the point. It has been suggested many times before that 90 seconds would be a reasonable time for a short and brief question.

Mr. Darling: I appreciate the comments of the Hon. Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Blais) regarding the many projects he has outlined. Those projects are included, I believe, in the Minister of Finance's budget which had some figures of $2.2 billion and then as high as $4 billion.

Mr. Blais: It was $2.4 billion.

Mr. Darling: Certainly that money has to be spent around there and I appreciate especially the publicity given to the proposed expenditure at the Department of Transport base in Parry Sound amounting to $5 million. But that $5 million is certainly not all being spent this year, as I wish it was. I was with the Minister of Supply and Services, I guess it was a couple of years ago, when he made this announcement. Expenditures are being made on a gradual basis and a lot of these projects he has mentioned are being done on a gradual basis. I have heard of many of the projects the Government is proposing and has undertaken. Some of them will not be finished for five or six years down the road.

We have heard for a number of years about the frigate program. When I first came here the Government was going to build those six frigates at a cost considerably less than it is now. Where are those six frigates now? They are still on the drawing board. That program comes through the Minister's Department so it is about time he got them going and got the frigates, as I say, divided around the country, two to be built in Nova Scotia, two in Quebec and two on the west coast. That will generate jobs but it is money already pledged; and I could go on and on about other similar projects.

Mr. Blais: Mr. Speaker, I would simply indicate that indeed I gave a wrong figure; it is not $4 million for the Agribition, it is $5.7 million. As to the hon. gentleman's comments, he knows full well that since the frigate program has been my responsibility, it has proceeded in accordance with the schedule set. In addition, the Hon. Member is also aware, is he not, of the two 800 class navy tenders that I had the pleasure to commission within his area. He fully recognizes that is public funding from federal coffers and he fully recognizes as well that 90 workers in Parry Sound depend on federal programs. Of course, he is very cognizant of that fact and I am very grateful for it.

Mr. Cosgrove: Mr. Speaker, in preparing its budget, and of course in coming to the deficit figures before us today, the Government took a lot of advice. I have before me a statement entitled "Ethical Reflections on the Economic Crisis from the Episcopal Commission for Social Affairs, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops". According to this statement, in recent years the Catholic Church has become increasingly concerned about the scourge of unemployment which plagues our society today and the corresponding struggles of workers in this country. The Bishops urge, Mr. Speaker, in developing strategies for economic recovery, that first priority must be given to the real victims of the current recession, namely the unemployed, the welfare poor, the working poor, the pensioners, native people, women and young people.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order. I invite the Hon. Minister to relate his comments or remarks to those made earlier by the Hon. Member for Parry Sound-Muskoka (Mr. Darling). The Minister is now quoting at length from a document.

Mr. Cosgrove: With respect, Mr. Speaker, I was indicating that this was part of the advice we received, that priority of expenditures should be for the unemployed, specifically those people I have made reference to. Therefore my question to the Hon. Member, who has spent a lot of time admonishing the Government for spending money to assist these people, specifically the $4.8 billion which is the main part of the budget designed to assist these people, is this. How would he suggest that the Government pay for that program designed to assist these people? By way of a deficit or by way of raising taxes? First of all, does he agree with the Bishops that this is an area the Government should address? Secondly, does he believe the deficit should be increased to do it? If he does not, what other ways does he recommend? Does he recommend an increase in taxes?

Mr. Darling: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to the Minister, certainly I agree with the statement made by the Bishops. Certainly I agree that there are many disadvantaged people, unemployed people and people on welfare whom the Government must help. No question about that. We know the Government has to borrow because it does not have the money.

The Bill before us is for $14 billion. I am no financial genius but the Government is not bankrupt at the present time. As of April 30, a good many of us have been paying our taxes, not requesting additional tax refunds, so the Government should be in a most liquid financial position at this particular time. If the Bill had been brought in for $10 billion, I do not think the Government or the Minister of Finance would have gotten anywhere near the criticism they have. According to the records, the Government has that $2 billion at the present time. God knows how much has been pouring in since April 30.

• (1250)

Our Party is saying that the Government is too greedy and is asking for too much. If it spends the $10 billion and returns to Parliament with legitimate reasons to borrow more, Parliament will certainly grant the authority to borrow more money to carry on with worthy projects. But it is asking for too much and it will simply have the money sitting in the bank and be paying interest on it. I know high finance. When you have a large amount in the bank you get some interest on it but you do not get as much as you have to pay the bank. The banks have a sweet deal going for themselves. It loans the Government $14 billion while the Government has perhaps $5 million sitting in the bank. It is the Government's money and they will make money on the deal. That is the point that I disagree with