

*Government Orders*

finance. This package of amendments, which is as thick as the bill itself, was found to be entirely out of order. They were entirely rejected.

As they say, this is no way to run a railroad. If the government cannot introduce a bill that covers the points that are necessary, surely it is incumbent upon it to withdraw the bill, and start over and do it properly. What we have in this case is a very important piece of legislation, tabled and debated in the House of Commons, which needed, according to the government and the departmental officials themselves, many amendments to it.

Either these amendments were superfluous and did not need to be presented in the first place, in which case they should not have been, or they were necessary, in which case the bill should have been removed from the list and reintroduced in the proper form. I think it is a demonstration of the incompetence of the government that it would present such an important piece of legislation in such a shoddy fashion.

The fact that we have spent this time debating it without having these amendments is a shame. What is going to happen, of course, is that these amendments are going to be presented in a new bill early in the new year and the only beneficiary of that process is going to be the publishers of income tax acts who publish them in great quantities every time the act is amended.

The bill presents many points for discussion. The most important for many Canadians, of course, is the proposal contained in it to claw back family allowance and old age security benefits. But there are other things, things that came up very briefly in correspondence received by members of the legislative committee and otherwise. I will refer to a couple of these.

• (1700)

We received very strong and worth-while submissions from representatives of the leasing industry on the adverse impact that provisions contained in this bill and which are proposed for regulations under the Income Tax Act will have on the leasing industry. It was pointed out to us that the government's approach to leasing as a business under the Income Tax Act is totally at variance with the way it intends to treat leasing under the new

proposed goods and services tax, an inconsistency which should not exist.

These matters could not be discussed or considered in the committee. They were out of order. For that matter, the very fact that so many important items are proposed to be changed by regulation 1100 in the Income Tax Act, instead of putting it in the act itself where it can be fully considered and debated in Parliament, is wrong in principle.

We had submissions on the government's large corporations' tax, which the government takes such pride in flaunting, which is a minor variance of the income tax system to try to ensure that at least some taxes are paid by Canada's largest corporations. Even in doing that, they could not get it right.

Representatives of the large corporations came to us and said that the tax, as proposed, unfairly benefited the revenues of foreign governments because Canadian large corporations were not going to be entitled to a foreign tax credit in foreign jurisdictions for their large corporations tax. A minor change could have corrected that, but such amendments were not in order because of the way the government had presented the bill. Foolishness and incompetence.

There is the matter of the surtaxes. Bill C-28, which should remove the surtaxes that the Minister of Finance told us were temporarily awaiting the imposition of the goods and services tax, makes them permanent.

Yesterday we were told in this House that not only are the surtaxes being made permanent, but they are being increased. This kind of lack of honesty in the presentation of financial matters to the country as we have had in the presentation of phase 1 of tax reform, followed by Bill C-28, which makes that surtax permanent instead of removing it, can only lead to the discrediting of members of Parliament on all sides and politicians in general.

The principal points to be made about Bill C-28 relate to the issues of the clawback of family allowance and old age pension benefits.

The government would have us believe and has tried to convince Canadians that what is happening in Bill C-28 is not anything to do with universality. Universality has been the basis in many ways of our social programs in this country. Universality is based on the concept that all Canadians, wherever they live, whatever their status in