

family allowance income figured in the amount of welfare that would be paid to a status treaty Indian or an Inuit?

**Mr. Martin:** Mr. Chairman, the first point I would make perhaps relates more to the first matter raised by the hon. member. It deals with a matter directly before the committee at this time, namely the income tax provision of the \$200 credit. The credit will indeed be payable to status Indians.

I will have to take the second question in reserve. The Minister of National Health and Welfare will be in the chamber shortly. As well, the officials are looking into this. I will get back to the hon. member. However, I want to make it clear that the \$200 credit, which is part of the bill in front of the House at the present time, will be payable to status Indians.

**Mr. Smith (Churchill):** Possibly I should turn the questioning over to someone else. There is no point in my continuing my line of questioning when I cannot get an answer to a simple question. I will take my place until someone is here who is qualified to answer my questions.

**Mr. Martin:** Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a point in connection with the matter raised by the hon. member for Churchill. I know his questions are well put. On the other hand, I do not think when we are dealing with an income tax amendment—

**Mr. Smith (Churchill):** On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, we certainly are.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Order, please. The parliamentary secretary has the floor.

**Mr. Martin:** I do not believe any question related to any matter that might come before the House of Commons can be considered to be necessarily relevant. However, I have indicated that an answer will be obtained. This has been done on two or three occasions when questions have been raised in the committee and we did not have immediate answers. I assure the hon. member that we will indeed have an answer for him.

**Mr. McGrath:** Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. The hon. member's question was really very relevant and very much connected with the bill before the House. It raises the question, where is the Minister of National Health and Welfare who has a responsibility for piloting this bill, and where is the Minister of Finance? Because this is a finance bill, an act to amend the Income Tax Act. We were told there was a possibility that the Minister of Finance might just favour the committee with his presence tonight. Is he going to be here?

**Mr. Martin:** Mr. Chairman, I would like the hon. member for St. John's East, who has been up on three or four points of order, to relax a little. Just relax. First, the question that was asked should more properly be put to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development during question period.

**Some hon. Members:** No, no.

### *Family Allowances*

**Mr. Martin:** I now have an answer, if hon. members are interested in hearing it. Is the hon. member for Churchill interested in hearing the answer?

**Mr. Smith (Churchill):** Mr. Chairman, if the parliamentary secretary can give me an answer, I will be very much interested in it. However, it seems he cannot give even a simple answer. The answer I am looking for pertains to this particular bill.

**Mr. Martin:** Mr. Chairman, I was trying to indicate that I had an answer. I was wondering whether members opposite were prepared to listen.

**Mr. Smith (Churchill):** It's a good thing the minister has just arrived.

**Mr. Martin:** I have not had an opportunity to say a word to the minister yet. The answer to the question put to me a little earlier as to who is responsible for welfare payments to status Indians is this. The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is responsible for Indians on reserves. The responsibility for Indians off reserves rests with the provinces.

● (2012)

**Mr. Smith (Churchill):** Mr. Chairman, I would now like an answer to the second question I asked. Are family allowance payments to status Indians on reserves taken into consideration when welfare payments are made?

**Mr. Martin:** Mr. Chairman, I understand that in this particular case it is up to local band councils as to how that matter is handled.

**Mr. Smith (Churchill):** That is an easy cop-out, but it is not that simple because many bands are under joint administration. Many bands do not look after their own welfare administration. In many cases this is handled by the federal government. Goodness knows, most Indians on reserves are living on welfare, and I want to know whether family allowance payments are taken into consideration in determining the amount of welfare. This relates to this bill because it involves family allowances.

**Mr. Martin:** Mr. Chairman, the answer is yes.

**Mr. Smith (Churchill):** Mr. Chairman, that sets the tone for the remainder of my questions. I will tell the committee exactly what will happen. Most of the Indian people in my constituency who are on welfare are on welfare because they have no choice. The parliamentary secretary says that the family allowance an individual receives helps determine how much welfare that individual receives. As of January 1, 1979 there will be a reduction in the monthly family allowance payment going to an individual on a reserve in receipt of welfare of at least \$8. In order to retain the same level of income this individual has been accustomed to, there should be a welfare payment increase of \$40 per month. This calculation applies to a family with five children.