Often we talk to small business people from within the communities about what funds are available. If you ask them if they have ever looked at the Small Businesses Loans Act they say they have been in to see the bankers and their bankers have never told them about that particular act. I think that this is reflected in some of the loans under the Small Businesses Loans Act. If we look at the period from 1985 through to 1991, we see a decrease under the Small Businesses Loans Act of 69 per cent in loans, from 34,741 small businesses using that act in 1985 down to 10,640. I think that is a reflection of the difficulty of what the small business community calls triple dipping and the fact that the bankers are not telling the small business community that the Small Businesses Loans Act is available to them.

The triple dipping I referred to is the wish of the banks to ensure their loans are looked after. They are guaranteed under the Small Businesses Loans Act. They are then given business collateral as well as personal collateral so that there is essentially triple collateral available to the banks. On collections, they often do not bother to pay attention as to whether they get the best value for their money when they are collecting on defaulted loans.

Also, if we look at the amount of money lent under the Small Businesses Loans Act for that same period of time, there is a decrease of 59 per cent of loans, from $1 billion approximately in 1985 down to $413,000 in 1991, a substantial drop. While the increased limit seems to be a good idea, I suggest that there is not much use to it if in fact the banks are not making the small businesses aware that this is available.

I should say at this point that I was pleased to see considered one of the suggestions that I have made to this House and a number of other members have made over the last two or three years, that of a one-stop shop. I understand that the government, under the Minister of State for Small Businesses and others, has set up a pilot project in Edmonton where there will be under one roof a one-stop shop for the small business community. I am hoping that that pilot project will work out well within Edmonton and will be able to be expanded throughout Canada to ensure that the small business community can go to one stop under one roof and find out from that area all of what is available from the federal government and perhaps also the provincial governments. I think that would be of great help to the small business community.

I think it is also interesting to note that as we look at money that is provided or loan guarantees provided by the federal government through the Small Businesses Loans Act and the Federal Business Development Bank, we see the loans getting larger and larger. If we speak to the banking community they tell us that there is as much paperwork to make a $20,000 loan as there is to make a $2 million or $10 million loan and they would much rather make the larger loans. I think that is the way the situation has gone in the banking community. There is a tendency to flow toward larger loans to larger corporations as opposed to assisting smaller businesses with smaller loans, the small capital loans.

I do not think that moving the floor up from $100,000 to $200,000 is going to help those smaller businesses. While I support the floor for those who need that increase, and I think that increase is needed, I suggest that we have got to do other things to make sure that the small business community is in fact getting the money it needs.

• (1310)

It is interesting to note also that there is a report card done on banking by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business each year. It is also interesting to note that the five major chartered banks are the bottom of the satisfaction scale. There has been some shifting over the years. I will say that the Bank of Montreal has made an effort. It appears to increase the availability of loans to small businesses. That is reflected in this report card, where they have come from the bottom last year up to somewhere in the middle, approximately a 56 per cent satisfaction rate. It is interesting to note that caisses populaires and credit unions have the top ranking as far as satisfaction percentage with the small business community goes in this report card. It goes out to other institutions, down to trust companies, national banks and other chartered banks. Then you get into the big five. I think that is a tell-tale figure and a tell-tale report card in looking at the availability of funding through our chartered banks and through our banking community.