

Income Tax Act

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Fisher: No, I have been advised to keep quiet.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): I feel the courtesy must be extended to the Hon. Member for Humboldt-Lake Centre. It is most regrettable but they do have that technical difficulty. Does the Hon. Member have a preference? Perhaps, if he wishes, I can instruct the broadcast section to simply cut the monitors altogether for the moment.

Mr. Althouse: Mr. Speaker, my microphone is no longer working.

Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): They have seven cameras.

An Hon. Member: Put him in the Speaker's chair.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): I am informed that of the total of seven cameras, six are out of order and only the one which is at the end of the Chamber and facing the Chair is in order. Even that one is not workable. Always presuming that the people in the broadcast section can hear me, I would request that they stop all cameras but leave the sound within the House. We could then proceed in that fashion with debate.

Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): The next time they should fix them before they are all out of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Is it agreed we stop the cameras?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Althouse: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I will attempt to pick up where I left off. I was attempting to point out an inequity which had crept into the Income Tax Act, an inequity both in the ability to levy taxes and an inequity—and perhaps a more important one—in the ability of certain groups in our society to raise money. As you will recall, during the last change to the Income Tax Act we introduced something called and ISIP, or indexed security investment plan, which permitted individuals to buy stocks which were traded publicly by large corporations, set them into a plan, and at the end of the year look at the listed trading price, calculate what the investment was worth, and if it had increased in value by 10 per cent or 15 per cent and the cost of living index had only increased by 5 per cent, the investor was allowed to deduct the cost of living index and put half of the balance of that income into his taxable income. Those who were operating with their own private companies did not have that option and were at some disadvantage in the money markets or the banks because the profitability of their operation was going to be less than the publicly traded corporations. People would like to invest in large public corporations because of the ISIP program. I see there has been a minor change in this proposal which has the effect of allowing refunds up to 40 per cent to taxpayers who are individuals or private corporations and certain trusts. For

all other taxpayers, the stipulated percentage is 20 per cent, and all that would be left would be those publicly traded corporations. The provision goes on to say that since the amount is deemed to have been paid by the taxpayer, it will only be used to offset any other liability he may have under the Act and will be refunded to the extent of any excess. As I read that, it means that if he is not taxable there will not be any way to get the refundable tax credit. That is something we should remember because most of us think of a refundable tax credit as something which will allow us to get some money back from the Government. That is not what it is in this case.

● (1620)

I was going to talk a little further about the effect of Section 31 of the Income Tax Act on farmers who are forced to work off the farm, but I see my time has elapsed, so I will continue to raise that point in committee and during question period.

Mr. Kristiansen: Mr. Speaker, rather than enter into debate, may I ask the Speaker whether the House is in compliance with the Standing Orders as regards the cameras?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): The latest report I have is that the television screens on the monitors now match my uniform; they are black.

Mr. Kristiansen: Mr. Speaker, if the House is not able to conduct its business in the way the Standing Orders intend, then we ought not to be conducting our business at this time. We should call it five o'clock and resume debate on Monday.

Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): Mr. Speaker, the House can conduct its business in the usual way. The only thing missing is the image on the TV screen, and I am sure the public can get along very nicely without that. I suggest we continue with our business.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): There was in the remarks made by the Hon. Member for Kootenay West (Mr. Kristiansen) an implied suggestion to seek unanimous consent. It is obvious there is not unanimous consent. I do not think that Hon. Members want the Chair to rule. The television broadcasting of the House is certainly part of our standard operating procedure. The Chair can be put in the position of making a ruling and I will do so, but perhaps we can do it without my having to reach into procedural matters.

Mr. Fisher: Perhaps if we agree among ourselves at this point to allow one more speaker we can have a quick conversation and come back and tell you the mood of the House. If someone is willing to make a speech and sacrifice his image, then we can try to get some sense of what is going on.

Mr. Kristiansen: Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is a matter of whether someone is concerned about his image appearing on the screen. If restraint in this country has reached the point where the House of Commons cannot conduct its business in the manner and with the appropriate recordings which the Standing Orders of this House demand, then I think we should