

Borrowing Authority

normal way. Those who are judged satisfactory will receive a bonus of 1 per cent of their salary, while those judged superior or outstanding will receive a 1.5 per cent bonus. There are between 5,000 and 6,000 public servants in the senior management categories who will be eligible for bonuses. I estimate that a maximum of 10 per cent of these are women.

There are a great many more women in the lower ranks of the Public Service, in the categories that are more vulnerable to lay-offs and job elimination. The President of the Treasury Board (Mr. de Cotret) has said that although 5,500 Public Service jobs, or person-years, were cut last year, in the end, because of transfers, natural attrition and so on, only 500 were actually laid off. It would be interesting to find out how many of those 500 were women and, in particular, how many were women supporting families. It would be interesting to know what standards and criteria the Government established to determine which jobs were to be cut and what their impact was on jobs held by women. This is information we have tried without success to obtain in the Public Accounts Committee.

We have also had a great deal of rhetoric from the Government on the subject of child care. The accredited day care centres can only accommodate 20 per cent of the children whose parents work outside the home. Of all the Canadian families with children under the age of 16, over one-half, or 51 per cent, are two-parent, two-earner families. There was nothing whatsoever in the Estimates with respect to day care. Yet last week in the House the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) promised the establishment of a "national comprehensive child care program". From where is the money to come? It is not in the Estimates. It is not in the Budget. We do not see any mention of it in the borrowing authority Bill. It is a program which is very much needed, but given the Government's success rate on keeping its promises Canadians may be excused if they wait to see action rather than putting their faith into words.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): If there are no questions or comments, I will recognize the Hon. Member for Mississauga South (Mr. Blenkarn) on debate.

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Madam Speaker, we have seen hypocrisy piled on hypocrisy by a Liberal Party which, first, says it will not support the borrowing authority Bill, and then proceeds to castigate the Government with respect to all sorts of cuts in expenditures ranging from training programs to education to transfers to the provinces. Somehow these Members seem to say that we are supposed to operate the country and increase training, transfers and benefits, while not increasing taxes or borrowing. They seem to say that we are supposed to go behind Parliament Hill and pick from the trees out there the money which is on them. That is the hypocrisy of the Liberal Party. It is also the hypocrisy of the New Democratic Party. That is why members of those Parties could never form a Government.

The people of the country may consider us to be down a bit right now, but they will certainly be looking at Members

opposite, too. As the people look at them, they will note what they did to the country. Over a period of time they took the nation from basically being in balance, where, aside from wartime, the taxes received were sufficient to pay the ordinary running expenses of the country, to the time when along came John Turner, the then Minister of Finance, now the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, who changed the system so that taxes went down on an indexed basis, and expenses went up on an indexed basis.

• (1630)

The year ending 1984-85 was the fiscal year when the present Government took over. The year had elapsed seven months by that time. The spending was in place, the orders were in place, and the staff were in place. If it had not been for Michael Wilson, our Minister of Finance, putting on the brakes in November of 1984, the deficit for that year would have bounced to well over \$40 billion. As it was, it was \$38.5 billion. Here they are, hypocrisy.

I have spoken on borrowing authority Bills since I was returned to the House in the 1979 election. I spoke when the Government was under the leadership of the Right Hon. Joe Clark. I also spoke when we were in opposition. In detail I have gone over the cost of the borrowings and the fiscal imbalance problems that are built into our system. As a Government, we have endeavoured to get a handle on it, get our arms around this problem. Bit by bit we are doing so, but it is not easy. It is very much like a frog trying to get out of a well. We go up a little, but then the expenses drive us down.

This year, \$28.5 billion of what we have to spend will go in interest to pay for money that was spent years ago. It goes in interest to pay the bills run up by the Government, supported by the Hon. Member for Trinity (Miss Nicholson). No wonder we have our problems. Yet the Hon. Member suggests that we spend more and tax less. What an interesting idea. She suggests that we find a money tree. That is the essence of their position, go find a money tree. I suppose we should go and print it as does Brazil or Argentina. That is what they were in the process of doing. The Government is turning it around, but it is not easy with the problems of regional disparity that the Official Opposition has alluded to. The Government knows about them, and that there is an unemployment problem of enormous proportions in western Canada that did not exist. Western Canada was dragging the country along, and it can no longer do that at the present time with the horribly low prices for oil. At one point oil went down to less than \$10 a barrel. Therefore, we are not able to receive the tax revenue from that source, nor are we able to cut back expenditures, because we have to pour more and more money into unemployment insurance and other benefits in order to help the west get back on its feet. It is not easy. But what does the Official Opposition suggest? It suggests that we should not tax as much, spend more, and run a larger deficit. "We will not let you have any borrowing authority", they say. That is a brilliant, progressive concept put forward by the Liberal Party.