

*Government Orders*

The Department of Industry, the Department of National Revenue and the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs have been working very hard in the last few months trying to create a one-all form. They are trying to organize various forms for business. They are working on a system that will be on one form, a simplified system for business reporting on various aspects of government responsibility.

That is also another realization we have come to accept and support as a result of our continued campaign on the access to capital front. In other words, that journey on access to capital has led to the realization that reducing the paper burden is something we must also work on very diligently.

The last thing I will touch on in terms of policy is where small business is crying out for our attention, which is the whole area of tax reform. Small business is telling us that the tax system is complex and inefficient. Many of them argue it is not fair.

As a government we are committed. Our red book stated quite clearly that the whole GST regime we fought so vigorously against in opposition is something the government has to address in its mandate. There is absolutely no way any Liberal member of Parliament could ever expect to go back on the campaign trail to get re-elected unless the whole issue of the GST is dealt with.

My goodness, in opposition we fought against the GST to the point that it nearly caused a riot in the other place. We challenged the government because of the complexity, the paper burden and the inefficiency of the GST. We on this side of the House are working very hard on total tax reform. It is a very complex issue to dismantle an entire structure the previous government set up. As the Prime Minister would say, it is not a matter of saying "poof" and it is gone. It has to be done responsibly, in a way that will not create a bigger problem than already exists.

• (1530)

We believe that dealing with the issue of tax reform is central to the requirements of small businesses and their ability to work in an environment that allows them to maximize their potential. Bill C-99, an act to amend the Small Business Loans Act, is another example of where the government is fine tuning by working with small businesses and the financial institutions and dealing with the financial markets, the currency traders, who have control on our interest rates and our dollar.

There is an issue I wish we could one day debate in Parliament. With the various challenges we take on in the House, whether related to industry, social programs or fiscal responsibility, deficit and debt with all the cutbacks, I would say the one challenge that we as a House of Commons have yet to face is the challenge of how we work with these currency traders who are essentially running most of the central banks of the world. These

unaccountable, unelected currency traders move literally a trillion dollars a day, pushing paper, playing the derivative games. I have referred to them before as the private casinos in the financial institutions of the world. These men and women who move that currency around in an unaccountable way are affecting our interest rates, which in turn affect the investment activity and the job creation activity.

I do not know how we can call ourselves a sovereign nation when we think of the fact that we have essentially lost control of our currency. We are sitting here as elected people, but every day we bow down to the currency traders, asking what the dollar is going to be, what the interest rates are going to be.

Do the men and women in this room have anything to do with what goes on with those currency traders? No. Those currency traders are controlling the agenda. No matter how fiscally responsible the government is in the House, they could say that it is not good enough. Then suddenly they give us another squeeze and drop our dollar or cause a jerk in interest rates.

I would love to have a debate in the House one day on how the currency traders of the world manage their affairs and what their accountability is. It would be not unlike the challenge we took up two years ago when we wanted to see what was going on with the financial institutions in the country and what they were doing with small business. These financial institutions were not initially receptive to our exchange, our views and our attempts to try to make their attitude and their culture more responsive to business. However, because we worked together I believe we now have a constructive relationship with the banks. I now believe those banks are actually starting to enjoy the growth and the improvement they are experiencing in their small business relationships.

I would put to the House that an even bigger challenge would be how we could take on the currency traders of the world so we can once again get control of our economic agenda.

In closing my remarks on the bill once again I thank members opposite, members of the Reform Party and members of the Bloc for working with us on these amendments so we can hopefully get them through the House before the end of the week.

This is probably the last time I will be on my feet before the referendum vote on Monday. I appeal to those small businessmen and women who hopefully are watching or are participating in this debate to think between now and next Monday about anything they can do to help make sure this campaign for Canada is won.

• (1535)

I personally believe that one of the things small entrepreneurs can do, because they have flexibility, is maybe find a bit of time to get into their vans, cars or trucks and take their families to visit our great province of Quebec this weekend.