

*Borrowing Authority*

might hear if they were in it, so I will continue with my speech.

The 7.4 per cent increase in government expenditures over the forecast for the past fiscal year—and we are told this is restraint—is that restraint? Is that what Hon. Members opposite consider restraint? I do not consider that particularly restraining.

I consider that a rather hefty increase and that is what we are being subjected to in spite all the rattling of chains and the noise about cuts. This is not a cut, this is a big increase. What is being done to pay for this increase? We are told that in fact the Government is slashing expenditures right, left and centre. The fact is the cuts are minimal. The fact is that the Government is raising its money on the backs of Canadians by vast increases in the taxes that Canadians pay as a result of these financial measures. That is what is going on here. What the Government is really doing is saying on the one hand, “Well, we have slashed expenditures”, and it announces a series of cuts that are devastating in three or four areas and it increases everything else. Then the Government says, “We will increase the taxes to pay for everything else”. That is what is going on and it is a shifty, shady, questionable operation. The Government is not coming clean with Canadians and explaining what it is really doing through this Budget.

We have been maintaining that on this side of the House for months now on every single item, because what appears to be happening is really not what is happening. The Government makes a policy announcement and says it is going to fix up unemployment insurance. “We are going to improve it”. But when in fact you look at the details of the plan it is worse for almost everyone who participates in unemployment insurance. The employers pay more, the employees pay more, and everyone gets less in benefits. That is not an improvement. Yet those are the kinds of policies that the Government pursues in this House. Those are the kinds of answers it gives to questions. Those are the kinds of speeches its members make when they stand up and defend some of the atrocious legislation which the Government has introduced in the House. The Government should be ashamed of itself.

I see the Hon. Member from British Columbia over there smiling and nodding in agreement. I can understand his agreement and his feelings of shame when he

considers the statements he is asked to make in this House in defence of some of the Government’s legislative priorities. I must say that were I on the Government side, having to defend some of the legislation that we have here, I would be a little ashamed myself. In fact, considerably ashamed.

**Mr. Edwards:** He is nodding off.

**Mr. Milliken:** The Hon. Member says he was nodding off. He looks wide awake to me.

I want to turn now to the third major item of financial control that the Government has at its disposal, and that is borrowing. That is the subject of the Bill we are discussing here today.

The Government made a decision in December that Parliament would be recalled in March. It later decided that it would be embarrassing to have an Opposition facing it across the House in March because we might ask difficult questions. We might embarrass Ministers. We might make the Government look incompetent. So the Government deferred the opening of Parliament until April, thinking that perhaps by April it might have its act together. We all know that it did not, but the fact remains we waited until April. In that month Parliament was recalled and we began dealing with a new series of legislative proposals outlined in the Speech from the Throne.

The difficulty is that by waiting until April the Government was forced to use the special Government General Warrants in order to get money from the treasury for the purpose of paying its bills. But there was not enough money in the treasury in order to allow the Government to take the money by special warrant. It had to resort to borrowing in order to replenish the treasury.

We know that under the Financial Administration Act the Government is able to borrow money. I would like to read from that Act, Section 47:

Where it appears to the Governor in Council that the Consolidated Revenue Fund will be insufficient to meet the disbursements lawfully authorized to be made from it, the Governor in Council may authorize the Minister to borrow, for a period not exceeding six months, an amount not exceeding such amount as the Governor in Council deems necessary to ensure that the Consolidated Revenue Fund will be sufficient to meet those disbursements.

The point of the section is that the Government may only borrow for a short-term period for normal government purposes. What happened here is that the Govern-