

less demanding on our federal treasury. But by the same token, revenues will accrue from the other side of the ledger. It is in this context that we have to recognize that if at all possible the recovery is expansionary and responsible.

Development over the past year and a half or so demonstrates that there has been no clear connection between interest rates and the deficit, and interest rates are considerably lower than in the pre-recession peak despite a rise in the federal deficit. This is not to suggest, however, that the interest rate developments are not affected by current events in the country to the south of us. Rather, during a cyclical downturn private demands—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): Order, please. The Chair must interrupt the Hon. Member to advise him that his time has expired.

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, it is an incredible day. Here we are engaged in a two-hour debate in which the Government has decided to use its voting power to close off freedom of speech on a borrowing Bill. On the same day, Mr. Speaker, we notice on the Order Paper the Government's intention to borrow another \$4 billion. Here we are closing off freedom of speech on the major Bill and yet at the same time introducing a motion which will lead to the Government's attempt to borrow another \$4 billion on top of \$29.55 billion. As I say, this is an incredible day.

I listened to the Hon. Member who just spoke. I wonder whether or not we could convince him to brag on the front page of his electioneering pamphlets about standing up in the House of Commons some 20-odd times to invoke closure, to invoke the denial of speech in this House. That is what Liberal back-benchers have done. They have supported the Government some 20-odd times in their declaration that freedom of speech is to be denied Members of this House. That is what they intend to do later this day.

Why, Mr. Speaker? Why do Members opposite prefer a society in which a Cabinet, a small group of elected people, in some cases elected and in some cases appointed, deny the freedom of speech? What would they replace it with? If they carry this propensity toward closure far enough, what will we have? We could have a dictatorship in which everybody submits. That is one of the logical, long-term consequences. I do not think Canadians, indeed North Americans, would stand for that. But what will we resort to if our freedom of speech is to be denied? Do we have to resort to fists? Do we have to resort to bullets and revolution?

● (1640)

The framers of the rules of the House of Commons put in place a provision to allow a government, the majority of the Members of this House, to cut off debate. But do any of us in our wildest imagination think that rule was put in place to be used routinely? That Members elected to this Chamber were not allowed to speak on matters of importance to the Canadian people? I do not think so. I think the rule was placed in the rule book to be used very, very sparingly, on occasion, when a

minority of Members were clearly abusing the House on something not particularly important. That is why the rule was put in there.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the majority Members of this House are abusing the rule. Looking back, I remember the Government advertising on television, with some \$6 million worth of flying geese, for the need for a new Constitution. Here we had the fundamental law of the land about to be changed. It was like a thunderbolt out of the blue; none of us had ever seen it, no provincial Premier had ever seen it. The Government laid it on this Chamber and two weeks later invoked closure to cut off debate. Two weeks, Mr. Speaker! That is an abuse of the rules of this House.

Today we stand here looking at a Bill to borrow \$29.55 billion. This will hurt businesses, hurt people on fixed incomes, and it will lead to increased unemployment. It is a fundamentally important Bill and the Government wants to cover it up by depriving Members of this House of the right to speak on the Bill, the right to alert Canadians to its implications. A little later this day the Government is going to ask us to vote on the motion and I suspect the Liberal Members will stand up and vote for closure. It will be more than 20 times that they have done that in the life of this Parliament. I suggest democracy is at risk through the abuse of the rules of this House and the willingness of the Liberal Party to participate in that kind of abuse.

This is a fundamentally important piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker. I heard Members opposite stand up earlier this day and say that we are just borrowing the money from Canadians, that all the interest will stay in the country. Mr. Speaker, technically that may have been a correct statement. In practical terms it is far from the truth. Canadians are net borrowers. This country cannot exist in this set of circumstances without borrowing money from abroad. Each time we do that, then some of the interest goes abroad. The Government of Canada might think it is borrowing Canadian money from Canadian banks, but lying behind that is the need of the Bank to borrow money abroad. What does that do? It drives down the value of the Canadian dollar, thereby increasing inflation.

When we stand in this House and ask for the right to debate the need to borrow this money, and the Liberal back-benchers are ready to stand up and say "No, we will deny you the right of free speech", then Canadians should ask themselves what is the Government trying to hide? What is it trying to cover up? The Government has told us it is going to be short \$24 billion this year but it is asking to borrow over \$29 billion. There is another motion in the Order Paper to borrow another \$4 billion. The Government wants to borrow \$9 billion more than it has told us it is going to spend. Why?

Do you think, Mr. Speaker, that perhaps the Government wants to create slush funds, to plough the money into Liberal ridings to try and bribe the voters? Do you think that is a possible explanation, Mr. Speaker? It is a burning question. In light of that, why does the Government want to move closure? It would just as soon the Canadian people never found out why the Government wants to borrow \$9 billion more than it has