

Government Orders

members of Parliament the opportunity to monitor and confirm the impact of the bills on which they voted.

Consequently, members of Parliament will not be consulted only in the House of Commons or in parliamentary committees. I was democratically elected to represent the people of my riding of Berthier—Montcalm and I must have all the necessary tools to fulfil my mandate. Information on public spending is one of these tools. How can members of Parliament play their roles adequately if they are not even aware of all government expenditures in their own ridings? Cleanliness starts at home, as we say, but when you do not know what to clean, it is hard to look clean to the public.

I reject the argument used by the minister who claimed that it would cost too much, because I think if members of Parliament were to closely monitor what is going on in their ridings, they could surely find some waste to eliminate. We could quickly come up with the money required to provide this information to members.

Fourth, accountability for public servants. This would be important. Public servants must be responsible and feel accountable to Parliament. We must clearly give more responsibilities to civil servants. No one is in a better position to expose all the awful waste occurring in federal departments. We have to find ways to encourage public servants to denounce such extravagant spending by the government. The right to expose public waste must be addressed by this House and very soon at that.

Since most contracts will be executed by the Department of Public Works and Government Services, it seems to me that Bill C-52 should have covered this issue.

Federal public servants must realize that, as taxpayers, they also pay for unnecessary spending they are aware of.

Here is a good example to justify the cleaning up, which, as I said earlier, should start at home.

I invite the Minister of Public Works and Government Services to visit the back entrance to the Confederation Building to see for himself what is an immoral spending.

Public Works rebuilt the access ramp for handicapped people. Although I completely agree with the principle, I am outraged with the end result. Instead of a simple efficient and functional slope, the contractors have created a huge labyrinth not accessible by wheelchair. Moreover, I am told this non-functional labyrinth cost \$170,000.

That shows how some expenses are fit for a transcendental world.

• (1725)

Finally, I would like to say a few words about advance payments by the government. The purpose of this practice by senior officials is to make maximum use of the resources available to a function within a department in order to ensure that the same level of resources will be allocated to that function in the next budget year. Government officials do this because they are afraid of having their annual budget cut if they do not use all the resources available to them in the current year.

The whole issue of advance payments concerns all departments. Moreover, it becomes clear that the Department of Public Works must take the bull by the horns and exert strict control over government expenditures.

While Public Works and Supply and Services have historically been considered the ideal departments for patronage, the new department must now do everything it can to become the department of transparency, and it has to have all the necessary tools to be able to do that.

Again, the Liberal government is watering down this objective and, in this particular case, it is drowning it. Instead of being a watchdog as it should, the Department of Public Works and Government Services is playing an unhealthy game that prevents it from being as transparent as we would like it to be.

Another example that I find appalling concerns some electricians from Public Works Canada. I was outraged when this information was made known to me. It would appear that some electricians keep the copper from the electric wires that they dispose of, melt it and then sell it to pay for the big party they throw at the end of the year. I think this kind of practice is unacceptable in 1994.

Another quick example, Mr. Speaker, because I see that time is running out—

Mr. Duhamel: I want to ask a question.

Mr. Bellehumeur: I will be glad to answer your questions, if I have the time.

The other point I would like to mention concerns something I noticed when I moved into my new office in Ottawa. My 286 and 386 computers were replaced by more efficient and modern systems. In my riding, I have a number of community organizations, women's groups, youth organizations and other groups. They had asked me how to go about buying those old computers from the Canadian government. It is quite difficult, as I found out. It seems that those computers are auctioned off, but that they end up being bought by employees in some departments or their relatives and friends. As a result, taxpayers and community agencies across Canada who would need those computers and