

Government Orders

I would also like the hon. member to elaborate on the fact, as he would admit—that many new businesses are in the service sector. Therefore, these businesses have no buildings; they have practically no valuable items. They usually only have a rented computer, a desk and two or three chairs. So, when these businesses go bankrupt, they have practically no goods. In that context, I would like my colleague to tell me how we could this money which, at the present time, is not in the hands of those businesses. The idea is commendable, but it is very important that we be able to give the money to workers who are waiting for their salaries. I would be grateful if you could clarify these points and tell me if you agree with the hon. member for Mississauga on that issue.

• (1730)

[*English*]

Mr. Mills: Mr. Speaker, I do not think the minister was listening to the point the hon. member for Mississauga South was making. We are talking about a shifting of priorities. We are talking about showing faith in the work force of this country. We must remember that we are only talking about one payroll here. We are not talking about the fact that a payroll keeps going on and on and on. We are talking about wage protection.

I say unequivocally that all other suppliers including the Crown now move into a secondary position. The minister has to remember that if he puts these people out of work they are going to be on unemployment insurance, which is a draw on the Crown.

If you lose your job tomorrow and you go on unemployment insurance, where does the money come from? Why not reverse your approach and take a chance on the work force of this country, because I think in the end that will lead to productivity which might minimize the number of bankruptcies in this country. That is the whole point.

This government does not understand that to motivate a work force you have to show some fairness. You have to send out some signals of fairness. This bill, on that specific point, does not show that. The Minister for International Trade came into the House yesterday and talked about productivity, about going across the country and listening to what people would say about what will make us productive.

We have listened to our constituents. We have been listening to people and I know the minister has too. They say they want fairness in the tax system and this bill flies in the face of what the people are asking for: "Show some good will toward us, show some faith toward us", and that is the point. In order to get to that point, they are going to have to put the banks and the Crown behind the payroll.

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the hon. member for Broadview—Greenwood's speech. He is always very impressive and I am always very supportive of the things he says.

We have heard that this is a tax or a levy on businesses, but I want the hon. member to comment on the fact that this is not just a levy on businesses because school boards are going to pay it, hospital associations are going to pay it and municipalities are going to pay it. Where do municipalities, school boards and hospital associations get their money from? They get it from ordinary ratepayers.

I want the hon. member to comment on that because it is more than just a tax on employers that are a great big corporation, a small corporation or a medium size corporation. They are we the people, taxes on the people. They are really taxing people and I would like some comments on that.

Mr. Mills: Mr. Speaker, I have wondered why the government was putting this tax on hospitals. There is only one thing that concerns me about this tax on hospitals. This government has been dismantling national institutions for the last seven years. There are many people who believe that the next national institution that is about to be dismantled is our national medicare system.

God forbid that this is sort of the advance party of privatization of the hospital system in this country. If we are to maintain our national medical system—and I will not even get in to the schools; let us just talk hospitals—this 10 cents a week on a hospital employee does not make any sense. The only way this would make any sense is if there were some intention of this government to get into the game of privatization of hospitals. There are many in this country who think that is their next step.

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Meritt): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand here today and speak for some period of time on the bill before us, the Bankruptcy Act, and the wage payment act. I do it with