

Income Tax Amendment

Mr. T. S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I have listened with interest to the speech of the hon. member for Kamloops (Mr. Fulton), as I always do. I must say that, like my colleague for York South, I do not pretend to comprehend fully all the details of this bill. I made an attempt to understand the various clauses as best I could but I must say that I was completely unaware of some of the sinister philosophical undertones in the legislation which the hon. member for Kamloops sees in it. It has become obvious to me that when the bill is considered in committee a good deal of the discussion on the clauses of the bill will centre around the different aspects of the legislation. This is to be expected in view of the heading which appears in yesterday's *Hansard* preceding the minister's speech on second reading. It appears to put the emphasis on the incorporation of provisions in the Income Tax Act analogous to those contained in the Canadian Vessel Construction Assistance Act.

My only purpose in participating in the debate at this stage is to say a word about an aspect of the legislation which was not touched upon by my colleague from York South, namely, the proposed repeal of the Canadian Vessel Construction Assistance Act. I have looked at the clauses in the bill relating to the existing provisions of that act and I find myself in agreement with the recommendations of the minister in this connection. In fact I am prepared to go somewhat further and to congratulate the minister on having had the foresight to take a course which in my view eliminates what was largely a piece of political window dressing introduced by a former Liberal administration in the immediate post-war period when a hue and cry was raised regarding the future of our merchant marine and of the Canadian shipbuilding industry.

As I understand the Canadian Vessel Construction Assistance Act, it is really an act which could very well have been incorporated in the Income Tax Act had it not been for what appears now to have been a ploy at the time to give some comfort to those engaged in Canadian vessel construction. Therefore, to the extent to which the minister is in effect rationalizing the legislation on our statute books by putting the provisions of the Canadian Vessel Construction Assistance Act where I think they should have been in the first place, in the Income Tax Act, I am happy to support the minister's move in that direction.

Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, the remarks I should like to make in connection with this bill are more in the nature of a protest at the method by which the principle is evolved rather than against the principle itself. I am referring to clause 21 of the bill which contains a definite principle that is to a large extent not connected with the bill, and requires every person filing an income tax return to have a social security number. The hon. member for Perth (Mr. Monteith) quoted a statement that the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) made as long ago as 1964 in connection with the use of social security numbers. There are a number of other occasions on which members of the government have solemnly assured the house and committees of the house that it was not the intention of the government to make the social security numbers applicable to everyone in Canada for every purpose. My objection is based on the fact that if clause 21 is adopted the process will be completed and practically everyone in Canada will be identified by a social security number.

• (4:00 p.m.)

In an automated society such as we have at present we must recognize the need for a certain amount of numbering. In fact, I could not conscientiously protest the use of numbers in plans the government brings forward in connection with social justice measures. One could not do so because such plans could not be operated without a reasonable system. To that extent I have to go along with the fact that numbering is necessary in many of the plans that are brought before parliament.

What I protest most strongly is that all the time the government was stating this was not what it intended to do it was in fact, through a series of four or five pieces of legislation, doing exactly this. If we adopt this bill the process will be complete. I should like to outline for a moment how this has been accomplished through a series of enactments that we have passed. It is the way it was done that I wish to protest. If the government had started out by saying, we are making plans for the Canada Pension Plan, for medical insurance later and for automating the income tax set-up, as well as a number of other things which will require social insurance numbers, then we could have had a debate on this subject. We could have settled the matter.

The government would probably have won such a debate because I suspect it would have had the support of the New Democratic Party. We would possibly have lost the battle if we