

Borrowing Authority

Everywhere one goes in the country, one is asked what people can do, how they can help. There is a general sense of helplessness across the land that is serious.

At the outset of my remarks on Bill C-143, Mr. Speaker, I should like to say that I am frustrated with the decay that is setting into the process of parliamentary Government. I am frustrated at the obvious loss of the fundamental principle of ministerial responsibility, and frustrated with the art of stonewalling, not only in the House but throughout the committee system. I am frustrated at the political process the Liberals have adopted in governing the country.

My speech on Bill C-143, the borrowing authority for \$19 billion, will attempt to outline the basis of this frustration.

Bill C-143 appears to be an afterthought, as if not part of a plan but simply a debt on a risk—a risk that we could not calculate with any accuracy. The annual deficit proves this. When we started the budgetary process in this Parliament under the former Minister of Finance, we heard it was going to be \$19 billion, then it moved up to \$23 billion or \$24 billion, and now it is \$29 billion. It is interesting that when the original \$19 billion was announced to the House I was told by a person in the Department of Finance it would actually be well over \$25 billion.

I am one who believes that this \$19 billion borrowing authority is the result of a plan. So far as Bill C-143 links us to that plan, we are really debating a part of that plan today. As I see it, this borrowing authority is a link and there are three aspects to this link—the past, the future through the present.

The common thread through these aspects is leadership. Through the recent past we have seen a dramatic change in expectations throughout the country—expectations of our responsibilities toward ourselves and toward the state. By this I mean expectations of the rewards for duty. Expectation of what the Government has to offer.

Let us just slip down the west coast of North America and look at the State of California. It has a population about equal to that of all Canada. It is a State that has wealth, people, climate and everything going for it, yet it is bankrupt. It is now paying its civil servants and contractual obligations in IOUs as a result of the rising of the people for Proposition 13.

We are talking about expectations from and of employers throughout the land; we are talking about expectations from and of unions throughout the country. Out of this change in expectations came the displacement of individual self-reliance with the notion of the collective.

Collectives that bring people together in a common purpose as a means of improving the quality of life, are instinctive to Canadians and are a part of our heritage. Collectives have been positive forces throughout our history and in our society. The authority of the state as a collective has been with us all along. But when this authority becomes arbitrary to serve one man's view of the collective at the expense of others, at the expense of our heritage, our traditions and conventions, then the collective breaks down.

The plan was deliberate in 1968. It was made possible by our prosperity. The plan was to use the notion of collectives to serve the ends, the objectives, the purist thinking of a group of political figures. Leadership was the key. The philosopher king became the Messiah.

From that point in 1968 to the mid-seventies, we were given a mindset across our land. Government would do our thinking. The Government would take care of it. Throughout this period too many people gave up a sense of self-reliance. The seeds of socialism were sown. Cradle-to-grave mentality was accomplished by the politics of expectation. This was accompanied by the politics of confrontation. The confrontation which evolved in federal-provincial relationships, the confrontation which was encouraged in business-union relationships and the regional confrontations were all a part of the plan. Confrontation by definition delivers a winner-loser society; the winners impose their way on the losers. This is why the plan is anti-collective. Loto Canada did not happen by accident but rather by design—the winner-loser syndrome.

• (1550)

The deception I have described up to this point links Bill C-143, this \$19 billion borrowing authority, to the past. I will now discuss the link of this plan to the future. The deficit of today translates into an inheritance of neglect which will deliver hardship and burden on our children and grandchildren tomorrow. This is where I differ with the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway.

Bill C-143 exemplifies the serious lack of leadership today. Real statesmen never address the problems of the day at the expense of those that follow tomorrow. Real leaders would deal with the circumstances of today, now and today, so that tomorrow will be more hopeful and the emerging generations will be allowed a dream or two. It is no wonder that the youth of today are disillusioned and hold this institution in such low regard and contempt. They have very good reason to be concerned. The extravagant and spendthrift recklessness of this Liberal Government has already placed an unbearable burden on their backs.

I draw to the attention of the House the Canada Pension Plan crisis which will be with us at the turn of the century. The demographics of today and tomorrow indicate that there will be a larger number of people in the country retired and drawing upon social plans than workers able to sustain them. The big-Government, out-of-control spending exemplified in Bill C-143 serves only the power needs of an elite at the expense of the people who can contribute most to the prosperity of the country, and this plan is also at the expense of those entering the work force tomorrow. The tragedy is that with Bill C-143 and its predecessor borrowing Bills about which we have heard today, we are removing the freedom to decide or the freedom to choose from those who follow tomorrow. There will be a decade and a half of very serious, hard work ahead of the next Government which takes charge of the federal institution in Canada.