

Government Orders

While there are people who have said that simply is a result of the interest over the years, we know that is patently false.

[Translation]

I conclude by reiterating the support of my party. We believe that this is a step in the right direction but we want the government to go a little farther. Our party would also like the government to consider an in-depth review of the heavy burden of government regulations on business people. We would also like the government to review the tax rate on these businesses and to ensure that in a society such as ours these businesses are as free as possible to make the decisions necessary for their health and well-being.

[English]

We want to support this bill. It is a step forward. We encourage the government to look at other areas such as reducing paperwork and making sure the taxes are not overwhelming to the point where we chase people out of the business or we create unnecessary bankruptcies, a very serious phenomenon.

Finally we endorse the idea that while governments have to be aware of what is happening in this sector, they should not interfere unduly. There are a lot of bright men and women out there who know how to operate a business and really do not need help from government. In fact help from government can be very destructive.

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to enter into the debate on Bill C-99 respecting the Small Businesses Loans Act.

Through my lifetime I have experienced being in small business, first in Saskatchewan in farming. It high time the country realized that farming can be a small or medium sized business and in some cases a big business. Somehow we have one rule for farmers who run a small business or a medium sized business and another one for the person who runs a business in a city.

• (1540)

After farming my family moved to Ontario and opened up a small restaurant business. With seven in the family all working together and hiring three waitresses, the little restaurant called "Lakeview Diner" was very

successful. We could not have managed had we not been able to obtain a loan. Thanks to a local bank loan and money obtained from selling the farm in Saskatchewan we got into quite a thriving little business. Therefore I speak with a bit of experience.

During December and January when the House was not sitting I visited many businesses in Parkdale—High Park. I was very pleased when I visited a business that was successful and was doing more business than at the same time the year before. I could count those on the fingers of one hand. The rest of them were asking: "When will the recession be over? What are you going to do to help small businesses? We are going under. I may be able to survive another six months but no longer".

When I asked what the problem was and how the government could help small business, usually the answer was: "Stop taxing us to death". Others would say that the GST was killing them with red tape, the paperwork and the taxes. Some even told me they preferred the GST-type tax to be hidden somewhere so that customers would know it is one price and that the price they pay is on the tag, instead of playing around with different prices.

Everyone hoped that 1993 would begin successfully with the economy taking on an upward trend. Unfortunately that is not happening. As a federal government, as provincial governments and as municipal governments we have to put our heads together to help small businesses. That is why I would like to add my support to Bill C-99. I am for anything that will help small businesses, providing of course the government accepts some of the amendments we are putting forward.

We have said over and over that small and medium sized businesses are the backbone of the country. They provide 80 per cent of the jobs. They provide family incomes. They provide jobs beyond the family. Yet, when it comes to help for small businesses, it is not there.

We have been hearing in this House about growing food banks in Montreal, Vancouver and Toronto. What do we do to try to correct that ill in our society? Do we get more volunteers out and throw some more money here or there? If we really wanted to get rid of food banks we would help small businesses to create more jobs. If people had jobs they would not have to stand in lines at food banks.