

we have to keep the Canadian dollar high is because of the understanding with the United States concerning the Free Trade Agreement. I suspect we have to keep the Canadian dollar high because the Americans will not play ball with us and the Free Trade Agreement unless the Canadian dollar is high.

The increase in the value of the Canadian dollar over the last year has essentially had the effect of a tariff on Canadian goods at about 10 per cent to 15 per cent.

Farmers in my constituency know this because they are exporters. They export their hogs, their beef and their grain and know that every time the Government increases the interest rate and the dollar goes up, the value of their exports decrease and their ability to export decreases. Yet the Government says it needs to keep the Canadian dollar up, otherwise imports will cost more. It is saying that our exports will increase and we do not have the plant capacity to produce more. We really see what the Government is all about. It is attempting to keep the Canadian dollar up so that it will fulfil its promises to the Americans in terms of the Free Trade Agreement.

The Government does not have the vision or the imagination to begin developing an economic policy and strategy that works from coast to coast rather than just in southern Ontario. Surely these higher interest rate policies affect the Maritimes, northern Ontario, Québec, the Prairies and British Columbia. If there is concern about too much plant capacity in the Golden Triangle, surely there could be an economic policy and strategy that would induce manufacturing outside the Golden Triangle and into the Maritimes, the Prairies, northern Ontario and the West Coast. That would be the strategy if we had a Government that believed it had a role to play as an active participant in the economic life of this country, a Government that believed in working together not just with the private sector but with the workers and farmers to create an economic strategy that is good for all Canadians.

However, it is a Government that does not believe that government can and should be playing a role as an active participant in the economic life of this country so that wealth can be produced and more fairly distributed.

### *Borrowing Authority*

We live in an age of abundance. The newer technologies allow us to produce at a fraction of the previous cost. There is great material wealth. Yet in this age of abundance, there are the homeless, there are food banks and operations are being postponed because there are not enough hospital beds. We do not have enough money to allow native children to get a university education. The one clear way out of the cycle of poverty for Indian people is higher education but there are limits and restrictions on that. We do not have enough.

• (1220)

We are living in an age of provincial, municipal and federal cut-backs, slashes and downgrades because we do not have enough to provide the basic necessities for human life. All this is in an age of abundance, all this is in an age in which there is so much material wealth and the capacity to produce beyond our imagination. Yet we live in this age of scarcity. I find that to be obscene. That is an indictment against the Government's bad management. We are living in an age of plenty, in a country so endowed and blessed, but we do not have enough for basic necessities. That surely is an indictment of the Government, the Minister of Finance and their mismanagement.

**Mr. Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia):** Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to make some comments and to ask a question of my colleague from Regina—Qu'Appelle. We have heard the same old speech from the Hon. Member many, many times, the frothing and foaming, the ranting and raving about all of the problems in the economy, about how terrible it is that programs unfortunately have to be reduced and that taxes have to be increased in order to meet a debt problem which has built up over the past 20 years.

There is no use going back over old ground. That has been talked about here before. The fact is that there is an enormous national debt and it has to be serviced. The tragedy is that the interest on that debt is taking up more and more of government revenue, thereby leaving less and less for other things, the kinds of programs that all of us here would like to see improved, enhanced and continued.

What is the answer in the face of that debt and that debt servicing problem? It seems that the choice is either to reduce Government expenditures, to increase Government revenues or, another alternative which is resorted to by other countries, to print money and debase