

*Income Tax*

going on. This keeps going on and on and on. The Minister should be making statements on motions to give us progress reports on what is to happen.

I hope that this motion will not be talked out. It is very simple. It does not have to be locked into another study. That is not necessary at all. It is unfortunate that arrangements were not made so that veterans could have been considered for the 1982 tax year.

I would like to impress upon the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs to go to the Minister and ask him to take a second look at this particular motion. It is not involved. Perhaps he could come up with a recommendation for his officials, the Income Tax Department, or whoever he has to speak to, to have this introduced.

We cannot accept his argument on long-ranging reviews and studies. Again, let me say to the Minister that our veterans are aging. We have to act now.

I hope that we will receive a commitment from you this afternoon. I hope some Liberal is not in here this afternoon with another prepared statement from some bureaucrat as to why this simple motion cannot be accepted. I hope that some Liberal over there has such a statement in his hand. I hope he will not rise today, but that this motion can be passed and this simple recommendation be put in place for Canada's veterans.

● (1700)

**Mr. Gilbert Parent (Welland):** Mr. Speaker, I preface my remarks by saying that it was only a few years ago that I was the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs. As a compliment to my colleague and next-door neighbour, the Member for St. Catharines (Mr. Reid), I hope that you do not think that the only reason that Members on this side stand is to oppose what you are saying. I think what he is asking in his motion—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** I hesitate to interrupt the Hon. Member, and I possibly should have addressed this comment to the previous speaker as well, but while the Chair is more lenient during Private Members' Business, remarks should be addressed to the Chair.

**Mr. Parent:** Mr. Speaker, thank you for your correction. I have had enough experience in the House to remember that common courtesy which we should extend to Your Honour.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I wish to assure the Hon. Member for St. Catharines that I believe his proposal does indeed have great merit. The previous speaker, the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Assiniboine (Mr. McKenzie) set up a paper tiger when he said that he hoped the Department of Veterans Affairs would not be lumped in with the Department of National Health and Welfare. I personally, and I am sure many of my colleagues, would be very much opposed to any lumping of Departments at all.

However, it caused me to reflect upon who was the Minister of Veterans Affairs during the short period when the Members

opposite were in power. For all of my thinking, all I could come up with is that they never had one.

**Mr. Lambert:** Yes, we did.

**Mr. Parent:** If I am permitted to continue, the Minister of National Defence was in charge of Veterans Affairs. Those Members did not see fit to have a separate Minister, as the Liberal Government has had for a number of years. Yet, they set up paper tigers. We think enough of our veterans that we indeed do set them aside and treat them as Canadians who have performed a great service for the country.

**Mr. de Corneille:** It is in the dirty minds of the Tories.

**Mr. Parent:** I would not use those terms, I say to my colleague. I am sure that when we are talking about the veterans, that type of remark is a little bit beneath us.

It is my opinion that there is more to be said on the subject being debated here today than can be expressed in one simple answer. The whole question of the War Veterans Allowance Act should be considered in light of just what it offers to those Canadians who are our friends, neighbours and relatives. More than 50 years after the legislation was passed in the House of Commons, Canadian men and women continue to benefit from most generous legislation. This is sometimes not understood not only by their Canadian friends but by those new Canadians who have arrived from countries that are not as far-sighted or as generous.

I can recall the time when legislation came up to extend the benefits to Hong Kong veterans. The Hon. Daniel MacDonald was the Minister of Veterans Affairs then and I was his Parliamentary Secretary. This legislation was brought to the House and passed by a Liberal Government. As Parliamentary Secretary at the time, I can recall that a request was made to extend these allowances to the veterans of Dieppe. We were the ones who brought that in. In fairness, I must say that there were amicable discussions on both sides. At the time there were Members from both Parties who were indeed interested first and foremost in the welfare of our veterans. I notice that the Hon. Member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) is in the House. He is a veteran of Dieppe and a decorated soldier who should be acknowledged in the House as being an outstanding soldier in his time, a Rhodes scholar and a very great participant in all of the debates on veterans affairs. We should continue to listen to him as we have over the years. I compliment him for the work he has done for the veterans.

The War Veterans Allowance Act and the Civilian War Pensions and Allowances Act provide an allowance for persons who meet service eligibility requirements and who, because of age or incapacity are unable to work and have insufficient income for maintenance as determined by a modified income test. This allowance is available to veterans of the Canadian, Commonwealth and Allied Forces and to certain other civilians who served in close support of the Armed Forces during wartime. It is not only those, but, equally important, widows, widowers and orphans who may qualify under the same Act,