

Time Allocation

I conclude by saying that, in the consultations that we have had with the private sector for the preparation of the budget and the prospect of financial recovery in a wider sense, I was impressed by the participating groups and their willingness to recognize that we must all set aside our differences and work together toward a sense of national purpose and a renewed spirit of co-operation. We would ask that Members opposite demonstrate a similar desire to get Canada back on the road to economic recovery. Giving this matter speedy consideration by the House would be a good first step.

Miss Pat Carney (Vancouver Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to protest strongly the Government's attempt to gag debate on the borrowing Bill by introducing time allocation on Bill C-143. We feel that this Bill is far too important to be stopped before the Government can be held accountable for its spending.

I listened with sheer amazement to the Minister's comments during the presentation of his argument. I did not recognize any sense of shame or discomfort over introducing a borrowing Bill of this size. The Government has effectively asked for a blank cheque to borrow \$19 billion just for the next few months. The Minister suggests that this is prudent.

I would like to put that \$19 billion into perspective. That \$19 billion is the size of the Government's entire budget ten years ago. It is 12 times what the Government spends on post-secondary education. It is 13 times what the Government spends on employment programs. That \$19 billion of borrowed money is 15 times what the Government spends on housing. It is nearly double what the Government spends on old age pensions and is four times what the Government spends on medicare. It is eight times what it spends on Family Allowances. That amount is double what the Government is paying in Unemployment Insurance benefits. It is more than double what the Government spends on defence.

At the present time, the public debt charges represent the fastest growing envelope of expenditure. Public debt charges now amount to 21.7 per cent of all Government payments. The Government has made a nation of promise into a nation of debtors. It still will not say what it needs the money for. Despite the Minister's comments about the Estimates, he has not provided any forecasts for his spending for the next few years. The Government has not provided any forecasts for spending since 1981. What information it has provided has been grossly inadequate. It has kept delaying the presentation of its budget. It has given us no fiscal framework upon which to judge its requests. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) says that he will play the budget deficit like an accordion. He is playing some very sour notes.

In the absence of all of this information, the Government has tabled spending estimates totalling almost \$90 billion. That is a 17 per cent increase over the 1982-1983 Main Estimates, despite what the Minister and his colleagues say. At the same time as the Government is asking pensioners and families to sacrifice income and abide by the six and five restraint program, its own Estimates show that Government spending continues to escalate wildly.

The Minister has spoken of the need to increase social support services. Let me relate some of the other spending increases that are planned. The public debt charge is up 10.7 per cent from last year's Main Estimates. The number of management positions has increased 78.3 per cent over the last year for the 11 largest Departments. The Estimates for the Department of Agriculture have increased 14.3 per cent over last year's Main Estimates. Accommodation costs alone for the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce are scheduled to increase by 40 per cent. There is no reason given for that.

The cost of FIRA is forecast to rise 14 per cent. The total Estimates for the Department of Justice are up 10 per cent. The Main Estimates for the Department of National Defence have been increased by 11 per cent. The Main Estimates for the Department of National Health and Welfare have increased by 13 per cent, but National Revenue is increasing by 9 per cent. The total Estimates for the Solicitor General are up by 16 per cent. All of these increases are taking place in this age of six and five. All of this is in the name of social services.

Let me give some more examples of Government spending. In terms of employment, the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission is now spending more on unemployment than on employment. In Transportation, subsidies to VIA Rail will increase 49.3 per cent to \$755 million in spite of cutbacks in service last year. In terms of transfer payments, the Minister ignores the fact that payments to Crown corporations will jump 30 per cent, to \$3.8 billion this year. Transportation and communications costs are up 16 per cent on a Main Estimates to Main Estimates basis. Professional and special services are up by 16 per cent, rental costs by 19 per cent and purchased repair and upkeep is up by 45 per cent.

● (1520)

This is not compassionate Government spending; this is Government spending which is out of control. How can we even trust these figures? Last year more money was added to total spending through Supplementary Estimates than through increases in the Main Estimates. All sense of Government accountability and Government responsibility has clearly been cast aside, and by gagging this debate, the Government is saying: "Trust us. Forgive us our past mistakes; we will try to do better." We cannot do that because someone must call this Government to account. Future Governments, a Conservative Government, and future generations will be paying for the present Government's mistakes, and no attempt to stop debate can cover up that fact.

The mistakes of the Government have been too horrendous to ignore. This is the Government which ran up the deficit in prosperous years and entered the recession with a \$10 billion deficit. It took 113 years, from Confederation to 1980, for the net federal debt to total \$68.6 billion. In four years, Ottawa will have more than doubled the net federal debt, from the \$68.6 billion in 1980 to \$152 billion. The Liberals will have done it.