

[English]

HEALTH

PLANS FOR PROVISION OF LOW-COST DRUGS TO
PERSONS ON FIXED INCOMES

Mr. Heward Graffey (Brome-Missisquoi): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his answer on pensions, but in light of the 3.8 per cent increase in the cost of health supplies from a year ago, and because of the extreme importance of the availability of drugs to all Canadians, especially those on low incomes, can the minister now assure the House that he has plans formulated to provide that all Canadians, especially those on fixed incomes, have access to low cost drugs?

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, health falls primarily under the jurisdiction of the provinces with which we have, in fact, discussed every matter of concern to them. Indeed, a few weeks ago we met the provincial ministers of health to discuss a new mode of financing health services, and another meeting is planned for the end of March.

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[English]

INCOME TAX

INTENTION RESPECTING REVISION OF FORM FOR 1972

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Revenue. I noticed that yesterday in my absence he described the income tax return form as no more frightening than Brigitte Bardot in a bikini. Has he found it more frightening, having regard to the number of complaints he has received as to the impossibility of interpreting the income tax return in its present form, and is there any intention of revising it so that it would become understandable?

• (1150)

Hon. Robert Stanbury (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I would welcome the suggestions of the hon. member for improvement of the forms—

Mr. Stanfield: It needs improving.

Mr. Stanbury: —but the description of the form which I gave yesterday was not mine but that of Ken Hall of the *Calgary Herald*. I might refer the hon. member to those other great Conservative newspapers, the *Toronto Star* and the *Ottawa Journal*—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Some hon. Members: Order!

Mr. Stanbury: —which state—

Some hon. Members: Order!

Mr. Stanbury: —that as far as—

Some hon. Members: Order!

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Would the minister kindly resume his seat?

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, that type of red herring really will not get the minister anywhere. Will he give the assurance that amendments will be made to the new income tax form if I or other members on this side of the House suggest changes that ought to be made?

An hon. Member: They were not suggested back in 1962.

Mr. Diefenbaker: The minister has invited me to make suggestions, and I do so. I ask him why it is that the prescribed forms are not now available? Why is it that chartered accountants are being advised by information officers in district taxation offices to dream up their own forms until the government finally gets off its posterior?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanbury: Mr. Speaker, I will not suggest that that allegation has been dreamed up—

Mr. Stanfield: It is true.

Mr. Stanbury: —but if the right hon. gentleman has any details about particular cases I will be glad to have them looked into.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Turning aside from the minister's appreciation of female forms, as evidenced by his having accepted the suggestion of a commentator in Calgary, may I ask whether the minister is now giving reconsideration to bringing back the new Income Tax Act which parliament never had the opportunity to consider, not having dealt with more than one half of it because we were shut off by closure—

An hon. Member: You were away on vacation.

Mr. Diefenbaker: —in view of the fact that Mr. Thorson, the Associate Deputy Minister of Justice has stated—

Some hon. Members: Order!

Mr. Diefenbaker: —to the tax foundation—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am not sure whether that was a question or whether the question is coming, but what is coming quickly is the end of the question period.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, then I will simply ask the minister this: Is he aware that the Associate Deputy Minister of Justice, when asked about this conglomerate mess, the Income Tax Act, in speaking to the Tax Foundation said that there were only six people in Canada who clearly understood the new act and the other "five" were his employees?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Diefenbaker: Will the minister not add his own name as one who understands it?

An hon. Member: Poor John.