

Small Business

on size alone, as used by the Small Businesses Loans Act, does not always describe what is the most important feature of a small business, that it be owner managed, as in our definition. The minister and the government must consider using that definition which has been accepted internationally. Naturally, this party would like to remove the ability of subsidiaries of multinational corporations operating in Canada to apply for and receive assistance under this act.

Still on the loans act, Mr. Speaker, in order to help owner-operated enterprises raise working capital, we are recommending that the small business loans program cover working, as well as investment capital where such funds are not available through normal commercial arrangements. We feel that including working capital assistance within the loans act would enhance the use of the act and assist the small firms where assistance is most required.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have attempted to be as general as possible in talking to our very positive motion today. I will not repeat all the points in the motion, but it spells out many of the incentive-oriented programs we proposed, including—and this is a surprise to me and maybe the minister could speak on it—amendment of those provisions of the Income Tax Act which discourage the transfer of small businesses within families or to employees. The last budget indicated that incorporated farms would be exempt from the implications of this, so it is beyond me why the rest of the small business sector was excluded. I understand the minister will reply to my remarks, so I hope he will try to answer this question. We have made this proposal for a number of years, and prior to the minister's appointment, of course.

Some of my colleagues will speak on the areas of taxation and farming, and the hon. member for Halton-Wentworth (Mr. Kempling) will discuss research and development. But I have one point to make on that subject. In the last budget no mention was made regarding small business proposals, with the exception of the reduction in the provincial sales tax which is a short term, phony way of improving the situation. We do not see consumers flocking to retail outlets. As a matter of fact, Mr. Ted Burton, who represents Simpsons, the large Canadian retail outlet, has indicated that the reduction of the sales tax will not substantially increase consumer purchasing in retail outlets. Yet this was the minister's answer to the problems that small business in this country was facing.

I have said I will not dwell on research and development because my colleague will deal with that matter. Tax breaks were given for research and development, however, but in what sector were they given? To multinational foreign-owned oil conglomerates. There is nothing wrong with that, but again small business has been left out. This government supports a trend toward centralization and concentration of power, be it larger and fewer multinationals, bigger and stronger labour unions, or costly and more powerful bureaucratic governments.

The whole issue here is to decentralize, of course, and that is why when speaking on behalf of the small businessmen, not necessarily on behalf of my party, I am truly disappointed with the results of the just announced Bryce commission which not

only supports but strongly recommends the concentration of economic power which would, on a long term basis, allow small business literally to go down the drain. That has been the trend of this government for at least ten years.

The fact that this government is more costly than any in the history of Confederation is no secret. I shall not go over the statistics. The concentration of union power is as damaging to the economy as a whole as to the small businessmen. The Post Office deficit alone has increased by 872 per cent to over \$651 million. Yet in ten years postal rates have increased from six to 14 cents, while the mail service has deteriorated to such an extent that Indian smoke signals over one hundred years ago were more efficient and cheaper.

We must no longer allow this permissiveness on the part of the government to continue. We must begin to decentralize and, I believe, especially in the case of the Post Office, the right to strike should be removed from all monopolistic essential services in Canada.

I have outlined some of the positive, incentive-oriented programs which we are recommending and which the government has ignored since and before this minister was appointed. I hope that serious consideration will be given to our proposals. Had the Prime Minister not backed down from calling an election, in a month or two we would be in a position to implement these programs.

In closing, I would like to repeat what I have said often in this chamber, something which I believe is imperative if our democratic way of life is to survive. If we want the small business sector to survive within our society, as I am sure we all do, then immediate action must be taken by the federal government. The small business community is what the free enterprise system is all about. It is what this country is built on and what this country can prosper by. Other countries which presently are more fortunate than Canada with respect to unemployment, inflation, productivity, and other areas by which the standard to success is judged, have all concentrated their economic energies toward their small firms sector within their industrial way of life.

My concern is so genuine regarding the problems of small business and freedom of enterprise that I hope the seriousness of these problems can be dealt with, as I said, on a non-partisan basis. We cannot wait any longer, the small business community cannot wait any longer, and Canadians cannot wait any longer for the government to move in a positive direction in this regard. I hope hon. members will realize the seriousness of the situation and consider some of the proposals which we are outlining today. Opportunities still exist in Canada—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but his allotted time has expired. He may continue with the unanimous consent of the House. Does the hon. member have unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Jelinek: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the unanimous consent. I was just coming to the end of my remarks. I repeat