

Revenue. I am confident that a letter to any Government office asking for the forms or for information would be directed to the department handling these numbers.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Senator, I will get that information for you this afternoon.

Senator SMITH (*Queens-Shelburne*): The point that Senator MacKenzie raised is rather important.

Senator MACKENZIE: There are a lot of old people in this country who cannot read or write.

Senator SMITH (*Queens-Shelburne*): Ever since the system was first started it was on a voluntary basis and we were all sent the forms. I do not know where it came from: I just filled mine out and I have my card; but there are many people, particularly in rural areas although I would include even the cities, who will not know how to get numbers, or whom to ask; who do not know how to write letters or even how to write. Therefore, I think these forms should be available at all post offices.

The CHAIRMAN: What might happen is that if you send in a tax form not filled in in accordance with the requirements it might well be that the computer will throw it out, whereupon it will be returned to the taxpayer with some indication, I expect, as to why it was necessary to return it. But on the question of whether these forms are available in the post office, I can find that out and tell you this afternoon when we are sitting.

Senator SMITH (*Queens-Shelburne*): I do not particularly want to know. I just want to draw to the attention of the people who are going to have to process this new system that to my mind it would be perfectly simple to put something in the area where that social security number is to go on the income tax form to indicate that these numbers are available at the post office and at the Department of National Revenue. If you do not do that, a lot of people will be confused and angry with us for passing the legislation.

Senator HAIG: I think, if you announced this afternoon, Mr. Chairman, at the opening of the session just where we can get these numbers, that will satisfy everybody on that particular point.

Senator BENEDICKSON: Presumably we are not ready to indicate a system of accelerating the obtaining of these numbers, because this is the next legislation in the Canada Pension Bill which makes it desirable to have some national campaign, but again, presumably, Mr. Irwin, if this legislation passes it will be printed forms with respect to income in the 1967 taxation year that would be the first forms making it mandatory to have on the form the social security number.

Mr. IRWIN: Yes, sir. This would apply for the 67 returns which would, generally, be filed in the spring of 68. This point about availability of the numbers is a very important one, of course. I understand, however, that it has not been a problem up to now. I am told that nearly 90 per cent of taxation returns already do show the number.

Senator BENEDICKSON: Is there a question about the number on the form now?

Mr. IRWIN: There is a place where it is to be inserted on the present form.

Senator BENEDICKSON: How long has that been on the form?

Mr. IRWIN: Two years, I believe.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions you want to ask on this bill?

Senator LEONARD: I think we ought to put this bill through now.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall I report Bill C-259 without amendment?

Hon. SENATORS: Agreed.

The committee adjourned until 2 o'clock this day.