

to spend a lot of time in his opening remarks commenting on the difficulty that small business is having getting access to capital.

The Prime Minister said repeatedly during the campaign, in the red book and in the speech from the throne, that small and medium sized businesses would really be the engine for putting people back to work. The greatest hope for putting people back to work rests with the entrepreneurial spirit in that small business area. We all know that the banks are really not co-operating with that sector.

I wonder if the member could explain to this House if the Reform Party shares the view of our party that the financial institutions of this country really have to deal with putting the economy back on track. I wonder if the member would stand and say that the Reform Party will join with us in making sure that the banks do their job for small businesses.

**Mr. Harper (Calgary West):** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question and for his congratulations. I have known the hon. member for some time and it is a delight to be able to sit with him in this Chamber.

Of course there was not time in my speech to address all of the concerns that the hon. member would like me to address. If in future the rules of the House are altered so that I can speak at greater length, I would be delighted to do so.

The member raises the question of small and medium sized business and their access to capital. My supporters, particularly my association, are predominantly people who work in small and medium sized business and they voted for our party I suspect precisely because they share our concerns.

I would suggest to the government that certainly there are problems with access to capital in the banking sector. However, I would suggest that what the government should do before it starts figuring out how to run the banks and how to run small and medium sized businesses and all kinds of other institutions that it run itself so that small and medium sized businesses have access to capital.

According to the projections of the Minister of Finance, in this financial year we will be borrowing up to \$45 billion in the financial markets. Certainly some of this money, if not a large part of it, would be available to small and medium sized businesses if the government would undertake the credible program of deficit reduction that is being advanced through our subamendment. If we do not do that, it would be ridiculous to try to alter the rules of the banking system if the capital itself is being tied up by the Government of Canada which is more than absorbing our domestic savings. That is all in the book his own government has put out.

### *The Address*

I would suggest that the way to deal with the problem of capital access for small and medium sized businesses—and the message from the people in my constituency—is to deal first with releasing those funds through deficit reduction and only then should we deal with the problems in other institutional arrangements.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** The hon. member's time has expired.

**Mr. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood):** Madam Speaker, on a point of order. Is not the question and answer period 10 minutes?

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** It is five minutes on a ten-minute debate. They are splitting their time.

**Mr. Riis:** Madam Speaker, a point of order. I have listened very carefully to the very thoughtful comments of my colleague. Considering the importance and the nature of the tax system and the funding for small business, would the House permit two or three other questions in response to the hon. member's comments? Can we have unanimous consent to allow a few more questions to be put to the member?

• (1100)

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** Is it the will of the House to allow a few more questions?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Robichaud:** Madam Speaker, I thought there was a consensus and that the Speaker had been informed that we would split the time allotted, that is ten minutes for a speech, followed by a five-minute question period. I would like us to stick with this formula to give more people a chance to speak to this debate, otherwise each member could considerably exceed the time limit and I do want as many hon. members as possible to have the opportunity to speak.

[*English*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** Unfortunately consent is denied.

**Mr. Riis:** Madam Speaker, a point of order. I appreciate the point made by my hon. friend. If the concern is to allow as many members to speak to this important debate as possible, we can always extend the hours for people to do that.

My point was that the past speaker was a very important spokesperson for the Reform Party and an obvious person of whom to ask a number of questions.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** There will be another chance for questions unless the next speaker is willing to cede his time.

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert):** Madam Speaker, I would like to start by congratulating you on your election to the Chair of this honourable House.