

The final paragraph, paragraph 105 read:

In accordance with the practice followed by the committee in its reports to the House for the past three years, the Auditor General is again requested to report to the committee on the action taken by the various government departments, crown corporations and other agencies, toward implementing recommendations contained herein.

Mr. Chairman, the progress report that I am required to make pursuant to this direction is now in the course of preparation. Unfortunately I have not been able to produce it for today because we have only now just completed our 1962 report which I shall be handing to the Minister of Finance who will be tabling it in the House of Commons when the house resumes its business after the Christmas recess on January 21.

As I just mentioned, members will no doubt wish to refresh their minds by reading the 1961 report of this committee. However, in case you can not get through the whole thing I should tell you that we are doing our best to summarize the background of each of the 40 odd points which will be contained in the progress report in order that the report will "stand on its own feet" as a document.

If it is agreeable to the committee, Mr. Chairman, I propose mimeographing this and asking the secretary of the committee to distribute it in English and French to the members for study sometime before they return to the House of Commons after the Christmas recess so that each will have the maximum opportunity of reading it quietly before our next meeting.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that agreeable, gentlemen?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Mr. McCLEAVE: Mr. Chairman, our proceedings are to be printed and I am wondering whether this could be made an appendix to our first volume. I do not think there is a great rush to print our first report, so there would be time to make this an appendix to that report.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Henderson, would you be agreeable to giving this report to the secretary of the committee for that purpose?

Mr. HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman, I would be happy to do whatever the committee desires. However, I should state that this progress report is usually examined following its tabling and I do think it might usefully form part of the proceedings of the next meeting of this committee. However, this just involves a matter of convenience.

Mr. CARON: Mr. Chairman, I think we should have a separate report so that we can study it separately.

The CHAIRMAN: It seems to be the general wish of committee members to have a separate report; however, it could form part of the next minutes.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Mr. HENDERSON: As Mr. Taylor, Mr. Steele, Mr. Balls have dealt with the functions and the roles of the Department of Finance, the treasury board and the comptroller of the treasury, I will just limit myself to describing the function and role of the Auditor General.

As I mentioned, he is, of course, an officer of parliament as distinct from a part of the government or, that is to say, the executive. His functions and responsibilities are outlined in part VII of the Financial Administration Act.

By law he is entitled to free access at all convenient times to all files, documents and other records relating to the accounts of every government department and agency. He is entitled to require and receive from members of the public service such information, reports and explanations as he may deem necessary for the proper performance of his duties.