

Financial Administration Act

in metro Toronto high schools. The recipient of this grant stated that he had strong communist leanings. Also he received a \$26,000 grant to produce children's plays for public parks. Can one imagine that type of program?

There is a place for a granting program. I am not arguing that. But I am concerned about the looseness of the department which is administering this program. Should these things be allowed to happen? A minister of the Crown took great pains to tell parliament and the public that he makes the ultimate choice, for the Young Canada Works program. According to that minister, it is not done on the recommendation of hon. members of parliament, nor on the recommendations from ministerial advisory groups. The minister indicated that he makes the final decision.

A grant of \$15,880 was given to a project known as "The Shadow of Dracula" to produce a full-length film with this intriguing title, using the residents of a housing corporation development in Toronto. Is that how public funds should be spent? Is it any wonder hon. members of the official opposition support the concept of a comptroller general, and have done so for some time? At the outset we were dismayed by the government deciding to stand against the concept of a comptroller general. It was indicated that, for some reason or other, there was a mystery surrounding that concept, and that it might interfere with ministerial responsibility, which is a doctrine the government is prepared to ignore when it is convenient.

The sum of \$23,500 was granted for a study on how to demystify the dance, another project which was approved by a minister of the Crown and not a public servant. It was not approved by a member of parliament for the area, nor by a member of the public who was involved in a ministerial advisory group which supposedly advises ministers of the Crown. This is one of the projects which was "ultimately approved by the minister". That justifies the office of comptroller general.

Various other examples are contained in the document to which I referred. For example, a drafting clerk at Dairyland, Coquitlam, Mr. Maurice Muirhead, received \$306,784. That grant was under a Local Initiatives program and not Young Canada Works. Is it local initiative for a man to be able to con the government out of \$306,784? According to the reports, the man had no qualifications whatsoever. He had a full-time job, and yet received four grants totalling more than \$250,000. Surely that was not done on the advice of the hon. member of parliament for that area, nor on the advice of constituency advisory groups which are supposed to represent the taxpayers of Canada. Again this was a project approved by the minister.

I could refer to many such projects, but in particular I should like to refer to those famous buttons which were produced by the former minister of national health and welfare and charged to the Status of Women. Has Your Honour ever heard any of the women's groups talking positively about the Status of Women program instituted by this government, except to say it is the greatest study on cosmetics since

[Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton).]

Revlon? Have you ever heard them speak in a laudatory way about that? No, you have not, Mr. Speaker.

● (1532)

We had a question on the order paper of the House of Commons asking how much it cost to produce those buttons, which read "Why not?" or "Pourquoi pas?", on behalf of that program as a promotion. The answer by the then minister of national health and welfare, now the Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations (Mr. Lalonde), was that they cost \$62,224. I suggest you could go to any self-respecting women's group in this country, and its membership would find a positive use for that \$62,000 odd.

Why do I raise these questions and why do I put these examples on the record of this House of Commons? A young person came to see me last Thursday. He is a graduate of a university, with a degree in psychology. He wants to put his skills to use. He has studied for four years, plus one, and cannot now get a job. He cannot find employment. He has had difficulty in finding employment even in an area outside his skills.

We have one million people unemployed in this country, including young people who cannot fulfil their ambitions or even use their training. They are discouraged and upset. I think of what the Prime Minister has said about these people wanting to move somewhere else, and I say to myself that if ever there was a government which needed a comptroller general, in the face of these examples I have given surely this is the government. If ever a country needed a change of government, in the face of the matters I have raised surely it is this country.

The hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Stanfield), when he was leader of the opposition, suggested that the government spills more sometimes in respect of some projects than it spends. I think of the senior citizens who petition members of parliament about the inadequacy of pension programs and the whole performance of the spouse's allowance. The moment an individual over 65 dies and leaves a widow between ages 60 and 65, even before that spouse is buried the survivor has that allowance taken away. When this occurs, and when I think about the wastage by this government which says it cannot afford to do better, then I say no wonder the Canadian people cannot believe in this government, and no wonder they cannot credit it with being able to speak the truth on anything. No wonder we need a comptroller general in Canada.

I happen to be a member of the committee on statutory instruments that twice has said the use of regulations to increase the postal rates is wrong in law, yet we have heard the Postmaster General (Mr. Lamontagne) say he does not care whether it is wrong in law. It apparently does not matter to him whether this practice flouts parliament. He says he will run things by order in council. When I hear that kind of thing, and the refusal of a minister of the Crown to deal in any way with the question of the legality of this in the face of that unanimous report, then I say there is no stronger case anywhere for a comptroller general. That report was not just