

Government Orders

those transfers that are obviously needed. What we need to have is some sensibility from this House of Commons.

I think it is the responsibility of members to stand and speak not of the problems but of the solutions. The suggestion of a solution to beat up on corporate taxes by grabbing and taking and making sure that companies cannot exist and go broke is really not much of a solution. It only adds to the problem.

Adding to the debt only adds to the problem because the debt must be carried. It is about time we had some solutions other than the cry of demand and the complaint of cutback. There is no cutback here. There is a substantial increase of transfer over and above inflation at a time when government revenues are suffering and suffering greater than they have for a long period of time.

It is time we had some responsible comment from the New Democratic Party members and not crazy rhetoric. They ought to know better and if they do not know better then the people of Canada ought to listen closely to them and see what a wreck they are making of Ontario and maybe they will make the same wreck of their province of British Columbia. Who knows? I can say to you, Madam Speaker, that you cannot spend yourself rich.

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Madam Speaker, this is the third time I am speaking on this bill. This is something I do not usually do. I feel if you have spoken once on the subject, you have had your say. The damages that this bill will do to our country are so great, however, I feel that I must speak even a third time. Somehow this government is not listening.

I would not mind if the government did not listen to the Official Opposition of this House. I would not mind if this government would not listen to the New Democratic Party. But I do mind, and I am angry as hell, when this government has stopped listening to Canadians. It has stopped listening to Canadians coast to coast to coast.

The government members experienced this during the winter break just as we did. I am sure they took the opportunity as I did to go and visit the businesses in their area and talk to the people in their area. They would get the true picture of what this country has come down to

after seven years of Tory government. I used to hear: "Tory times are tough times". I certainly believe it now.

I canvassed the businesses along some of the main streets in Toronto: King Street, Queen Street, Dufferin and Dundas. It is a little scary to see five or six stores closed. The windows are boarded up. Some are for lease and some for sale because of the damage of the recession. It is scary.

I looked up a small business that employed 50 people. It was a firm which imported fabric from Pakistan and Poland to make napkins and tablecloths. During the 1988 election that company warned me: "Mr. Flis, if the government brings in the free trade agreement, I will not survive". Out of interest I went to this firm to see how it was doing and to compliment the firm. I went there. The doors were closed. The firm did not survive the free trade agreement.

The businesses which are hanging in tell me they have lost 30 to 50 per cent of their revenues over last year.

• (1540)

I ask what the cause is. What is happening? Why are you losing business, why are you going under? Some who are still in business say they are just hanging in, but if this recession lasts much longer, they are going under as well.

I think the minister led Canadian businesses astray when almost a year ago he said that the recession was over. People built up their hopes. "Oh, well, if the recession is almost over I think I can hang in there. I will invest a little more, et cetera". A year later the recession is not over. The government fooled the people.

Getting back to the causes, one cause was the mismanagement of this government; the second cause was the free trade agreement; the third cause was the GST; and then just an over-all frustration. Many businesses would tell me to tell the government to stop taxing them to death. They felt it was the over-taxation that was killing their businesses.

I said to them that we have a great country here, we have built in certain social safety nets, we have an excellent medicare system, an excellent education system. Someone has to pay for that. The government has to get revenue to pay for these things. What is your solution? Again, their solution was to stop taxing them to death. They want the government to put money into people's pockets, quickly, now, not a year from now. They also said build up confidence. The people who have the money are afraid to spend it. They are afraid to spend it because they do not know whether they will have a job next week or next month. The people who