

what the Prime Minister has just done with his remarks from his seat.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member is quite right. It is not in accordance with correct parliamentary practice to impute motives and I have pointed this out already today to hon. members who in my view were doing that. I agree with the hon. member in that respect. Again I will call on the hon. member for Regina East. Perhaps he might ask his question.

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#### AGRICULTURE

ACTION TO OFFSET IMPACT OF UNITED STATES IMPORT SURTAX—RESPONSE TO LETTER FROM SASKATCHEWAN WHEAT POOL PRESIDENT

**Mr. John Burton (Regina East):** My question is very simple and uncontroversial and it is addressed to the Prime Minister. I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether he has received a letter from Mr. E. K. Turner, President of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, asking that further action be taken to assist agriculture in offsetting the impact of the United States import surcharge? Can the Prime Minister tell us what response he has given to that letter?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** I have no memory of receiving such a letter. Had I received it I would have referred it to the minister responsible for the Wheat Board to advise me on a possible answer.

**Mr. Burton:** May I ask the Prime Minister whether the government has considered any further special measures to bring before Parliament to assist agriculture in offsetting the effects of the situation in which it now finds itself as a result of the United States economic measures?

**Mr. Trudeau:** The Minister of Agriculture in his speech on Bill C-262 indicated what the government proposes to do.

**Mr. Speaker:** Orders of the day.

**Mr. MacInnis:** I rise on a question of privilege.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member will have to find a new question of privilege because I have already ruled there is no question of privilege before us. The question period has expired, but I recognize that we are going to spend more time on a question of privilege. The hon. member has the floor.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. MacInnis:** My question of privilege arises from the fact that the government has advertised false information regarding the unemployment picture in this country. I would ask the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, as head of that department, whether it is not his duty to safeguard the interests of the Canadian public and the Canadian taxpayer by preventing money being wrongly spent by the government.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I suggest to all hon. members that that is not a question of privilege. It is a matter

#### Income Tax Act

of debate between the minister and the hon. member and I think he should not pursue the matter further. I have already called orders of the day. In any event—

**Mr. MacInnis:** Once more, on a question of privilege, I do not intend to stand here and listen to snide remarks from that minister who is failing to carry out the duties imposed upon him by the government.

**Mr. Speaker:** Orders of the Day.

• (3:00 p.m.)

#### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

##### INCOME TAX ACT

The House resumed, from Monday, September 13, consideration of the motion of Mr. Gray (for Mr. Benson) that Bill C-259, to amend the Income Tax Act and to make certain provisions and alterations in the statute law related to or consequent upon the amendments to that act be read the second time and referred to the committee of the whole, and the amendment thereto of Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West) (p. 7763).

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, it was as long ago as September 7, 1969 that the present government, with a great flourish of trumpets, tabled the white paper on tax reform. It was on November 28, some three weeks later, that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) rose in this House to present the white paper on behalf of the government and to move its reference to the appropriate committee.

The minister said then that the white paper was not binding upon the government and that if anyone had any better suggestions to make those suggestions would be taken into consideration. But it quickly became apparent that the minister did not really believe any basic changes were needed. In fact, it was not even necessary to wait until he had reacted with hurt and astonishment to the first criticisms. In his opening speech, the minister let his mask of neutrality slip when he said, and I quote him:

We in government believe that the system proposed is a good one. As I said, it is being put forward as a proposal for discussion, to be brought into study whereby it will be accepted by Canadians as being a good tax system.

May I repeat the last phrase "to be brought into study whereby it will be accepted by Canadians as being a good tax system". What that means, if it means anything, is that Canadians would be given the right, as far as the government was then concerned, first to study the white paper and then to adopt it. The government may not have felt bound by the white paper, but it was clear from the outset that the Minister of Finance was, psychologically at least, very much bound up with its proposals. It was his baby and he was not about to give it up.

You may remember, Mr. Speaker, that the minister told us at that time that this was a fight between ordinary Canadians and big business, that it was a crusade, that it was to be a march to victory. It was an advance, however, that was quickly halted, then turned into a retreat and