

Human Rights

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

Occasionally there are pretty high pressure sales tactics used, particularly by in-house issuers or certain retail stores. Some pretty high powered tactics are used to get people to accept their credit cards and use them. Often those retail stores have the highest rates of interest attached to the use of their cards. This afternoon we have heard examples of rates as high as 28.8 per cent.

I would like to say a few words about the Bill presented to us in response to this real problem. We have a proposed legislative solution. We are going to legislate ceilings that credit card companies can charge. It will be done on a sliding scale which gets away from some of the difficulties that happen when a maximum interest rate is imposed, and for that reason it is good. If a legislated solution of this nature can be avoided, I think that that would be the preferable way to go.

Mr. Benjamin: We tried that and it did not work. You are dreaming.

Mr. Nickerson: In the final analysis, if I accept a credit card and use it, that is a freely entered into contract between myself and some other person. If at all possible the state should not intervene in those contracts that are made on a voluntary basis.

Another reason is that where Governments in the past have imposed maximum interest rates it has resulted in non-economic allocation of resources and, in the long run, brought about things that were undesirable. An example that immediately jumps to mind is the question of the Savings and Loans in the United States that are going through a difficult period and causing a lot of problems.

Mr. Benjamin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I wonder if I could prevail upon my colleague, the Hon. Member for Western Arctic (Mr. Nickerson) to sit down, let us at least deal with second reading of this Bill, and quit trying to talk out the Bill of his own colleague.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired.

Pursuant to Standing Order 36(2) the order is dropped to the bottom of the list of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

SITTING SUSPENDED

[*Translation*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to order adopted earlier today, the sitting is suspended until the call of the Chair.

At 3 p.m. the sitting of the House was suspended.

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at 4.23 p.m.

The Deputy Chairman: Pursuant to order adopted earlier today, the sitting . . .

The Deputy Chairman: I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed Bill C-158.

Mr. Prud'homme: On a point of order.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme), on a point of order.

Mr. Prud'homme: Mr. Speaker, so that we may have a clear picture of the proceedings, would you be so kind as to repeat what you said initially and then dropped because it seemed inappropriate? Could you repeat "pursuant to the order adopted earlier" . . . ? I would like to hear the end of this "pursuant . . .", what we agreed to this morning.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to the order approved unanimously by the House, we are back for the message from the Senate.

Mr. Prud'homme: Today?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Yes, today. The sitting of the House was suspended, but now we are back.

I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed Bill C-158, an Act to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act, 1971, without amendment.

I also have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed Bill C-147, an Act to establish the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, with amendments.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

With unanimous consent, the House proceeded to consideration of amendments by the Senate to Bill C-147, the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development Act.

Hon. Doug Lewis (for the Secretary of State for External Affairs) moved that the amendments by the Senate to Bill C-147, an Act to establish the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, be now read the second time and concurred in.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt this motion? Debate. The Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier).