

SMALL BUSINESS

PROPOSED MEASURES OF ASSISTANCE—MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Otto Jelinek (High Park-Humber Valley): Mr. Speaker, I rise pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 43 on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity related to the highest unemployment level in Canada since the war. Because, by the government's own definition, small business in this country even as recently as last year was responsible for 60 per cent of the labour force and roughly 50 per cent of the manufacturing sector; and in view of the fact that the government continues to ignore the problems and potential solutions of this vital sector of our economy, evidenced by the fact that not one realistic incentive oriented program has been introduced thus far, nor did the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) see fit to even mention small business in his so-called minibudget on October 20, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka (Mr. Darling):

That this House instruct the Minister of State responsible for Small Business, along with the Minister of Finance, to introduce forthwith realistic and comprehensive programs in accordance with numerous recommendations by various interest groups across Canada including those made by the official opposition regarding such specific programs as the employment tax credits, government set-asides, investment tax credits and many others.

Mr. Speaker: Presentation of such a motion for debate can be done only with the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

UNEMPLOYMENT—DATE OF INTRODUCTION OF MEASURES TO ALLEVIATE

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question was to be directed to the Minister of Finance whom we understood would be in his place in parliament today. In his absence, I should like to direct it to the Acting Prime Minister. The Minister of Finance has admitted to Canadian people that the tax measures in Bill C-11 are in effect already in the country. It is clear from the unemployment statistics this week that they are not working.

I see the minister entering the Chamber. I will wait for him. I welcome the minister to the House of Commons 15 minutes after the hour.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark: Outside the House the minister admitted that the tax measures in Bill C-11 are already in effect in the country. The unemployment statistics indicated this week that

Oral Questions

those measures are not working well enough. Yet, as we look at the order paper of the House of Commons, we see that there is not a single new finance measure proposed by this government to create jobs or growth for the economy. What new measures does the minister propose? Where are they? Why are they not on the order paper? When will they be before this parliament?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have not made any remarks when the hon. Leader of the Opposition was away trying to raise money, with great difficulty, for his party.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Chrétien: When the hon. Leader of the Opposition was away, I said in the House that if Bill C-11 is passed, I hope to return very soon with tax credits for businesses to enable them to employ more people. It is very difficult for me, having been tied up in the House with Bill C-11 for five weeks, to be in my department at the same time.

• (1417)

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark: I do not know when the Minister of Finance will stop crying to parliament and to the people about his problems and when he will bring before the House of Commons some new measures. I do not want to hear about hopes. I look at the Order Paper of this parliament, the agenda of the House, and I see that this government is proposing nothing at all that is new. I want to know when we are going to have these proposals, and I say this to the Minister of Finance and to the government: If the government can come up with some new proposals to bring before the House of Commons, then we on this side of the House are prepared to come back early after Christmas to deal with them. We want to know that there is business here to deal with, and I want to know from the Minister of Finance now what those measures will be.

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, there are some measures in front of the House at this time. The Leader of the Opposition would be well advised to tell his colleagues to pass Bill C-11 so that the business community will realize that despite the fact that those measures are in force since the spring budget, many of them do not believe that it is so—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: They don't believe you.

Mr. Chrétien: Every day I receive phone calls from the business community inquiring about what we are doing with Bill C-11, and I have to tell them it is being filibustered by the opposition.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: You don't know what a filibuster is.