

### *Borrowing Authority*

passed because of unending debate. It would not have passed until the Government had committed itself to some explanation of what it was all about.

This brings me to what I feel is of great concern to me and of increasing concern to the people of Canada. I am referring to the attitudes and characteristics of the present Government and their adverse effect on our total parliamentary system, as well as the respect of Canadians not only for Members of Parliament and governments but for the parliamentary system, which should be something very dear to all of us.

In my last few minutes I would like to make some comments about some very serious and deplorable characteristics of the present Government which need to be brought to the attention of the people of Canada. Actually, they know about them. Their feelings about the Government and all of us in the House are aroused as a result of attempts by the Government to do what it is doing in Bill C-143.

We are seeing signs of a lack of trustworthiness. If not that, it is incompetence or both. It is very manifest in this Bill. One has to go back only three or four months to the time when the Minister of Finance gave his financial statement in the House. You have heard it before in these debates. This is so important as evidence of what I am trying to say that I will repeat it, not for your benefit, Mr. Speaker, but for the benefit of about 140 Liberal backbenchers, only one of whom is here today. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) on October 27, 1982, in this House, as reported in *Hansard* at page 20081, said:

• (1640)

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the Government is presently seeking a \$4 billion increase in its borrowing authority under the provisions of Standing Order 72A. I have outlined the factors leading to this request. I have also made it clear by the estimates I have presented that further borrowing authority will be required before the end of this fiscal year. In the budget I intend to present early in 1983, I will review again the fiscal situation for the current fiscal year, set out estimates for 1983-1984 and future fiscal years, and then seek additional borrowing authority as required.

That was a commitment on the part of the Minister of Finance to give us a budget and set out estimates and future predictions, and he concluded his sentence with:

—and then seek additional borrowing authority as required.

Let me give one more example of this lack of trustworthiness. The Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen) when he was Minister of Finance appeared before the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs on May 31, 1982, less than a year ago, had this to say:

I do not think it would be appropriate to ask the House for additional borrowing authority until I have laid out in some detail an update of both the economic situation and the fiscal situation.

Here we have two very senior Ministers telling the House and the Canadian people that they will give us some information before seeking further borrowing authority. But what do we have? We have Bill C-143 before us and we do not have that information. It is that kind of attitude that causes cynicism with regard to Parliament and to governments. I can say that honestly about this Government in particular. I hope that when we get rid of this Government we will not see that

cynicism existing and pervading in the country as it does today.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Halliday:** A second characteristic of this Government alarms me. That of the arrogance, the secrecy and the contempt this Government has for Parliament. I could give a full hour's speech on the contempt this Government has had for Parliament over the years, but I do not think it could be expressed any more effectively than it was in an editorial that appeared in a leading Canadian newspaper, the *Toronto Star*. That newspaper is not known to be a supporter of the Progressive Conservative Party, but is often a supporter of the Liberal Party. On February 20, 1983, the editorial was headed "Side-stepping Parliament". This editorial was describing the attempt of the Minister of Finance to get money without saying what he wants it for. In part, this editorial reads:

—it would be tempting to look on his corner-cutting as a necessary evil. But to do so would undermine the supremacy of Parliament.

That is precisely right. The present Government has no respect for the supremacy of Parliament. The editorial continues:

One of the lynchpins of our democracy is the belief that directly elected representatives of the people—not mandarins in the finance department—should make the final decisions on how and where and in what quantities our budget is to be disbursed.

That is very true. There is another characteristic of the present Government which is downgrading the feeling of Canadians about Parliament. This Government is prepared to sidestep Parliament and it is prepared to denigrate the role of Parliamentarians in order to satisfy the Government's own needs. We have to admit that over the last 12 years it has done that. This Government has succeeded in being re-elected by this kind of action.

Finally, there is the matter of deceit. I trust deceit is a parliamentary word. What we are witnessing here through Bill C-143 is nothing less than deceit. We are seeing deferred taxes being levied against Canadian people and future generations, as my colleague pointed out.

I see you are about to rise, Mr. Speaker, and I will conclude by saying that this Government has three types of personality defects. I think they are leading to the downgrading of Parliament and to the cynicism that we now see right across the country.

**Mr. W. C. Scott (Victoria-Haliburton):** Mr. Speaker, over the years we have seen the present Government ignore the House. It passes regulations by Order in Council. We hear so much about this. I want to put a typical example on the record. I had a telephone call earlier this week from a gun collector. He asked me about the gun Bill that had been passed in Parliament. I told him that I did not know anything about a gun Bill that had been passed in Parliament. But we found out that it was another Order in Council. This is another example of sneaking something in through the back door. This should not be part of our democracy that we are hoping to enjoy in Canada today.