

Supplementary Borrowing Authority

within the limits of an informed discussion on the various parts of these programs. Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to add that I am happy to see that the Minister of Finance has left our social programs unchanged and has not re-allocated monies towards job creation and other programs but that instead he has resorted to other methods making cuts in other departments, for instance. For I am one of those, Mr. Speaker, who believe that when it comes to discussing and improving a system we should first have in hand all relevant data and not proceed via piecemeal fashion. I therefore totally agree with the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) when he says that these programs are a sort of safety net for the Canadian people and that they should not be changed now in view of the difficult times we living. However, if we are to discuss them it should be by means of a substantive debate with the participation of all interested parties and not by issuing staggering statements.

Mr. Speaker, the minister said that next winter will be a hard one and I must tell Canadians who listening to our debates, in particular my own constituents in Rosemont, that indeed times will really be harsh and to pretend the opposite would be deceiving them; on the other hand, due to the inherent strength and the resilience of our economy we can expect within a few months, when the world economy is back on its feet, that Canadians will be able to take advantage of this recovery and to see to it that our country once again is as flourishing as it should and will be.

Mr. Keeper: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member has indicated that he would entertain a question.

Mr. Lachance: Agreed!

Mr. Keeper: Thank you. During his remarks, the hon. member stated that he had looked for waste in the federal budget. Here is a case. Some \$180 million in the federal budget are earmarked for advertising. Is the hon. member willing to advise the Minister of Finance to cut this portion off the federal budget? Yes or no?

Mr. Lachance: Mr. Speaker, allow me first of all to congratulate wholeheartedly the Hon. Member for speaking such fine French, as well as the members of the NDP caucus who, I know, are trying very hard to learn French.

Let me put it this way: in my opinion, it is the responsibility of all Hon. Members to see to it that the taxpayers' money is spent where it will do the most good. Unfortunately, the means presently at their disposal are woefully inadequate. I have the privilege to sit on a very special committee of the House, namely, the Standing Committee on Standing Orders and Procedures, which is trying among other things to provide opportunities for Hon. Members' input and direct contribution whenever some items of government estimates do not receive the priority treatment they feel they deserve. And my colleagues on this committee are aware that I am one of those who feel that financial accountability is one of the most important issues, although it has unfortunately been too often overlooked in the past. I could answer his question and raise a

whole series of others. I will simply remind him that before the Summer recess, when the House was called upon to vote on government items, I abstained from voting on the Information Centre on Canadian Unity.

[English]

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, today we are debating the giving of permission to the Government to borrow some \$4 billion to help finance its economic policy. I want to take this opportunity to comment on the Government's economic policy and say why I think it is so wrong and say why it will not be the answer to the problems facing the country.

• (1510)

The day before yesterday, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde), in an economic statement which was really a budget speech, whether or not he called it that, went considerably further in the forced retreat march of the Liberal Party away from the battle for social justice. He confirmed even more what I have always believed to be true about the Liberal Party, that it is a fair weather camper when it comes to the cause of equality. It does not have the guts or the inclination to stand up for social justice against the self-interests of the powerful and the big financial and big business sectors of the Canadian society when times become tough and when real sharing and caring, to use a phrase that has been systematically cheapened by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in recent weeks, would require the rich and powerful to sacrifice, to care and to share.

Instead of progress toward greater equality among Canadians, we have seen a series of attacks on the average Canadian. The six and five program, which makes no distinction whatsoever between 6 per cent of \$100,000 and 6 per cent of \$10,000, is the clearest example of the moral failure of the Liberals, supported by the Conservatives. They don't even bother to pretend that they are interested in equality or in equal sharing of our economic problems? Fortunately for the Government and for the Conservatives who support them, what support there is for the six and five program in the country comes from the willingness of many average Canadians to co-operate and attempt to play their role if it will help the country. They are willing to do their part to help Canada. Wisely, they know by instinct that there is a moral problem at the root of our economic dilemma and not purely a technical or economic problem. That is why they are vulnerable—admirably vulnerable—to arguments about sacrifice and co-operation. They are vulnerable because they, unlike the Liberal Government and the Progressive Conservative Party, have not lost the ability to think in ethical terms, when considering economic matters. Their willingness to consider the common good is to be admired all the more because they also know deep down that the Liberals and the Conservatives who encourage them to sacrifice and co-operate in the interests of the common good