

Petitions

and it assumes an added urgency with only 31 days left before the government's decision takes effect.

MR. CLARK—PLIGHT OF HOME OWNERS

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, I ask leave to present petitions from home owners in Midland, Ontario and in Saint John, New Brunswick who were part of the convoy of anger who came to Parliament Hill to try to force this government to pay some attention to the plight of Canadians who are being forced to abandon their homes by the deliberate high-interest rate policies of the Government of Canada.

The petition from Midland, Ontario contains some 1,660 names; the petition from the Saint John Home Owners Association contains some 3,478. I should forewarn you, Madam Speaker, that there will be several more to come.

MR. WENMAN—PLIGHT OF HOME OWNERS

Mr. Robert Wenman (Fraser Valley West): Madam Speaker, I have the duty to present these initial petitions on behalf of a large number of Vancouver lower mainland residents who are in dire straits because of exorbitant interest rates and a corresponding lack of interest shown by the government toward the plight of home owners. The prohibitive cost of taking out new mortgages and renewing old mortgages are depriving Canadian citizens of their basic right to shelter. Therefore, these petitioners have asked as follows:

Wherefore the undersigned do hereby protest the Government of Canada's policy on housing and interest rates and do pray that the House of Commons will act to ensure that

- 1) Interest rates be reduced,
- 2) Adequate, affordable housing become recognized as a major government principle and objective—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member can only make a brief statement about the petition. He cannot read the whole petition. Once the House has received the petition, it will be examined and I will report on it later.

Mr. Wenman: On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I refer you to Standing Order 67(8). I recognize that no debate shall be permitted upon the presentation of petitions. However, I refer you to the last part which gives an exception. That exception is:

—if it complains of some present personal grievance requiring an immediate remedy, the matter contained therein may be brought into immediate discussion.

Recognizing that all members of the House from all sides have just previously indicated the immediacy of and necessity for discussion of this matter, I think I can personally within my petition directly refer to matters of personal and immediate concern relating to individuals within this petition who, in effect, will lose their homes if we do not have discussion and a resolution.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The Standing Order which the hon. member is now reading to me and on which he raises

the point of order, I remind him, pertains to the report. The report has not yet been given; the hon. member is simply presenting his petition. He is allowed a very brief statement on the matter with which the petition deals. However, discussion takes place only later. The phrase the hon. member is reading refers to once the report has been made. It has not been made. The petition has to be examined by the bureau to ascertain whether it is in accordance with the rules and regulations of this House.

Mr. Wenman: For further clarification on the point of order, Madam Speaker, am I to understand that in presenting this petition it will be examined and, if found to be correct as to form, the Speaker will again call it in the House of Commons tomorrow in order that I might proceed with a debate, in view of the imminence regarding this matter?

Madam Speaker: The petition will be reported tomorrow or on another day. The hon. member is treating this petition as though it were a matter of immediate urgency, that it supersede everything in the House and be debated immediately. He has not made that kind of request to the House.

The hon. member may present the petition. I will report on it tomorrow or at another date. We will then see what rules apply. For the time being the hon. member may not continue with his statement. All he can do is let the House know the subject of that petition and he has done that.

MR. McDERMID—EFFECTS OF HIGH INTEREST RATES

Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown): Madam Speaker, I ask leave to present a petition from residents of the regional municipality of Peel and the regional municipality of Halton, which includes residents from my riding. I would like to present this petition on behalf of 6,725 people who feel that this government must enact legislation or introduce budgetary measures to assist all those suffering from the current level of interest rates, such as home owners, farmers, small businesses and those on fixed incomes.

I believe, Madam Speaker, that this petition reflects the attitude of most Canadians who feel that they have waited long enough for some form of remedial action by this government.

* * *

[Translation]

SMALL BUSINESSES LOANS ACT (NO. 2)

MEASURE TO INCREASE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF LOANS

Hon. Charles Lapointe (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-84, Act No. 2 to amend the Small Businesses Loans Act.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.