

to be specific about where we in the NDP or those in the Conservative Party would make cuts if we were in Government. Such cuts could easily be listed because over the years the Auditor General has given us thousands of examples of where Government has badly managed its expenditures.

● (1710)

What does a Government have to do? Quite a number of practical suggestions have been made over the past number of weeks that this Bill has been before us as to how the deficit could be cut. Government Members must ask themselves whether they should continue to advocate the kind of deficiencies that appear in the operations of Government because deficits just do not happen. They are either planned or accidents of bad management or planning. In many cases, analysing Government spending turns up examples of bad management and bad planning.

My constituents ask me why this was allowed to happen, how the Government ever got in the situation in which it finds itself. They ask whether this kind of deficit financing and borrowing is of value to the country and whether it has been necessary over a long period of time.

For many years Canadian Governments did well in balancing their budgets. The first big spender in Government was Diefenbaker. Every year of the Diefenbaker Government there was a fairly large deficit. When we look at it now, it appears as though it were a small deficit. That was the beginning of the big spenders. The Pearson Government which followed balanced a couple of budgets. However, since this administration has been in power, this Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has been the second of the big spenders.

This Government is well assisted in the expending of money by Crown corporations which the Government says must operate at arm's length. We in this Party are often attacked by the Liberals and Conservatives who say we are the big spenders. However, the Government record in Saskatchewan proves that even though we put before the people of that Province good programs and expenditures, we did not plan large deficits such as this Government is doing.

Saskatchewan was the deepest in debt of all Provinces in 1944 when the first CCF Government was elected. After 30 years, with the exception of Alberta, it had the least public debt. Over those years, it had put in place some of the best social programs in Canada, if not the world, and paid for them. That is what I mean when I say that planned spending is what is important.

Last year the Conservative Government of Saskatchewan had a larger deficit than in the previous 77 years. The planned deficit this year will be higher than in the previous 78 years. If it continues in this way, it will soon catch up to the federal Government.

When we allow the Government to proceed with a Bill such as the one before us, Bill C-151, it is our responsibility to see whether the Government is a good custodian of the taxpayers' money. It is part of our responsibility to ensure that what the Government spends is well spent. For example, if in the past it

was a good custodian and spent well, maybe then we could be expected to support it when it asks for more money.

Let us look at the record of this Government. Let us look at the last annual Report of the Auditor General. I could go through many such Reports of the Auditor General and pick out thousands of authentic examples of bad expending of money. It is interesting to note that the Auditor General said in his 1982 report. It will paraphrase rather than read the exact quote. He stated that the examples they chose to put in the 1982 Report were not the worst or the best examples. If they are not the worst examples, I would like to see them, because what he listed in his Report illustrates the weakness in Government spending and control.

I would like to list some of those examples. A number of people who appeared before the committee talked about how the Government could take control of its spending so that spending did not continue, absolutely out of control, as stated by the previous Auditor General. There are a number of obvious examples in the Auditor General's Report. Statutory expenditures over which Parliament has no control are quite often over-expended and are often indexed. They were set 15 years ago and have been indexed ever since without any need or effort to make those increases viable in any way. They just increased automatically. We have no control over expenditures by Crown corporations. We have no control over money put out by this Government in the form of letters of comfort. Parliament does not have control, nor does the Government it seems, over tax credits established over many years and never reviewed expenditures. Let us look at some of these. All of these together have led to a \$250 billion deficit, \$180 billion in the public accounts and the rest in areas over which Parliament has no control. It is time we got that kind of control over expenditures, that we had some input with regard to the expenditures of the Government.

● (1720)

Mr. Bert Hargrave (Medicine Hat): Mr. Speaker, if I have caused some disappointment over there, I am genuinely sorry. It is my intention to join in the debate this afternoon. Rather than being somewhat repetitious by talking about what has been repeated many times, I think that it would be appropriate if my remarks dealt with the agricultural sector, a subject which I feel more at home with and which I think should be discussed at this time.

I want to talk about borrowing in the agricultural sector, and more particularly about the agricultural sector's repayment of borrowed funds. It is the repayment of borrowed funds that has brought on what I would consider to be a very serious crisis in the agricultural sector right across Canada. This crisis has been most noticeable over recent months.

I must say that it is one thing for the Government to come before Parliament and ask for borrowing authority for \$26.7 billion but quite another to conscientiously explain how that amount may ever be repaid. If a member of the agricultural sector buys a farm or any part of a farm, repayment is a pretty important factor. The farmer dare not ignore the aspect of