

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): I thank the hon. members.

Motion as amended agreed to.

And the House having resumed in committee:

[Translation]

Mr. Asselin: Mr. Chairman, I listened very carefully to what the hon. member for Trois-Rivières (Mr. Mongrain) said last night about the bill now being studied.

The way this bill was drafted by the government surprises me very much. A committee of the House sat for many weeks in order to get at the truth and to find the reasons for unrest within the Company of Young Canadians. Once again, the government does not take into account the recommendations of the committee and simply asks the House to pass hastily a bill whose sole purpose is to provide for the appointment of a Comptroller of the Company of Young Canadians.

That is why, Mr. Chairman, we often wonder what the committees of the House are for. Even though committees' recommendations are not binding upon the government, I suggest it should have taken into consideration not only the committee's recommendations but also its terms of reference.

According to the minister, this legislation must be passed, and when it is, another one will be passed, without our being told about its substance.

That is the reason why my colleague for Annapolis Valley (Mr. Nowlan) objected to the bill being introduced without hon. members being told of the nature of another bill to be brought forward later on.

We also wonder whether the government's bill does not come too late. Following the exchanges between the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and Mr. Saulnier, Chairman of Montreal's Executive Committee, even before the committee held its first sitting and Mr. Saulnier made his statement in Montreal on the Company of Young Canadians, even while the Secretary of State (Mr. Pelletier) was aware of the deep-rooted unrest within the Company of Young Canadians, no action was taken while it was still time. The Secretary of State merely summoned the Director of the Company once to his office, to ask him what was going on and whether a volunteer of the Company was going to be thrown out.

That was all the control exercised, whereas what was required was the taking over of the management of a company that was spending

Company of Young Canadians Act

public funds. The inquiry revealed expenditures of \$7,000,000.

In Montreal, the inquiry also revealed that many volunteers were just agitators—not dissenters, those we accept in our modern society—seeking the destruction of democratic institutions existing in Montreal and elsewhere in the province of Quebec.

The Secretary of State was aware of that. He had been warned long before the Chairman of Montreal's Executive Committee made a public statement. But it was the great silence. Had it not been for Mr. Saulnier's statement, we would not know anything more about the doings of some members of the Company of Young Canadians.

The government, finding itself cornered when a royal commission was called for to investigate the matter in depth, decided to entrust a parliamentary committee with the consideration of the whole problem.

According to the report of that committee, where a minority opposed the general recommendations, it would simply be necessary to place the Company of Young Canadians under trusteeship, to review its objectives, to renew its structures so that we may know how the funds allocated to that organization are spent.

We have the striking example of a government which advocates greater participation by hon. members in public affairs. When it was suggested that the committee be given more leeway, the government did not pay any attention and the introduction of the bill now under study is another example of how little concerned the government is about the work of committees. It is the cabinet which decides. The policy is spelt out by the government, not even by the members of the party in office.

• (9:50 p.m.)

Mr. Chairman, I agree with the statement of my colleague from Annapolis Valley (Mr. Nowlan). We wish to know which steps the government intends taking in order to settle the problem of the Company of Young Canadians. It does not follow that we of the opposition are against the activities of young people who wish to improve our society through social development for the benefit of those who are without voice, as the law says. But we wish to purge the company of its undesirable elements, to give it a new structure and new objectives. And if the minister would let us know the provisions of the new proposed legislation, perhaps this debate would not be necessary.