

Mr. Harkness: Mr. Speaker, I do not think our system is based upon trusting a minister to do what he thinks best with public money and public assets. Our system is based on control of the executive by the legislature. This is why I am attempting to impress upon the minister the need for control by this parliament over the disposal of these assets, and such control can only be exercised by saying there should be provision for public tenders and so forth.

As to the write-off of \$125 million for which the bill provides, I would point out that the minister has not yet, at least in an intelligible way, indicated just how this \$125 million is made up. This, too, is information with which we should be provided.

There are a great many more complaints one could make with regard to what was done, and not done, by this Corporation. However, I do not wish to take any more time this afternoon on that subject. I repeat that I trust there will be no disposition on the part of the government to push this bill through the committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs before it has received a thorough examination.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, in 1967 we had a big party. Even more than two years later we realize, I think, that it was a tremendous success, that we enjoyed it and that it did something for Canada.

All parties have to be paid for, of course. Sometimes they are paid for in advance, but most often they are not paid for until after they have been enjoyed. It would seem that this is what we are being called upon to do in the bill which is now before us.

The party was a bigger one than we had planned; it cost more, and now we have to foot the bill. One cannot but agree with the hon. member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Harkness) that in retrospect there is evidence of extravagance, waste and poor planning which might have been avoided. The Auditor General is a very good witness in this connection. But even after this has been asserted, the fact remains that the bill has to be paid, and the question before us is a very simple one: who is going to pay it? The Government of Canada is obviously taking the position, and so recommending to parliament, that this was a national event, that the mere fact of its location in one part of the country, Montreal—I am referring in particular to Expo—does not mean that the people of Montreal or the

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people of the Province of Quebec should pay more than their fair share of it. Rather it means that the people of Canada as a whole should pay a major share of the cost of Expo which, as we all recall, was one of the major items on the program for our 100th birthday party.

• (4:20 p.m.)

Therefore, while I cannot but go along with the kind of criticism made by the hon. member for Calgary Centre, I think in all realism we would have to admit that we are now presented with a fait accompli: we are now presented with the bills, and the bills have to be paid.

I would remind you, Mr. Speaker, as I have reminded the House on other occasions, that Expo was not the only national event in our centennial year. There were indeed events of various kinds in every province, in every city, and in many of the towns, villages and hamlets of this country. Moneys were raised in one way or another to finance those celebrations and parties. Most of them, I trust, have been paid for by now; and I share the minister's hope that it will not take us as long to wind up our 1967 events as it is taking France to get over the exposition it held during the last century.

I am sure no one in the chamber has any doubt as to the direction my remarks are taking. One of the other big national events in 1967 was the holding of the Pan-Am games in Winnipeg, or, to use the full title, the Pan-American games. Let me stress the fact that although those games were a much smaller event than Expo, they nevertheless constituted a part, and a very successful part, of the national celebration of our centennial year. Everybody recognized this. It is also a fact that the federal government joined with the government of the province of Manitoba and the city of Winnipeg in helping to pay the cost of the Pan-American games.

Having said that, I think I can add that even two or three years later we still enjoy in retrospect the experience of Expo. It is still true that in Winnipeg we are still enjoying the experience of the Pan-American games, and we are pleased and proud to have in our city such buildings as the Pan-Am pool and other structures that were erected for the Pan-Am games of 1967.

However, just as the actual cost of Expo was greater than its anticipated cost, so the actual cost of holding the Pan-Am games was greater than anticipated. It is the view of all