

Borrowing Authority Act

to raise CPP benefits to half the industrial wage. We believe that a universal public pension scheme is the only way to bring women pensioners above the poverty line once and for all.

● (1540)

The expenditures of this borrowing Bill will not be targeted to the needs of women. In her speech, the Minister responsible for the Status of Women talked about how great this Budget is for women. I asked her to explain why there were no job-creation programs targeted to women, no retraining programs for those who will be displaced by high technology, and no federal initiatives to assist with essential support services so that women can get into the work force and remain there. I asked why there were no support systems such as daycare and parental leave. Instead of answering the question, she praised the Government programs as being quite adequate.

Canadian women do not agree with this answer. Thousands of women want jobs. They want equality in the workplace. They want and need to work, especially women in very risky jobs such as in the clerical and service categories. Every day these jobs are being lost to high technology. The Budget and this borrowing Bill completely neglect this important issue for Canadian women.

There is no job protection or work alternatives for women, something that is really needed. We cannot approve this kind of blanket borrowing authority for billions of dollars. The Minister responsible for the Status of Women also praised the Government's affirmative action program, which is not mandatory, does not include contract compliance and does not apply to job-creation programs. Statistics show that far fewer women are getting into job-creation programs funded by the federal Government. This Government is taking no steps to preserve jobs for women. Why is there no fund to assist over 200 women, mostly immigrants, who will soon lose their jobs at Puretex Canada, a Toronto sportswear factory? The Government quickly found billions of dollars to bail out Dome and Massey-Harris, but cares nothing about saving industries which employ women. Puretex is a good example of that.

The federal Government has added to the hardship of women forced into taking part-time jobs with part-time pay cheques and no benefits. Those who work half-time will be covered by the Canada Pension Plan, but the Government ignored most of the recommendations from their commission on part-time work last year, steps that are urgently needed for women.

Woman have not been considered in the six and five provisions of the federal Government. There will be no catchup provisions for them. We are very concerned about the total compensation comparisons with the private sector. This means women will be locked into the same pay scales, which are far too low for secretarial and maintenance jobs in the private sector.

We criticized the Liberals justifiably. As a British Columbian, I can tell you that it will be far worse if the Conservatives get into government. One of their speakers who spoke earlier today said that if he becomes Finance Minister, he will require

a means test. Knowing his record on women, he will be chopping some of the important programs I have mentioned.

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta): Mr. Speaker, I must say that the time allotment ran out for the last speaker at the most appropriate moment. She was ready to make sure that the rich get more out of the Treasury and deprive the poor.

In speaking to this borrowing Bill, there is a sense of *déjà vu*. We are back to the same thing again. In the four years in the life of this Parliament, this is the eighth borrowing request. That is in addition to the regular revenues that the Government receives. Within the life of this Parliament we are looking at a cumulative borrowing of \$102.85 billion, almost \$103 billion. I agree with the other Members that it is bad enough to have such things as the bailout of Maislin and Canadair and some other projects, but I object if much of this borrowing is, as it probably is, to help with the Liberal slush fund. In the last month or two, we have repeatedly heard about special funds provided for Liberal back-benchers only. They have total discretion over how those funds are spent in their constituencies, and maybe in others.

To get a picture of what is going on in the whole scene of borrowing in this country, we have to put it in perspective with past experience. In this one Bill, we are asked to give the Government permission to borrow \$29.55 billion. In this one borrowing authority, they are asking for almost three times as much as the total deficit of the entire nation in all of Canadian history when the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) came into office in 1968. Our country was in debt for \$11 billion for the first 101 years of our history. In one borrowing authority, we are being asked to give permission to borrow almost three times that amount for one year.

I listened with care to the Hon. Member for Restigouche (Mr. Harquail), who incidentally reads very well. He said that this borrowing authority, which will supply money for the Government until March 31, 1985, "will help to avoid unnecessary interruptions". That is a very insightful comment by the Hon. Member for Restigouche. What kind of unnecessary interruptions could there be during the next year? Could there be such things as a leadership race in the Liberal Party? Would that be an unnecessary interruption? Following the leadership convention in June, would a possible general election be an unnecessary interruption?

What does the Member mean by "unnecessary interruption"? Does he mean that an interruption is the need to come back to Parliament to borrow more money? In two of the eight borrowing Bills in the last four years we discovered that the Government was asking for far more money than it needed to operate. The Government had to reduce the amount requested in Bill C-125, at the request of the Opposition. It reduced by \$4 billion the amount in Bill C-151 because Opposition Members demanded it. The Government was borrowing more than it needed so that it would not have to keep coming back to Parliament for more money. It is a nuisance factor in this parliamentary system for the Government to come back to