

*Borrowing Authority*

have them become any more cynical than they already are.

When we deal with the Budget and this particular Bill, we must recognize that it is not just an exercise to discuss our own petty grievances. We are in a position to discuss matters that Canadians are talking about more and more. Every Canadian has had to deal with what the Finance Minister has brought before us. We are dealing with a Bill that will provide borrowing authority for the Government to pick up some \$24.8 billion. I am sure it is just coincidental but that is roughly the amount the Finance Minister hopes will be the deficit next year. It is beyond the wildest imagination of every Canadian to deal in real terms with this figure of \$28 billion. They deal with hundreds of dollars and thousands of dollars. They deal with buying groceries. They deal with the uncertainty of those people who cannot buy a home. What will the sales tax do to them? What is the impact of this Budget on their daughters and sons? What will the impact be in regions of the country where any type of reduction or slowdown in the economy will be disastrous?

• (1550)

I do not believe for a moment that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) or the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) had any intention of telling us that they were wrong last fall in the promises that were made, for example, to elect the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bouchard). It is amazing that hundreds of millions of dollars could be committed and in part spent last summer as though the bank vaults were open and there was no problem at all, because we have to get my friend into the House of Commons and into the Cabinet.

However, when we are talking about UIC benefits and the privatization of the Unemployment Insurance Program then there is no money from the Government at all. There is not a reduction, there is no money at all—unless, to be fair, there is a major catastrophe or a tremendous sense of urgency. If we continue with high interest rates, with deficit financing, and this type of borrowing, and the slowdown that many people are predicting in the economy, that urgent and emergency

situation will undoubtedly come about. It is not something that anyone looks forward to.

In closing, I hope the Government will recognize, as we all do, that there is not much choice in the matter. Canadians have not become totally acquiescent. They understand that it has gone a long way. The chairman of the Finance Committee suggested that someone might start a tax revolt. Politicians do not start tax revolts. They cause them.

**Mr. Nunziata:** I wish to congratulate my colleague on an excellent speech. I would like to indicate to him and to the House my serious concerns with respect to the Budget and the money the Government wants to borrow in order to meet its commitments. I am also concerned with what the Budget will do and what it has done to the social safety net that has taken years and years to develop. That social safety net makes Canada unique. For example, I am speaking of the Old Age Security Program, the Unemployment Insurance Program, the Family Allowance Program, the day care system, and the transfer payments that go from the federal government to the provincial governments. I am shocked that the Government should break its solemn commitment to the people of Canada with respect to the social safety net. I am also very concerned in terms of the impact it will have on Canadians and Canada generally in the years to come.

If we could turn the clock ahead a few years, perhaps to the year 2000, I shudder to think what the country will be like in the year 2000 and the years beyond with respect to those least able to help themselves. For example, what will happen when there is no longer an effective Old Age Security Program, or an effective Family Allowance Program, both of which are no longer universal? What will happen when the Government pulls out its funding with respect to day care, education, and health care? Those programs make Canada unique and make it the envy of the world.

I would like to ask my colleague about his concerns and his predictions in terms of that social safety net, and what may or may not be left of that safety net in the years to come, and the impact that it will have on future senior citizens, future single-parent families, and on future unemployed in Canada.