

*Financial Administration Act*

● (2022)

One cannot help but wonder if this comptroller general office that is being established is nothing but window dressing. If one looks back to 1970, this government introduced a bill to reduce the powers of the Auditor General, but thanks to the insistence and filibustering by members on this side that bill had to be withdrawn. The last thing this government wants is someone examining what it is doing. We will find out in time whether the Comptroller General will be able to do his job. When we form the government after the next election we will make sure that he has all the powers to carry out his duties, Mr. Speaker. How irresponsible can this government, which is now spending \$1 billion more a month than it is taking in, get?

Perhaps the Canadian people would like to know just exactly what it is going to cost them to operate the Comptroller General's department. Initially Treasury Board estimated a total expenditure of \$4.9 million and 124 man-years to run the office of the Comptroller General. Even they realize that they need a large department to keep track of what this outfit is doing. This includes \$1.9 million of new spending and 35 new man-years. Another \$3 million and 89 man-years comes from a transfer from the Treasury Board secretariat. The financial administration branch and the efficiency evaluation branch of the Treasury Board secretariat are being transferred to the office of the Comptroller General. So one can see that because the President of the Treasury Board cannot control expenditures and the Minister of Finance cannot control expenditures, the Canadian taxpayers will now have to pay almost \$5 million to establish another department to keep track of what this government is doing.

I would like the Comptroller General to examine why the CBC had six units standing west of the main block for the last two weeks with a whole crew of technicians and truck drivers. There were six large mobile units sitting there waiting for the election to be called. Well, we are not going to have the election, Mr. Speaker, because the vans are being pulled away. I guess the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has notified the CBC that there will be no election. From information that I have obtained I understand that for approximately the last two weeks it has cost the Canadian taxpayers \$1,200 an hour to have these six vans sitting there. This just shows the games this government plays and the cost of the games which the Prime Minister plays for this parliament and for the Canadian taxpayer. Tonight there are two vans left. We will find out tomorrow whether they will be pulled away, and that will be an indication of whether or not there will be an election this fall. I will try to get the total cost of having those six vans parked outside for the last two weeks.

I would like to quote from a recent article which appeared in the *Ottawa Journal*. It is written by W. A. Wilson who has summed up this cabinet's performance in an excellent way. It is headed "Trudeau cabinet incredibly careless". I do not need Mr. Wilson to tell me that; all of us are aware of it. In this particular article he states:

[Mr. McKenzie.]

The sensational aspects of the public accounts committee's investigation of nuclear sales abroad, the suspicion that payments were made for corrupt and illegal purposes, inevitably will secure the most public and political attention.

The new Comptroller General will certainly have his work cut out for him. What a challenge it will be to keep track of this government and what they are doing. Over the last ten years this group has spent \$235 billion of taxpayers' money. All they have reduced from that \$235 billion is \$20,000. So that gives a clear indication of the disrespect this government has for Canadian taxpayers.

For another example I would like to quote from *Hansard* for November 26, 1976, some comments made by the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner). These comments are in regard to the Government Expenditures Restraint Act which we were discussing at that time. The hon. member for Crowfoot stated:

Mr. Speaker, in rising to resume debate on Bill C-19 I would refer to my remarks of last night when I said there is a shocking lack of planning by this government, particularly in the Department of Transport.

The hon. member for Crowfoot is now overlooking all this irresponsible spending and he is sitting on the other side with the rest of them. He goes on to say:

There are heavy lay-offs in the steel industry, but no plans are advanced on how to assist the regions faced with these lay-offs which come as a result of lack of orders from railway companies

And on and on he goes. How could any responsible person join a government which operates in that manner? The member for Crowfoot goes on to say:

I have read of the problems in the Department of Transport. In fact, I read a very revealing statement. The Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) said that no additional airports would be built in Canada without consulting the airlines. That is an admission that when Mirabel was built, the airlines were not consulted with regard to the kind of terminal facilities they wanted.

How is the Comptroller General going to deal with the political pay-offs and political decisions which are how this government operates? Will he be able to stop their political decisions and pay-offs? Not very likely. The new Comptroller General will be in a most frustrated position when he deals with this government.

The hon. member for Crowfoot goes on to say:

When talking to the former president of Air Canada, he informed me that he was not consulted about the public transit vehicles used between the terminal and the airport. In fact, when he was told that the system would be at Mirabel, he informed the government that it was a very costly and wasteful system.

As if that would concern them. It most certainly would not. I do not know how the Comptroller General will deal with a situation like this. The hon. member for Crowfoot went on to point out:

Many members of parliament and the press have been making hay with regard to the Minister of Transport's abuse of the public trust placed in him, with his exorbitant travelling costs. He stated in all seriousness that he had to fly to Calgary a year ago for the Grey Cup game in order to represent the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde).

How will the comptroller deal with these JetStars? The minister from Crowfoot now flies around in one of these JetStars. He was the one who was so critical about this matter and was the one who revealed the Minister of Transport's travelling costs, which were three quarters of a million dollars