

receivable unless the sales tax were paid immediately. This manufacturer was keeping people off the unemployment insurance rolls, Madam Speaker. He was paying federal sales tax and generating wealth in this country which would benefit all Canadians. The government's attitude was not one of encouragement but rather to smother him with so much with red tape that he was threatened with the possibility of having to go out of business.

I am pleased to report that when the matter was brought to the attention of the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Cullen) he was responsive. An arrangement has been worked out so that payment can be made at a later date. But it should not have been necessary for this man to come to his member of parliament. He should never have run into difficulty with the bureaucrats who just put impediment after impediment in his path.

The third area which affects my constituents, although the plant is not in my constituency, is the situation at the consumer appliances division of Westinghouse Canada. Westinghouse Canada is attempting to sell its operation to another company and there are two bids, one from White Consolidated Industries which is foreign controlled, and the other from G.S.W. Ltd. A number of my constituents work at the Orangeville plant which employs about 200 people and I know the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) has raised the matter of the Hamilton plant and the jobs there. The workers at the Orangeville plant are not unionized and are very concerned about their future.

The sale of Westinghouse Canada to White Consolidated Industries was blocked by the Foreign Investment Review Agency and I am not quarrelling with that. What bothers me is that the decision on whether the sale goes through has been delayed so long by the government. We expected a decision last week, but now the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce is away on a two-week trip to the Far East so the workers still have no assurance about their future. The effect on their morale is bad; they are concerned about their jobs, and they have a right to be concerned. For this reason I recently wrote to the minister expressing concern and saying that an early answer to this problem must be found. The paramount concern must be the protection of jobs of Canadian workers, and guarantees must be given. I know that GSW Ltd. has offered guarantees in its Hamilton and Orangeville plants, but I am not aware of guarantees given by White Consolidated Industries. That is of concern.

● (2110)

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order, please. I regret to interrupt to hon. member, whose time has expired.

Some hon. Members: Carry on.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Does the House agree unanimously?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

An hon. Member: For not more than one hour.

Productivity and Trade

Mr. Beatty: Madam Speaker, my colleague says that I should speak for not more than one hour. I hope to be a good deal shorter than that.

I am concerned about the sale of Westinghouse Canada. At present the consumer appliance industry in Canada is divided into six roughly equal parts. The company which gains control of Westinghouse Canada will have dominance in the Canadian market, or will dominate the consumer appliance market. This is a matter for concern. The government's previous approach to an industrial strategy for Canada has been to take the sector by sector approach. It favoured control being exercised by a Canadian corporation in each sector. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce should look closely at this matter. Of vital importance is the question of the productivity of Canadians, and decisions which could affect our ability to compete abroad. I am not saying that the minister should decide one way or another in this regard. I merely say that one criterion governing his actions should be the protection of jobs of affected workers and the need for Canadian dominance in this important sector.

As members of this House know, the government spends large amounts on big corporations. The hon. member for York-Simcoe mentioned the Export Development Corporation, which makes available hundreds of millions of dollars to large industries. I am concerned about the small businessman. We have paid too little attention to our small businessmen and farmers. They are the most productive. The wolf is never far from their door, and they must be productive in order to make ends meet. The government should pay some attention to this area, instead of making money available merely to big business. Compared to the big businessman, the small businessman is smothered in red tape, swamped by high taxes and must compete with the Unemployment Insurance Commission, which is in a dreadful mess.

Unlike the Prime Minister I am a strong advocate of the free market system. It is time to lift the burden from the back of the small businessman. It is time big business carried a share of the load. The government's priorities have been exactly the reverse. If the free market system is dead in Canada, as the Prime Minister suggests, it is dead largely because of government intervention, which protects large businesses but does little for small businesses.

The government should adjust the tax system to provide incentives for productivity. Under the present wage and price program workers may win up to 2 per cent for productivity increases. Many economists feel this figure is too low and that stronger emphasis should be given to encouraging increased worker productivity. I agree. The government should act in this area. I therefore hope the government will re-assess part of its controls program and allow greater incentives for productivity. For example, why not change the tax structure in such a way as to encourage workers to invest in their company? I find that concept exciting. It would give a worker a stake in his job, be an incentive to greater productivity, and give him some measure of security for the future. If our system needs improving the government should encourage incentives for industry, and encourage workers to invest in their firms.

Present day conditions are critical. If the government takes strong action to restore the health of the economy we