

*Dissolution of 1967 Expo Corporation*

An elaborate gas distribution system was built at Expo costing \$743,000 but there was a provision in the agreement with the gas distribution company that should the system still have value after the close of Expo, some of this cost could be redeemed. I understand the distribution system is still in use but the Corporation, without pursuing the possibility of recovering part of its costs, has transferred its rights of recovery to the city of Montreal and Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Apparently the Corporation was not at all concerned about redeeming some of the cost.

An extensive telephone service was provided at a cost of \$335,000 over and above the regular charges, to cover construction costs. The service is still in use but the Corporation has never approached the telephone company for the recovery of any part of the construction cost. One hundred and nine telephone booths were to be provided to the Corporation at no cost, but apparently they wanted something more elaborate and put in their own design at a cost of \$170,000. This sort of thing added greatly to the cost. There is no excuse for those in charge who did not abide by the conditions laid down for this exhibition and do their part to prevent waste and careless spending.

Before I conclude, Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the minister why the reports were not tabled on time. The Act provides for them being tabled three months after the end of the fiscal year. The 1967 report was tabled on October 2, about six months late, and the minister states that the 1968 report will be tabled today, although it should have been tabled last April according to the act.

I would be remiss, Mr. Speaker, if I did not make mention, as did the hon. member for Sainte-Marie (Mr. Valade), of the two great Canadians who had a lot to do with staging Expo 67 and who have since passed on. I refer to the late Minister of Trade and Commerce, the right honourable Robert Winters. He carried a tremendous load during Expo and I know that these expenditures worried him a great deal. It is most regrettable that a greater effort was not made by those in charge to keep costs under control. Another person who travelled abroad and was successful in having many countries exhibit at Expo was the Commissioner General and President of Expo 67 Mr. Pierre Dupuy, C.M.G. To these two great Canadians we owe respect and offer our condolences to their families.

• (5:20 p.m.)

It is regrettable that the minister has had to come before Parliament and ask that this deficit be forgiven or wiped off the accounts receivable for Canada. There is one other thing I should like to ask in connection with the deferment until 1972 of moneys due by Quebec. Is any interest being charged on these moneys, and what happens if Quebec fails to meet its commitment? These and many other questions I hope will be asked when this Bill goes to the committee. I hope that those who are responsible for letting the show get out of control will be called before the committee and asked to give an accounting.

**Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West):** Mr. Speaker, I have listened with a great deal of interest to hon. members who have spoken on this bill which is to wind up Expo. I do not intend to spend a great deal of time on it. I merely wish to say that Expo celebrated our one hundredth birthday and was eminently successful. I am of the opinion that Expo '67 had a great unifying effect on Canada and Canadians, that it advertised Canada to the world and that the way it advertised Canada will bring us benefits for a long time to come. Nevertheless, despite the good that has come out of Expo and the good that will accrue to Canada as a nation, Members of Parliament should not hesitate to criticize if they find that planning on the financial side has been faulty and lax. That, certainly, seems to be the case with Expo. Like other members of the House, I read with amazement some of the foolish financial arrangements entered into by the federal government with regard to Expo '67. You know, Mr. Speaker, here we seem to see the same old story of cost estimates running wild and no attempt being made by the Corporation or the government to collect recoverable expenses which, in my opinion, should have been taken into account. I agree with the hon. member who preceded me. When the Auditor General's report is before the committee, those who were to keep an eye on the accounts ought to be brought before the committee and asked to explain why they did not adhere to the various agreements we had entered into in financing Expo. They must explain why certain things went wrong.

**Mr. Pepin:** All that will be done in committee.