

Oral Questions

of the House. I regret that the confusion is being spread to taxpayers across the country.

REQUEST THAT IMPLEMENTATION DATE OF BUDGET BE
CHANGED

Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough): Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of National Revenue. Revenue Canada officials have confirmed today that they plan to process some taxpayers' returns three times in order to get around the problem of the delay in getting refunds out. Apparently they are going to process the same returns under the old system before the budget, under the new system based on the budget, and a third time, if necessary, if the budgetary provisions are changed in some way in regard to taxes.

In view of the fact that Revenue Canada has said that only a minority of taxpayers' returns are affected by the relevant provisions in the November, 1981, budget for the 1981 tax year, would the minister not agree that it would be simpler and cheaper for the government and for taxpayers if the effective date of the budget were changed so that it does not affect any taxpayers in the 1981 income tax year?

Hon. William Rompkey (Minister of National Revenue): Madam Speaker, I really have to repeat my last answer. With regard to the holdup of refunds, I have to repeat to the hon. member that there is no holdup in refunds. Almost two million refunds have been issued so far this year, and that is well ahead of last year. There is no holdup in refunds and there is no stockpiling of refunds.

Miss MacDonald: That is wrong.

Mr. Rompkey: The Department of National Revenue is acting according to the law. We are encouraging people to file on the basis of the new provisions and to put notes on their tax returns signifying where the new provisions will apply to them personally. There is no delay at all.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

STATEMENT BY GOVERNOR OF BANK OF CANADA ON INCOME
OF WORKERS

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister and, because it deals with broad policy matters, I hope he will answer. He is shaking his head. His miasma must be bothering him again today. I will put the question to whomever is responsible or cares about finance matters over there.

Given that the average industrial worker in Canada earns \$19,000 per year, and a typical family living at the minimum wage level lives below the poverty level in our cities, does the Prime Minister agree with Governor Bouey that these workers need to reduce their income in real terms in order for the country to deal with inflation?

• (1425)

Mr. Douglas Fisher (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, Governor Bouey did not say that they should reduce their incomes. He said that they should not play games with catch-up.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Epp: John Evans would not have said that.

GOVERNOR'S ANALYSIS

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, I should like to come back to the hon. member who is today actually accepting the responsibility which the Prime Minister should be accepting, and point out that the question concerned income in real terms. Governor Bouey said that workers who have had a net decline in real income for four years in a row should be prepared to stay in that condition and that they should not go after, to use the hon. member's term, a catch-up. We on this side of the House think it is time that the average Canadian worker got a fair deal in the country, and we blame the government for not giving it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: I repeat, does the government agree with Governor Bouey's analysis that workers at the minimum wage, or average industrial workers, must take a decline in their real income in order for the government to deal with inflation in the coming year?

Mr. Douglas Fisher (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, first of all I thank the leader of the NDP for putting me in such good company.

Mr. Clark: You will not be there long.

Mr. Fisher: Second, I remind him that the governor gave the same message to corporations to reduce their profits and to all of us to hold our costs down. We are doing no worker, whether he is on the minimum wage or above it, any favour by renewing a vicious inflationary spiral. That is the message that we all must get out.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

REQUEST THAT GOVERNOR BE DISMISSED

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, my last question is directed to the Prime Minister. Governor Bouey indicated that ordinary industrial workers must accept a decline in their real standards of living. He also blamed farmers who organized marketing boards for inflation, even though their real incomes are expected to go down 15 per cent this year. In so doing, he clearly demonstrated complete insensitivity to ordinary Canadians wherever they may live. If