

prices, which sends up receipts, and you have this spiral going on and on. I repeat what I have said before, that we could stand this better if there was any sign of repentance; but all we have is a continuing sense of self-satisfaction. Perhaps the greatest irritation of all is that we are expected to accept as a complete answer, "Well, we used the money to pay off the debt." I do not suppose anyone thinks they stole the money. You could not do so even if you tried. It is not that we do not want to pay off the debt. Of course, we want to do that; but we do not want to blunder into it, we want to plan it.

I go on to the next section, which is under public stores. On a cursory reading, which was all I had time to do, it would appear as if we were going to have a kind of super-revolving fund. The other day we had a little experience with revolving funds, and the relations between the various government departments seemed rather casual and loose. It was almost a case of the right hand not knowing what the left hand doeth. In this connection I suggest it would be well for the committee to have a close look at these revolving funds.

I should like to say a word about crown corporations. Here we have a real problem because on the one hand we must give adequate power and adequate discretion to those who are carrying on business like any other corporation—Polymer is an example. On the other hand, we must somehow or other retain adequate control in this parliament. It is a curious irony that most of the crown corporations come under the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe). He is a man of many devices. So far as I can see he apparently manages to be both a private ownership man and a convinced public ownership man at the same time, and without any split personality. But after all, there is perhaps quite a simple explanation of that. The contradiction is only superficial, because when he was describing the operations of Polymer in this house on a certain day, the member for Rosetown-Biggar (Mr. Coldwell), after listening to his very satisfactory report, said to the minister "a pretty good recommendation for public enterprise". The Minister of Trade and Commerce gave an answer which I really think should, in some way or other, be immortalized. He said "This is different. This is my enterprise."

Of course it is natural that under the present Minister of Trade and Commerce these corporations should go on pretty strongly under their own steam. This may raise a question for the future. I often wonder in my own heart whether the Minister of

Trade and Commerce could honestly in his heart advocate that such wide powers as he has had should be given to anyone else. I would think he would have grave doubts about that. However that may be, there they are. They have been very unusual, and I think this may well raise a question in the future.

One other question which arises in connection with crown corporations is the question of the relationship of the Auditor General to their operations. Section 77 says that the Auditor General is "eligible" to be appointed the auditor or a joint auditor of a crown corporation. Actually, he may be eligible; he may have passed the qualifying round, but he has not very often won a prize because he has not been very popular as auditor to crown corporations. I have the names of some, which I am going to mention, for whom he is not the auditor. I am not willing to press this point unduly because there may be certain cases where, by reason of the size of the corporation and the ramifications of its operations, the Auditor General might have to enlarge his staff to do one particular job, and that would throw him out of balance. I am not dogmatizing on this, I am just raising the point. When I find companies like the Industrial Development Bank and the board recently set up under the Agricultural Products Marketing Act are not put under the Auditor General's supervision, I think it is a matter the committee should investigate. I believe the committee should be thoroughly satisfied as to what the policy is, and the reasons for it.

I want to say a word, and I think this will be my last point, about part VI of the act which deals with the whole manner of setting up the public accounts. Looking back, it is not possible to reach any other conclusion than that our method of dealing with our public accounts was like Topsy and just "grow'd". It was not according to a plan but was compromise piled on compromise. I know I am correct in saying that more than once in this house the Minister of Trade and Commerce has remarked about our method of public accounting. I am not quoting now, but I think it is a fair interpretation to say that he expressed the opinion that our method of public accounting is not like that of any private corporation, that we just take nearly everything that comes in and call that income, and we call everything that goes out expenditures. We do not take the trouble to distinguish between what is truly capital and what is truly income.

An ex-minister of finance used a somewhat different phrase when he called it the bridge