

\$10.98 billion which they need for specifics, plus an additional \$3 billion that is not identified. The government just says it needs it for contingencies. I would see nothing wrong—and I think we would be much more inclined to let this bill pass—if the government would simply ask for the \$11 billion now and say in six months time that it wished to present a bill asking for \$3 billion more.

In terms of fiscal sanity or fiscal management that makes sense to me. I see no reason why that course could not be followed. It would certainly make Parliament a more accountable place. I think Parliament is becoming less accountable all the time. This would give us in the opposition a much better chance to scrutinize the kind of spending the government wants to carry out on behalf of the people who elect us and send us here, at great expense I might add.

I would like to talk a bit about the kind of example which the government sets. We have seen much controversy in my part of the country, western Canada, in the past several years regarding our transportation system. I think people are aware that we have lacked the adequate transportation facilities to take advantage of the amount of grain production which we are not only capable of producing but, more important, which is in very great demand around the world. I think a commonly accepted figure—although it is hard to put an exact figure on it, and it can be an estimate at best—is that during the past two or three crop years we have lost a half a billion dollars in sales, in terms of exporting grain from western Canada to customers around the world. Admittedly, a half a billion dollars does not sound like a lot of money in terms of the budgetary deficits this government is facing, but half a billion dollars, in terms of sales of grain, which we had on hand, is a sizeable amount of money. It is a sizeable amount of production, as far as grain farmers are concerned. This figure is for actual sales of grain which we had to deliver but could not get into export position because of our poor transportation facilities. That is one side of the coin.

The other side of the coin is more important. It is our potential. We all know that farmers, given an opportunity to produce, are very ingenious people. They will produce if they are given that opportunity and, above all, an incentive. Had we been able to move the additional half billion dollars worth of grain we would then have had empty grain bins, money in circulation and the incentive for grain producers to produce more. To my mind, we lost at least an additional billion dollars in terms of potential production and sales, had we been selling and transporting to market the grain we have on hand in western Canada now. That is a lot of money, Mr. Speaker. It involves more than just a half billion dollars or a billion dollars.

Farmers are well known for being good spenders. Once they get money they spend it; they spend it on machinery, repairs, and on fertilizers. Much of it is recirculated throughout the rest of the country, and in this way it is spent many times over. That spending and respending, in economic jargon, is called "the multiplier effect". You can talk in terms of spending that money two or three times over. This very easily leads you to a

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figure of \$3 billion or \$4 billion, in terms of additional economic activity in our economy.

I have figures in front of me from the Parliamentary Library which show the share of the GNP or the total amount of expenditure which the federal government can take from that amount of money. It equates to roughly 30 per cent of it. If we take 30 per cent of, say, \$4 billion in additional economic activity throughout the economy, we see there is a net benefit to the government by way of tax income of a billion dollars. That is an estimate but it could very easily happen. That billion dollars could go a considerable way toward cutting down the requirements of this government's borrowing needs.

As I emphasized, these are the kinds of measures I think the federal government should be taking. It should be taking the lead in seeing that we do have a transportation system which will give us a chance, not only in western Canada, to produce and generate economic activity, provide jobs and income for our families. This would create spin-offs which would accrue to other parts of the country. As has been pointed out many times before, a lot of this money would accrue to central Canada where most of the manufacturing takes place. It would accrue to companies such as Massey-Ferguson, which we know is in financial difficulties. These are the areas in which this measure would help. We would not need some of the bailouts and government activity we see the government now involved in with some of these larger companies. To my mind these are the kinds of measures the government should be taking a lead in, and seeing that they are accomplished.

I must be critical here, despite the fact that I am not really a partisan person. I would like to see the government get its act together in terms of what it is saying with respect to the Crow rate. The Minister of Agriculture was in Edmonton a week ago where he talked about the Crow rate. I will quote a passage from a speech he gave to the Alberta Rapeseed Growers Association on January 29, 1981. He said:

I know that you people in this room have a variety of opinions on the Crow rate yourselves. You say let's make a decision. Well, I'm of that opinion too. And I feel the question must be settled soon—I would say by the start of the next crop year if possible.

In terms of the way the government operates, I think that is a pretty optimistic statement, given the background of the Crow rate and how it is imbedded in politics in western Canada.

The minister responsible for the Wheat Board in the other place stated to the press just over the weekend that he really did not care if the Crow rate was ever settled. As far as he could see it was a benefit to western Canada and he did not care if it was ever settled at all. We have the Minister of Agriculture saying he would like to see it settled, hopefully by the start of the next crop year, which is August 1, 1981. We have the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board saying he does not know whether it needs to be settled at all.

I will now talk about the Minister of Transport, who I see in the chamber. I know he has been trying to get some support in cabinet in respect of putting a position paper through for presentation to the farmers of western Canada. This would get