

Borrowing Authority

friends—we borrow. The Government needs to pay for the use of JetStars by Cabinet Ministers—we borrow.

Let us take a look at how much it costs each and every taxpayer of this country to finance this deficit. Fifteen years ago, the deficit used only 4 per cent of the Government's spending money—this year, 34 per cent of the total expenditures are taken up by the deficit—a deficit the Minister of Finance is asking us to increase with the passage of this Bill. That is an increase of 30 per cent in 15 years.

On the other hand, if the Liberal Government had managed to balance its budget for the last 15 years, the cost of servicing the debt would be only \$3.3 billion. That is a far cry from the \$16.7 billion we are facing today.

But the worse effect of this continued borrowing and continued mismanagement of the affairs of Canada is the loss of confidence other nations have in Canada and the continued loss of confidence Canadians have in their country. We used to be an industrial power, but now we cannot even begin to compete. We stand twenty-fourth out of 24 countries in productive capacity. Economists predict that we will be the last country out of the recession, and that is not something the Hon. Members opposite can blame on the world recession.

The Government has been operating in the red since 1970. That is 13 years of operating at a loss—a deplorable record of a Liberal Government that knows no restrictions. Any businessman knows that you cannot recover from 13 years of operating in the red unless you take some drastic action such as cutting costs and stimulating sales through effective marketing strategies. What strategies has the Government produced? It has only produced a defence of its policies at great expense to the taxpayer.

It cost the Canadian taxpayer \$70 million to learn that the six and five program is working—that is advocacy advertising. It cost the Canadian taxpayer \$10 million for Government hospitality—food, drink and entertainment. That money could have been better spent on employment programs and could have provided employment for 10,000 people. This in turn would have meant more taxes and netted revenue for the Government and more money being spent in the economy as well as savings to the Government on UIC benefits.

The metric program has cost the Canadian taxpayer a total of \$65 million to date. It has also cost the business sector additional costs in conversion measures and has created a furor among Canadians that still rages.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on for hours but I realize that my time is limited. There is much to say about government waste but my major concern about this borrowing authority and all the previous borrowing authorities we have seen go through here in recent years, is the effect it will have on our citizens in the future. The effects on the younger generation of today of a stagnant economy and an escalating deficit is evident in the many letters I am receiving from students who are frustrated and wondering why they have to pay for the extravagant and ostentatious spending habits of an irresponsible Government. Students are faced with high unemployment and little prospect

of job when they graduate. They are starting off their adult life with no hope for a secure financial future.

No, Mr. Speaker, I cannot condone the request by the Government to borrow a further \$19 billion unless it is prepared to take a responsible and realistic view of its spending habits and be accountable to Parliament for its spending needs.

Mr. Vince Dantzer (Okanagan North): Mr. Speaker, like others in the House I am very pleased to have the opportunity to speak on Bill C-143. I consider this to be an historic event because this is the largest, one-shot request for supplementary borrowing authority in the history of this Parliament. I would be happy if I could be assured that this is a unique event, that this is the only time the request would be as low, but I am very much afraid that I cannot hope for that.

Bill C-143 requests authority to borrow \$19 billion. Someone once asked how you could get your arms around \$19 billion. Never mind your arms, Mr. Speaker, how do you get your mind to grasp the extent of the \$19 billion requested by a Government that congratulates itself on its restraint program?

The only thing about Bill C-143 that smacks of restraint is the amount of paper used to ask for the authority—it is one sheet of paper, printed on both sides. The first side requests authority for \$5 billion. I suppose the natural thing for Members to ask is why the Government wants the \$5 billion. In this little sheet of paper it is stated that it may be required for public works and general purposes. The second page contains a request for a further \$14 billion. All day long Members in the House have been asking why the Government wants to borrow \$14 billion. The stated purpose, according to this paper, is that it is required for public works and general purposes.

How can we possibly get a handle on what the Government is trying to do? Perhaps I can tackle it this way, Mr. Speaker. You are a family man, a father and a grandfather, and I am sure other Liberal Members have children and grandchildren. If one of their children or grandchildren asked them for 50 cents or a dollar, they would probably ask what it was for. If the child answered that it was just for spending, presumably the parent would hand over the money.

If the Government asked us for authority to borrow \$1 billion, we would probably reply in the same way and not insist on a detailed account of what it was for. But suppose the child or grandchild asked for \$100 or \$150. Surely the parent would want to know what it was going to be spent on. If the child still answered it was just for spending, how many parents or grandparents would hand the money over without some explanation of what it was for?

It is somewhat the same with this little piece of paper which requests \$14 billion. It is an unreasonable request. The Canadian people are the parents of the Government and are responsible for its existence. The situation is the same—the Government, through Members of this House, is asking the Canadian people for money, and the Canadian people are entitled to ask what it is for. They are entitled to know why the Government wants \$14 billion.