

Income War Tax

Mr. GRAYDON: Farmers and their wives will come in, and when they see the income tax forms they are required to fill out they will throw up their hands—I have seen them by the dozens—and say: There is no way in which I can possibly make out this form and still come within a reasonably accurate statement of my income. The farmer cannot do it unless he is to have someone on the farm to keep track of all that he sells and of all that remains by way of inventory. He is in an entirely different position from the ordinary businessman because his whole mode of living is entirely different from that in the urban centres.

I am glad to hear that the minister is to simplify some of the income tax forms because, if they are continued as before, it seems to me that the farmer will be faced with an almost hopeless situation in making out his income tax return. There must be a simpler way of doing it. There must be some means provided whereby the average farmer can readily calculate his income tax.

Mr. GIBSON: The trouble is to calculate his income.

Mr. GRAYDON: That is the point I was about to make. I understand that the Minister of National Revenue is to provide some form of assistance for those with incomes of less than \$3,000 in making out their income tax forms. Some assistance is to be provided, or they are to have their income tax forms filled out for them, I understand, free of charge.

Mr. GIBSON: No, the tax will be shown on the form for incomes up to \$3,000, within ranges of ten dollars.

Mr. GRAYDON: Then I misunderstood. No one receiving an income of less than \$3,000 is to receive any assistance in filling out the forms other than the information that is to be given on the back of the form in a table?

Mr. GIBSON: The table on the form will show what the actual tax is on incomes above \$660 for single persons, and \$1,200 for married, those being the exemption levels, and up to incomes of \$3,000, within ranges of ten dollars. The tables also show the tax for different classes of taxpayers according to the number of dependents, so that a man with a certain number of dependents will be able to see from the table the amount of tax he must pay on his salary.

Mr. GRAYDON: That may be a help, but it does not go very far in helping the average person to make out his income tax return. It is of no help to the farmer.

[Mr. Castleden.]

Mr. GIBSON: The farmer's trouble is to find out what his income is.

Mr. GRAYDON: That is the point I was trying to make, and I am quite sure that the minister will be one of the first to recognize the difficulty the farmer has in that respect. When I hear people saying here and there that the farmers are not making out any income tax returns I want to tell them and the minister that many people in other walks of life would almost throw up their hands if they had the same difficulties in calculating their income that the average farmer has. My experience in agricultural sections has been that the farmer wishes to pay to the government every five-cent piece that the government asks him to pay. On the other hand, I think the government ought to provide some simpler method, if at all possible, and there should not be one standard form applicable to the farmer just the same as to everybody else. The minister mentioned that there is to be a simplification in the form for salaried workers. Their income is much simpler to calculate than agricultural income. Once the salaried or professional man has figured out his income there are certain calculations to be made so that he can easily arrive at the tax. But I think the minister ought to give consideration to providing some simplification by which the farmer might more easily arrive at the income upon which his income tax is based.

Having in mind the suggestions which were made by the hon. member for Wellington South, I think we sometimes forget that there are other places besides the large centres of population. The difficulties in meeting the requirements of government taxing bodies and government offices generally are, I believe, more difficult the farther you get away from the large centres. The whole thing boils down to a matter of inconvenience. A farmer in the constituency of my hon. friend the member for Wellington South comes from north of Guelph, we will say. He has to go to Hamilton to see the income tax inspector, and there is a whole day lost. But a man in the city of Ottawa can take half an hour off at lunch time or half an hour off from his business, go into the income tax office and complete his form in a comparatively short time. The same is true, of course, of Montreal and Toronto. The question of convenience enters into the picture so far as rural Canada is concerned.

I have some sympathy with the suggestion made by the hon. member for Wellington South, but I am afraid I cannot follow him the whole distance. I am not sufficiently familiar with the circumstances he described. But,