

Borrowing Authority

I do not ask whether Members or Canadians agree or disagree. I ask, were they told? Were they told that social programs such as unemployment insurance and old age pensions would be tinkered with? Were they told that foreign aid would be slashed? Were they told that average Canadians' taxes have risen 60 per cent in the last four years, while the taxes of those earning more than \$100,000 have risen by only approximately 8 per cent? Were they told that they would pay, in addition to all the other taxes the Government is asking them to pay, in order that the Government can borrow \$24.8 billion, an additional 9 per cent goods and services tax on virtually everything? Were they told that the Government would abandon its child care commitment? No. Canadians were not told that.

The issue is not whether Canadians agree or disagree with some or all of those measures. Naturally, there will be people on both sides of the issue. Rather, the issue is the failure of the Government to come clean with Canadians.

What about integrity? Last month the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) stated that Canadians were not listening to him during the election campaign. That is not true. Canadians were listening carefully, but they were misled.

The Tories tried to blame past Liberal Governments, but almost half of today's debt was accumulated in only four short years of Tory Government. The stated purpose of the Budget is to control the deficit. Yet, the deficit continues to rise. It is higher today and it will be higher tomorrow than what it was before, notwithstanding the stated purpose to control it, and in fact reduce it. The Tories have had almost five years to do something, yet both the debt and the deficit have only increased. What is the answer? The Prime Minister blames this not on bad fiscal management, but on previous Liberal administrations. Where is his integrity?

Some Canadians criticize the Opposition for criticizing the Budget. What would they do? Would they entice the Canadian electorate with election candy and then hit them over the head with a financial sledgehammer? At my monthly public forums, I have asked my constituents how they would deal with the problems. As might be expected, there were many suggestions, including controlling interest rates, eliminating capital cost allowances and corporate write-offs not allowed to ordinary Canadians, eliminating or tightening up federal grants, lessening military spending, temporary across the board

cut-backs in government spending, and many other suggestions.

Naturally, at those public forums, no one agreed entirely on all the solutions. However, what we did agree on is that Canadians can and do expect to be told honestly and with integrity that we face a problem and the proposed solution to that problem. Instead, after the election, of course, the Government told us to tighten our belts without having first told us in advance that it would take our pants off.

The Government wants to borrow \$24.8 billion and more to come. What do we get for it? It is up to us as Canadians to decide which we want: deception and double-talk, or honesty and integrity, for we will inevitably get the kind of government we deserve.

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): Madam Speaker, it gives me pleasure today to speak against the borrowing Bill. The Government is requesting borrowing authority for \$24 billion of taxpayers' money. In the preamble to the Bill, it can be seen that we have an accumulated deficit that exceeds \$320 billion. This year's estimated deficit is approximately \$30 billion.

When one looks back at the election last November, the deficit was not a very high priority. I do not recall at any time during the election when the deficit was an item of debate.

What were items of debate were the promises that the Government was prepared to offer to the taxpayers of Canada with their own hard-earned money. The promises from the Government totalled almost \$20 billion. Was the Government worried about the deficit at that time? It seems not. The Government certainly did not mention it. Were they worried about the impact of the increased expenditures that those promises would bring? It does not appear so.

The Tory election promises presented certain expectations to Canadians, particularly in the areas of day care and environmental priorities.

During the election campaign, I clearly remember the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) indicated strongly that they were not promises. They were commitments that the Government was willing to make and stand by. It is interesting because now that the election has been fought and won and the dust has settled, where are the promises? Where are the commitments? Suddenly the Government has been re-awakened with the need of pressing financial priorities. Suddenly, it has discovered that there is a deficit to deal with. It was strange that was