

The Bill as drafted is good. One thing I should like to point out to the House and to all Canadians is that at the same time as we introduce this good Bill which will allow Canadian families to get \$300, the taxman will recoup \$354. It is said in the Bible that what the right hand gives the left hand takes away. You represent the right hand, you give \$300 to families, but your tax department and Mr. Wilson represent the left hand. Unfortunately, they are the ones who will take away the \$354.

• (1620)

[English]

Mrs. Collins: Mr. Speaker, I wanted to clarify something to which the Hon. Member alluded that caused me some concern. She seemed to imply that if there was an overpayment because the mother or family had earned more than \$15,000, the family would have to repay that amount with interest. She talked about people knocking on doors and I want to assure her that that is not the case. People will not be knocking on doors. In fact, if there should be an overpayment there would be no interest charged until after April 30 of the following year.

When people file their income tax and find that they have earned over that amount, they would have to send it back, but there would be no interest charged unless they were late in filing the income tax return itself. I believe it is important to make that point, because we certainly do not want people to be fearful that if the amount they are receiving is not quite right they will have to pay it back plus interest. That certainly is not the case and I want to draw that to her attention.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, I think we could probably get some of the details from the Parliamentary Secretary. However, it is the impression of the Liberal Party that the interest which will be accruing will be from the date of the delivery of the cheque, as opposed to April.

There is another difficulty that may be considered. I remember filing my income tax return at the beginning of March. After yelling and screaming loud enough for my return, I finally received it in September of this year. If I had been a recipient of a child tax credit—although obviously I am in a position where I am not receiving a child tax credit—some months would have elapsed from the time at which I would have been responsible for repaying that amount, even though I had filed within the required time and the Government was just slow in processing the income tax return.

Mrs. Collins: I want to assure the Hon. Member that with the tremendous changes that have taken place in the last two years—

Ms. Copps: It was this year.

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Mrs. Collins:—since the Government has come to power the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. MacKay) has made changes so that people are getting their income tax returns very quickly. I really do not think that it will be a problem at all.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, I have a very quick reply because I know that my time has lapsed. My nightmare with the Income Tax Department was this year. It related to the fiscal year 1985, so I think the Government can beat its breast quite a bit, but there are still many Canadians who must wait a long time to get their returns.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Does the Hon. Member for Swift Current—Maple Creek (Mr. Wilson) have a short question?

Mr. Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek): I have a short question for the Hon. Member. I appreciate her view that this is basically a good Bill. I wonder about the purpose of the amendment she has suggested which would increase the threshold to \$23,500. In fact, this means that all of those people who might potentially receive the child tax credit ought to receive the prepayment. By so doing, would this not complicate matters to the point where indeed the potential for overpayment and the problems of collection would be drastically increased? I do not think the concern is so much a matter of interest, but of getting the original money back. I can envisage that there would be many problems in collecting money where it has gone out perhaps erroneously or accidentally. Would the Hon. Member not reconsider that amendment, seeing that perhaps it might cause more problems than it is worth?

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is no doubt aware that there is a partial tax credit that also goes to families with incomes between \$23,500 and \$31,600. While the Government has used \$15,000 as an arbitrary cut-off point, the reason we feel it should be raised to \$23,500 is that if one takes most norms for establishing poverty into consideration, including the Senate Report on Poverty, Statistics Canada and the various national indicators of poverty, \$23,500 is the figure at which every Canadian family living in poverty will be entitled to the tax credit in advance. Those people living above the line of poverty but still receiving the tax credit will wait for the child tax credit income tax return in the normal course.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[Translation]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order, please. Pursuant to Standing Order 66, it is my duty to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of