

three respects—the provision of easy and inexpensive appeals, the clarification and codification of the legislation, and the doing away with ministerial discretions—the bill does almost precisely what the Senate committee recommended. Of course I could go on for hours to discuss detailed provisions, if my physical strength and your patience would permit, but, as the leader on this side has observed, it does not seem necessary at this stage. Remember that this bill is almost entirely a codification and a reclassification of our income tax law as it already exists, and does not contain much new law. In fact, if I may be allowed for the moment to drop into metaphor, the bill is largely our old friend the income tax, but the lady is dolled up in a new dress. We might say that she has acquired “the new look”. But if you seek to penetrate beneath “the new look” you will find the same formidable and forbidding female to whom all of us have been unwillingly paying alimony for these many years past.

There is one more word which I think should be added on a point to which reference has been made by the leaders on both sides. The bill comes to us at a period of the session when it is impossible for this house to give it that careful and detailed consideration which it deserves and which this house rather prides itself on giving to legislation of this kind. On the other hand, we should bear in mind three considerations. First, as the honourable leader on the other side pointed out, it has already been before the public for a year. Second, it carries into effect many of the recommendations of our own committee of two years ago. Third, as by its terms it does not come into force before January 1, 1949, there will be another six months in which to consider it. On balance, therefore, I submit and I urge that it is to the advantage of the country that we should pass this bill this session, even if we are unable now to give it the clear and detailed scrutiny which it deserves.

May I conclude with one suggestion which arises out of what I have just said? Would it not be a good thing if at the beginning of next session we were to reconstitute the Special Income Tax Committee for the purpose of examining closely into this new bill, of hearing representations, of examining it in great detail, and, if we find it desirable, of making further recommendations for even more improvements than are to be found in it at the present time?

Hon. SALTER A. HAYDEN: Honourable senators, in the first place may I congratulate the honourable senator who has just spoken on the very able way in which he has developed the various aspects of this bill? At

the same time may I point out that while his description of the bill as “important” is true, it is a grave understatement? The bill is basic. It provides the foundation for the most substantial revenues that the country gets from its citizens; and having regard to the fact that it is the source of the authority for taking money from the people of Canada, if we were to give the bill the consideration to which its importance entitles it, we should need much more time than is now available.

Ordinarily, in examining a measure of this kind, our procedure would be to consider the provisions of the bill itself; and, to the extent that those provisions incorporated the principles already contained in our income tax law, it would be our duty, in order to do a thorough job, to inquire into the value and propriety of continuing the methods and the principles of taxation contained in the original Act. At this stage of the session there is no opportunity for us to do that. We must approach the subject solely on the assumption that what is, is good, and should be continued; and to the extent that there are changes, we must examine into the sufficiency and the merit of those changes. In other words, although the bill is described as both new and basic, our approach to it is no different from our approach to amendments introduced from year to year to the original Act.

We have neither the opportunity nor the time to develop, through hearing evidence, a satisfactory decision. Whether or not the basic principles involved in this taxation bill are the soundest or the best, we have to accept them. We shall proceed farther and accept what we find in the income tax law as being a good starting point. It may be that it is, but surely if we consider a new Act—with emphasis on the word “new”—we should give consideration to that aspect. But this we cannot do now. I am not going to bemoan the lateness of our receipt of this bill, because it is typical of the kind of thing we have to deal with every year. Towards the end of each session we firmly resolve that this sort of thing will never occur again, and that we are going to stand on our rights and refuse to pass certain bills. But we still go on every time and rush consideration of legislation. That is exactly what we are going to do now. In the circumstances I suppose there is no other course open, but I am sure that some features of the bill are not going to receive the consideration they should.

My honourable friend from Inkerman (Hon. Mr. Hugessen) has suggested that we could appoint a special committee next year. The leader of the opposition has said that as this bill does not come into effect until January,