

*Small Businesses Loans Act*

they turned out to be harmful, not only to small business but also to the average Canadian.

I therefore have a question for the Hon. Member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell (Mr. Boudria).

He was employed by the House of Commons under the previous Government. I remember him as the friend of the average Canadian. This was a man who was interested in the average person and who showed concern and sympathized with other people's problems. I think that what I want to say should be seen as a comment rather than a question. I would like to say to the Hon. Member that we admire him for what he is today, a Member of this House. We share his concern as a Member of Parliament who wants to represent his constituents, and we like to see his enthusiasm for defending his constituents. However, we are disappointed that he should be using methods that are perhaps not quite as honest as those he used to help his fellow Canadians when he was an employee of the House of Commons. For instance, at the very beginning of our mandate, in September, he asked this Government for a plaque to commemorate employees of the House of Commons who were killed in the Second World War, and we helped him in this endeavour. I remember that I offered him my support. So I just want to give him some friendly advice, as a fellow Member.

We want to improve the situation of small businesses because it is a sector that will have generated at least seventy per cent of employment over the last five years including this year. It was the only sector to do so because big corporations are struggling with spending problems and lack of capital. They have suffered tremendously as a result of the federal deficit—a deficit we inherited from the previous Government—which made it impossible for them to raise capital on Canadian money markets and forced large corporations to borrow abroad, with a weakened dollar. Government and business were facing major problems. Small businesses were—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** I am sorry to interrupt the Hon. Member but the time for questions and comments has expired. Debate. The Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap (Mr. Riis).

[*English*]

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, it is a real pleasure to have the opportunity to rise this afternoon to make some comments regarding the Bill before us, a Bill to amend the Small Businesses Loans Act of Canada. At second reading, it is customary that we discuss the Bill in principle only, and that is what I will do this afternoon rather than look at the various parts of the Bill and deal with specific amendments to it. That will be done in committee.

I would like to say at the outset that the New Democratic Party feels that this particular Bill is an appropriate one and that it will provide some assistance to the small business community of Canada. We will support it in principle and we

will have a number of comments to make and amendments to put forward when it reaches committee stage.

I would like to indicate first that we are talking about what is possibly one of the most important topics that we could be discussing in the House of Commons. It is important in the sense that we are talking about 900,000 businesses in Canada that are referred to as small businesses and are defined as small businesses by the Government of Canada. These businesses are 100 per cent Canadian-owned. Not only are these companies 100 per cent Canadian-owned, their commitment is 100 per cent to Canada. In fact, their commitment is usually 100 per cent to the community in which they are located. These are the businesses that cater to the minor hockey teams and various community organizations. These are the firms that source their products locally wherever possible. These are the firms that are represented on the local chambers of commerce and the local business associations.

The small business sector is the sector of our economy that is committed to Canada and to Canadians. This is also the sector that has created most of the new jobs which have been created in this country in the last five or six years. In excess of 70 per cent of all the jobs created in the private sector have come from the small business sector. I suspect that in the next decade, a full 90 per cent or more of the new jobs created in the private sector in Canada will come from the small businesses of Canada. In terms of finding ways to put 1.5 million people back to work, it is the small business sector to which we must look for that action. The small business sector must be assisted, encouraged and nurtured in every way possible to enable it to grow, to expand and to create those much needed jobs.

I think it is important that when we are talking about businesses that are 100 per cent Canadian, we are also talking about businesses that do the majority of the research and development that has occurred in Canada over the last few years. Not surprisingly, that research and development has come not from the large corporate sector but indeed from the small business sector. It is within the small and medium-sized business sector of Canada that the research and development through to production is being carried out. It is not being carried out in the large corporate sector because most of the large companies are branch plants by definition and their research and development is done back home at the parent company in a country other than Canada.

The important thing is that the small business community of Canada represents the dreams and aspirations of Canadians everywhere. In the large metropolitan areas, in the small cities, in the small communities and indeed in the rural areas, we find that small business person. I say "small business person" because all too often we refer to small business men. We do not mean short business men. However, today, most of the new businesses being created in Canada are being created by women who have entrepreneurial aspirations, dreams and ideas about opening up new ventures. They also have experience. Indeed, not only are most of the new businesses in Canada created by women but more of the successful small