

*Taxation Reform*

Last night my hon. friend from Waterloo (Mr. Saltsman) referred to one of the matters which has not been dealt with in the white paper, that is to say, the tax free allowance granted to Members of Parliament. I agree wholeheartedly with him that the government should have had the courage to make clear its intention to do away with tax-free allowances. There is no doubt that all of us, as Members of Parliament, incur heavy expenses in connection with carrying out our duties. Nevertheless, we as Members of Parliament should not enjoy a privileged status in this regard; we should not be able to claim expense money without being called upon to provide supporting information or documents.

The White paper on taxation dealt also with the subject of co-operatives and credit unions. This is a matter in which I am very much interested and which I believe should be considered carefully by the standing committee when the white paper is before it. I feel the government has not paid sufficient attention to the unique role played by the co-operative movement in Canada. It is clear that people in the government did not really understand the situation of the co-operatives when they drew up the proposals affecting this particular area of economic organization and activity. The government should carefully review its proposals regarding co-operatives before any legislation is introduced. Co-operatives represent an alternative form of economic activity and organization, and their activities should be encouraged. In my view, the government has not given them a proper break in its white paper proposals. We note that the government appears anxious to push through the House of Commons bills dealing with trust companies, loan companies and insurance companies to make sure that they get additional privileges. At the same time, inadequate attention is given to the situation of the co-operative movement. At this point, I might comment briefly on the position of credit unions.

Credit unions in Canada play an important role in enabling people to deal with their own financial problems, in encouraging self help and making it possible for them to organize their own activities. In my opinion, more attention should be paid to the proposals of the white paper as they affect credit unions. We need to make certain there is no discrimination against them in the legislation as finally introduced.

I understand, Mr. Speaker, the House is to interrupt its proceedings at 12.45 in connection with another function. I should like to move on to another area of discussion. Accordingly, perhaps I might call it 12.45 at this point, and then continue my remarks after the House returns.

**Mr. Dinsdale:** Let us sing Christmas carols while we are waiting.

**Some hon. Members:** Continue.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bécharde):** I suggest to the hon. member that he should continue.

**Mr. Burton:** The white paper envisages that the present economic system will be retained. The fact is that power in our present economic system is vested in the corporations. The power of the corporations is growing. In this context I was interested to note an article which appeared in the *Globe and Mail* yesterday. It dealt with a lecture delivered by Professor Leslie T. Wilkins, head of the School of Criminal Justice at New York University, and made some reference to the growing influence of corporations in our society. I should like to place on record some of the remarks made by Professor Wilkins on this subject. The article reads, in part, as follows:

Professor Wilkins sees the growth of the power of private corporations and financial conglomerates as one of the main dangers to be faced and legislated for.

Information is power, and as government spending on research is reduced more information is concentrated in the hands of the private firms who can afford to pay for it, he said.

Private corporations can also exercise power in other ways such as in running private police forces to intervene against demonstrators or in other situations where the normal police force does not think action is called for.

"The trend toward more and more power over the individual being in the hands of non-elected organizations will continue", Professor Wilkins said.

In fairness, I should state also that Professor Wilkins noted that in all circumstances this might not be undesirable. Nevertheless, he emphasized that more power is being vested in corporations today than in the past. The implications contained in the white paper are that this system will continue—that the growth of corporate power in our economy will be encouraged.

Another important subject which is treated in the white paper concerns concessions to the oil and gas industries. This is a matter which interests me greatly, of course, as a