

Government Orders

The Court Challenges Program is a different circumstance. I appreciate my hon. friend raising that. When the charter came in, we did not know what the legal implications of it were. I think it was most appropriate that the government set aside funds to assist Canadians who may have legitimate issues or challenges against the charter or indeed against the government to determine exactly what the extent of their rights were under the charter. I think it was appropriate that that fund existed for many years. Indeed, as a result of that fund we have a legacy of many court cases that have gone a long way toward clarifying the implications of the charter. There comes a time where the purpose for which the fund was established has been achieved. Therefore, as with other government programs, they should not be funded *ad nauseam*. They are established in response to a need and when that need has been attended to, that is the point at which the fund should cease to come out of the pocket of the taxpayer.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, today we are debating the bill wherein the government is asking this House for permission to borrow money. How much money do the Tories want? I guess that is the first thing we should decide. They want \$24,700,000,000. That is just so that Canadians know what it is we are discussing today.

We are discussing whether or not we should give those Tories \$24,700,000,000. There is no need to spend 20 minutes debating that question. The answer is no. No. This government does not have the confidence of this House to run the affairs of the nation nor, of course, should this government be encouraged to go on any further. This government should step aside and let someone else take over.

This government recently tabled its budget. In that budget it announced very little.

[*Translation*]

There is, for instance, a provision for using registered retirement savings plans to buy a principal residence. I am pleased that, at least in this respect, the government listened to the Liberal leader and member for Beauséjour who made just such a suggestion. That is something good. The Conservatives understand a few things.

A few days earlier, the government opposite also decided to reduce the amount of the down payment on a new house. Again, this is great. The government listened to the suggestions made by the Liberal Party. I must also point out that the government agreed to cut \$75 million spent on advertising and opinion surveys—maybe I should use the word propaganda—but anyway, I say again, that's great. It is a very good initiative. We must also remember that last year, with the government's prosperity program or prosperity agenda—I think that's what it's called—expenses had already increased by some \$25 million. Therefore, Canadians should not think that the government has rediscovered virtue. It is not quite that. The government simply reduced the excesses that were already in the budget.

Moreover, I am pleased to see that they have finally understood the importance of stimulating the production of ethanol in this country. I must congratulate the hon. member for Lambton—Middlesex, who has been urging the government to provide such incentives for a long time. Enough praise, Mr. Speaker, because the rest is not quite as rosy.

Several members asked for the creation of an economic recovery program. The member opposite who spoke a few moments ago told us that we were coming out of the recession and that things would improve. I hope so. However, I have in front of me an article by Eric Beauchesne, a journalist with Southam News, that gives us some facts.

[*English*]

This story is entitled: "Full recovery five years away".

• (1330)

Let me read what the story says: "The economy will not fully recover from the recession for another five years". That is what the finance department concedes in a sobering admission buried in the budget papers. "As bleak as the outlook is, the budget papers also warn that there is a risk that it could be worse". That is five years if things go right to get us out of the recession.

This is not according to the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. It is not according to an independent, objective person like Mr. Speaker either. No, no. That is not the way. That is according to the finance department of the minister across the way. Apparently it is going to