

public last year. It indicated the policy the government is considering and what it is going to do in order to tighten up this whole field. That is long overdue, Mr. Speaker.

What are hon. members opposite going to achieve by creating a special committee which will look at Crown corporations, among other things? The Auditor General, the special Lambert Royal commission and the Standing Committee on Public Accounts are doing that. The hon. members who participated in the Standing Committee on Public Accounts would agree that it was generally a non-partisan committee whose members, regardless of political party, were anxious to do the right thing in terms of coming to grips with the areas where it was necessary to bring about a greater economy in the use of public resources.

● (2022)

It was a bit of a joke in that committee that we never knew how many Crown corporations there were. The number kept expanding. When the representative of the Treasury Board came in, the first question asked of him day after day was: "Have you found any more Crown corporations since the last time?" Well, there is now a comprehensive list. It is a good joke, but the problem lay in the fact that many Crown corporations had incorporated subsidiaries and the incorporated subsidiaries may or may not have been active. In many cases they were dormant, and were added to the list, and properly so. The most significant and active Crown corporations, I am happy to report, were discovered some time ago and were documented.

The process of review, I submit, has to be done by this parliament through its committees. We will have an occasion to do so when the Financial Administration Act is revised, which the government intends doing in the very near future. The revision of that act will establish a framework for re-examining government policy with regard to Crown corporations. It is a far greater problem than deciding whether or not we should have a Crown corporation. The problem is to make sure the proper resources are at the disposal of the Crown corporation; that there is a periodic review in response to some instrument of the democratic government of Canada; that guidelines are issued and followed concerning the ethics which will guide that public corporation in its expenditure of what are, after all, public funds; and last but not least, to make sure that at every point the basic question is asked: Are we getting value for our money? Are we getting good use of our resources? Are we in effect doing those things which government should be doing? We must admit quite frankly that from time to time the function may well change and that we should get out of the business. When that time comes, it should be possible to make a rational decision.

Mr. Speaker, the last of the arms of this multiple resolution—it has at least these four sides to it—is the adaptation of new flexible budget planning techniques to discourage unnecessary growth in departmental budgets. We are also trying to do this. Treasury Board is doing this, searching from day to day. This is the task for all of us who participate in parliament. The current approach, of course, is to set limits on the

manpower side. Within the entire public service of Canada, six tenths of one per cent is the total permitted increase of manpower within the current budget year.

Hon. members on the other side are smiling about this, but there is reason to believe that these limits will be observed. If there is any reason to show they are not being observed, it is our task to find out and demonstrate it, not just make a general allegation. I know as an Ottawa member that it is very hard for any young graduate to get a job in the public service today because job opportunities are not there. The restrictions on hiring are there. The restrictions on the budget are there. I know the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker) will agree with me because he must be getting as many letters as I am. Positions are being declared redundant. Fathers and mothers come in to me and say that there are just no job opportunities for their children in the public service because of the restrictions that are now in place, the decentralization moves now in effect, and also the adoption of new flexible budget planning techniques to discourage unnecessary growth. The old-fashioned way to limit growth is to say: There is the line; this is the sum that must not be exceeded. This is the established number you can have for personnel; you cannot exceed it.

Within the national capital region today, growth is negative. The growth taking place in the public service is largely outside the national capital region.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but his allotted time has expired. Nevertheless he may continue with unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): There is no unanimous consent.

Mr. Harvie Andre (Calgary Centre): I have to open my remarks by saying how surprised I am at the negative and unconstructive posture of the speakers opposite. I find this especially surprising in view of the report in yesterday's *Ottawa Journal* in which the hon. member for Scarborough East (Mr. O'Connell), the chairman of the forthcoming Liberal policy convention and the president of the Liberal party, the senator from Nova Scotia, were reported as saying that, as they returned from their tour across Canada, having talked to the Liberal rank and file, they found that the predominant concern of the Liberal rank and file was the growth and size of government and the necessity to bring this under control.

The motion put forward by my leader today outlines four very responsible initiatives which we believe, if implemented, would accomplish the goal which obviously concerns not just us in the House but, in fact, the rank and file of the Liberal party.

The negative posture taken by spokesmen on the other side is a little hard to understand and reconcile. It shows a lack of