

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, July 7, 1955

The house met at eleven o'clock.

QUESTIONS

NATIONAL REVENUE—PHOTOSTATS SHOWN TO PREMIER OF ONTARIO

Mr. Knowles:

1. In the matter of the photostatic copies of any document or documents which the Minister of National Revenue showed to the premier and/or provincial treasurer of Ontario, on April 27, 1955, were the said photostats prepared in or by the Department of National Revenue?

2. If so, when were they prepared?

3. If not, from whom did the minister obtain the said photostats, and when did he obtain them?

Mr. McCann: Stand.

SUCCESSION DUTY—PHOTOSTATIC COPIES OF DOCUMENTS

Mr. Knowles:

1. During each of the last three fiscal years, in the case of how many succession duty returns did the Department of National Revenue make, or have made, photostatic copies of any documents submitted in connection with such returns?

2. For what purpose or purposes were such photostatic copies made?

3. In how many cases were such photostatic copies brought to the attention of the minister?

Mr. McCann: Stand.

INCOME TAX—PHOTOSTATIC COPIES OF DOCUMENTS

Mr. Knowles:

1. During each of the last three fiscal years, in the case of how many income tax returns did the Department of National Revenue make, or have made, photostatic copies of any documents submitted in connection with such returns?

2. For what purpose or purposes were such photostatic copies made?

3. In how many cases were such photostatic copies brought to the attention of the minister?

Mr. McCann: Stand.

NATIONAL REVENUE—SOURCE OF INFORMATION DISCLOSED

Mr. Knowles:

1. In the matter of the information which the Minister of National Revenue communicated to the premier and/or provincial treasurer of Ontario, on April 27, 1955, did the minister obtain the said information, in the first instance, from the files of his department? If so, when?

2. If not, from what source did the minister receive the said information, and when?

Mr. McCann: Stand.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Speaker, I think that the attention of the house should be drawn to the fact that these four questions that have just been passed have been standing on the order paper now for six weeks. Unless it is the intention of the government not to answer them at all, they should have been answered long before this. I believe there should be some explanation because the estimates of this department will be coming forward and it will be appropriate that the information asked for in these and other questions should be available to hon. members at that time.

Mr. St. Laurent: Mr. Speaker, the attention of the house has already been called to that fact and the minister replied that he would be providing the answers before the day fixed for the calling of his estimates.

Mr. Knowles: Since I am involved in this matter, Mr. Speaker, may I ask whether there is any reason why the answers should be delayed until just before the estimates are brought down? Why not give the answers earlier than that?

Mr. McCann: The answers will be given prior to the estimates.

Mr. Fulton: How long before?

Mr. McCann: I should think that the hon. member who has put the questions on the order paper would be the one most concerned with reference to the time of the answers.

Mr. Fulton: We are all concerned.

Mr. McCann: Some few days ago when the hon. member asked about the question I gave an answer which appeared to be satisfactory to him. I will carry out the suggestion I made at that time in plenty of time. It appears now that the estimates may not be on for a considerable time, but I am ready to go ahead with them whenever they are called. When they shall be called is at the discretion of the house leader.

Mr. Knowles: If the minister is ready to go ahead with his estimates at any time, surely the answers to these questions must be ready.

Mr. Speaker: So that this debate is not to be regarded as a precedent, may I submit that when questions are being asked with respect to delays in answering questions, they normally should be asked before the