

cents a pound or \$2 a hundredweight. That means a bag of PEI Canada No. 1 potatoes pays for about two chocolate bars. We know that the cost of production is, roughly 5.5 cents to 6 cents a pound. We know what farmers lost by growing potatoes last year. They have been asking the Government of Canada for assistance to help them out through this most difficult year, but since last November until today there has been no assistance from the federal Government or from the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise). We hear promises that something is coming, but I need not remind the Minister of Agriculture and the Government that planting season for potatoes is only four weeks away. The wolf is at the door. There is no way that these people will be able to get enough money to put another crop in next year even on a reduced scale. The farmers admit there needs to be some sort of management supply system, but the Nielsen Task Force report is strictly against supply management systems.

I have looked at the fishery. I saw \$76 million cut from the fishery by the Government. I have seen the vessel subsidy program, about a \$9 million to \$10 million program cut. It helped small inshore fishermen improve their vessels so they could bring in better quality product to the market and thereby net a better return.

We have just had a new Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. Siddon) appointed. Upon his appointment I heard him say to reporters that his objective was to grow more fish. That is a very admirable objective.

Mr. Nystrom: Grow more fish?

Mr. Henderson: That is what the new Minister of Fisheries said he was going to do, grow more fish. A lot of biologists and scientists and those who really understand and know the fishery know that that was the most ridiculous statement ever to come from a Minister. I realized that the Minister knew nothing about the fishery when he was appointed, but I hope over the next few weeks or months he will gain some experience from the fishery. If he had some sort of magical wand to grow more fish at the snap of a finger, then he should have made provision for the fishermen to bring more fish to shore in top quality, which would increase income.

Let me talk about user fees. Other Members have pointed out the user fee problem. The Government is not only increasing taxes across the board to the ordinary working Canadian, but it is also using what I call the back-door tax method of user fees. We have inspection fees on potatoes and increased ferry rates to Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland. The Nielsen Task Force had the audacity to suggest that while the ferry service from Borden to Cape Tormentine in Prince Edward Island and from Port aux Basques to North Sydney, Cape Breton, was constitutional, the whole issue should be referred to the courts for a decision as to whether or not the Government is obligated to subsidize such a service. That sort of mentality and thinking scares me. It scares people from PEI and Newfoundland as to where the Government is heading and where they fit into Confederation, how they see themselves as

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Canadians. I think we should get that nonsense out of the Government's head forthwith.

Many Members will say that it is fine for the Opposition to say we need more money for this and that and that we need to reduce the deficit. I want to remind the citizenry of the country of some of the things the Government has been doing since it was elected. We have the largest Cabinet in the history of the country. Right now we have 39 cabinet Ministers. It was a Cabinet originally made up of 40 Ministers. That is an extremely heavy Cabinet for Canada. We see well over 100 people on staff in the Prime Minister's (Mr. Mulroney) office, the largest staff ever in that office. We have seen the bail-out of depositors in the Canadian Commercial Bank and the Northland Bank to the tune of almost \$1 billion. We have seen a number of programs the Government has initiated which give no future or hope to the ordinary Canadian.

I cannot support this borrowing authority Bill. I cannot trust the Government with this kind of money. It has not proved to me in its year and a half in office that it is able to manage the economy for the good and benefit of all Canadians.

• (1220)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate with the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay-Nipigon (Mr. Epp).

Mr. Ernie Epp (Thunder Bay-Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on Bill C-99, the borrowing authority. I do so with some pleasure since this is an important matter of public policy, particularly given the country's economic circumstances. Of course, the debate is not now on the Bill itself but on the six-month hoist motion proposed by my House Leader and seconded by the Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme). That motion is designed to kill the Bill. Let me explain why I am pleased to speak to that amendment and why I think the Government should not have the borrowing authority it seeks.

As I said a moment ago, the economic circumstances we are experiencing are such that not only are many people unemployed, the increase in jobs which the Government talks about does not actually reduce the number of unemployed by very much at all. The percentage is declining very, very slowly. As the labour force continues to grow and more people seek jobs, the actual number seeking work remains at about the same level. In those circumstances, with so many unemployed, with so much of our economic capacity not being used, any Government would expect to be running a deficit in its operations and be compelled to come to Parliament to seek authority to borrow money to cover those operations.

The difficulty is that the Government continues to live with a deficit situation which is years old. It was created by predecessor Liberal Governments and this Government has failed to come substantially to grips with the difficulty. The result is that it is forced to seek authority to borrow, in this case, \$22.6 billion, or something over one-fifth of the Government's expenditures in the coming fiscal year. It is possible that before the fiscal year, beginning April 1, is concluded on