

*Income Tax*

that; readjustments are probably necessary. I have to say so.

However, the hon. member for Témiscamingue who I know is a sincere centralist, a first-rate federalist who has been our defender in Quebec for almost a generation knows that at the federal level the prime responsibility for the good of the community rests with the federal government. When the provincial and federal governments do not see eye to eye, we must as federalists give the benefit of the doubt to the federal government.

I realize that effectively we will find a fair solution to the problem which we are now facing. Still it hardly justifies delaying passage of the legislation under consideration, owing to the interest of some areas of the country while we also find in Bill C-49 some clauses beneficial to our citizens. There are some amendments dealing with registration for the purchase of a house and registration for buying into pension plans. In connection with those bills, my constituents constantly ask me: "What is happening? I want to file my income tax return, but I cannot do so, because you have not yet passed the bill." I answer: "Do not blame us, but blame rather those awful Progressive Conservatives!"

[English]

I am glad to have had the opportunity to say these few words. They are essential. I have spent much time in this House because I like this House and the work it is supposed to be doing. But it is not doing that work. As backbenchers we wanted to contribute sensibly to the discussion of this bill. We have not been able to do so because we knew that the need for this legislation was pressing. We wanted to get it out of the House. However, knowing this, members of the opposition took advantage of the fact that we were sitting back wanting to get this piece of legislation through the House.

**Some hon. Members:** Sit down and vote on it, then!

**Some hon. Members:** Question.

**Mr. Blais:** I hear a comment from one of my friends at the back—"Let them know what it feels like!"

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

[Translation]

**The Chairman:** I am willing to let the hon. member complete his remarks but I would invite hon. members to stick as much as possible to clause 4.

I must admit, and I hope other hon. members will join me in this, that there is some degradation in the House and that our business does not progress very much. Therefore I invite hon. members, without wanting to hurt anyone, to examine thoroughly the matter before us and to prepare a decision which will perhaps be taken later this evening. Now I recognize the hon. member for Lotbinière.

**Mr. Fortin:** Mr. Chairman—

[English]

**Mr. McGrath:** On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, the hon. member surely has an obligation to stick within the rule of relevancy. I call attention to Standing Order 34(2). The hon. member's remarks were totally irrelevant to the

[Mr. Blais.]

clause before the committee and we should rule that the committee vote on the question.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Chairman:** The hon. member's point is well taken. I made the same point even before he raised it. I did not relate it to Standing Order 34(2) but I invited hon. members to pay attention to their own responsibility for the application of the rules and not to leave it only to the Chair. Now that the hon. member for Nipissing has resumed his seat and a number of hon. members have indicated that they wish to take part in the debate, it is difficult for me to put the question. I have to accept the fact that the hon. member for Lotbinière and the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands have indicated that they wish to contribute.

**Mr. Stollery:** I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Chairman. The hon. member for St. John's East has brought it to the attention of the committee that we on this side evidently did not have occasion to speak about the bill in general in the way we have heard members of the opposition discuss it for the past three weeks.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Stollery:** We were talking some time ago about taxation. I should like to draw attention to the fact that the taxpayers of Canada have been waiting for a long time now for this bill to pass. I think the hon. member for St. John's East should be ashamed of himself.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Chairman:** I am sure the hon. member would agree with me that the subject he has just raised is a matter for argument and debate. He may have wished to have expressed those opinions during the past week; tonight might not be the appropriate time to do so.

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** It is perfectly apparent that the Liberal members of the House do not want a vote to be taken either on the amendment or on the clause, clause 4, in spite of the fact that they say they want to pass this legislation. The committee has been held up for one hour—

**Some hon. Members:** Three weeks.

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):**—by irrelevant speeches by parliamentary secretaries and those who hope to become parliamentary secretaries.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

● (2100)

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance—

**An hon. Member:** You are leaderless.

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** And the hon. member is like Horatio holding the bridge while the government Whip goes out to see if he can arouse the Tuscan hordes from their deep slumber.