

*Income Tax Act*

plan the business of the House in any sensible or organized way.

[Translation]

**Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Mr. Speaker, the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) who today invoked Standing Order 75c to close the debate on the motion for third reading of Bill C-259 is also impinging upon parliamentary freedom. In my opinion, it is a way of tampering with people's freedom.

In fact, why are we against Bill C-259 and the imposition of Rule 75c? Simply because nobody in Canada agrees on that famous Bill C-259. We realize there is confusion everywhere, even on the government side. The former Minister of Communications and the former Minister of National Defence do not agree with the government on Bill C-259. A few moments ago, some hon. members applauded the government's decision to apply Standing Order 75c, without knowing why.

On the other hand, if we consult economists about Bill C-259, we find that those who belong to the Liberal party do not agree at all with those who belong to the Progressive Conservative party and that the latter do not share the opinions of their colleagues in the New Democratic Party. So, there is confusion among economists, and some even claim that Bill C-259 will make things worse instead of improving them.

Even chartered accountants do not agree too much among themselves. One of them, the hon. member for Laurier (Mr. Leblanc) expressed in the House yesterday opinions that were completely contrary to those held by the others. As a matter of fact, he attacks everyone without proposing any useful solution.

With regard to the different social classes, the minister referred with pleasure a moment ago to the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin), who is a lawyer and who suggests that the government should insist upon a vote on Bill C-259. But the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) is also a lawyer and his opinions are the very opposite of those of the hon. member for Greenwood. So there is confusion among lawyers as well. The hon. member for Waterloo (Mr. Saltsman) supported the decision of the government to apply Standing Order 75c and the minister stated that even editorials are divided. Parliamentary reporters do not agree. Some are in favour of the bill, others are discrediting it, but all are uncertain.

This is why, Mr. Speaker, we cannot support Bill C-259 which is a kind of bible 730 pages long which nobody understands. Indeed, even the minister does not understand it. However, they want us to pass it so that they may tackle the Canadian taxpayers who are working to build the country.

When I refer to economists, for example, I do not hesitate to state quite frankly that the economists who advise us are our people who work in Canada and contribute to its development but do not try to crush it or rob it blind.

We talk about farmers, miners from Noranda, Canadair workers, Montreal and Trois-Rivières wage earners, in short about all the working classes in our society, including small storekeepers who will pay the piper and go broke as a result of the enactment of Bill C-259. Those are the economists we have. We speak sensibly on their behalf

and we request that the government be more understanding.

• (2:40 p.m.)

Because the President of the Privy Council has invoked Standing order 75c, we say he interferes with the rights of parliamentarians. If the vote were free, if we were not asked to vote like sheep, if the members, government and others alike, were entirely free to vote according to the interests of the citizens they represent, then closure would not have to be invoked, nor would we be asked to study confusing bills.

It is all very well to say: We are levying a new tax because the people are rich, as the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) was pleased to say over CKAC in Montreal. It is all very well to say to the people: You earn enough, that is why you are being taxed, when everyone, including the Prime Minister, knows that they have not enough money already. But in order to sound funny on radio, one can always tell them: You are rich, that is why we are passing bills to tax you more. That is exactly what the government means by introducing Bill C-259.

In any event, the government takes the responsibility for applying Standing Order 75c. It has the majority. The Prime Minister was saying on the same station that thanks to the majority that it holds, the government is solid. They have solidity, indeed, but only to impose additional taxes. They are solid enough to impose new taxes on the middle class of our society through a bill which will be favourable to the rich without assisting the poor all that much and which to a certain extent, will siphon off a considerable part of the income of the middle classes so that we will end up some day in Canada with a situation where people will be either rich or poor.

That is exactly the purpose behind Bill C-259. The government is taking the responsibility for foisting this bill upon the people of Canada, and that despite the suggestions put forward by the opposition. Although the government says that we will have debated this bill for 50 days, we don't even have the right to make it understand the least little change that should be made and applied for sound economic, social and political policies in Canada. That should be done not by funny speeches delivered over radio or television but through legislation respectful of the human being, of personal initiative and of private enterprise across the country.

[English]

**Hon. Arthur Laing (Minister of Public Works):** Mr. Speaker, I am quite certain that questions will be asked on the other side of the House about whether my colleague has requested that I speak today because he is getting to the bottom of the barrel over here.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Oh, no!

**Mr. Laing:** My defence to that—

**Mr. Stanfield:** There is no need for any defence.

**Mr. Laing:**—and my confidence stem from the fact that the barrel has been emptied several times on the other side.

**Mr. Stanfield:** You can do better than that.