

*Income Tax Act*

to formulate economic and fiscal policies. It is a question of training and experience or the lack of it, and with all due respect to the minister's good intentions he just does not have these attributes or these intentions. The minister is a chartered accountant, and I know very well that he was a competent and successful chartered accountant when he was employed in that milieu. However, we all know that an accountant examines other people's books and checks to see that the fives and the sixes are in the right column and he checks to ensure that the additions and subtractions have been done properly. I would expect that he even checks to see whether or not the figures have been juggled to conceal a fraud. Accountancy is an exact science, and I would be the first to concede that governments, business and industry could not endure without the help of chartered accountants.

However, I suggest it is a far cry from the desk of a chartered accountant to the office of finance minister. In the latter case, the minister is responsible to the people of Canada for a national budget that has now climbed to some \$15 billion to run the country for one year. I suggest again that it is one thing to check the books of a business or a corporation and yet another thing to formulate policy, and I think the answer comes loudly and clearly in the so-called tax reform package and its companion piece, the budget.

**Mr. Pepin:** What background does the minister have?

**Mr. Alkenbrack:** Disenchantment is not felt or expressed only on this side of the House. The only economist in the cabinet, the former minister of communications, left the government in disgust when he could no longer stomach the futile posturing of the Prime Minister and his so-called geniuses in the economic and related portfolios.

**Mr. Mahoney:** Now, this sounds like Mr. Stanfield's speech.

**Mr. Alkenbrack:** I am glad that my strong statement is receiving some response, because if it does nothing else it might alert the rank and file of the Liberal party members behind the front benches to becoming more conscious of the dire effects that this cabinet is having upon the economy, the morale and the social welfare of the Canadian people. I suggest that because of the rate at which some of the ministers are spending money—particularly the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Marchand)—the Finance Minister has been instructed to administer the karate chop on any and all Canadians who cannot defend themselves.

I asked yesterday for some assistance for a youth group in my riding which is in financial difficulty and which is doing a good job in its work among youth in one particular community in the south of my riding. However, I was told that the money was all gone. It did not take long for funds allotted for that purpose to completely disappear, did it?

The ever expanding spending spree, particularly in Quebec, must be matched by an ever-expanding tax bite; that is only a natural thing. The more they spend the more they have to demand from the Canadian people, and all the finance minister's protestations to the contrary, we

[Mr. Alkenbrack.]

are witnessing the most sinister and menacing tax bite in the history of North America. Compared with the incredibly expensive war in which the United States is involved at present—their government has cut personal income taxes twice in the last three years—compared with the serious economic problems faced by the United States, we in Canada should find it easy to make adjustments in our tax laws in order to help the people who are working but who are earning less than they need to live properly. You will notice that I did not say "to live comfortably" although I cannot see why it is so difficult to ensure that most Canadians are able to live comfortably.

At this point I should like to draw the government's attention to a parable which appears in a number of places in the New Testament and which is familiar to most if not all members of the House. I refer to the parable which I paraphrase as follows: "You have done those things that you ought not to have done, and you have not have done those things that you ought to have done". This parable attempts to convey to all men that it is often, if not always, just as easy to neglect the things that you ought to do as it is to do the things that you know to be wrong.

**Mr. Pepin:** It is far clearer in the Bible.

**Mr. Alkenbrack:** In other words, sins or crimes of omission are just as serious as sins or crimes of commission. When one is charged with a responsibility, such as the responsibility to govern, then it is a serious offence against all the people being governed when a government neglects to do everything in its power to ensure equality of opportunity, equality of justice and obedience to the statutes.

• (2:20 p.m.)

When the Prime Minister was campaigning throughout Ontario this past summer he remarked that politics was fun. In the case of the Prime Minister it may well be that politics is a ball, a real gas, as the saying goes. But I say to him that while he is having a ball there are millions of Canadians who are living at or below the poverty line. While he is having a ball I would point out to him that there are hundreds of thousands of Canadians unemployed. He knows that. Lately, he is beginning to realize it. And every day a larger percentage of them is running out of unemployment insurance benefits. I am sure I speak on behalf of all private members of the House when I point out that a great deal of our time every day is spent trying to get unemployment insurance benefits straightened out or obtained on behalf of our constituents. I do not hear any contradiction of that statement, and so I am sure all hon. members have had this experience.

**Mr. Osler:** Will the hon. member permit a question, Mr. Speaker?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Order. The hon. member knows that a question has to be allowed by the hon. member who has the floor.

**Mr. Alkenbrack:** Mr. Speaker, when I have finished the time that you have allotted to me then I will deal with questions.