

### Small Business

Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Gillespie) should convince the Minister of Finance to include in his next budget the Canadian investment credit incentive plan put forward by the Leader of the Opposition, which would entitle a Canadian to deduct from his or her income tax otherwise payable one half of any new amount, up to \$5,000, invested in eligible, Canadian-owned small business.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I think at this point I should interrupt the hon. member and remind him of the terms of Standing Order 15. I do this from time to time because I think it is the duty of the Chair to remind hon. members that the Standing Order provides that a minister of the Crown may make an announcement or statement to the House, and it goes on to provide:

Any such announcement or statement should be limited to facts which it is deemed necessary to make known to the House and should not be designed to provoke debate at this stage. A spokesman for each of the parties in opposition to the government may comment briefly, subject to the same limitation.

I have often found it difficult to determine what the adverb "briefly" means. Members, in my experience, do not always use a like guide. I would hope the hon. member would judge that perhaps he has now reached the point where the Standing Order becomes applicable.

**Mr. Hellyer:** Mr. Speaker, I have one more sentence, with your indulgence. The Canadian investment credit incentive plan, if implemented, will do more to promote and develop small business in Canada than all the government's programs put together.

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville):** Mr. Speaker, I assure you that I will not take any more time than the hon. member for Trinity (Mr. Hellyer). I observe that the hon. member for Trinity began his remarks by condemning the minister's announcement as a small step forward and then promptly took credit for it as an idea of the Conservative Party. He said it was similar to the platform put forward by his party in this House and on the election trail.

I welcome the announcement the minister made this afternoon to establish in the fall a Crown corporation that is to provide some assistance to small business in terms of financing and other services. I only hope that when the Crown corporation is established it will be as positive as the rhetoric and prose of the minister's statement this afternoon. Often an announcement is misleading. I hope that the workings of this corporation will be as positive as the announcement the minister made in the House.

There are one or two matters of concern connected with the announcement. First, I should like to know how much money will be provided for the corporation. Second, I am concerned about the corporation being attached to the Industrial Development Bank. In the past, as members of the House know, the IDB has been tougher in its granting of loans than the chartered banks and other financial institutions. It has been more stringent in terms of to whom it will lend money for purposes of establishing industry in this country. If the IDB is to have anything to do with this, the House must lay down some explicit directives as to what money is to be lent. Money ought to

[Mr. Hellyer.]

be lent at reasonable rates of interest to small businessmen of this country. I think that is an important part of legislation of this kind if it is to be positive and constructive.

I remind you, Sir, of the interest that my party has taken in this matter. We encourage the minister to implement a positive policy. I wish to refer to what the leader of my party said in the throne speech debate, as recorded at page 65 of *Hansard* for January 8:

—to the extent that investment needs to be stimulated, it should be encouraged in small and Canadian-owned business through a redesigned Canada Development Corporation. I point out that these smaller, Canadian-owned firms are labour—rather than capital—intensive and would indeed open new job opportunities.

The marketing and management services referred to in the throne speech would also help.

● (1430)

He went on to say:

What we do not need, what we in the New Democratic Party will continue to oppose, is a continuation of the corporate rip-off at the expense of the ordinary Canadian taxpayer.

One of the interesting aspects of today's announcement is that it is a shift in policy by the government toward helping free enterprise. For too long the huge, multinational corporation has been assisted by both the Liberal and Conservative parties in this country to the detriment of not only the ordinary citizen but small business itself which found itself squeezed out of the free enterprise society by huge multinational corporations. I find that shift in policy very interesting.

To be effective and meaningful, this new corporation will have to provide funds to small businessmen at low interest rates—rates they can afford. It must be a place where they can go to borrow money to expand their industry or enterprise. It should be mandatory that the banks and financial institutions, as well as this institution, lend money to small businessmen at a rate not higher than the prime interest rate. I suggest this should apply to farmers, fishermen and people purchasing homes. If this is done, perhaps we will have some meaningful activity in terms of Canadian-owned small business development that tends to be more labour-intensive than the foreign, huge, multinational corporations.

The announcement today also indicates the need for an over-all industrial and economic policy in this country that is all-inclusive. In order to help small business in the west, Quebec, the Maritimes and the north we need equitable freight rates; the anomalies in the freight rate system should be cleared up. Many businessmen would like to expand or initiate businesses in the north or some other region but cannot do so because the freight rate structure discriminates against them. I urge the government to bring into fruition an agency that is meaningful, not one that is couched with all kinds of positive rhetoric to fool the Canadian people, because I do not think it will fool them.

[Translation]

**Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Gillespie) has just pompously announced the creation of a new ivory