

*Appointments to Crown Corporations*

makes requests for funds topping the hundred million dollar mark annually. That's a lot of loose change.

With income tax time here, a lot of Canadians will be thinking about disappearing dollars and the tax drain. Any accounting that can be given by Crown corporations, and most won't think much of the idea of a politician's doing the accounting, will be in the best interest.

Parliamentary watchdogs, if they are adopted, could save money. But equally important, initially, they can generate just enough scare to keep Crown corporations on their toes, and let their administrators know the public is watching.

It's a good idea.

In recent weeks, one of the committees of this House considered the International Development Agency and the possibility of placing a Member of Parliament on the board. This suggestion was accepted. An editorial against the idea appeared in the *Globe and Mail* the next day. I replied to that editorial pointing out that there seems to be a certain group in this country who suggest there is something unhealthy about the inclusion of Members of Parliament on these boards. Since we are held responsible for the money spent, I think we should be in a position to have some say in the operation of these agencies. It is not a question of running them, as we would be only one or two voices on the whole board. At least there would be a representative of the people working in their interest.

• (5:10 p.m.)

As a result of the remarks in the *Globe and Mail* and my letter, several prominent citizens wrote to me in support of the idea of Members of Parliament serving on boards; no one wrote against it. One very prominent man by the name of Thomas Marshall who lives in Oakville, in the constituency of the hon. member for Halton (Mr. Whiting), wrote a meaningful letter. This gentleman, who is well respected across the country, submitted certain matters to the Glassco Commission. He is well respected in his community, and writes as follows:

I congratulate you on your letter which appeared in the *Globe and Mail* on Feb. 25th. I deplore as you do their editorial of Feb. 23rd. It seems to me the editorial writer has little or no knowledge of the day to day workings of a Crown company. If you combine this lack of knowledge with a naive belief that civil servants, because they have been given the stamp of approval by the Civil Service Commission, have a sort of divine right to run the country while thinking at the same time that Members of Parliament are inferior persons not to be completely trusted but who fortunately are not forever with us; you can see how the editorial came out as it did.

It is my opinion from personal observation that far too often the civil servant or Crown Company bureaucrat is ever ready to exercise authority arbitrarily, is excessively secretive and because he looks upon criticism within his own organization as disloyal, these organizations tend to become self-protecting bureaucracies, to be managed for the benefit of the people who run them to the point where in some instances they become almost the personal fief of the man at the top.

He goes on to say in his concluding paragraph:

—The way things are now I think the dice are loaded against the people. By simply stalling, the civil servant can frustrate a Representative of the people in any investigation, for the odds are better than even that, by withholding information that is pertinent but may not have been directly asked for, misinterpreting questions, giving partial or incomplete answers, the investigation can resist conclusion until such time as the hazard of election has removed the Representative.

That is how a man highly respected in his community expresses himself. I have another letter from Mr. Fred M. Halls of London, Ontario, who says:

Thank you on behalf of many of us ordinary citizens for your letter to the *Globe & Mail* printed in this mornings issue.

Many people feel that our duly elected representative to the three levels of our governing bodies have no control over and, indeed, very little knowledge of the day-to-day operations of not only Crown companies but Departments, Boards, Commissions.

Speaking Federally, there are those who contend that in many matters the Ministers of the Crown are but mouth-pieces for the senior Civil Servants in their various departments—

Please be sure my prayers and best wishes are with you in your good work.

I have read two letters to illustrate the kind of reaction I have been receiving. As I say, I have received no letters contrary to the idea of our placing Members of Parliament on boards of Crown agencies and corporations.

I feel that in this country today there is a desire to create more Crown corporations. I sometimes wonder if the reason behind this is that certain people wish to remove more of the business of government from the scrutiny of Parliament and the representatives of the people. Certainly, that is how it appears. A good example of what I am talking about, of complete disregard for the people, is to be found if one looks at Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. On February 21 of this year, that corporation arbitrarily passed two regulations of which no person would be aware unless he happened to tender an application to build a house or to obtain a mortgage loan. One of those regulations says