

*Borrowing Authority Act*

program from this government; indeed, we received no such program last November that would in any way indicate that this government has a method of getting the country out of the hole.

As long as this country continues to portray to the rest of the world that we will forever finance Canada by going to the marketplace and borrowing larger and larger sums of money, our dollar will forever be weak, we will have inflation forever and we will forever have a sense of lack of confidence in the country. What we must do is demonstrate not only to Canadians but also to the entire world that management means paying one's bills with the money on hand, not the money borrowed from one's neighbour.

What has happened since we came back after the election of 1980? We have run our debt, our net debt, from roughly \$65 billion to \$92 billion or \$93 billion, and that in barely two years. We cannot continue in this way, particularly in view of the interest rates we are paying. This year we will pay probably close to \$17 billion in interest, far more money than this government ever spent when it was first elected under the current leader. That cannot continue. We must have a program to ensure that the government finances and pays its bills with the money it takes in taxes, and no more. We must get away from this concept that we can continue forever in deficit. We must have some program to limit government expense.

The other day in the House, on June 10, I suggested to the Minister of Finance during question period that he should consider some of the suggestions which had come from the banks, from the Royal Bank and from the Bank of Commerce. In reply, the Minister of Finance said that cutting government expense was the problem because everyone wants to do it in general but no one wants to bite the bullet. He said:

I advise the hon. member to show his hand by going into committee and indicating where he thinks government expenditures ought to be reduced.

I want to point out to the Minister of Finance, through the Minister of State for Finance that the estimate hearings before committees have been terminated, in accordance with the rules, but if he sincerely wanted the help of the Parliament of Canada in reducing government expense, he would form a special parliamentary committee on government expense to open up those estimates again, to go into detail in depth and to take out of the government expense of this country as much as could be taken out. I suggest up to 10 per cent. That might eliminate some services and cut back on some things that we have enjoyed. But when the homes of people in my riding are being foreclosed because they cannot pay their monthly mortgages, I have a hard time saying to them, "Yes, but we increased the budget of the CBC." I have a hard time telling them how important the National Film Board is. And I have a really hard time telling them how important it is that Canada use over \$1 billion a year in support of foreign-aid programs.

I think it is about time that Members of Parliament were entrusted by the government to take a look at some of the expenses and go over them with a fine-toothed comb, and then to say, "Yes, we like that program, but in our scale of priorities it does not count as much as something else." We would be

responsible, as the House of Commons ought to be, for controlling the expense of government.

About two weeks ago we had a debate concerning some major projects in Canada, the Alsands and the Cold Lake projects. Those were megaprojects and they fell apart. Surely to goodness it is time that the government went back to the drawing board and looked at its tax laws and the sense of trust people have for this government, and said, "What can we do on a matter of confidence to get people to invest in these projects again?" Projects do not make sense if one has to pay 20 per cent interest on money from day one. But they might make sense to the Japanese who may want to secure a source of oil. They might make sense to the Americans who might want to secure a source of oil. They sure as heck would make sense to people who were working in steel mills in Hamilton, now laid off, at least 20 per cent, and they sure would make sense to unemployed people in St. Catharines and Brantford. We can let them take a portion of the product as payment for the money they put in. The prime rate in Japan is 6.4 per cent. If we had put 6.4 per cent in the mathematics for Alsands and Cold Lake, those projects would be going ahead. How do we make them go ahead? We offer to pay for them in the product we take out of our soil. We build our country with our own resources. We must make our country work again and get things going. There is no need to be foolish or to have unemployment when we have the resources that would make prosperity possible.

• (1750)

Getting back to the borrowing authority bill, where are we going? The government comes to the House of Commons for authority to borrow based on a budget which it says is inappropriate. We have an economy where more and more people are out of work every day. Companies are going broke, whether by bankruptcy, receivership or just walking away. There is no direction, no plan. The people of Canada have no confidence.

Members of the Liberal Party will have to accept the responsibility within the next week or so. We know they meet in caucus and are having other discussions about changes regarding the financial concerns in this country. They have a responsibility to the people of Canada because things can only be changed in the parliamentary sense with a vote.

The responsibility of those opposite is not to sit back and say they will support their party right or wrong. The policies proposed by those who control the levers of power and the party of government are not Liberal policies, policies of free trade, expansion and development of the liberty of the individual. They are policies of government control, statism, waste, direction from the ivory tower.

Members of Parliament must address these policies. If they cannot be addressed by those who hold the levers of power, Members of Parliament collectively have a responsibility to face the problems. If they cannot be faced in caucus, they must be faced on the floor of this House.