

to give further consideration to that matter this session. If this is so, I assure you that I and my officers shall be glad to offer every assistance and cooperation in regard to this and any other matter.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you Mr. Balls.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

The CHAIRMAN: I should just like to add another word at this point. Mr. Balls has been very helpful in the past and we appreciate his association with this committee.

The next witness is hardly a witness, but traditionally has been the chief adviser to this committee. He is the Auditor General of Canada, Mr. A. M. Henderson, F.C.A., a man of very considerable business experience before he became Auditor General of Canada some three years ago. Before that time Mr. Watson Sellar was Auditor General of Canada and advised this committee during the first two years of its existence under the new set-up. For the last three years, Mr. Henderson has been our chief adviser and counsel, if I may use that word.

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce, certainly to the new members if that be necessary, Mr. Henderson, Auditor General of Canada.

Mr. A. M. HENDERSON (*Auditor General of Canada*): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman for your kind words of introduction.

May I first of all express my pleasure at meeting with you again today in anticipation of another session, and I hope I am able to render the maximum assistance possible to this committee.

I am, Mr. Chairman, as you have said, your servant. I report only to parliament. I have with me today my senior men whom later I should like to have the privilege of introducing to you and will ask each to say a few words about the various duties for which each is responsible.

M. HENDERSON: A titre d'ancien citoyen de la ville de Montréal et comme membre de l'Institut des comptables agréés du Québec, il me fait grandement plaisir de saluer aujourd'hui les membres du comité permanent des comptes publics qui sont de ma province natale. Ma grand-mère était française, mais malgré cela je dois vous avouer que je ne parle pas cette langue aussi facilement que je voudrais. Si je fais un effort vous serez sans doute assez aimables de me dire que vous avez compris au moins une partie de mes paroles.

Donc, monsieur le président, je m'empresse, à cette occasion, de vous assurer que l'essentiel du courage est certainement la prudence.

Mr. HENDERSON: The public accounts committee in recent years, as the Chairman has said, has had an excellent record which I think everyone will regard as most constructive. The Chairman has referred to some of its accomplishments. I perhaps should point out that the 1961 report, which is the last, and is very interesting reading, was the longest report ever made by this committee. Following 24 meetings, it involved 40 witnesses including 12 deputy ministers from as many departments, five officials from the Canada council, and four of the directors of the Polymer Corporation.

The report was 20 pages long and it had 105 paragraphs about 40 per cent of which contained recommendations or suggestions of one kind or another for action.

I should, with your permission, just like to read two very short paragraphs at the conclusion of this report. Paragraph 104 read:

The importance of maintaining parliamentary control over financial matters is the paramount concern of this committee. It is therefore expected that its recommendations will be given close attention by the departments, crown corporations and other agencies.