

Borrowing Authority

My point is that we authorized Government funds based on a budget in June, 1982 which said that six and five would be the law of the land. That law is not for all Canadians. Some Canadians who are being paid by the Liberal Government are receiving increases much in excess of the six and five program, and for that this Government must be accountable.

The third budget, presented by the Minister of Finance in October, 1982, can basically be called the NEED budget. The only significant program in that budget was the establishment of the NEED program, presumably for those who have exhausted their UIC benefits. Those people were to be provided with employment. By the Government's own figures, 3,000 to 5,000 jobs were created. That is so insignificant in the face of our present unemployment that it is a laugh. The budget has created almost no jobs. The only jobs created are for the ads and brochures put out across this country by the Government. The jobs for those who lost their UIC benefits or have never received them because they have not had a job are not there. This program is not creating jobs at a very fast pace for these Canadians.

● (1140)

And so, Mr. Speaker, we come to the next budget, the budget which we have been told will be introduced in April of this year. We are told that that particular budget will deal with the problem of job creation. These are the hints, the leaks and the indications which we are given. But where is that money going? To what use would that money be put and who would receive that money? I endorse the motion of the Hon. Member for Comox-Powell River (Mr. Skelly) who said that this Bill should not be passed, that the subject matter of this Bill should be sent to committee for study. Surely to God, Mr. Speaker, we should not pass a Bill which gives the Government \$19 billion more without any indication that the Government knows where the money is going. This Government has no economic plan and no knowledge of where it is going.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, this Liberal Government is like the chicken which had its head chopped off and still jumps around the coop. This Government is dead but has not the decency to die.

Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley-Hants): Mr. Speaker, I echo the thoughts of other Hon. Members who have participated in this debate on Bill C-143, a massive Government borrowing Bill which asks the Parliament of Canada, without any plan, design or financial statement, let alone budget, to give to it \$19 billion. This Bill, presented without any plan as to what is going to happen to that money, is in my humble opinion a direct insult to this institution and an affront to the Canadian people, an affront to the Canadian taxpayer who will eventually have to pay back this money through whatever taxes the present Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) imposes whenever he brings in another budget. You do not borrow \$19 billion without interest. There is no more free lunch. Canadian taxpayers of the future are going to have to pay this money back. It is completely unacceptable to give the blank cheque which is asked for here by the present Government.

Other Hon. Members, Mr. Speaker, have tried to analyse the implications of both the Estimates and spending plans as well as the \$19 billion asked for in this Bill. I share the view of most Hon. Members that, frankly, most Canadians, even Hon. Members of this Parliament, just cannot comprehend what \$1 billion is. Many years ago C. D. Howe said "What's a million?" Now the question is, "What's a billion?"

I read with interest an article in *Saturday Night* of February, 1983, where Dian Cohen was quoted as she tried to reduce "billions" to a comprehensible figure. She said, and I quote:

"The big race has begun. The object of the exercise is for the government of Canada ... to spend its way through \$76-billion before midnight March 31, 1983. That means spending \$200-million a day every day."

That is a tremendous amount of money in terms of the mismanagement of this Government in the last period of 15 years, really since the present Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has been in charge. Government spending has been out of control. Spending has gone from \$1,837 to \$8,000 plus per taxpayer in that 15-year period. Per capita spending has gone from \$595 per Canadian to \$3,281 per Canadians; interest on the debt to the taxpayer from \$215 to \$1,600 plus in 1982-83; per capita, from \$70 to \$682. And it goes on and on.

In a most interesting column, Mr. Don McGillivray in *The Gazette* on February 22, 1983 tried to define "What's a billion?" He prefaced his remarks by saying that if you had to spend \$100 an hour, and you spent that sum for a 16-hour day, taking, I believe, Sundays off, you were into the situation that even at that pace, with two weeks' annual vacation, you would be spending only \$480,000 a year. On that basis, how long would it take to spend a billion? The answer is, and I quote from the article:

The answer is that it would take about 2,083 years to spend \$1 billion. In other words, you would have had to start before the birth of Christ, when the Roman Empire was just beginning under Augustus.

You would have spent about half your billion dollars by the time William the Conqueror invaded England in 1066. When Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492 you would be about three-quarters done. By the time the United States declared independence from Britain in 1776, you would have only about one sixth of the billion left to spend.

Canada's Confederation in 1867 would find you with less than 10 per cent of the money still on hand.

That is just for one billion, Mr. Speaker. He has some other interesting cogitations as to spending an \$80 billion or \$90 billion budget which, in effect, is close to our estimated budget, but I have no time in this ten-minute abbreviated form of debate to delve into that. We are talking in Bill C-143 of \$19 billion. As the Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald), among others, has said, this is the largest borrowing Bill ever asked by any Government and is just another reflection of the Government's arrogance toward the Canadian people. If it takes that length of time to spend \$1 billion, a little over 2,000 years, you are almost back in the days of the caveman, 38,000 years ago, with the \$19 billion.

I have tried quickly to give some human dimension to the spending of this Government. All too quickly, with this ten-minute rule, I have tried to put this Government's massive spending into some comprehensible perspective, even though