

Borrowing Authority Act

Mr. Baker: I hear an Hon. Member from the Conservative benches saying that that is good. Then it recommended to seek judicial clarification on federal constitutional obligations concerning all subsidies to Newfoundland and the provision of the Newfoundland and Labrador coastal services. They have actually said they will obtain a judicial decision on the terms of union between Newfoundland and Canada after making the reductions they are to make. It is a slap in the face to all Newfoundlanders.

● (1250)

Let us look at the recommendations which the federal Cabinet has accepted, for example, in environment. They recommend the closure of the weather office in Gander through the transfer of the weather centre to St. John's. Air Canada made an application to move its international flights to St. John's. If the Government approves, it will mean that St. John's airport would require about \$4 million or \$5 million of expenditure just to meet the standard federal requirements of space for security reasons. The Department of Immigration and the Customs Department have told the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski) that he cannot approve the application unless the Government spends \$4 million or \$5 million.

The Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie) threatened Air Canada by saying: "You go to St. John's or else". Now the task force is recommending moving the weather office from Gander to St. John's, which will result in an additional cost to the federal Treasury. Is it any wonder that one of the persons on the ministerial task force was the Hon. Member for St. John's West in whose riding St. John's airport is located? We see throughout the documents the vested political interest and the short-term political gain. The Government is trying to obtain some political influence for the former Minister of Finance, the Hon. Member for St. John's West, and is trying to prop up the Hon. Member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath). The Government of Canada will not get away with it. It will be put on the spot on every move it makes in an attempt to rob from Newfoundland for the benefit of its Members' ridings.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): The Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans) on debate.

An Hon. Member: Him too?

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I hear a voice from the wilderness on the other side. Let me say to him: "Yes, me too".

I have listened to the debate the last few times this matter has been before the House. As I heard the arguments being made, I thought to myself how it reminded me of the arguments made during the period from 1980 to 1984. At that time Conservative Members sitting on this side of the House, when the previous Liberal administration was in power, rose one after another, *ad nauseam*, arguing that there was no necessity for that amount of borrowing, that the borrowing was founded on wrong information and misguided policy, and that the borrowing was inappropriate. In fact, any number of argu-

ments were put forward, each one of which has been advanced again during the course of this debate. As I thought about that, I could not help but feel that the Conservative Party in its new capacity has not changed very much. The only thing its Members have not yet done, though I warn you, Mr. Speaker, that it is not outside the realm of possibility, is muster their numbers to charge the Speaker's chair during this Parliament. That is about all that has not been pursued.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Not yet.

Mr. Deans: As the Hon. Member for Ottawa-Carleton (Mr. Turner) just said, it has not happened yet but it may. I would not be at all surprised if he led the charge, after having listened to him, without fully understanding the undermining effects such a charge would have on the authority of the Chair. That is what the Conservatives did in the early 1980s when they attempted to intimidate the Speaker of the day with their obnoxious, boorish behaviour.

However, I see in the Government much of what I saw in the Conservative Party when it was in Opposition. Its Members argued on both sides of every issue, just as they are doing today. In fact, I remember rising in the House at one point and making some comments about that very fact. It made no difference what was before Parliament or what issue was being discussed across the land, people could find a Conservative Member to speak for them no matter what side of the issue they were on. At one point—and in fact I am not even sure now, but I thought it was by design—they had decided that since they did not have a clear policy on anything and since they did not really stand for very much, they would find out on purpose what was the public view on each issue. There is always more than one view held by the public at large, so they would make sure that every aspect of the issue was covered by one or another of their speakers. Then if a Canadian asked for the Tory view on almost anything—

Mr. Riis: Give me some examples.

Mr. Deans: I hear my colleague; I will in a moment. However, if a Canadian wanted to find out where the Conservatives stood on the testing of the Cruise missile there would be a Conservative who had spoken in the House of Commons against it and one who had spoken in favour of it. Then they could check to find out what side the person was on and ship out the appropriate piece of propaganda. If one happened to be in favour of the universality, for example, there would be a Tory speaking for him or her. If one were opposed to universality, one could find a Conservative who had spoken on that side of the issue, and therefore be provided with the appropriate piece of propaganda. This seems to continue all the way into Government.

I remember when the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) stood in the House of Commons and argued vehemently against the necessity for borrowing. In fact, the Conservatives put up speaker after speaker—perhaps as many as 90, sometimes—to castigate the then Government for its audacity in introducing time allocation to terminate the debate and to