

during times of crisis. I agree with him, but I do not think this period of crisis should be equated with a period of war or depression. However, the point is that these debts we are now incurring are not long-term investments. Basically, they are debts to cover ongoing expenses of the government, daily expenses.

I will give you one example, Mr. Speaker. We have before the House Bill C-14, which is now in committee. I do not want to get into a debate on the bill, but it is a bill amending the Unemployment Insurance Act. The other day I asked Mr. Speaker for the official consolidation of the act. I received a message from the legal department of the House that there is no such animal. What they did do was give me two pages of amendments and references to the Unemployment Insurance Act passed in 1971.

What I am pointing out is that this is another example of lack of credibility. The then minister of manpower and immigration said that the plan will not cost Canadians any more money than did the previous plan. Yet what is it costing us? It is costing us \$4 billion. The point I am trying to make is that every member on this side of the House has said, "Let us make the unemployment insurance program work." But the leakage—or is it the haemorrhage—continues and continues. When anyone criticizes, immediately members on the government side rear up in great protestation and say, "Are you trying to remove money from the unemployed?" They have always tried to project the image of competent managers with experience. They have tried to say that we on this side do not have experience and therefore it will be in the interest of the Canadian people to elect them. I say that the type of experience we are having at present with the government Canadians can well do without.

Why does the government need this \$7 billion? Has the parliamentary secretary given us a clear indication of what they need that money for?

Mr. Martin: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The question has been posed by the hon. member for Provencher and the answer is yes. The reasons and explanations have been given time and time again, at second reading, in committee—

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): That is not a point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. I understand the parliamentary secretary would like to debate this, but this is certainly a point of debate, not a point of order.

Mr. Epp: Surely it is quite simple. Let us go back to March, 1978. What did the present Minister of Finance say when he asked the House for an additional borrowing authority of \$5 billion? Does any member on the government side care to give us the words of the finance minister? I am sure the parliamentary secretary can, but twice he has been shot down by Mr. Speaker for being out of order so perhaps I had better help him out. The Minister of Finance said that the \$5 billion in borrowing authority would be sufficient to see the government through to the end of the fiscal year which ends on March 31,

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1979, plus, he said, it would be sufficient to meet further contingencies.

What happened then? When we came back on October 10 he asked us, not for \$7 billion for this year, but for more. How much did he want? He wanted another \$10 billion for next year. Did he give us any answers as to why he wanted the \$7 billion? No, but I suppose he must have thought Christmas is coming when everybody gives gifts, and that if the Canadian people have been gullible for so long, they will be gullible once more. What has the government had to do? They have had to withdraw their request for the \$10 billion authority because of opposition from this party—because we said no and the Canadian people said no. Despite all the promises of the Minister of Finance, how are we to believe his March statement that \$5 billion was sufficient when now he wants another \$7 billion? Is it because we are purchasing certain things or is it because we have to prop up the sinking dollar? Is it because the commitments of the government are so high that despite its attempt at restraint, its cash flow is such that it has to go back to the trough for more borrowing?

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The Prime Minister went to Bonn and rubbed shoulders with the great leaders of the world. I imagine he hoped the aura of greatness surrounding him would rub off a little bit on him. What did he commit Canada to at that point? He committed Canada to 5 per cent growth and a restraint program. What happened? He came back to Canada after a slight respite in Morocco. What did he come back to Canada to do? He went on national television and told us about the restraint program. Again he said that the government was going to allow the private market economy to take over.

What is the real growth of Canada? We require 5 per cent just to maintain present employment levels and the revenue demands and commitment of the government. We are not meeting a 5 per cent real growth despite the solemn promises of the Prime Minister. That is the reason the government now needs an additional \$7 billion and that 14 cents of every tax dollar goes to service debt, not amortize it.

The hon. member for Welland said that the hon. member for Calgary Centre was opposed to social service programs. That is not the case. He pointed out that under the old age pension program we are spending less in Canada on senior citizens than we are spending on interest. The greatest tragedy is that this generation is spending the legacy of our children. We are placing upon our children and their children a debt, not a debt incurred on the basis of investment which will be of benefit to them, but a debt for our own profligate ways. The government has led the way. It needs \$7 billion now, and before the next election rolls around it will need additional money.

Mr. Andres: That is correct.

Mr. Epp: The hon. member for Lincoln (Mr. Andres) agrees. I should like to point out to him that Canadians are