

Income Tax

An hon. Member: Two or three.

Mr. Saltsman: Yes. They just strayed a little bit. They are just "poor little lambs who have lost their way." I am sure my colleagues will join in the chorus—"baa, baa, baa."

In conclusion, I appreciate the attention the House has given to my remarks, but this is a serious matter. It is not just playing games and bashing the government for the sake of bashing the government. We need some indication from that side of the House that it is prepared to change its policies and move in new directions.

As far as the benefits in this budget are concerned, I realize most people have already made arrangements to take the benefits; but somewhere down the line we must hear the government say, "We understand what the problem is. We understand we have to move in these new directions, as difficult as they may be". At least the government would then provide some encouragement.

Whether this budget is passed or not, as things now stand, for the ordinary person it would be of little consequence. It would do the government a great deal of good if it ran into a real debate on this issue. Also it would do the government good if, during the course of that debate, it had a chance to think better about what it has been doing, and it brought in positive rather than perverse policies.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Jake Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, this is an important period of time in the history of our country, and especially in the matter of our economic future.

Despite the seriousness of the situation all Canadians face, I must admit there is a certain amount of humour which can creep into the debate and into this House of Commons. Possibly the position the hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge (Mr. Saltsman) put forward, that the greatest friend of small business in this country had been the CCF, the NDP, or what he preferred to call democratic socialists, is not correct. If members of this House left the Chamber this evening and took a poll of small businessmen, asking them whether the NDP was their best friend, the results would be somewhat less than that mentioned by the hon. member. In fact the natural alliance of the NDP in Manitoba, for example, was not with small business.

It was the small businessmen and their employees who got together on October 11 and turfed out the provincial NDP government. It was the small business community which saw business investment was down in the province, and employment was down. It was the small businessmen, along with their employees, who wanted security and realized that the NDP government of Manitoba had gone beyond the pale of taxation and had gone into the area of confiscation. Not only did the NDP government of Manitoba do this, but I suggest the government opposite has as well.

It is a commonly held opinion by many Canadians that in fact this country has been governed by a socialist prime minister for the last number of years. The hon. member for

[Mr. Saltsman.]

Waterloo-Cambridge says that the best friend of small business is a social democrat. I do not know how he can say that, because a social democrat has been the leader of this Liberal government. Liberals who have been members of that party for many years have left the party simply because they cannot accept the Liberal-left association that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has allowed. Nor can they accept his economic policies.

● (2227)

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Tell us about the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner).

Mr. Epp: The hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge expressed some rather interesting economic theories. He slipped them in as if they were new, but I believe they go back to a man named Karl Marx and his writings, and hon. members know what he was the forerunner of, Mr. Speaker. I have to paraphrase the hon. member because I cannot get *Hansard* at this moment, but he said we should redistribute income on the basis that those who have money should distribute their income among those who do not. I believe if we look to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and their sixtieth anniversary, we will find that that is pretty close to what Karl Marx said, and that it is on that they have based their economy.

Despite the fact that the former minister of state for small business went to the USSR to see what he could learn about small business there—and I hope the present minister does not follow that example—the fact remains that I do not think a lot of small businesses can be found in the USSR, and the reason is very simple. The natural extension of the philosophy of the hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge, of the NDP and of the socialist democratic Prime Minister of this country would simply destroy business.

Mr. Gillespie: The Tory philosophy is take it from people who haven't got it and give it to people who have.

Mr. Epp: The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Gillespie) is trying to intervene. He has so many problems in his department he should stick with them and try to solve a few. He should not try to get into economics. He has made enough of a mess already.

Mr. Gillespie: Why don't you go back to the philosophy you were talking about? Tell us what is the Tory philosophy.

Mr. Epp: Bill C-11 is known to everyone as a mini-budget. In fact in question period the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) said it was a budget. Very surreptitiously the government plays its games. It decided to have a mini-budget slipped into the throne speech debate. Therefore, as our House leader has already stated, we will use this debate to bring forward the position of this party on economic affairs and to show to Canadians once again that the great failure of this country is the economic leadership, or lack of it, that the government has displayed throughout its tenure of office. This government and this Prime Minister have been abject failures,