

(Finance) (Mrs. McDougall). I do not see any need to go over them again. However, I must emphasize that this measure highlights the major principles which generally govern the private sector. In other words, one of the basic principles used in the private sector is that people must pay for services rendered. In my opinion, an attempt has been made to redistribute the load, in the sense that this bill contains as many tax rebates as new tax levies. This is the kind of redistribution which has to be made, considering the sorry mess the previous government left behind.

The word confidence has been heard often lately. I think this bill will restore confidence and I draw your attention particularly to the spirit of fairness behind this measure.

● (1450)

In one instance, the Government has decided to pay interest when it was late in paying back. In its arrogance, the previous Government was quite willing to make us wait for money owed to us. In the private sector, you have to pay a penalty for late payments, and that is what this Government is proposing in its great spirit of equity under certain provisions of this Bill.

A lot has been said about unemployment. I believe that this Bill will to some extent restore the confidence of our citizens. Why? Because when a new administration takes over the first indication of its ability is the extent to which the people in charge can put things back in order, and this is what we have done. We have not been in power very long, only three months, but I believe that this Bill confirms our commitment to put these mechanisms to good use to provide jobs for the people of Quebec. Of course, I believe that our Government is not alone in this, and I am quite certain that this obviously is also the wish of the Opposition.

Of course, there is no confidence at the present time in the Canadian economy. There is only hope that this confidence, which we deserve, will be restored. I sincerely hope that the initiatives taken under this Bill will give back to Canadians the confidence necessary to create employment for their fellow citizens.

I found one sentence in this Bill especially striking, and it says something like this: Passage of this Bill will be a first step in examining new initiatives and improving the spirit of equity that should characterize indirect taxation while enabling the business sector to operate in a climate of certainty, stability and confidence. This is our definite pattern, and it is our belief that everything in the measures introduced by our new Government and in the legislation we will be putting forward will show the same spirit of fairness which we backbenchers from the business community are bringing here. It is our hope that the forthcoming bills will be as well designed as this one to restore financial order.

Of course, a new emphasis will have to be put not only on the backbencher's role, but more generally on work ethics. Formerly, people were admired for their work ethics, but now

people are admired mainly for what they get as a result of their work ethics, and that too often alas means money!

I think the Right Hon. Prime Minister made a remarkable statement when he said that people would have to be put back to work. We must put them back to work confidently. There are many people now who work but lack confidence in the future. There are people who refuse to work, supposedly because salaries are too low, preferring to do nothing. But we will have to give priority to the work ethics that always inspired our predecessors and Canada's pioneers.

Well, I would think that this legislation or the spirit behind it has been very successfully developed from a consensus reached both outside and within the Government.

I am sure you appreciated the comments made this morning by my Minister and I would like you to know, Mr. Speaker, that this is the first time I work for a woman other than my wife, but it is extremely pleasant, and I can assure you that my Minister has performed very well up to now, and although she does not need my humble assistance, I can assure you that she has my full support, both as to the contents of the legislation and the way it was put forward. I had the chance myself of attending consultations that led to the introduction of this Bill and I can assure you that the business community is quite in agreement, on both the procedure and the ultimate goal.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you personally that as back-benchers on the government side we take part in the drawing up of all government policies and I can do it without any restraint. I feel that my training phase is not over yet, but I assure you that we feel quite proud of taking part in the management of our country.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Questions and comments. The Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom).

Mr. Nystrom: I should like to put a question to the Hon. Member for LaSalle (Mr. Lanthier) about his speech on Bill C-12.

Many changes are made to our tax system in that Bill. A very important issue is the 1 per cent increase of the sales tax. The proposal was made by the former Liberal government. In July and in August, the Progressive Conservative Party fought the election campaign against the Liberal party and the tax increase. The same situation prevailed in the House last year when the Progressive Conservative Party criticized the sales tax increase planned by the Liberal Party. Could the Hon. Member explain his party's turnabout? Why do we find a Liberal proposal in a Conservative bill?

The more it changes, the more it is the same, Mr. Speaker. Last year it was the Liberal Party; this year it is the Progressive Conservative Party. What we have is exactly the same thing with exactly the same proposal. Could the Hon. Member explain to the House why his party has changed its mind? This