

Income Tax Act

Mr. Howard (Okanagan Boundary): Let me say to the hon. member for Edmonton Centre (Mr. Paproski) that this side of the House is prepared to offer a Christmas present to 5.5 million Canadians.

Mr. Nielsen: Ho, ho, ho!

Mr. Paproski: All Benson has to do is get up and offer it.

Mr. Howard (Okanagan Boundary): The offering is there and is spelled out for all who can read.

Mr. Nielsen: That is the problem.

Mr. Paproski: Even your minister does not believe that.

Mr. Howard (Okanagan Boundary): If the hon. member would only take the time to read the Minister of Finance's little red book—

Mr. Paproski: I have read this bill, the Liberal bible.

Mr. Nielsen: "Red" is right.

Mr. Howard (Okanagan Boundary): —he would be able to understand the benefits all Canadians will receive when we pass second reading of the bill and get on to clause by clause study of the specific things which need changing. Let us get on with the preparation of the Christmas present for our fellow Canadians.

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, we have heard many astonishing things in the House during our debates, but none more astonishing than we have heard today. The parliamentary secretary to the minister—and the minister is sitting in the House—has been appealing to his minister to talk, not to his colleague the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) but to that minister's parliamentary secretary, the hon. member for Calgary South (Mr. Mahoney). He only opens his mouth in respect of these matters to change his feet.

I should think there would be a more effective line of communication than has obviously been established by this government over the past 3½ years. Even when the parliamentary secretary was speaking—and he made a rather doubtful contribution to this debate—he was not appealing to his own minister, who was not listening in any event, but to a colleague.

When I look around at the number of experts in the House on the other side listening to the suggestions being made in this important debate, I see the hon. gentleman who suggested our economy is in such a rosy state that we need worry no longer. He suggests employment will go up in the forthcoming winter months and that the cost of living will go down. He said we have nothing to worry about as far as the Canadian economy is concerned, notwithstanding the warning of the Economic Council and economists throughout the country that we are facing a serious situation. We have that parliamentary secretary, the hon. member for Calgary South, who stands up and tells us not to worry, everything is rosy and things will turn out all right.

Mr. Mahoney: That's not true.

Mr. Nielsen: In addition, we have that other expert who appeared rather touchy this morning during the question

[Mr. Paproski.]

period. Obviously, something has worried him. But he is the only minister in the chamber at this time, apart from the newly-appointed minister who is an expert on science. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin) has been sitting here but has not been listening to the suggestions of his parliamentary secretary. I do not think he even heard the changes the parliamentary secretary has been advocating to the bill.

• (3:30 p.m.)

Mr. Pepin: I can read.

Mr. Nielsen: The minister says he can read. That is an assurance to members on this side of the House, because in the past we have had some doubts as to whether he really could.

Of course, there are other experts over there apart from the hon. member for Calgary South. We have the hon. member for Sudbury (Mr. Jerome). That expert has disappeared for the moment. Then we have another expert, the hon. member for Mercier (Mr. Boulanger). He is an expert on these matters and no doubt will be participating in this debate. He has a great deal to say outside of this debate, and we will be looking forward with great interest to his contribution.

Mr. Paproski: The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) got rid of him.

Mr. Nielsen: Then, of course, there are at least—

Mr. Mahoney: Why don't you move that the House adjourn?

Mr. Nielsen: Members supporting the government sometimes have constructive suggestions to make, but the suggestion that has just been made by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, that the House adjourn, is one of his less constructive suggestions because there are some things members on this side of the House have to say that, given time, might filter through to the government and be found embodied in this bill. The hon. member for Calgary South seems to indicate, as do members on the other side generally: What the hell is the point of talking in this House. We are not going to get through to them anyway, because there is only one man who rules this country. He said the other day on the television program "Encounter", "I do not govern to please the opposition".

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: They are applauding. I invite hon. members opposite to pay attention to the personal pronoun that was used. What happened to the cabinet system? He said, "I do not govern to please the opposition"—and the question asked was, "Who do you govern to please?". Unfortunately, the program finished at that point so we were unable to hear his answer.

But that is the situation. No matter what is said over here with respect to this or any other measure, it is that man who governs and that man who makes the decision. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howard), instead of trying to go through the ineffective channel of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance might try writing a