

Borrowing Authority Act

Mr. Lee: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. If the hon. member would care to look, he would find that that speech was made in 1975.

What the hon. member quotes me as saying in 1975 is something I fully subscribed to at that time, but because of speeches of backbench members of the Liberal party, who have great influence on members on the Treasury benches, since 1975 the government has been reducing its expenditures below the level of the rate of growth of the gross national product. Last August the government announced a very sincere program with respect to government restraint. The government said it would curtail financial requirements by \$500 million for the current fiscal year and projected a further curtailment of \$2.5 billion for the next fiscal year. Because of the influence of members like myself, that is the kind of action this government takes. The hon. member deliberately did not tell us the date of the news report.

Mr. McKenzie: Mr. Speaker, the date is at the bottom of the article. For the convenience of the hon. member for Vancouver East, I point out that the date is September 29, 1975. If his statements were relevant then, they are more relevant today. He speaks about a restraint program. If there is a restraint program, why is the government wanting to borrow \$17 billion?

● (1742)

The hon. member went on to say that this was not only a necessity, it was a matter of paramount importance if we were to cope adequately with inflation, and the government was not doing enough to bring its expenditures into line with the economy. If that was the way he felt, I do not know how he can possibly sit over there now with that political party after that statement in 1975 and what is facing us here today.

We have had a series of finance ministers who have been complete failures. Probably the biggest failure of all was John Turner. Federal government spending more than doubled when he was finance minister. When he departed, Mr. Macdonald took over, but he could not straighten out the mess so he too resigned and departed. He did not do enough damage here, so now he is travelling around the country making a series of statements. Speaking in New York recently he said that personal attacks on the Prime Minister may polarize Canadian opinion and destroy confederation. Let me remind hon. members that the Prime Minister is responsible for introducing the rule changes in 1968; he is not the type of man who wants to be accountable to parliament or the Canadian people.

Also, officials, whether it is at the federal, provincial or municipal level, want to reduce the accounting system so there is no proper examination of the expenditures. Prior to 1968 there used to be approximately 450 votes with itemized accounts of every federal government department so you could see what was going on. That number was reduced to approximately 160 votes. Now when we look at the estimates of every department we see that "others" went up 43 million and "miscellaneous" went up \$5 million, and this sort of nonsense.

[Mr. McKenzie.]

The article to which I referred earlier goes on to read:

Macdonald, who resigned from the Trudeau cabinet a little more than a year ago, blames what he calls "very substantial prejudice" in English speaking Canada against the Prime Minister because he is a French Canadian.

That is absolute nonsense. Our concern lies with the way the government has handled tax dollars and the economy of this country. The previous prime minister, Mr. Pearson, started all this in January of 1963. We criticized the government's record then, and Mr. Pearson was an Anglophone. So it has nothing to do with the nationality of the person running the government. What Mr. Macdonald said was a lot of nonsense and he will not kid anybody in western Canada or any place else with such statements.

Dennis Braithwaite said it very well in a recent article in the *Toronto Star* when he wrote about the Liberals clamouring to get rid of the present Prime Minister and wanting to bring back John Turner. I did not hear Mr. Macdonald, in his statement in New York, say anything about the Manitoba Liberal candidates who want to dump the Prime Minister. Do they want to dump him because he is a French Canadian? Why does Mr. Macdonald not raise that? They are having a squabble in Manitoba.

Mr. Martin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. We are in the process of debating a bill which is before this parliament, namely, Bill C-7. I can find nothing in the remarks of the hon. member opposite in the last several minutes that has had any bearing whatsoever on the bill. I wonder if that might be drawn to his attention, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): I suggest the hon. member revert to the terms of Bill C-7.

Mr. McKenzie: Mr. Speaker, the terms of the bill cover the borrowing of large amounts of money, and if we had a responsible government, we would not be presented with such a bill in the first place. That is why I am highlighting all the squabbling within the Liberal party over their present leader and the confusion this is causing around the country. Apparently they are upset, and I can understand their being upset, with regard to the way the Prime Minister has allowed the government to get out of control and has handed a blank cheque to every cabinet minister to spend just as he likes. Of course, their main concern is to run the Liberal Party in western Canada in the next federal election. I think their candidates will not qualify under the Election Expenses Act, as was the case with the Liberal candidate in Burnaby-Richmond-Delta. He did not get 15 per cent of the votes; in fact, he got less than 10 per cent, and 51 Liberals lost their deposits in the provincial election in Saskatchewan. So I can understand why nobody wants to run for the Liberal party out in western Canada.

Here is another example of what is wrong with Canada and how this government mismanages the country. We want to encourage entrepreneurs in Canada and we want products to be manufactured in this country. I will read an article about a gentleman who resided in Saskatchewan but who is leaving Canada now because he cannot get anywhere here. He said he