

*Borrowing Authority Act*

what has been said by speakers before about how we have tripled the debt since this Prime Minister took office.

● (1632)

The government wants to attempt to spend its way out of debt. Previously I had not heard of such an economic theory, yet it is being unravelled before my eyes. As I indicated, at one point the government thought it had enough money for this year, and now it is requesting \$7 billion. It has made a \$7 billion error, and now it needs a little more money. I am not too sure if we should accept that fact, but even if we did and gave the government \$7 billion for this year, why should the government be given \$10 billion starting on April 1, 1979, through to March 31, 1980, at which time this government will not be the government; government members will be sitting in opposition. The government is requesting a complete blank cheque, and I do not know how the money will be spent. Perhaps the entire \$7 billion will be spent between April 1, 1979, and election day.

I must emphasize that never before in Canadian history has a government ever had the audacity to come before a legislative assembly requesting borrowing authority for a year in the future for which estimates have not been tabled. I beg the House to consider realistically the intelligent proposal of splitting this bill. We could deal with the money they require for this year, even though that is dubious, but definitely we should not give the government a blank cheque for a year, before the estimates are received. I do not care if it is the Liberals under the present Prime Minister, the New Democratic Party, the Progressive Conservative party, the Social Credit party, or any other party in any other legislature; no legislation should request a blank cheque before the estimates are tabled for a particular fiscal year. It has never been done in the past. No parliament should sanction this.

This situation demonstrates the arrogance of the government. It epitomizes how parliament is losing control over the purse, over how much money is spent. At the present time the estimates go through because of a rule which was rammed through by the Liberal majority in approximately 1968. The estimates are deemed to have passed committee stage when perhaps a vote on the estimates has not been held or perhaps the estimates have not been discussed. If the estimates are not discussed by a certain date, automatically they are passed, even though the committee has not looked at them in detail. In many cases that has been the situation. They are deemed to have been passed, so there is no control over government spending. The government is requesting a blank cheque for a coming fiscal year, even though the estimates have not come in. It is apparent that a deficit is anticipated.

What would happen to a person who went to his bank manager wanting to borrow \$10,000 and giving no reason for such a loan? I will use the example of \$10,000, because I am sure a bank manager would not understand \$10 billion. We all know what the bank manager would tell such a person. Perhaps Parliament should tell the government the same thing,

[Mr. Dick.]

since it does not want to tell us what the \$10 billion will be spent on.

The reason for some of the deficits and problems at the present time is the complete mismanagement and waste of the government in the spending of Canadian funds. I should like to refer to one small example in an attempt to explain the situation. In late May 1978, the Progressive Conservative government of Ontario and the Parti Québécois of Quebec made a joint request for proposals on a new lottery computer, a technological gaming device. The greedy old Liberals opposite on June 19, after that joint proposal had been made, granted a \$24 million contract to an American firm without tenders.

I have had occasion to speak with the legal advisers of that firm in New York. Also I have spoken with its directors and officers who live in Maryland. These gentlemen are officers of the Canadian subsidiary. They told me that every screw, rivet, piece of metal and wire will be manufactured and assembled in their plant in Maryland. The government said that no Canadian company could perform this task; apparently no Canadian company could bring up these little computing machines in order to assemble the \$1 gaming device for the new lottery. I did not buy that for a minute. I made inquiries and found out that the government was wrong.

On approximately July 15, the Ontario government awarded the very same contract to two Canadian firms. One of those Canadian firms is owned 66 per cent by the federal government, yet the federal government would not go to that company. The name of the company is Consolidated Computing Devices, and it is located in the east end of Ottawa. That firm will be doing the majority of the work under contract. The other firm is called Digital, and it is located approximately 14 miles outside of Ottawa. Digital will be doing the computer part of the work, and Consolidated Computing Devices will be doing the terminal work. The Ontario government has given the entire contract to two companies within a 15-mile radius of Parliament Hill at a cost which is less than that quoted by the American firms. The greedy old government said that no Canadian company could do the work, yet it did not even look around.

As part of that contract, the Quebec and Ontario governments held two meetings, one in Toronto and one in Montreal. Approximately 125 people from the computer industry of Ontario and Quebec attended the meeting in Toronto, and over 90 attended the one in Montreal in order to exchange ideas, make further inquiries and discuss computer technology, manufacturing and what was needed. We had been deceived. These things could be built in Canada.

Then the government came forward with a second line of attack. Apparently it was necessary for us to get into the field first and not have to worry about competition. It has been said that by November we will be into that field. We are looking forward to that. At the present time there has been a run on the Ontario government computing devices. They could have been in the field a week or ten days ago. They beat the federal government to the punch. I understand that General Instru-