

Time Allocation

and innovative suggestions of Hon. Members. The Government is then forced, in its arrogance, to bring in something called time allocation, a fancy term for closure, to muzzle parliamentarians, to close off debate and to close off any further discussion and analysis of the collection and expenditure of \$29.55 billion.

We on this side of the House tried to negotiate an arrangement to allow relatively rapid passage of this borrowing request. We tried our best to ask the Government to borrow a certain amount of money until the end of this calendar year. The New Democratic Party put forward an amendment which in effect said to the Government: "Take what money you require up until the end of the year and we will debate the request for any other funds in 1985 as warranted by expenditures and planning." We tried to facilitate the movement of this particular Bill through the House. We tried to make an arrangement that was satisfactory to both sides, but we failed in that endeavour and the Government simply went blithely ahead with its original plan and indicated that it is not interested in hearing the voices of parliamentarians opposite or on its own benches. That is something that we feel very strongly should not have occurred, and for that reason, we will be voting against this motion at the first opportunity.

Mr. Keith Penner (Cochrane-Superior): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I have enjoyed this debate on Bill C-21, the borrowing authority Bill, which has lasted for several days. At various times I have been more than moderately amused by some of the comments made by Members opposite. I like hearing the ranting and railing about too much government spending and large deficits. I have heard a lot of rhetoric, Sir, and I have seen a lot of posturing. However, it is interesting that what Members opposite do not say is so very revealing.

Members opposite do not say where significant cuts could be made in the Government's overall spending program which amounts to some \$94 billion. The critic for the New Democratic Party spoke about suggestions that have been made in the House. We receive suggestions every day about how we as a Government could spend more money. Rarely do Members of Parliament tell us specifically where we could cut spending in very significant ways. I like the company of Members of Parliament, but the conversations that go on in that company are never about cuts but are, rather, about how the Government can do more. How often do we talk about where taxes could be increased and who will be hit hard? Very rarely. However, we are all in favour of tax decreases.

The critic for the New Democratic Party spoke about closing tax loopholes. We would not have to worry about that if we simply used the income tax system as it now exists and obliged Canadians who legitimately owe taxes to pay those taxes. However, if we do that we get a huge howl from opposition Members. They howl that Revenue Canada is somehow undermining democracy by collecting the taxes that are authorized by the House.

• (1550)

The Opposition says that we have too much spending and deficits which are too large. But where should we cut, Mr. Speaker? Where will the additional money come from? There is a great servant of this House, one whom every Member of Parliament respects, and that is the Auditor General. If we were to take all of his suggestions and carry them out carefully, using a scalpel with the skill of a surgeon rather than using a chopping axe as has been done in some parts of the country, notably British Columbia in its recent budget, and if we were very, very skillful, we would still have to borrow money, perhaps not \$29.5 billion, perhaps only \$29 billion but we would still have to borrow money. We must borrow because there are some very big needs in the country and they must be met. That is the legitimate reason for borrowing money.

The needs I refer to, Mr. Speaker, are health care, the unemployed, job creation, pensions, economic development, defence, and Indian affairs and northern development. These are expenditures that must be met, but today the revenues coming to the Government of Canada are less than they would be in a booming economy. There has been a recession and only now are we moving into a period of recovery. During that recovery we cannot forget those in our society who have needs.

Where could we get more revenue? Certainly not from the working poor or from the middle class who have been eloquently defended here in recent days. The New Democratic Party would say that we should go after companies and corporations, but not many of them are making huge profits these days. Sometimes we are told that we could collect deferred taxes, but that might result in plant closings, a reduction in research and development or less exploration. Tax increases are not "in". To help the recovery we should probably have more tax decreases than are now allowed by law in accord with the increase in the rate of inflation, a 5 or 6 per cent decrease in taxes this year.

Some Hon. Members have put forward the idea that governments should be run like any Canadian household. I look at a lot of households, Mr. Speaker, and find that they borrow. If a new house is needed, they go out and get a mortgage. If they need a new automobile—

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): They pay it back.

Mr. Penner: The Hon. Member says that they pay it back. That is the kind of empty statement that Hon. Members opposite toss out. When has my hon. friend bought a government bond or any other financial instrument that he has not paid back? They are always paid back. If someone needs an automobile he can get a personal loan. If there is a student in the family going to university or college who needs money for tuition fees, money for books or living away from home, it is not uncommon for the family to borrow. People borrow on the basis of need. I could tell my hon. friends that there are needs in our society and that the role of government is to respond to those needs.