

we find out that they are wrong in their forecasting of growth, inflation, and unemployment. The country is in a mess, and most of this comes as a result of the ineptness, mismanagement, and incompetence of this government.

Last year's growth was only 2.6 per cent, yet the Minister of Finance bamboozles the people again by saying he expects a growth of 5 per cent. The Royal Bank of Canada is more correct when it says 3.3 per cent. What we really need is about 5.5 per cent average growth if we are going to have a 5.5 per cent unemployment rate and a 3.5 per cent inflation rate as we hit the year 1981. We are so far off target that it is a disgrace. It is a national disaster.

In my view, we need an address on the state of the economy. We must come clean with the Canadian people and tell them, whether we are in a mess or not. It is the responsibility of the Minister of Finance to be honest, rather than trying to flim-flam the Canadian people. He is here to give them direction and to create a positive atmosphere whereby this country can reach its ultimate destiny, and here he is playing around with an ad hoc, catch-as-catch-can approach. Is it any wonder that our dollar is destroyed, that the business communities and banking institutions offshore have no confidence? Is there any wonder when we find it is incompetence that we continually face?

The government, Mr. Speaker, preaches restraint, but it practices extravagance. The one time minister of finance inaugurated the current spending program, the budget of June 23, 1975. At that time the main estimates for 1976 had received the approval of parliament. They forecasted budgetary spending of \$32.2 billion. The main estimates of 1979 forecasted budgetary spending of \$46.5 billion. Thus, during the three years of the restraint program, main estimates for budgetary spending have increased by \$14.3 billion, or 44 per cent. Main estimates have increased an average of 13 per cent a year. That is hardly evidence of restraint.

My colleague, the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens), on March 14 put it in these words—I just want to read what he said because he is concerned, as are the vast majority of the Canadian people—he wanted to know how three budgets could go so wrong. As reported at page 3748 of *Hansard* dated March 14, the Minister of Finance continued to say we must wait. What are we waiting for, complete disaster? The hon. member for York-Simcoe stated:

On May 25, 1976, the then minister of finance said unemployment would decline. On March 31, 1977, the then minister of finance stated we anticipated 5 per cent real growth and that unemployment would decline. In his October 20 statement, the present Minister of Finance said, "I want sustained growth of between 5 per cent and 6 per cent in order to bring unemployment down."

● (1602)

How can three budgets have been so wrong, Mr. Speaker, at the expense of the unemployed in this nation? That is the key question. How can they be so wrong?

The government now has the cheek to introduce Bill C-31. I think it is important to read what was said on March 15 when the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Cullen)

Supply

moved interim supply on behalf of the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Andras). The motion begins as follows:

That a sum not exceeding \$5,657,022,492.00 being the aggregate of: (a) three-twelfths of the total of the amounts of the items set forth in the Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1979, laid before the House of Commons on February 22, 1978 . . .

We have to read the rest of it because we cannot find it in the bill. The bill in paragraph 2 states: "not otherwise provided for, and being the aggregate of". The thing is, they want another \$5 billion. The motion then calls for "an additional eight-twelfths of the total amount of Energy, Mines and Resources", "an additional six-twelfths", "an additional five-twelfths of the total amount of Treasury Board", "an additional four-twelfths of the total amount of Finance", "an additional three-twelfths of the total amount of Communications", "an additional two-twelfths of the total amount of Energy, Mines and Resources," and then "an additional one-twelfth of the total amount of Energy, Mines and Resources." It is these additional amounts that bother us, Mr. Speaker. The government has found again that it is necessary to request increased borrowing authority, and this is a clear indication that things are out of hand. This government is out of control; its spending is unlimited. You would think that the taxpayers had a bottomless pocket that we can dip into without explanation. This government is out of control—it has lost control of the economy, and that is readily evident.

The number of officially unemployed Canadians has risen to over one million for the first time in Canadian history. I heard the Prime Minister, or I read about the Prime Minister and the Minister of Employment and Immigration saying, "If you want a job, go out of the country." They claim that the statistics are exaggerated and say it is not their responsibility to create jobs. Are they going to the people with this millstone hanging over their heads? I am going to use those expressions, Mr. Speaker, whenever the Prime Minister wants to pull the plug. They are making all sorts of plans right now and deciding when the opportune time will be. By-elections were called for October 16. What a lot of nonsense that is. We are going in June—heaven knows what day in June.

Mr. Woolliams: Stanley knows.

Mr. Alexander: The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) knows. I think he said June 19 or June 26.

The government has lost control. Inflation is running at 8.7 per cent—and that is with controls. Members of all parties on this side of the House are asking what the government is going to do and what the facts are about government borrowing during the present fiscal year. Initially the House approved \$7 billion of new borrowing authority based on a \$6.4 billion cash requirement. The government increased its tax requirements to \$8.5 billion as announced by the Minister of Finance in his October 20 throne speech remarks. In reality that was his mini budget. I think this is also a mini budget we are discussing now, this further borrowing of \$5 billion that the government is requesting.