

exceed \$3 million, and quite likely never will in my lifetime, even given our present rate of inflation.

• (2110)

They employ, on the average, much less than 100 employees; indeed some of them only employ the husband, his wife, and the kids when they get home from school and on weekends. They are in every phase of our business community—retail, wholesale, manufacturing. They are people who work 12 and 14 hours a day, six and seven days a week, and take so little out of their business that many months provide them with less than the minimum wage. They reinvest their profits daily so they can buy a more efficient piece of machinery or a second delivery truck; and, Mr. Speaker, whether this government believes it or not, they are willing to continue to do so provided they can see a ray of light or a hint of encouragement from this government.

So they look to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Gillespie) and what he had to say to and for them in this House last Friday. He said, Mr. Speaker, a grand total of six lines out of the hundreds and hundreds of lines of his speech in the official report of last Friday's debates. What were the minister's words? Let me quote from page 2780 of *Hansard*:

In closing the catalogue, I should like to refer to new proposals which I am preparing in order to provide additional special assistance to small business. This is the sector which employs most of our work force. In my view it is the sector which generates most of our new products and services.

This apologetic afterthought is all the minister can offer to those whom he calls the sector that employs most of our work force, the sector which generates most of our new products and services.

The leader of the New Democratic Party has accused those in this party of selling out "to the wealthy, the rich and the powerful corporation". The people for whom I speak are apparently unknown to the hon. member. These people and the companies for whom I speak are not the wealthy, the rich and the powerful; they are the overtaxed, the discouraged, and the bureaucratically controlled Canadians who are buried in government inspectors, government forms, government reports and government regulations, who are finding it hard to find the time to be good Canadians, let alone good businessmen, because of government pressure and because of neither government encouragement nor understanding.

The leader of the New Democratic Party says that all the hon. member for Trinity proposed last Friday will be at the expense of the Canadian people. Mr. Speaker, those for whom I speak are that part of the Canadian people which the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) will doggedly and blindly crush if he continues to exert his control in his alliance with this government. These small business people look to this government to be pro-Canadian, not anti-foreign. However, they would likely support Bill C-132 if it was evident that it was but a minor part in a total, positive economic program.

Not one of these vital citizens in my riding of Perth-Wellington, be he personal or corporate, is looking for a government hand-out, although most would agree that the \$1 billion this government spent to bail out the unemploy-

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ment insurance fund was the result of economic mismanagement, and that had that amount been spent over a period of time in economic incentives a few years ago, the UIC fund never would have become overdrawn.

So when these people, who are the heart, the soul and the backbone of many Canadian communities, see this foreign investment review bill presented to the House without any indication of other positive incentives to Canadians, they must wonder if this government has any idea of their position, where they are overtaxed, have limited access to capital and are being destroyed by high interest rates.

Small business wants and deserves the opportunity to play its role in expanding the economy and providing employment, and I suggest that any government which denies them this role is doomed. Surely, Mr. Speaker, we cannot accept a business climate where the business failure rate in Canada last year was the highest since 1932. This year brings no better news, for in January there were 217 failures, compared with 177 a year ago—an increase of 17 per cent. And this government must assume its share of the blame for this unacceptable situation. As the leader of my party said last fall:

It is characteristic of the government today that its preoccupation with its own size and power leads it to ignore those it considers of relative inconsequence. Attempts at tax reform led big government to ignore the total interests of small business. And yet, small business in this country generates more employment, more real growth, and more tax revenue, and bears more of the cost burden of government than does the so-called big business.

The minister, with some justification, may accuse me of enjoying the luxury of opposition which provides me with this opportunity of telling the House that this ad hoc, penal bill is inadequate in face of the demands for positive, economic incentives. Therefore, I wish to itemize only three areas in which a Conservative government would meet these demands. I hasten to point out that there is no reason why the minister should not imitate his colleague, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner), in adopting Conservative programs, although I would hope he would be inclined to be more courteous than the Minister of Finance and acknowledge their source.

In any event, the first program would involve the orderly transfer of ownership of the small family business within the family. We should investigate the elimination or changing of capital gains tax for this transfer, since I suggest to the House that the capital gains tax produced in these family transfers would not be sufficient to pay for the bureaucracy costs in having inspectors, accountants and others running around the country trying to figure out the necessary valuations and making them stick, any more than these costs can be met by the capital gains tax revenues resulting from the transfer of family farms.

Therefore, if the minister chooses to take advantage of our suggestion of considering the elimination of capital gains tax for the transfer of the small family business to a son or daughter, I wish him more success with the Minister of Finance than that enjoyed by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) who wound up with the incredible situation of telling this country's farmers that they have to die before an orderly transfer of the family farm to their children can be affected. It would also be a Conservative government's responsibility to consult with the