

Borrowing Authority

the Government wants six and five, then why does its expenditures increase by double that amount?

An Hon. Member: Why?

An Hon. Member: Why? Answer that.

Mr. Fisher: What a weak line of thought.

Mr. Epp: If that is the case, why does Government not hold its expenditures to 6 per cent? If it wants wage earners in Canada to keep at 6 per cent, if it wants all services to be kept at 6 per cent, why does the Government of Canada feel justified in doubling and increasing its expenditures by 12 per cent? If that program is to have validity, and Government wants to reduce the inflation rate, then why does it increase it by 12 per cent?

Mr. Fisher: Surely you can use better logic.

Mr. Epp: That is absolute logic, and you know it.

An Hon. Member: "Six per cent for everybody but us".

Mr. Fisher: You are a man who could do his homework and yet you have not. That is shameful.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Epp: What is interesting, Mr. Speaker—

An Hon. Member: You don't know the difference between \$19 billion and \$126 billion, where you will be a year from now.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Hon. Member for Provencher (Mr. Epp) has the floor.

Mr. Epp: What is interesting, Mr. Speaker, is that when you raise the point with the Hon. Members opposite that they seem to be saying, "Don't do as we do, do as we say", that is when they become sensitive. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, the Government is demanding from every Canadian a 6 per cent ceiling, but it will go to 12 per cent and tax all Canadians at that level.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Epp: There is no way those Members opposite can escape that fact. That being the case, Mr. Speaker, this Government, must come to grips with its deficit and must come to grips with the escalation of its expenditures, both of which are absolutely at variance with the words Hon. Members opposite say in this House, words they want to have Canadians believe, and the words they say in international forums. Until they are able to square those words with actions, we will vote against this Bill.

• (1750)

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I had not actually intended to speak on this Bill, but after listening

to the last two Conservative speakers I felt it important to rise and add just a modicum of sanity to the debate.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deans: The Member who spoke just prior to the last speaker was going on at some length about the plight of farmers. First of all, I want to acknowledge that he knows as much about that as anyone in the House. He spoke lucidly and intelligently about the difficulties that farmers face. There is no doubt in my mind that the overwhelming majority of the farming community will well understand the logic of much of what was said by the Hon. Member. I find only one minor problem with his presentation. I put it to you, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about this, that there is no doubt that the economic policy pursued by the Government of the day has wreaked havoc with all sectors of the economy, particularly the farming sector. The inability of farmers to match their cash requirements with their sales in many areas has resulted in many farmers going into default on their bank loans and being forced into bankruptcy. We have seen farmers so often, many of them not so young, having their equipment sold out from under them. I can remember when, not too many weeks ago in this House, there was a Private Members' Bill dealing with that very topic, supported by a significant number of farmers from all parts of the country. If I recall correctly, it was Bill C-653, and it would have established a mechanism, albeit imperfect, for dealing with bank foreclosures. It was an intermediate step which would have allowed for consultation and apportionment of the indebtedness over a long period of time. But the Tories have locked it up in committee to the point where it will never become law. That is evidence of their commitment. When the farmers are really on the line they are standing shoulder to shoulder with them, only until they can stab them in the back.

We have seen so many other problems develop over the course of the last couple of years. The Government is its own worst enemy in that regard. There was the interest rate escalation which took place over the course of, oh, the 24 months preceding the last three or four months; in other words, starting back in 1980 and coming forward into the latter part of 1982. The Government not only allowed that rapid escalation of interest rates, it encouraged it. Had it not done so, then the cost of the borrowing that the Government undertakes so frequently would not have been so high. If that had been brought under control, the amount of money the Government is now asking for would have been considerably less.

So you cannot help feeling that on the one side we get the plaintive bleating of the Conservatives as to how they do not like what is happening, but when there is concrete action to deal with it, they refuse to do so. On the other hand you have a Government which has brought about much of this deficit because of its inability or unwillingness to come to grips with the usurious interest rates permitted to be charged in this