

The people of Haldimand—Norfolk and, indeed, the people in all of Canada need to know what this government is prepared to do in this area.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair received earlier today notices under Standing Order 52, one from the member for Essex—Windsor and shortly thereafter one from the member for Haldimand—Norfolk.

• (1710)

The Chair has considered what is a most important and serious matter which concerns the Chair and, in particular, the Deputy Speaker since in my constituency we have the same type of problem that could occur.

However, after having considered the matter very carefully I do not believe that at this time it meets the requirements of the Standing Order.

I must thank the members for bringing this matter to the attention of the House. Again, as I have stressed, at this time I do not believe it meets the requirements of the Standing Order.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I realize the point that the Chair is making and we certainly accept the point that in your estimation this matter does not qualify for an emergency debate.

However, after hearing the views put forward by my hon. friend I wonder if we could ask for unanimous consent to have a special debate later in the day on this emergency. While it does not meet the specifications of the Standing Order, if the members of the House of Commons unanimously agree that it proceed then perhaps we could do it that way.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I agree with my hon. friend that this is a very important matter. I do not think we should get into a position of, in effect, not directly but indirectly overruling the Chair when the Chair considers the business before the country and before the House.

I think we should save the Liberal party any further embarrassment by not having this debate at this time.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I want to say this slowly. We are not embarrassed in any way, shape or form.

Government Orders

As a matter of fact we, the Liberals, represent an area which is at this time subject to a catastrophe. We asked for the debate and we would be happy to have it at any time.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

INCOME TAX ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Wednesday, February 14, consideration of the motion of Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) that Bill C-52, an act to amend the Income Tax Act and related acts, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Finance; and the amendment of Mr. Brewin (p. 8329).

Mr. Deputy Speaker: When the House last debated the bill there were four minutes left in the question and comment period on the speech of the hon. member for Kamloops. If there are members who wish to ask the House Leader for the New Democratic Party questions on his speech, they are welcome to do so at this time.

Since there are no questions, the Chair recognizes the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca on debate.

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to participate in the debate on this bill.

This bill falls into the same category as other legislation that this government has introduced that is of benefit to the rich with very little concern for middle-income earners or low-income earners.

Mr. Speaker, I want to refer you specifically to the opinion of one of the major newspapers in this country. It is an editorial in response to this bill which I think is appropriate.

I refer to an editorial in *The Toronto Star* of April 16, 1989, relative to the RRSP changes. The title of the editorial is: "RRSP changes benefit the wealthy". It states in part: "The distribution of income in Canada is highly unequal. In 1981 the 20 per cent of Canadian families with the highest incomes ended up with 41.8 per cent of the total income pie. By contrast, the 20 per cent