

Dominion Succession Duty Act

they should expect half of the estate up to a reasonable amount. I am not going to hold up the committee, but the minister has said that when the resolution is adopted the bill will be given first reading but will not be proceeded with beyond that stage. The minister said we would be given time to analyse it and come forth with suggestions.

I want to ask him if he is really sincere in asking the members of this house to come forth with their suggestions. If he is, then he is going to get some. If he is sincere in requesting that we come forward with our suggestions he should indicate his sincerity by saying that he will listen to them; that he will accept those suggestions and if they are reasonable, when the bill is presented at the next session of parliament, if he has anything to do with it, those suggestions will be incorporated in the bill. If he is sincere, that is exactly what he will do. If this bill is introduced and we can see it and analyse it, the women's organizations of this country can also see it, then I am quite certain that the minister will be flooded with suggestions as to how the women of this country who are left widows, perhaps without earning power, feel they should be regarded in so far as their husbands' estates are concerned.

I will not say any more than that. I want the minister to be sincere in this matter. I think he is sincere. I think he wants to do a good job for Canada. I have no doubt about that. He is a very fine gentleman. I am going to say this, however, that we in this corner of the house have, for many years, recognized that he is restricted in what he would like to do. He is restricted by reason of the fact he is a victim of the financial policies that have been embodied over the years in the legislation of this country. His hands are tied. If he is sincere about this matter and wants to do a real job for this country and particularly the unfortunate widows, he will look into all these matters, including the financial policy which is tying his hands, and he will tear himself loose from that type of policy. This will enable him to do all the things that he believes the people of this country desire he should do. Some of us expect to be back for the next parliament. I do not know whether or not the minister will be, but I suppose he expects to be. If we are all back here, we are going to remind him of what he said this afternoon. We are going to ask that suitable amendments be made to the bill.

Mr. McGee: May I take just a moment before the time expires, to point out one aspect of this matter which appeals to me in particular. Recently we have heard a great deal about the decline in the purchasing power of the dollar. It seems to me that the

main features of this proposed bill will have the effect of increasing the purchasing power of the insurance dollar, certainly as it applies in my particular case. I should like to pass along to the minister and the house the comments which I have received from my riding concerning this bill. The people in general are most enthusiastic about it and the manner in which it faces up realistically to present problems.

Mr. Cameron: May I call it six o'clock, Mr. Chairman?

At six o'clock the committee took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The committee resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. Cameron: I do not propose to take much of the time of the committee now, but since we have been told that this bill is not going to be proceeded with during this session I feel there are some things which should be said in regard to this particular phase of our taxation structure.

I want first of all definitely to associate myself with the views expressed by my colleague the member for Vancouver-Kingsway who, I think, set forth the views not only of this group but of a growing number of people throughout the country. I think it is not too much to say that most intelligent people today in our western society tend to give at least lip service to the idea of an egalitarian society, and by that I do not mean any rigid level which puts everyone on precisely the same basis. I do suggest, however, that most people today do consider that the serious inequalities between incomes and the consequent standards of living and opportunities should be ironed out as rapidly as possible, and one of the major sources of continuing inequality in society, of course, is the inheritance of wealth.

I quite understand and agree with the view expressed by the member for Macleod when he spoke of the position of widows who are left with children to support and to educate. I am sure no sensible person and no person with any sense of justice would want to deprive a widow of the necessary estate in order that she might continue the work of rearing her family, although I should say that, as far as I recall, I have had only one letter on this matter. It may be that I have not as many potentially rich widows in my constituency as has my hon. friend from Macleod. However, I am quite prepared to agree that something should be done to take care of that situation. I believe that the