

stood them, it has gone on to provide for them. The first essential is information about the proposed expenditures. To this end the government has increased the amount of such information and improved its form of presentation.

Mr. Nielsen: Don't read us fairy tales.

Mr. Drury: Mr. Speaker, if I could respond to these uniformed interjections, I am suggesting, in respect of the method of presentation of information related to expenditures, that this information is two years late. Perhaps the hon. gentleman would just listen to how parliament does its work or should. The Auditor General's report by definition is an audit of the events which have occurred. The estimates purport to be, and in fact are, a representation of plans for future implementation. At the moment, I am talking not about the audit subsequent to the event, but the presentation of plans for the future.

The second essential, which would also seem to have escaped the hon. member, is ample opportunity to question ministers and their officials, to seek yet further details. This opportunity is abundantly provided through the committee system, now incorporated in the Standing Orders through amendments introduced in the early years of the present Liberal administration.

Mr. Baldwin: The other day a minister refused to appear when the committee asked that he appear.

Mr. Drury: It is to be greatly regretted that some of the hon. members colleagues in opposition have chosen to waste the time of the committees in pointless haggling over procedure rather than address themselves to the country's finances, as he professes they are so anxious to do.

The third essential is the report to parliament of the expenditures after they have taken place. The government has acted in this regard as well in restructuring the form of the public accounts to mirror the new form of the estimates, in adding more information, and in advancing by a number of months the date on which these accounts are tabled.

I am led to speculate about what the hon. member means by the phrase "control of expenditures". He may be caught in the grip of some nostalgic vision of a day that never existed or he may have some dream of himself as a departmental financial officer examining individual transactions. The fact of the matter is that in a real sense, parliament does control expenditures fully and in the only way it ever has. That is, not one dollar is spent that has not been authorized by parliament.

Some hon. Members: Oh! oh!

Mr. Nielsen: A fairy tale.

An hon. Member: That is not what the Auditor General says.

Mr. Drury: This authority may be found in continuing statutes such as the one which calls for the payment of family allowances, or it may be found in the Appropriation Acts through which the estimates are given effect. This is the way it has always been and this government

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has worked only to improve the procedures which Parliament follows in giving these expenditure authorities.

Now, let me spend some minutes on what I suppose might be called the second theme of the hon. member's motion, the so-called "mismanagement in spending escalating revenues". As is so often the case, the meaning of such motions is difficult to grasp from the way they are worded. The hon. member has done little in this case to explain his meaning when he spoke to us today. Nevertheless, I will try to look at the motion and continue to place his concerns in proper perspective.

Perhaps, first, I should say it is good of the hon. member to acknowledge by implication the successful economic policies of this government in reference to increasing revenues.

Mr. Baldwin: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, that is not so. They are lousy.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): Order, is the hon. member seriously raising a point of order?

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, the minister put words in my mouth by suggesting I indicated I was satisfied with the economic policies of this government. Mr. Speaker, that would cause me to lose my social standing throughout the country if people thought I had said that.

Mr. Drury: Mr. Speaker, I can well understand the hon. member's worry about his social standing. It is sufficient-ly frail that he should be preoccupied.

In relation to increasing revenues, these are revenues to a government that has cut taxes a number of times. This I would suggest provides convincing evidence of economic policies favourable to economic growth. Where have these increasing revenues gone? The publication "How Your Tax Dollar is Spent", issued in each succeeding year, and in particular the one for the current year 1973-74—which, by the way, is another attempt by the government to inform not only members but the public—shows a growth from expenditures for 1968-69 to the estimates figure for 1973-74 of about 70 per cent. The publication breaks down the expenditures into their functional components to show where the new revenues have gone. This breakdown shows that the emphasis is being placed by the government on areas where it is difficult to believe that even this opposition would not agree it should be placed.

● (1250)

Expenditures on health and welfare have gone up by over 200 per cent, as have those on educational transfers to the provinces and on general government services. Expenditures have also risen more than the average for culture and recreation, and for foreign affairs as a result of aid to developing countries. The smallest relative growth has been shown in internal overhead expenditures and defence expenditures. This is management of increasing revenues in the broadest sense, and the record shows a government with a sense of priorities appropriate to the national situation and the world situation.

Possibly the hon. member is unaware of what the government has done in improving management in the more usual sense. First, let me tell him that the government of