

*Financial Administration Act*

virtually every business organization of any size in Canada or throughout the world.

The Auditor General also spells out the selection criteria for this position, and I quote him when he states:

The Comptroller General must have the appropriate professional qualifications, with a proven record of outstanding competence and achievement at senior levels of responsibility, and with extensive experience as a senior financial executive in a large scale organization in either the public or private sectors. He must have the ability to gain quickly the confidence and respect of the Treasury Board, cabinet, parliamentary committees, heads of departments and Crown corporations who will look to him for functional leadership in financial matters.

● (1752)

These are very special qualities and I hope that when the government appointed Mr. Harry Rogers—a man whom I do not know personally but of whose abilities I have heard glowing accounts—the government was thinking about the Canadian people and their basic needs.

It is obvious from the facts that I put on the record that we are sadly in need of a comptroller general, for in his 1975 report, the Auditor General stated:

The present state of the financial management and control systems of departments and agencies of the government of Canada is significantly below acceptable standards of quality and effectiveness.

The Auditor General further buttressed these comments by stating in his 1976 report:

In the majority of the Crown corporations audited by the Auditor General, financial management and control is weak and ineffective. Moreover, co-ordination and guidance by central government agencies of financial management and control practices in these Crown corporations are virtually non-existent.

That is a frightening admission of the manner in which Crown corporations look after the tax dollars of the Canadian people.

After two years, the Auditor General finally reached the opinion, and I will quote the following statement from his 1976 report:

Based on the study of the systems of departments, agencies and Crown corporations audited by the Auditor General, financial management and control in the government of Canada is grossly inadequate. Furthermore, it is likely to remain so until the government takes strong, appropriate and effective measures to rectify this critically serious situation.

In closing, I say to you, sir, that this is a damning criticism of this government's over-all management of the Canadian taxpayers' money, and I hope that by appointing a comptroller general we will help rectify the serious problem as it relates to the financial control of expenditures made by this government. This is the challenge he faces. The manner in which he carries out his duties may well determine, in light of what we hear today, whether Canada remains solvent or whether its financial structure is totally destroyed by the present government's incompetent management of our affairs.

**Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant):** Mr. Speaker, in entering this debate there are many things I would like to say on behalf of my party in addressing myself to Bill C-10 which has been a long time coming before the House for second reading. In view of the fact that the Auditor General suggested very strongly over two years that we should institute in our civil service in Ottawa the office of comptroller general, and in view of the fact that it is now about four minutes to six, I would appreciate it very much if I could call it six o'clock so that tomorrow I can begin the major portion of my speech.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is it agreed that we call it six o'clock?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** It being six o'clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

At 5.55 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.