

Supply

Mr. Pat Sobeski (Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to ask a very quick question of the hon. member.

He talks about whether or not the \$48 billion should come to the government. Back in 1980 or 1981 the Liberal government was coming forward and asking for money. It was not really money because the government was asking that it be put on the credit card. In essence, I think every Canadian can understand that back in 1983 for every dollar of tax revenue the Liberal government was providing about \$1.23 in services. Imagine that, Mr. Speaker.

Where was that extra 22 or 23 cents going? It was going on that Visa credit card and then the MasterCard because that was over-exposed. All the balances on those credit cards kept going up.

Now we are hearing the member moan and groan as the government is trying to get its fiscal ship back in order. Today, for every dollar in tax revenue there is about 95 or 96 cents going toward services. We have made that adjustment.

Is the member suggesting that the government should go back and is he concerned that it is only \$48 billion? If we were following the policies of the Liberal Party ten years ago we should be requesting \$96 billion and just putting those balances on the credit card.

I would like him to explain if indeed that is the case, why we are not asking for \$96 billion instead of only \$48 billion.

Mr. Boudria: It is always nice to get a question about credit cards from the government that gave us the American Express bank.

I find it interesting that a government member would be asking a question on credit cards. The government gave us the Amex bank, signed it by an Order in Council the day of the last election, probably in the fear that it was going to be turfed out on its ear and that if its friends at Amex could not be rewarded, the way to—

An hon. member: It didn't happen.

Mr. Boudria: The member says that it did not happen. No, it did not, but we will get to them next time.

The member asks us about fiscal responsibility. That is interesting given that one half of the accumulated debt

in the history of Canada is there courtesy of the present Prime Minister and his administration.

In other words, the \$400 billion debt we have today was only \$200 billion in 1984, immediately after a very severe world-wide recession. After years of prosperity this government made it worse.

The member asks me how much I think the \$48 billion should be. He has missed the point. The point is that Canadians have no faith in this government. Canadians do not trust this government to administer their money nor the affairs of the nation.

That is why my colleagues and I do not want to give any authority to this government to be running the affairs of the nation. It is not a bill that the government should be asking for; it is an election. That is what we need.

Mr. Bob Horner (Mississauga West): If in 1984 there had been a \$200 billion surplus and now through compound interest it had grown to \$400 billion, would you be upset by that? That is exactly what has happened to the national debt. It was \$200 billion in 1984 and the compound interest on that debt has grown and doubled right now.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, this government is telling us that after some six years of prosperity, the last year and a half or so in a recession largely caused by the policies of this government, the best it could do was to double the debt in Canada. And government members are asking me to explain that kind of mismanagement? I am sorry, neither I nor the Canadian public can explain that, but they do understand it and they will take care of it very shortly.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Mr. Speaker, on the other side of this House sits the Tory government which has always been on the best of terms with the business sector. But what has this government done? During the last three years, our country has been undergoing a de-industrialization process. During the last three years, we lost 16 per cent of our manufacturing jobs while the United States lost only 7 per cent of jobs in that area. Therefore, this cannot be due entirely to restructuring, globalization and the recession.