

### *Borrowing Authority Act*

Crosbie told reporters that in order to get deficits down: "You have to be tough, mean and nasty and do all kinds of unpleasant things. That's why I'm not going to outline what they would be now. That's for a government to do."

What a marvellous position to be taken by a man who is a former Minister of Finance and who claims that he will be the next Minister of Finance!

Let us move one step further to another voice in the Tory Party, that of my neighbour, the Hon. Member for Etobicoke Centre (Mr. Wilson). He said, as reported in *Hansard* on March 6, at page 1828—and you do not have to take my word for it, you can look it up—the following:

- (1650)
- there must be broad spending cuts—
- spending must be reduced in the broadest possible way—
- by cutting right across the board so that everybody would feel they had some involvement in the reductions that were being applied through an over all discipline.

Then he went on to say in that same speech that that is the way you do it in business. Yes, Mr. Speaker, that is the way you do it in business. I once worked in a business where they did it that way. The place went under within months. It is the dumbest possible approach to say that you can take that kind of meat axe and cut right across the board. The Hon. Member for Mississauga South (Mr. Blenkarn), another neighbour of mine, attacked the very heart of our support for the business and cultural communities in his speech on the Budget. He went after the CBC, VIA Rail, the post office, the energy grants, Canadair and de Havilland, and the Atomic Energy of Canada. He stopped only because his time ran out, and in each case it was attack-slash, attack-slash, attack-slash.

There was yet another example of what the Hon. Member for St. John's West was going to do in an article in *The Toronto Star* two weeks ago. The headlines were massive and shocking. He said at that time that he would introduce a means test to make sure that seniors and families did not get access to every government program that they have a right to enjoy.

All of this Tory attack is creating a clear image for the rest of the country. Again, do not take my word for it. Read what the observers themselves have to say. *The Toronto Star* on February 18 had this to say about the Hon. Member for St. John's West:

No wonder he isn't willing to tell Canadians before the next election how his Party would reduce the deficit.

So where is Crosbie going to cut? Is he going to cut the \$10.4 billion going for pensions for the elderly, the \$2.3 billion of family allowances, the \$3.4 billion spent on welfare payments to the poor? Or will he cut into the \$5.8 billion going to provincial governments for equalization. Or will he slash Ottawa's \$7.7 billion share of the country's medicare and post-secondary education costs?

Within days the answer came from the Hon. Member for St. John's West. The answer to those questions was, yes, he would do that, and at least every Canadian in Toronto read the quote in the newspaper. They know where the Hon. Member for St. John's West and the frontbench Members opposite would take this country. Jamie Lamb of the Vancouver *Sun* had the same kind of denunciation. He said on February 20:

As a result of Mr. Mulroney's activities last week, the public may begin to turn away from him. They may even choose the . . . policies of a party that at least plays at statesmanship, in preference to the trite trumpeting of rank opportunists.

That is what he said about the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Mulroney), and he is perfectly correct. Contrast that, Mr. Speaker, with what we heard from the Hon. Member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) today when he summarized his career as politics of compassion. Do we want to be ranked with the opportunists or do we want to be with those who have compassion? I say that compassion wins in that argument. Look at this Government's record. Over the past recession, this Government, along with Sweden, has preserved the social network in this country. We are one of the two countries in this world to preserve and expand the social network. We did not abandon it in the Tory slashing kind of way. We built it up when it was needed. We added to the guaranteed income supplement for seniors. We increased job-creation funds. We extended special help to businesses in trouble. We expanded resources for the Farm Credit Corporation. We renewed the Small Business Bond Program. We introduced a Canada Mortgage Renewal Plan for home owners. That, in the eyes of the Tories, is the wrong course. In the eyes of the Canadian people it is the right course.

It is the right course to offer people help when they need it with the rich, prosperous, productive land we live in. It is the right course to give our communities resources to those most in need. That is the Liberal approach and that is the approach I agree with. That is the approach of the politics of compassion about which we heard today. I say, begone to the rank amateurs, begone to the opportunists, begone to the people who want to slash and hack at the fibre of our country. Let us in the course of the next election turn again to those people, the Liberal Party, the people who want to build, preserve and add to our productivity and to the social network we have for the needy people in this country. I am proud to stand on that analysis and I believe it is an analysis that will drag down that bunch across the floor.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert):** Questions, comments? Debate.

**Mr. Joe Reid (St. Catharines):** Mr. Speaker, what we have before us this afternoon for consideration and debate is a simply shocking one-page piece of legislation. We in the law always used to say that when you have a bad case you just shout harder and you pound the table more than ever before.

Bill C-21 is a simple, unabashed, straightforward case. It is a straightforward request by the Government for parliamentary authority to go out and borrow \$29.55 billion. I noticed that my hon. friend, who is just now leaving this House, did not once refer to the amount of \$29.55 billion. It is more than the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) had included in his total Budget. I wonder if any person in the House can envisage just what the amount, the extent, the equivalent of \$29.55 billion really is. That amount includes a \$4 billion contingency fund. It is not earmarked to any source of production or social legislation. It is \$4 billion by way of contingency which, by the