

Crown Corporations

that, but I think it should not be passed in the house without that step being taken.

Mr. Grant Deachman (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, I listened sympathetically to the arguments advanced by the hon. member for York Centre (Mr. Walker) because I realize the growing problem of giving adequate scrutiny to the work of government. The hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. Churchill) referred to the necessity for scrutinizing the expenditures of government, a task which falls to members of parliament. It is a difficult task to perform adequately, and it is because of that that the hon. member for York Centre has moved this motion seeking to place parliamentarians on the boards of crown corporations which perform various tasks on behalf of the crown.

To give hon. members some idea of the increase in the size of the task which falls to a house which has not enlarged its own size very much, we might note that the whole central services of government, including parliament, were contained in the three buildings on this hill in 1867. Of course the three buildings of that time were not as big as they are now. The old parliament building itself had one storey less than at present. It contained its own heating system.

The east and west blocks were about half their present size and these three buildings represented parliament and the whole central civil service of the Canadian government of that day. It was not until about 1885 that the first building containing government offices was built off the hill. That was the Langevin block on Wellington at the corner of Elgin street. The only other off the hill building for the civil service before world war I was the Connaught building on Mackenzie avenue. The museum, mint and archives had been built but did not contain departments of government.

Let us compare that with what is contained in some of the notes on the size of government in the opening paragraphs of volume I of the Glassco report, page 19, describing the scope of modern-day government. At the time of its publication it identified a total of 116 departments and agencies, the armed forces, 21 statutory boards, 42 corporations and 29 miscellaneous statutory officers, commissions and councils. It said that the government in 1960, occupied 180 million square feet of building space, the equivalent of over 100 buildings each the size of a football field and 28 storeys in height, with the value of real

[Mr. Churchill.]

estate holdings estimated at \$4 billion. That is the size of government and crown corporations which members must cope with when examining expenditures which today are between \$6 billion and \$7 billion per year.

If we were to adopt the suggestion of the hon. member for York Centre of sending parliamentarians to serve on the boards of crown corporations we would be breaking new ground among commonwealth parliaments because this is not a practice which is followed in the parliaments of the old dominions. I am grateful to the hon. member for giving me an opportunity to look at some of the material which he collected on this subject over the course of some two years during which he was waiting for his motion to creep forward on the order paper and take first place for discussion today.

I want to refer first to a letter from the office of the High Commissioner for the Commonwealth of Australia which reads in part as follows:

The Postmaster General's department has advised that in no case is there provision for a member of parliament to be an official or an ex officio member of any of the boards or commissions which come within the province of the department.

The Attorney General's department has advised us that there are two bodies on which members of the commonwealth parliament may serve, such provision being made in the legislation which established them. These two bodies are the National Library of Australia and the Australian National University

In the case of the Australian National University, the act provides that the council shall include two members of the Senate elected by the Senate and two members of the House of Representatives elected by the house. No member of the council is paid any remuneration for his services on the council.

Then there is correspondence from the British High Commissioner which reads:

—the membership of almost all such public boards, or boards of directors of government-owned companies, automatically disqualifies a member of the House of Commons from continuing as a member of the house. He could not normally escape disqualification by declining to be paid a salary, since in general the offices which disqualify a member from membership of the House of Commons are those for which salaries either will or might be paid.

This was the view of Sir Henry Lintott on the subject. There is further correspondence on the subject from the High Commissioner of New Zealand. He writes:

• (6:50 p.m.)

—it has not been the practice to appoint serving members of the House of Representatives to serve as unpaid directors of crown corporations. I would think that possibly the State Advances Corporation