

Privilege—Ms. Copps

commenting on that at the moment—that it is not a question of privilege.

The question of propriety, which has been clearly raised as a matter of concern to Hon. Members, is properly a matter that ought to be taken up in another place. The Chair has no power to allow a private Member to table the particular document, and the Chair cannot unilaterally refer the matter to whatever committee might be appropriate to do so. That is a matter which Members can consider among themselves, and there are other means to deal with the issue. Again, I find that it is not a question of privilege. I am not commenting on whether it may very well be an appropriate subject in front of another forum.

I want to thank all Hon. Members for their interventions which have been helpful to me. Especially I want to thank the Hon. Member for Kootenay West and the Hon. Member for Nanaimo—Alberni for bringing notice of this and giving me the opportunity to see in advance the actual document.

COMMENT OF MR. MURPHY

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, in the course of the representations to Your Honour with respect to this issue, the Hon. Member for Churchill (Mr. Murphy) stated and I quote: “Shut up and sit down. Why don’t you go out and get some more government business for your family”.

I believe that the Member’s statement was completely unparliamentary and absolutely wrong. It was a total distortion and it was uncalled for. I would ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, I do not know if it is part of the record or not, but I certainly did not mean to cast any aspersions with regard to the Member or her family. I think the record will speak for itself.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, I heard the statement. The statement was also heard by my colleague. I would ask the Member, in light of the new spirit of generosity in the House, to make an unequivocal withdrawal. He knows what he said and what he said was completely wrong. It was uncalled for and it is an abuse of my privileges. He is implying that I am using my position to secure government business for my family, and that is wrong.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair has not had the advantage of being able to read the “blues” nor have other Members. As is obvious, there may be somewhat of a different recollection as to what was said and what was heard. However, the Hon. Member for Churchill (Mr. Murphy) might be disposed to indicate that if the comments were offensive, whether or not they were meant to be that he would withdraw them, otherwise the Chair will have to consider the “blues” and bring this matter back to the Chamber. Would the Hon. Member for Churchill like to comment?

Mr. Murphy: Certainly, Mr. Speaker. As to the exact nature of the comments, I do not recollect every word that I said. I suspect the Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps)

certainly heard my intent, and if she takes any offence with that, I do withdraw them without any qualifications.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the Hon. Member. The Hon. Member for Nanaimo—Alberni (Mr. Schellenberg).

Mr. Schellenberg: Mr. Speaker, if you will permit me, just to go back to your earlier ruling on this matter, is it not possible—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair has made the ruling and it would not be appropriate to open up that matter. I am sure that if the Hon. Member has any further matters he wishes to discuss, there is a disposition in the Chamber to discuss it further among all Members and I am sure the Hon. Member can take it to the appropriate place.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

INCOME TAX ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Wednesday, October 15, consideration of the motion of Mr. Hockin that Bill C-11, an Act to amend the Income Tax Act, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Mr. W. Paul McCrossan (York-Scarborough): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak in favour of Bill C-11. This Bill represents another in a series of Bills introduced by the Government improving family benefits. Members on all sides will recall that the first major reference given by the Government to a parliamentary committee in January, 1985 was to study family benefits and pension reform. I participated very actively in that study. During the course of our deliberations and family benefits, we made a number of findings which were reported in our parliamentary report. First, the benefits as they existed up to that time, after tax, had a roller-coaster effect. What this meant was that the worst off in our society received the least benefits. As income increased, benefits after tax increased. They increased until you hit the level of \$27,000 and then very gradually decreased. A person making \$50,000 received only slightly less than a person right at the poverty line.

It was the finding of our committee that benefits should be increased for low-income families, that they should remain roughly the same for middle-income family and that net benefits from the three programs should be reduced for upper-income families. At the same time, we made specific recommendations that the child tax credit should not be paid in a lump sum as part of the tax refund. We also identified that the tax rebating process, as a result of people turning in their tax refunds for a discount, was resulting in a significant loss to the taxpayers who were trying to benefit with moneys being diverted to the outside.