

Borrowing Authority Act

money this Government has to borrow. This would have tremendously beneficial effects throughout the country.

If we continue the way we are going, more and more people will be out of work, less and less tax will be generated and more and more government spending will be required. It becomes a never-ending circle. We must have more responsibility in terms of government. We have not seen that across the aisle. Unfortunately, I have to vote against this Bill. Hopefully we will have a chance to defeat this Government quickly at the time of the next election.

Mr. Thomas Siddon (Richmond-South Delta): Mr. Speaker, I wish to carry on the same rather serious tone set by my colleague from Portage-Marquette (Mr. Mayer). I want to express my surprise that so few government members are participating in this debate on a Bill of such fundamental importance to the future of our children and their offspring. It is important and fortunate that the Canadian people have the opportunity to witness this debate over national television. It should have a strong bearing on decisions they will reach before entering the ballot booth some time next November.

I want to put in context the magnitude of the amount of money the Government is asking this Parliament and Canadians for authority to borrow. The Government is asking for authority to borrow \$30 billion in one year. That is more than \$1,000 for every man, woman and child in this country. The deficit already approaches \$16,000 for every taxpayer. This Bill will increase that amount by some \$3,000 in one year for every taxpayer in Canada.

That does not make too much of an impression on the average viewer or voter. Let us look at it this way. Out of the close to \$100 billion that this Government will spend in the coming fiscal year, which incidentally is nine times as large as the Government budget when the outgoing Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) first took office, 40 per cent will be expended under the authority of one Minister, the Minister responsible for the social policy envelope. These programs of social assistance and support in terms of pensions, family allowance, unemployment insurance and other important programs devised as the so-called safety net for Canadians are now in jeopardy.

We have forgotten about the basic dynamo of our economy. That is our industry, the exploitation of technology and the productive work that the majority of Canadians, particularly young Canadians, will have to engage in if in future we are to get rid of this enormous albatross that our Liberal friends are hanging around the necks of future generations. Out of that budget, \$40 billion will be spent on social programs. Today we are borrowing \$30 billion, three-quarters of what is required to pay for social programs. I doubt that the average Canadian realizes that in this year's budget, \$20 billion will be spent on interest to service that debt and only \$10 billion on economic development.

Out of a \$100 billion budget, \$40 billion will go to social policy and programs, \$20 billion to debt servicing, \$10 billion to economic development, \$5 billion to defence and a few other

small amounts. The important point that Canadians must realize is that if we were not paying \$20 billion worth of interest to carry the debt each year, we would have \$30 billion to spend on economic development. We could move into the higher areas of technology and fund the necessary retraining programs. We could pursue international markets with a whole host of attractive and challenging products. This country could be engaged in manufacturing, producing and selling to people around the world. Instead, we are saddled with a deficit which is costing the Government \$20 billion this year, half of the amount that will be spent on social programs. The Government wants to add another \$30 billion to the gross deficit in order to balance the budget. That is a measure of how serious the problem is.

● (1740)

The Government is asking us through Bill C-21 to authorize the borrowing of that additional \$30 billion even though the Budget which was tabled in the House a few weeks ago only projected a requirement for some \$25 billion. Why, Mr. Speaker, is the Government asking for \$30 billion? Indeed, the budgetary deficit is \$30 billion but the Government, in the Budget presented by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) a few weeks ago, indicated that it did not really need that extra \$4 billion.

Do you know why the Government did not need that extra money, Mr. Speaker? It did not need it because most of it is taken out of the hides of the public servants of the country. Most of the non-cash requirements shown as federal revenue come from the pension contributions of Public Service employees, whether they be members of government service generally, the armed forces or the RCMP. The Government is pretending to take those revenues and entrust them to a pension account when in fact it is using them to offset its borrowing requirements to the tune of some \$3 billion this year. Essentially, Mr. Speaker, the Government is stealing from its own employees to make up its cash requirements. It then has the gall to come to the House and ask for \$5 billion more than the Budget indicates is required. Is that not appalling, Mr. Speaker?

I was watching the person who most recently announced his candidacy for the Liberal Party leadership on television last evening and he was talking about deficits. I cannot speak in his dialect, but he said something to the effect that Canada is structurally a different country from other countries and deficits are a way of life in Canada. He told us why we had deficits, Mr. Speaker. The Hon. Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Chrétien), the latest declared candidate for the Liberal Party leadership, said that we have deficits because Canadians are great savers. He said that if we did not have deficits, there would be no Canada Savings Bonds in which Canadians could invest their money. He said that quite clearly. He was trying to justify the deficit by saying that Canadians needed to have somewhere to put their money.

That Minister said he agreed with what other Members in the House have pointed out, which is that personal savings in