

Income Tax Act

Mr. Speaker, I reiterate that I do not see any way in which this legislation will help the agricultural community to carry on. I am afraid it will encourage people to leave the land. Bill C-259 could be responsible for speeding the exodus.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I was going to make some comments to support the amendment of the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert), but I am sure the eloquent words we have just heard from the hon. member for Dauphin (Mr. Ritchie) have impressed all members of the House except, of course, my friends opposite who are beyond all reason in regard to this bill.

Mr. McBride: Try some reason on us.

Mr. Baldwin: I see we are going to hear from our noisy friends opposite.

Mr. Paproski: There is the basic herd right there, Murray McBride. He has milked his last cow in Lanark.

Mr. Baldwin: The hon. gentleman really should not be here. Today is only December 13; he is 18 days too early. The mechanical noisemakers do not arrive until December 31. To get down to facts, Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak about the subamendment offered by my friends in the New Democratic Party. We are going to support it, but we have some reservations. As usual, hon. gentlemen to my left who are long on zeal and short on logic, did not think it through. There are dangers inherent in this subamendment. For example, as I construe the subamendment, it will rule out several cases which the amendment moved by my hon. friend from Edmonton West would cover, for example, a farmer with a quarter or half section of land.

Today I had a letter from a farmer in my area who writes that because of inclement weather conditions in the last three or four years he has had a very small crop, with practically no net return and a very small gross return. The only way he is able to maintain his family is by driving a school bus. As I read the amendment offered by the hon. member for Regina East (Mr. Burton), it would not cover this man. But he would be caught by the amendment in the form moved by the hon. member for Edmonton West. Because of the subamendment of the New Democratic Party, he might well be pushed out of the picture.

• (8:20 p.m.)

The same thing might apply to a widow engaged in school teaching who lives on a farm which she has inherited from her husband. She might not get, under the NDP subamendment, the benefit my hon. friend from Edmonton West envisages in his amendment. So while we support the subamendment, we do so with reservations. Unlike the government, we believe in doing the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Anybody who would vote for this bill without an amendment would not deserve to sit in this House of Commons.

Having made those comments on where we stand on the amendment, I have a few remarks to make. I hope the House will be permitted to divide on this question. I see the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) is here. We know he has been a busy little minister in the Senate today, doing

his utmost to persuade them. I shall not talk about the means he exercised. It is a black day in this country when the Minister of Finance goes to the other place and pursues the line he took here last Friday and attempts to persuade the other place to put this bill through in a limited time. The minister pretends innocence. He knows very well what he said here last Friday and he knows very well why he went to the other place in an attempt to persuade them in what one hon. senator said was Christmas closure.

Some hon. Member: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Shame.

Mr. Baldwin: I am ashamed of the conduct of the Minister of Finance; I really am. However, I shall not pursue this. It is beyond words, Mr. Speaker. Let us reflect on the circumstances under which this vote will be taken, I hope in a short time, and subsequent votes on this bill. We feel this debate should be continued for a reasonable period of time to permit the examination of those parts of the bill which have failed to secure the adequate discussion that we as representatives of the people should have before a bill of this nature is passed. We know why we are not getting it. Today in the House I asked the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) a very simple and very innocent question.

An hon. Member: It would be simple.

Mr. Baldwin: I always ask a simple question of a simple man. I asked the Prime Minister whether the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Lang) was enunciating government policy when he said in Saskatoon that the government must exercise additional power, or more control or more power over Parliament. I want to point out that at that time the minister was sitting in his place and the Minister of Manpower and Immigration is by no means reluctant to get up and speak if he thinks he has been misquoted. He sat in his place and never challenged my statement, so I think we may take it that in Saskatoon when addressing some 900 of the faithful he said that in his view the government must exercise more power and more authority over Parliament.

An hon. Member: Right.

Mr. Baldwin: We hear "Right" from over there. Obviously, this is what government backbenchers want. I point out to them and to the hon. member for Bruce (Mr. Whicher), from whom I believe better things should come, that before long they will be sitting over here. It will not take long. At least the ragged remnants of them will be over here. They will be screaming at that time. When we stand up for the rights of Parliament we are standing up for all hon. members, not only ourselves but hon. members opposite as well. They do not have the sense to recognize that. However, getting back to the Prime Minister, as usual he distorted things and tried to pass the question off. He said: "Mr. Speaker, he was perhaps thinking of the motion that the leader of the House was talking to a moment ago."

That motion the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) was talking to was a motion for closure. Closure is never far from the mind of the Prime Minister or any hon. member opposite. They want to govern by