

testing facility here. We are looking at ways and means of solving the cold water navigation problems which are so close to the hearts of all Newfoundlanders now that our offshore resources are going to be—excuse the expression—exploited.

If I can split myself in two, I will certainly take advantage of the opportunity to learn more in the National Finance Committee.

Senator Flynn: I have just a few questions. The first of these, of course, relates to the comments made by Senator Everett, as well as to those of Senator Doody just before he resumed his seat.

My understanding is that the Minister of Finance, or the Minister of State (Finance), would like to have this bill receive royal assent tomorrow. The point that Senator Doody was making, therefore, was not by way of any criticism of the National Finance Committee. If there were no rush of this kind, I am quite sure that Senator Everett would agree to have his committee meet only next week, in order to accommodate honourable senators, and not rush the bill through tomorrow.

I think the deputy leader owes it to the Senate to tell us the reasons why the government wants this bill to receive royal assent tomorrow. Is it necessary in order to arrange for a bond issue right away, or will it make any difference if the bill receives royal assent only next week?

My second question concerns the next borrowing authority that we shall receive during the course of this year. I understand that the \$6.6 billion requested under this bill was calculated at the time of the budget in November 1981. Apparently, on the basis of what we heard this morning, the government is expecting a deficit of \$16 billion. In the light of that, what would be the additional amount that the government would require under the next borrowing authority bill?

Finally, I have a technical question which deals with clause 2(3) of this bill, which states:

(3) For greater certainty, any amount borrowed under this section or any other authority conferred by Parliament before the coming into force of this section may be borrowed in a currency other than that of Canada and may be repaid in the currency in which it was borrowed.

The deputy leader said that the purpose of this subclause is to clarify the problem, once and for all. It seems strange to me, however, that there should be a subclause in this bill which deals only with the authority for this year, and indeed, only for a part of this year, rather than by means of an amendment to the Financial Administration Act, or by means of a separate clause in this bill. This authority is going to be lost once the bill is exhausted, and it will be really difficult to find authority for the government to retain the power to borrow in any kind of currency, as is provided here. This is certainly a very technical defect, but it is an important one.

I would like to know if the deputy leader has something to say about this, and if he would inform the Senate accordingly.

The Hon. the Speaker pro tem: Honourable senators, I wish to inform the Senate that if Senator Frith speaks now his

speech will have the effect of closing the debate on second reading of this bill.

Senator Smith: Honourable senators, I would like to comment, if I may, on this matter of speed.

I quite agree with Senator Everett, as a member of his committee for quite a few years, that it is his habit, unfailingly, to provide, within the limits of his powers, full opportunity to members of his committee to examine whatever matter may be before them; but if he is under the constraint of being required, insofar as one can require a chairman to do anything within a certain time, to report this bill tomorrow or the next day, it seems to me very difficult to understand how the members of the committee are going to have time sufficiently to inform themselves to conduct the adequate examination before this committee that they ought to be able to.

Consequently, I would like to add my protest against this business of authorizing the government to borrow \$6.6 billion on the basis of a bill that was put on my desk, at least, an hour ago, and is expected to get third reading tomorrow. That seems to be an extraordinary situation. It is not as though this government, which does seem to stumble along from day to day and minute to minute, did not, long since, have sufficient knowledge of what it was going to require in this respect, and to introduce this bill into the Commons and get it through the Commons in time to allow the Senate, as well as the Commons, a full opportunity to examine it, and the reasons behind it, after being able to inform themselves as to the factors which it is necessary to understand in order to know whether or not they should report the bill.

Senator Frith: Honourable senators, I would like to deal first with the intervention of Senator Doody, and the first and major part of his concerns that were shared by Senator Smith and Senator Flynn.

I can understand why the borrowing authority, which is so closely connected to the budget, can raise criticism of the budget along with the general financial policies of the government; but the borrowing authority bill itself is really a technical follow-up to the budget.

There are, basically, two sources of funds that the government can turn to in order to implement its budget and its statutory requirements: the borrowing authority; and supply. I cannot agree that there is anything extraordinary about this, as Senator Smith and Senator Doody have implied. I do not mean to suggest that the observations made by Senator Doody were in any way out of order, because there is another opportunity in this connection to deal with the government's financial policies; but the borrowing authority last year was dealt with in exactly the same way as it is being dealt with this year. I wanted to check back on how it has been done in the past, and I do not want to suggest that it is purely routine.

An Hon. Senator: \$6.6 billion—purely routine?

Senator Frith: The point is that the \$6.6 billion in itself is not routine; it is part of the budget that has been duly debated and questioned. The point I am making is that once any