

*Government Orders*

Before I go into those proposals, I want to point out that as a party we acknowledge that small and medium sized enterprises do contribute a great deal to the quality of life of Canadians generally in a number of ways. Let me mention a couple. We have figures which show that in excess of 85 per cent of the new jobs created within the last couple of years have been made by small and medium sized enterprises. In fact that figure has been in excess of 80 per cent for a number of years. Many of these jobs are good jobs that challenge the intelligence and skills of Canadians in a very positive way.

Not only has there been job creation, but those small and medium sized enterprises have also contributed in a significant way to research and development. As I indicated previously, a lot of research and development has been undertaken by these particular firms. If one looks at their over-all expenditure in this area and the pay-offs as a result of those expenditures we find there is a lot of meaningful spin-off.

[*Translation*]

As I just mentioned, these small and medium-sized businesses greatly contribute to the quality of life of Canadians. A very significant proportion—I believe it is over 80 per cent for at least the last decade—of new jobs are created by these businesses. Not only are jobs created but there is also a whole field of research and development as well as extremely important investments in that sector which are very beneficial to us in the sense that they bring a lot to our country and of course to Canadians.

[*English*]

I would have liked the government to have looked at the excessive paperwork that prevents small and medium sized businesses from being as productive as they might be. This is an issue that is continually brought to my attention. As well, a lot of people believe there ought to be a one-stop shop where you can go to get advice, find out what kinds of programs are available not only from the federal government but from the provincial and the municipal governments.

One thing that has happened is there is a lot more glitz than substance to these supposed government programs. In other words, there is not a whole lot out there except a lot of glossy material. However, that does not resolve the problem for Canadian businesses and Canadian businessmen and women.

• (1530)

Another matter that needs to be looked at in a serious way is the whole area of financial assistance. A number of people come to see me after having been to the

federal, provincial and municipal governments and indicate that there is not a whole lot out there.

Sometimes there is absolutely nothing out there or sometimes what is available out there is not of a great deal of assistance because they need to be wealthy enough to qualify totally. If they are that well off obviously they would not have the kinds of problems many other people have.

I indicated before Question Period in my initial remarks that a number of people had difficulties. I gave some examples from my riding. I referred to an aboriginal inventor, a very creative and brilliant individual who came up with a number of really sound ideas according to all the advice that he has received. Although he has received some assistance, he is unable to receive enough assistance to have those projects realized.

[*Translation*]

What good are programs if they only help someone to go half way, if they do not enable someone to complete the whole thing? That is an example of someone who received a little help but not enough to complete this cycle. Unfortunately, this person has excellent ideas which might not materialize, and that would be sad, I think.

[*English*]

In another incident I mentioned two business persons. They had the idea of a tree farm where they would sell trees, particularly during the holiday season, that could be replanted, thereby saving trees and obviously contributing to the environment. They had a number of other unique features to this particular idea. When they explored the federal, provincial and municipal government levels there was virtually no money. It is very difficult to start any kind of business without financial assistance today. It is virtually unheard of. They are young men without a whole lot of collateral upon which they can rely to get the loans required to get this business working.

There were a lot of pamphlets. Initially in their conversations they felt there might be some help, but when they studied the various options available there was very little.

As well, I indicated that the president and owner of Astro Float Industries in Winnipeg has been trying to obtain a loan for years. I have no doubt the bureaucratic officials assigned to this dossier have looked at what he produces and the kinds of funding that could assist him in expanding his facilities to other markets besides the ones he serves now. At the same time there are rules in place that prevent this individual from going forward.