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our various programs. Let us ask if we have met our commitments. I think we did. The record is clear and the record is favourable. Let us look at another commitment in the Throne Speech. The Government stated:

Farmers and small businessmen are also hit especially hard by rising costs and my Government is sensitive to their plight. To assist the individual entrepreneur, the ceiling for loans under the Small Businesses Loans Act and the Farm Improvement Loans Act will be raised to \$100,000. Other measures of assistance will also be introduced.

Is this an area where we have done nothing? Obviously not. On June 27, 1980 we obtained Royal Assent for amendments to the Farm Improvement Loans Act and the Small Businesses Loans Act to increase the loan maximum to \$100,000. I saw some figures today which indicate that loans totalling \$208,605,679, over \$208 million, were made in 1980 under the Farm Improvement Loans Act. This action took us a little over two months from the reading of the Throne Speech. Is that inaction? Obviously not.

Some Members opposite may try to say that we have not done anything and may try to convince the public that we took no other action in support of the small businessman, even when the severe recession struck, but let us look at the facts. In the November, 1981 budget we redirected funds to the Small Business Development Bond to enable small businesses in severe financial difficulty to reduce their interest expenses by up to 50 per cent. I have frequently heard Members opposite say: "Yes, but nobody ever uses that program, it's not available to them". Well, as of January, 1983 nearly 16,000 "nobodies"—if nobody ever uses this program—with nearly \$2.4 billion in loans were using this program. Anyone who is suggesting that that program is not effective does not know the facts and is not telling it like it is.

● (1250)

In the June, 1982 budget we went a step further and introduced the small business investment grant. This program provides an interest grant equal to 4 per cent for small business borrowing for new machinery. This program has not been used either. To the end of March, 1983 about 2,800 business persons have applied for grants of nearly \$150 million. Well, I think that explodes that myth. Again, people who claim that that program is not effective simply do not have the facts.

Is that all? Hang on, folks, there is even more. Let us look at a tax initiative designed to assist the small business person, lower corporate tax rates. The recently passed Income Tax Amendment Act increased the small business deduction limits from \$150,000 to \$200,000 and the cumulative limit from \$750,000 to \$1 million. At present the tax rate on the first \$200,000 of income of a Canadian controlled private corporation is some 20 to 21 percentage points less than that of larger businesses.

This type of measure is in addition to ones already brought forward, measures which include: preferential tax treatment of certain stock options issued to employees of private corporations; full offset of capital losses on private company shares and debt obligations; special investment tax credit on research and development expenditures; sales tax exemption on up to

\$50,000; guaranteed capital gains for venture capital companies; spousal deduction for owners of unincorporated businesses; deferral of up to \$200,000 on capital gains on inter-generational transfers. In the last year these kinds of measures, measures put forward or maintained by a Liberal Government, add up to close to \$2 billion in tax breaks for small business people.

Well, it seems pretty clear to me that this Government has kept its commitment to the small-businessman as stated in that Throne Speech.

Let us look at another area dealt with by the Throne Speech, and I am again quoting:

Young people, women and the handicapped face special problems in finding jobs. To meet the needs of these groups, my Government will expand its employment program while using its resources more efficiently.

There will be an increased effort to develop critical trade skills so as to better prepare today's labour force for tomorrow's jobs.

Were we slow in our actions towards this commitment? Well, two months after the Throne Speech a special parliamentary task force on employment opportunities was commissioned. In addition, two ministerial task forces were organized, one to review the operation of the Unemployment Insurance program and one to examine the influence of federal policies on the labour market.

What about action? Well, in addition to that, of course, there was the Special Committee on the Disabled and Handicapped which I had the pleasure of chairing. I think the work of that Committee is well known. That was not a partisan Committee; all Parties co-operated. I think that to suggest that this House, under this Government, is not sensitive to those needs as spelled out in the Throne Speech is not being fair and not telling it like it is.

Starting in the summer of 1980, the Government first launched the Canada Community Services Project and later the Canada Community Development Programs. These programs were to minimize the impact of lay-offs and to help workers find alternate private sector employment.

In the same year the Government began its work sharing program. Under this program the Government, the private sector and labour are able to work together to maintain thousands of jobs during temporary economic downturns.

In January, 1981 the Government introduced the Industry and Labour Assistance Program. This program provides co-ordinated assistance to communities affected by declines in key industries. To date, \$450 million has been committed under this program. This program is designed to help communities with serious industrial dislocations and is a very important component in increasing national productivity.

In March, 1982 this House passed the Labour Adjustment Benefits Act to provide special assistance to older workers laid off in designated industries. This program was in addition to the Portable Wage Subsidy Program organized under ILAP which provided wage subsidies for older workers.

Last, this House passed the National Training Program Act. This program was designed to provide Canada with the skilled work force required for the 1990s by strengthening, expanding and modernizing existing training programs, facilitating