

Borrowing Authority

The spin-off effects from a base like Summerside would be about 60 per cent in the area, if not 70 per cent. We have heard that those bases do not have to be in those areas for regional development. We are told that they were not put there at a time when there was a need for regional development. They were put there because there was a need for a Canadian Forces base in the areas in which they were placed. That is what we were told.

The closure will affect those foreigners who are overfishing within and without the 200-mile limit. It will affect a company such as IMP which is bringing new technology and new ideas to the area. It had a contract. I heard that somewhere between 20 per cent to 25 per cent of its intake of business will be affected. I am not sure on that; it may be more. It affects the whole economy.

• (1600)

I have never heard of anything so devastating as what is being done to Summerside. I cannot believe that the Government can do this. If it wants to do away with CFB Summerside, it must have a plan of action that will sustain the area. If it does not have such a plan, it is simply saying that Summerside is on its own. In my opinion, Canada has never been that way. We are a country that has shared in the difficulties that exist across Canada. When a disaster occurs in one part of Canada, the rest of Canada has always helped.

I do not think Canadians want to see the effect of the base closures in Portage la Prairie and Summerside. There should be a more reasoned use of those facilities. One does not build a brand new cafeteria for \$10 million and then close it. What does one do with it?

The Minister of State for Tourism (Mr. Hockin) has indicated that the tourism distribution centre in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, is no longer needed. It was only built five or six years ago, but it and its nine jobs are no longer needed. It cost the Government many millions of dollars to build the building and it costs about \$792,000 a year in operating expenses and salaries. All the Government agencies that are operational on the east coast, for example the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, could use that distribution centre, but the Government does not think of that.

I know you are telling me that my time is up, Madam Speaker. I thank Hon. Members for their questions.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise to participate in this debate on the borrowing Bill brought forward by the Government. I note from the provisions of Clause 2 of the Bill that the Government is proposing to borrow a sum not exceeding \$24.8 billion.

What I find really surprising is the lack of public comment on this Bill and on the record of the Government in financial matters. I would like to speak briefly about what I consider to be an appalling record in this regard and to point out to Hon. Members, particularly those opposite, how they might seek to improve the record by changing their ways.

As Hon. Members know, the borrowing Bill is one of three major financial items that Governments present to the House of Commons in the course of a year. We have seen more fumbling and bumbling by the Government on financial matters during the course of this Parliament than any Canadian Parliament has ever had to witness. I would like to deal with that fumbling and bumbling by referring to each of the three items of financial business and explaining how it is in my view that the Government has fumbled and bumbled its way through these items.

I would like to turn first to the business of supply which has occupied considerable debate in the House in the course of this session. The irregular procedures the Government has followed in this connection have been shocking. The normal procedure is that the Estimates for the financial year are tabled in the House of Commons by the end of February of the year, or around the beginning of March. This year, it was April 28 before the Estimates were presented to the House.

In addition, the House failed to deal, because of the Government's fumbling and bumbling, with the question of Supplementary Estimates for the last financial year which ended on March 31. We have discussed extensively in connection with both the Supplementary Estimates and Main Estimates which were tabled so late the Government's dereliction of its responsibility to call Parliament together in a timely matter to deal with the financial matter of supply.