

provide a very exciting and encouraging bonus for Canadian businessmen.

Some years back when government recognized that indeed there was a serious housing crisis looming in Canada, that young people were having a difficult time finding enough money to provide a down payment, the Registered Home Ownership Savings Plan was brought in as a scheme under which persons could set aside money in an effort to accumulate enough money for a number of years for a down payment. One of the problems that working Canadians encounter, as I mentioned earlier in the evening, is the inability to set aside funds from their income and to protect them from the tax man as do other sectors of society. I wonder if it would not be worth looking seriously at providing legislation whereby Canadians from all walks of life could set aside a sum of money protected from the tax man over a five-year period, set aside \$1,000 to \$5,000 in an account so that in five years' time an individual could get together with two or three of his partners and they would have at their disposal \$100,000, or \$80,000 for a down payment on a small venture, on a new idea. This would provide an incentive, a model, an encouragement for Canadians to invest in the future of their country, to take advantage of that dream, that idea, that concept which I suggest probably exists in one way or another with every Canadian.

Mr. Mayer: It sounds like capitalism to me.

Mr. Riis: It might sound like capitalism to some people. To me it is an opportunity to invest in Canada's future, to provide the much needed venture and risk capital.

Mr. Mayer: For the individual.

Mr. Riis: Call it what you must. I think we all agree in this House that something like this is well overdue. It is the kind of thing which government should provide. It should provide an opportunity and leadership for that particular venture. It does not come from other areas, and perhaps where we differ is in the terms of the role that the government could play.

I should like to conclude, Mr. Speaker, by suggesting that high unemployment, double-digit inflation, a weakening Canadian dollar, plant closings, mammoth deficits in government spending and our balance of payments all point to mismanagement on a scale perhaps unequalled in Canada's history.

This government's preference for manipulation and deceit, its lack of confidence in the Canadian people is nowhere better demonstrated than in its present monetary policy.

The primary objective of monetary policy should be control of the money supply and credit conditions so as to maintain a healthy, stable economic environment. But this government has abandoned this objective in favour of maintaining the value of the Canadian dollar.

It is not coincidental that the countries in the world that are well managed have strong national currencies, and those countries that are poorly managed have weak currencies. Canada's currency is weak because our balance of payments deficit has

Income Tax Act

deteriorated over the years to intolerable levels. No industrial nation in the world relies more heavily on the export of non-renewable resources to maintain foreign exchange earnings than Canada. Our balance of payments deficit on finished manufactured goods per capita is the highest in the world, and we finance much of this deficit by going deeper and deeper into debt through foreign borrowings.

That is why the Canadian dollar is weak. It is weak because of the historical failure of successive federal governments to provide leadership and a sound industrial strategy to ensure a balance between economic growth and manufacturing development in Canada.

The Canadian people know there is something wrong in this country. They want to understand. They want a government that is honest with them, that sees them as responsible participants and that will confide in them. They are prepared to make the necessary sacrifices if these are seen to be fair and equitable.

A policy of maintaining high interest rates to support a dollar that is fundamentally weak is more than an exercise in outdated cosmetics, it is an act of deception wreaking economic havoc from one end of this country to the other. Sooner or later we will be forced to make the difficult adjustments that should have been started years ago. The growing deficit in our balance of payments means that we must consume less from the rest of the world and produce more of what we need at home. We must also begin to sell more in the way of finished goods abroad.

I suggest we should free the Canadian dollar from the grip of this gradualist monetary deception. Interest rates should reflect the requirements for internal stability, and let the balance of payments impose a badly needed discipline on our behaviour as a consuming and producing nation.

We are a resilient and creative people. All we need is a government dedicated to democracy, willing to address the problems head-on and involve the Canadian people in their solution. The present government has failed on all three counts.

Mr. Evans: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. In the minute that remains, would the hon. member entertain a question?

Mr. Riis: I certainly would, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Evans: Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to Mr. Lermer's analysis which was put forward. I worked with Mr. Lermer in the Economic Council. I wonder if the hon. member knows that Mr. Lermer's suggestion was to let more foreign banks into Canada to improve the banking competition. Could the hon. member tell us where the NDP stood with regard to the entry of foreign banks into Canada in the banking legislation which was just passed?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member has ten seconds in which to answer.