

Tabling of Documents

income tax. Does the Minister intend to put an end to situations that create tax privileges and amend the Income Tax Act accordingly, so that all Canadians will be on an equal footing and contribute their fair share?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, that is the real reason for the tax reform I intend to announce shortly. It is also why I introduced the minimum tax a year ago. And it is also the reason why this Government has made so many changes in our tax legislation during the past two years.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT

TABLING OF 1987 REPORT OF ALBERTA ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMISSION

Mr. Speaker: I draw to the attention of Hon. Members that it is my duty pursuant to Section 9 of the Representation Act, 1985, Chapter 8, Statutes of Canada, 1986, to lay upon the table a certified copy of the 1987 report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Alberta.

Pursuant to the Act, this report is deemed to have been referred to the Standing Committee on Elections, Privileges and Procedure.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

ALLEGED LAY-OFF OF JOHN QUIGLEY

Mr. Fernand Jourdenais (La Prairie): Mr. Speaker, regarding the Quigley affair, I think this is a violation of the integrity of Members in their role as parliamentarians. If it is true that on Friday, February 6, Mr. Lussier, Deputy Minister at Employment and Immigration, fired Mr. Quigley because he had informed members of the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration with respect to existing procedures, it is an act that casts doubts on the integrity of the members of this committee.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Hon. Member has the floor on a question of privilege, and I would ask Hon. Members to remain silent.

Mr. Jourdenais: Consequently, I want to ask the Chair to determine whether Mr. Lussier, the Deputy Minister, has infringed Members' privileges, and I strongly suggest that the matter be referred to a special committee of the House so that we can obtain further clarification.

• (1510)

[English]

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, I want to support the remarks made by my hon. friend. One of our responsibilities in this chamber is to the public that elects us, whether it is our constituents or Canadians generally. The ultimate master of this chamber and the bureaucracy is the Canadian public. If Members of Parliament cannot discharge their responsibilities for fear of some negative repercussions, as resulted in the case of Mr. Quigley who is losing his job and being forced onto the unemployment rolls, I humbly submit that that is definitely an infringement on the rights of Members of Parliament. The withholding of information that is valuable and necessary for the Canadian public contradicts the very reason why we are here.

I echo the sentiments expressed by my hon. friend and I hope Your Honour will deliberate on this matter very seriously and render a decision so that we can perhaps have a clear indication of how the Speaker and the House feel about this issue which goes to the very heart of representation in a democratic institution.

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, I want to add a circumstance that I hope you will take into consideration. It is that the two Members of Parliament who allegedly conversed with Mr. Quigley were at the time members of the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration. Therefore, we should take into account that Mr. Quigley was considering that he was giving relevant information to members of that committee who were concerned with the Department which he served. He was not spreading information far and wide, but speaking to those Members of Parliament who were specifically concerned with his activities. I hope that will be considered by Your Honour because it certainly affects the availability of relevant information to members of the committee.

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, it would appear that Mr. Quigley was dismissed as a result of allegedly divulging information to the Opposition. The grievance procedure has commenced. It is my submission that the privileges of Members of Parliament are affected because, as you know, there are a number of steps in the grievance procedure. In order for the Government to make its case, or in order for Mr. Quigley to provide a full and complete defence, the evidence of Members of Parliament may be necessary before the grievance committee. I believe it is a breach of our privileges and would affect the workings of Members of Parliament if we are required, either by the Government or by the person with a grievance, to give evidence before a particular grievance committee.

I think it is clear, based on the evidence we have, that the decision to fire Mr. Quigley was not an administrative decision by the Deputy Minister or the Assistant Deputy Minister, but a decision that came from the Minister himself and from the Government. The reason for that dismissal was that Mr.