

suffered the most were the construction, service and maintenance companies and the small manufacturers. All the financial institutions which operate in western Canada must act in consequence. The financial institutions which supported these companies were naturally affected too. The true story of the financial trouble of the Northland Bank does not therefore begin on March 22, but with the energy policy of the former Government. The same is not true of financial institutions which have their main office in western Canada. Indeed, the great majority of loans granted by these institutions are directly or indirectly related to the energy industry. If this industry has problems, the financial institutions suffer the consequences.

Mr. Lapierre: What about the United States? Tell us about the American loans.

Mr. Lanthier: Mr. Speaker, something was mentioned earlier and I think it is unfair. I am not too familiar with Parliamentary procedure, but I thought that a debate was an opportunity for us to have an exchange. However, it is somewhat unfair because the last ones to talk can speak about the first speakers, but the reverse is not possible.

Mr. Lapierre: The last ones will always be first.

Mr. Lanthier: There was a reference to twisted arms earlier. It was mentioned a while ago that certain bankers are supposed to have said that their arms were twisted. For my part, I can say that I was there, which is not the case for all the Liberal Members, as we saw at the Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs that the Liberal Party was absent when we were interviewing those who appeared before us.

However, having heard all the bank presidents, especially the president of the Bankers' Association, Mr. Speaker . . .

Mr. Lapierre: Guilty!

Mr. Lanthier: . . . who said that all the banks supported . . . the Bankers' Association . . . was asked by a New Democratic Party member whether his arm was being twisted by the Minister.

Mr. Lapierre: Were you there?

Mr. Lanthier: They answered with a formal no. First, these were concerned people who were directly involved in the negotiations, when those people formally stated and directly answered questions, the same questions that were raised in this House earlier. Second, we asked them: Did you feel forced to endorse such a bail-out package? The answer was yes. But forced by whom? The Government? Again the answer was no, by the events themselves. Everyone was convinced there was nothing else to do at that point.

Mr. Malépart: He meant the Government.

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Mr. Lanthier: You can rest assured that these events did not originate with this Government. If ever they were created, it was by the previous Government.

Mr. Malépart: So, the bank president issued the list.

Mr. Lanthier: Second, I would like, Mr. Speaker, to take up something the Hon. Member for Laval-des-Rapides (Mr. Garneau) said earlier, namely that there were anxious people in his constituency.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot be blamed for having done two things. If this Government decided to assume its responsibilities and compensate everybody, even people with more than \$60,000, they cannot blame us on the one hand for compensating people with over \$60,000 and on the other for getting people anxious. There is no anxiety, the Government discharges its responsibilities. All depositors are insured, on the one hand, by the Federal Deposit Insurance up to \$60,000, and over and above that, following the joint commitment entered upon by the Government with its associates at the time of the bail-out, the major Canadian banks, everybody came aboard to say we were compensating everyone. The Government is assuming its responsibilities.

Therefore, the anxiety which the old Liberal Opposition is trying to stir up has no hold on people, in my view, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Malépart: You are taking money away from families to give it to the rich!

Mr. Lanthier: Everyone will be compensated. That is clear. There is no doubt about that, everyone will be compensated as soon as the Opposition understands that this Government's responsibility is to make full payment.

Now, they referred earlier to the Caisses populaires. Last night, Mr. Speaker, we heard in the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Matters representatives of the Caisses populaires Desjardins from Quebec, a group that is given as an example both of financial solidity and citizen involvement in their banking institutions, not only in Quebec but all across Canada.

Mr. Lapierre: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Shefford (Mr. Lapierre) on a point of order.

Mr. Lapierre: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is referring to what goes on in committee. Can the issues debated in committee be debated in the House as well? Would you explain to me what the Standing Orders are?

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members know very well that committee proceedings cannot be discussed in the House but from what I heard I wonder whether the Hon. Member used committee