

them. To help remedy our national sickness this government must first set an example. This government must heed the old prescription of "physician heal thyself." The cure cannot be achieved with sugar-coated pills, cover-up tricks or clever repartee here in parliament. The nation is waiting to be convinced, waiting to work toward holding Canada intact, united, and strong.

Canadians, with few exceptions, know that Canada is worth fighting for and, who knows, this bill that we are debating today may well be a beginning. The Chinese say that a journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step. Hopefully this first small step is one in the right direction, for the need for a comptroller general is due to weak financial management and control of government programs, the lack of strong central direction by the Treasury Board, the growth of government spending, the lack of accountability to parliament, and the impact of government spending on Canada's economy.

As stated in the explanatory note of the bill:

The purpose of this amendment is to establish the office of the Comptroller General of Canada and to provide for the assignment of duties and functions to the incumbent of the office.

The first part of the above objective formalizes the government's intention to create the position of comptroller general which is a positive response to the Auditor General's principal recommendation in his 1976 report.

The second part of the above objective, however, only provides for the assignment of duties and functions of the comptroller general. It does not, I repeat, spell them out in the legislation. Certainly, in my opinion, an outline of the major duties and responsibilities, if contained in the bill, would have strengthened this piece of legislation.

Even a person of Mr. Rogers' capability, the recent appointee to this position, will need all the support he can get from this parliament if he is to have a fighting chance to regain financial control over the federal government, and that is why I gave the earlier figures of the outlandish lack of control which has existed during the ten years of the present administration.

I say to you, sir, unless this bill is amended, parliament and the people will have no control over the role that the comptroller general will play, either now or in the future. In my opinion the duties of the comptroller general must be given legislative authority. I also find it regrettable that there is no provision in the bill for the comptroller general to report to parliament. I believe the annual report of the comptroller general to the Treasury Board should, by legislation, be referred to parliament for consideration by the Public Accounts Committee during its review of the Auditor General's report.

Just what have we on the record regarding this position? On April 25, 1977, the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Andras) announced in the House the government's intention to establish the position of comptroller general. He also placed on the record the relevant duties and responsibilities of the position, namely:

Financial Administration Act

The Comptroller General will report directly to the President of the Treasury Board. The office will carry the rank and status of a deputy minister. The Comptroller General will be responsible to the Treasury Board for the quality and integrity of the financial control systems and administrative policies and practices in use throughout the federal civil service.

It is worth while noting here that the greater part of these responsibilities will comprise those that were assigned to the financial administration branch of the Treasury Board secretariat, as created in March, 1976, under a deputy secretary, then Mr. Stuart Mensforth. The President of the Treasury Board also stated:

A special functional relationship will exist between the Comptroller General and the chief financial administrators of departments, agencies and corporations, thus enabling the Comptroller General to provide necessary direction on financial matters.

The Comptroller General's authority and responsibility will be applicable to expenditure control systems and related administrative practices and procedures, after and within the authorization of the allocation of resources by the Government and Parliament.

Here it is worth noting that the entire responsibility for the control and direction of the resource allocation and control processes will remain with the secretary of the Treasury Board, and will not be transferred to the comptroller general.

What does the Auditor General think of the comptroller general's responsibilities? In his 1976 report, page 16, he considers such a key position as "the most important and responsible financial position in both the public and private sectors of Canada."

Both the President of the Treasury Board and the Auditor General have indicated that a major restructuring of the Treasury Board secretariat will be required. The Auditor General sees the position of comptroller general as having a status comparable to that of the secretary of the Treasury Board. He also sees the responsibilities of the comptroller general to include clearly:

The design, development, implementation and monitoring of adequate systems and procedures to ensure that:

- (1) The form of the estimates provides a sound basis for the government's budgetary control system;
- (2) public moneys and assets are under his effective custody and control at all times;

I would point out that Bill C-10 does not deal with this interesting and necessary recommendation. It goes on to state:

- (3) accounting procedures and financial reports throughout government (including the public accounts) should conform to acceptable accounting principles and standards;
- (4) expenditures of public moneys are made with due regard for economy and efficiency;
- (5) satisfactory procedures measure the effectiveness of programs where they could reasonably be expected to apply; and
- (6) he should be maintaining the central accounts of Canada, a job which is presently being carried out by the Department of Supply and Services.

Again, sir, this recommendation is not a part of Bill C-10, and I submit that it should be.

In effect, what the Auditor General has advocated, and so far the government has agreed to only in principle, is the type of financial control exercised by the chief financial officer of