

*Guarantee of Loans to Small Businesses*

**Mr. Howard:** I hear a noise from the back from the man who claims he is not a communist. My point of order is that the Minister of Finance has indirectly cast a reflection on the reason why I introduced an earlier amendment. May I say that it was not a frivolous amendment and it was not designed to obstruct the progress of this bill and I would therefore ask the minister to withdraw his allegation which is not true.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** I withdraw nothing. I am speaking about the assertion of the hon. member for Essex East—whom we welcome back to the house after his absence—and his assertion that co-operation has been extended by the official opposition with regard to this measure. I would like to tell him, for his information, because he joined us I believe only yesterday, that we spent a full day on the resolution stage of this measure last week, and in various stages here we have already consumed something like four days.

This is a measure that the opposition professed to welcome; it is a measure that the opposition supported to a man on second reading. There was not a voice raised in opposition to it, and yet now that we are in committee we do not seem to be able to make any progress. This does not sound a bit like co-operation, Mr. Chairman. I would hope that with the merits of this measure having been acknowledged by the opposition and welcomed by representatives of those organizations of small businesses that are going to derive benefit from it, we could address ourselves to getting on with it instead of going back and debating things that have already been debated all day today as well as last evening.

It is not a long measure. There are about three more pages of legislation. I would hope, Mr. Chairman, if we wish to extend the benefit of this measure as soon as possible to those whose need of intermediate credit has been acknowledged by all parties in this house, that we have the opportunity of doing it now, but I think it will take something more serious than has been happening of late to achieve that purpose.

The hon. member for Essex East asks about the number to be employed. No one can pinpoint the number of people who will derive employment at any one particular time, but we have been assured by the representatives of the retail organizations in this country that they see \$75 million worth of credit being taken up at once by retail businesses alone in the renovation, enlargement and modernization of their premises. I think that that amount of construction business, not to mention the work

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that goes into the construction of equipment as well as the on-site work, holds the promise of tens of thousands of jobs. I would suggest that this objective is one that, having regard to the general support expressed for the measure in the house, warrants our expeditious treatment of it.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** Mr. Chairman, the minister has spent considerable time in lecturing the committee, and that is his privilege, if he wishes to consume the time of the committee in this manner. But what the hon. gentleman fails to recognize is that if he is at liberty to tell other hon. members how they shall conduct themselves, we on this side are at liberty to inquire from the government what precise benefits by way of giving work are likely to flow from this measure.

The hon. member has said that we have given support to the principle of this bill. That is true. This bill, so far as it goes, has many commendable features. No one has denied that. It is commendable at this time that the government should be prepared to guarantee loans to cover the purchase, installation, renovation, improvement or modernization of equipment of a kind usually affixed to real or immovable property; the purchase, renovation, improvement or modernization of equipment of a kind not usually affixed to real or immovable property; the renovation, improvement or modernization of premises; or the alteration or extension of premises. This is desirable, and undoubtedly some people will be put to work as a result of this measure. But the government comes forward with a blare of trumpets and says that it is bringing in legislation that is going to deal with the severe problem of unemployment in this country and this bill is offered as evidence in support of that statement. I say to the minister, he has not given us any evidence tonight, or during the discussion of the bill, that supports his statement.

**Some hon. Members:** Order; sit down.

**The Chairman:** May I remind the committee that standing order 59 (2) says:

Speeches in committee of the whole house must be strictly relevant to the item or clause under consideration.

We are now studying clause 2 of the bill and therefore only discussion on clause 2 is relevant. I am sure that the exchange which has taken place had more to do with the principle of the bill than the clause under consideration.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** Mr. Chairman, there is no quarrel with what you have said. I submit to you that what I have said does not in any way detract from the character