

business community today and could have extended the cash accounting clause on page 33 of the bill, to the small business community.

I should like now to discuss the Income Tax Act as it pertains to capital gains tax. It will never cease to amaze me that a government, which says it has credibility with the agricultural community of this country, can tell farmers of the second, third or fourth generation that when a farm is sold, the capital gains on the acquisition of a farm from the father—who in many cases received it from his grandfather—must be declared as a liability. This shows a lack of compassion and concern for the agricultural community—a lack of concern for the business community as well.

The Conservative government at least said that it would allow the transfer to a registered retirement savings plan of the capital gains derived from the transfer of a farm to a member of the family.

The Minister of Finance comes from an agricultural community. I would ask him what is to happen to a lot of young farmers today who are being driven from the farm by such measures? They lose the farm because of the necessity of paying capital gains tax. Often this is not paid at the time of the sale but some years ahead when they have to liquidate. In other words, they find themselves deeper in the hole because if they could keep the farm they might find they would eventually have to sell it in order to pay the tax. Sometimes they have to move off the farm because it is not profitable.

Another area which shows a lack of compassion in Bill C-54 relates to the volunteer firemen in small communities across Canada. The Conservative budget would have allowed them a tax deduction of \$1,000 but this bill only allows \$500 to volunteer firemen in communities where they offset a cost of municipal and provincial governments by offering their services to fight fires. The \$500 is totally inadequate and shows a lack of compassion and concern for the local level.

Members of the government often talk about the Small Business Development Bond. What did they do about it when they took office? The people of Canada should know that this bond will expire at the end of March, but the government does not care enough about making that money available to the business community to allow it at least to flow for one calendar or fiscal year. I challenge the Minister of Finance to stand in this House and give us one example of a business that has borrowed on the development bond principle without conditions being imposed by the trust company, bank or lending institution—conditions providing that should the government not implement the policy, the small businessman will borrow at the going rate, will continue to pay the going rate and will not benefit from the bond issue. How much confidence can the banking institutions of Canada have in a government that offers a 90-day government bond issue as is done in Bill C-54?

I should like to ask the Minister of Finance now why this bill discriminates between men and women. Why should separated men not be allowed to claim child care expenses without first obtaining a legal separation, while women can? I thought

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the Liberal government considered all persons equal. Why does this government discriminate between separated men and women? I asked this government, and I asked the Minister of Finance what do they have against single parents by not allowing them to claim child care expenses?

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I asked the Minister of Finance why this government fails to recognize common-law couples on income tax returns. What does the Minister of Finance have against common law arrangements? Does the Minister of Finance not realize that common-law marriages exist in Canada today? Does the Minister of Finance not realize there is a moral obligation on the part of both partners to such an agreement? Is there not a moral obligation on the part of government to recognize that these people exist? Are these people not citizens? Are these people not Canadians, and are they not entitled to equal treatment? What does the Minister of Finance have to say about that?

In addition, what does this government have against allowing a dependent spouse allowance? Why does the government discriminate on the basis of marriage? Is the Minister of Finance creating two classes of couples? Is he creating different classes of citizens just as he is doing with the metric system by allowing the citizens of Peterborough to opt out? But to the other 33 cities of Canada he tells their citizens that they must operate under the metric system. So he is creating different classes of citizens, just as we have different classes of provinces in the constitution. Even if the Minister of Finance stands up in this House and defends these positions, I do not know whether I can believe him. He has broken his election commitments. The commitments of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce were broken. He said that if interest rates rose when he took office and he was in the cabinet, he would resign. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce still sits in this House. He has never resigned.

Bill C-54 is totally irresponsible. It is not a credit to the government. It is a sham to this Parliament. If the government does not address some of its commitments made in the last election campaign, dealing with small business and the citizens of Canada, the day will come a lot sooner than it expects when the citizens of Canada might say that they know best and it is not the Prime Minister of Canada who knows what is best for Canadians.

Mr. Kempling: Mr. Chairman, I have a few points to make on Bill C-54. I am a practising small businessman, aside from being a member of Parliament. I thought that if I brought the practical view to the Minister of Finance he might find it useful.

I think there are some serious structural problems in the small business sector in particular. The small businessman is in a real financial bind. The manufacturer in marketing his product is saddled with unbelievable costs. For instance, the cost of travel in Canada is one of the highest in the world. He is pressed to pay wage levels equal to or higher than large industry, and he must deal with competition from outside