

Borrowing Authority

Mr. Waddell: Mr. Speaker, let me first say that I did not make an inflammatory statement on religion. The statement was made by the Catholic Bishops. Second, the economic policies of this Liberal Government are an unmitigated disaster. They have zigged and they have zagged. They do not know in which direction they are going. If interest rates go up they blame it on the United States; if they go down, they take the credit.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I hesitate to interrupt the Hon. Member but the period for questions and answers has expired. The Chair will recognize the Parliamentary Secretary.

Mr. Huntington: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am wondering if you have the sequence correct. There was a Liberal who spoke and then an NDP Member. Does it not come after—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The sequence is correct. The next speaker will come from the Government side. This is the normal procedure of the House which is being followed. The Hon. Member for Capilano (Mr. Huntington) will be recognized following this speech.

[Translation]

Mr. David Berger (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, in the Bill before the House today, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) is asking Parliament to give the Government a supplementary borrowing authority of \$19 billion, namely, \$5 billion for the year ending on March 31 and \$14 billion for the coming year. Why do we have to borrow? Because Government expenditures exceed Government revenue. Those who would like further details regarding expenditures—

[English]

Mr. Kilgour: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. With great respect to the Hon. Member for Laurier (Mr. Berger) is it not within the spirit of the new rules that Members should not read speeches prepared for them elsewhere?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Berger) has barely begun his speech. With all due respect to the Hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Kilgour), I suggest that the Parliamentary Secretary should be allowed to proceed.

[Translation]

Mr. Berger: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the course of my speech Hon. Members will realize that I prepared it myself, whatever the Hon. Member may think.

As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, those who wanted further details on expenditures had a chance this week when the Main Estimates were tabled. That day, the spokesmen for the Progressive Conservative Party said that the expenditures were unconscionable.

[English]

Unconscionable is what the Hon. Member for Mississauga South (Mr. Blenkarn) said.

[Translation]

He neglected to mention, Mr. Speaker, that expenditures cannot be cut drastically without hurting the unemployed, senior citizens and other Canadians who are in need. I would also point out to the Hon. Member that the Canadian system is somewhat different from what they have in the United States or Great Britain. In Canada we have health insurance and assistance plans, to name only two. A cursory glance at the Estimates reveals that the Federal Government's Social Affairs envelope represents 40.6 per cent of Government expenditures. In the coming year, there will be an increase of \$6.1 billion or 20.7 per cent in this envelope. It includes the following items: first of all, for the Department of National Health and Welfare, increases totalling \$2.5 billion will be applied to programs such as Old Age Security, Health Insurance and the Canada Assistance Plan.

There are also transfer payments to provincial governments, for instance, to finance established programs such as health insurance, medical and extended health care and post-secondary education. This year has also brought substantial increases in the expenditures of the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, totalling \$2.2 billion. This includes an additional \$1.7 billion for unemployment insurance, \$366 million for job creation and \$237 million for training. The increases are in addition to the already substantial budget for the past year and, of course, before the budget the Minister of Finance is expected to bring down in a few weeks.

The Hon. Member for York-Scarborough (Mr. Cosgrove), the former Minister of Public Works, spoke of increases that took place during the past year with respect to housing programs. These programs include the Canadian Home Ownership Stimulation Plan, which was mentioned by the Hon. Minister, the Canada Mortgage Renewal Plan, the Home Renovation Plan, the Canada Rental Supply Plan and co-operative housing measures.

I remember that last year, as many as 27,500 co-operative housing units were financed. There has been an increase of \$483 million in funding for the coming year, and if we refer to 1982-83, we see an increase of \$1.2 billion for housing or housing related assistance.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure the public is aware of the hypocrisy of the Progressive Conservative Members. In every debate in the House, they want the Government to do more and, at the same time, to cut spending. I would like to mention two examples which are fairly well-known to Canadians. First of all, in the debate on established programs financing, they demanded that the Government increase payments to the provinces, and second, when interest rates were high, they wanted the Government to help Canadians who were in danger of losing their homes. So whenever there is an issue that is