

*Small Businesses Loans Act***SMALL BUSINESSES LOANS ACT**

MEASURES TO AMEND

The House resumed, from Friday, April 25, consideration of the motion of Mr. Lapointe (Charlevoix) that Bill C-17, to amend the Small Businesses Loans Act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I understand the hon. member for Western Arctic (Mr. Nickerson) had the floor.

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, I believe you are correct, but I did not know that as soon as I waked in tonight you would change the schedule and this matter would again be under discussion. However, I have just about completed what I had to say on the subject.

The final clause of the bill with which we are dealing brings the date forward, at which time the act will expire, unless renewed, to June 30, 1982. I am pleased to note that this sunset provision is still included in the bill. If we are not very careful, legislation of this nature can continue, continue, and continue, and Parliament can lose sight of it. With this provision it means that the measure has to be brought back before this House within the time period.

We are given to understand that within the two-year time period the government is going to take a close look at the various ways by which assistance can be given to small businesses, and I am very pleased this is to be done. The general consensus of the House is, I believe, that we should like this to go ahead, with assistance given to small businesses, and we commend the government for taking this upon itself. I am sure it can expect the advice and help of all members of this House.

Although that is the consensus of the House, I have one small reservation. It appears to me sometimes that instead of the government taking money from one set of taxpayers and giving it out in this fashion in specific areas, it might be better had it not taken that money from the taxpayers in the first place. We can very often make a good case for leaving the money in the hands of individuals, in the hands of corporations and small businesses, particularly so that they can themselves decide where they want to reinvest that money.

Just a few days ago every member of this House received a communication from the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy) about the summer youth employment program. In reviewing various projects under that program it came to our attention that after all this money has been spent we are still not going to be that much further ahead. This was something of a stop-gap measure. Perhaps in that case, as in the case of some of the programs to assist small businesses, it would be better to leave the money in the hands of the taxpayer.

I think those were to be my concluding remarks on this particular bill. This is something I am sure everybody in this House wants to deal with quickly. We all agree with it in principle, and I hope it has speedy passage.

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg-Assiniboine): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to enter the debate on Bill C-17 to amend the Small Businesses Loans Act. The government has nothing to congratulate itself about in respect of this bill. All this is, is a very small step forward. The government certainly has much to do in this Parliament in order to get off the backs of the businessmen. I should just like to read into the record a brief comment from some business leaders in Manitoba following the introduction of the mini-budget last week. This is an excellent article which appeared in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, entitled "Budget Riles Winnipeg Businessmen". The article states in part:

The federal government's mini-budget is the worst of all possible combinations, three Winnipeg business leaders say.

Their protests centre on higher government spending and escalating deficits coupled with higher taxation.

"They've led us down the garden path," is the way the government's financial posture was described to the *Free Press* by Gervin Greasley, executive vice-president of the Winnipeg Construction Association.

Jim Cartlidge, president of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, expressed concern the government is increasing both taxes and bureaucratic spending without having a long-term plan for fiscal administration.

● (2010)

In other words, the government does not have its act together. The article goes on to criticize the government for its continuing irresponsible spending habits, which have been the record of this Liberal government or so-called Liberal government since 1968. The Liberals have a disgraceful record when it comes to assisting the business community in Canada. One only needs to look at the number of commercial failures and bankruptcies since 1968. In 1968, under a Liberal government, there were 2,481 bankruptcies. Since 1968 the Liberals have managed to work that figure up to 5,648 bankruptcies. Clearly it indicates that their policies of heavy taxation, interference, and harassment of the business community have been very successful. They have increased bankruptcies by making things as awkward and difficult as possible for the business community in Canada.

Mr. Pepin: What is the figure for 1979?

Mr. McKenzie: We on this side are very pleased that the Liberal party has adopted a number of our proposals. One proposal which it has adopted is the Small Business Development Bonds which will assist small businessmen with the problem of escalating interest rates. I will be discussing the high interest rate policies of the New Democratic Party and the Liberal party in just a few moments.

Another policy which has been adopted by the government is the tax deduction to small businessmen of salaries paid to spouses, which was introduced in the last Conservative budget. One of the most serious problems for businesses, large and small, is the paper burden. Our government had taken steps to reduce the amount of paper work imposed on the small business community. Over 70,000 small businessmen will be exempt from filing reports under the Corporations and Labour Unions Returns Act. This is a step in the right direction, and I hope that the Liberal government will take a look at this