

Adjournment Debate

Since this matter was not brought to my department's attention until after the four-year limitation, this matter must now be considered closed.

The Department requires seven years if it is checking an individual's account. Now it is closing its files on the taxpayer in four years.

The Calgary office repeatedly told my constituent or his accountant that it was a computer mistake which would be corrected. Revenue Canada, Winnipeg claims the records are destroyed. The Minister says they are not. Both the department and the bank claim they have checked and rechecked their records, the ones that were supposed to be destroyed. How could they do this if the records were destroyed? The truth is the records of the Department of Revenue appear to be in a disgraceful mess.

In summary, I ask again where is this \$1,000? The taxpayer sent it through the bank to the Department of National Revenue. The Department of National Revenue cashed it. What the Revenue Department has done with it is the responsibility of that Department and certainly not the responsibility of my constituent. There is a definite responsibility now on the part of the Government to pay back this \$1,000 to this Canadian citizen. If this is not done, this is another case of the Government ignoring the Charter of Rights, ignoring any sense of fairness and trampling over an innocent individual. I hope this \$1,000 can be returned very shortly; it should be returned to my constituent.

Mr. Garnet M. Bloomfield (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, if there is one aspect of the Income Tax Act that one would expect all Members of this House to be aware of and to respect, it is the provision concerning the strict rules that apply to the confidentiality of the affairs of a taxpayer in so far as they have become known to the Department. Therefore, I am constrained from giving any details of the case the Hon. Member has raised and I am sure he understands that as well as I do.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order. The department has the authority of the taxpayer to do it.

Mr. Bloomfield: I can only say that the Hon. Member, with the very best intentions I am sure, has continued to pursue this matter with more than one Minister of National Revenue in quite a number of letters. A number of replies have been sent to him stating and reiterating the Department's position. It is obvious that he is not yet satisfied, but his persistence does not change either the applicable law or the facts of the case. One would always like to be more obliging but it is not possible in the circumstances for this to be done.

MINES AND MINING—URANIUM CITY, SASK.—COMPENSATION
SOUGHT FOR PROPERTY OWNERS

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West): Mr. Speaker, two years ago Eldorado Nuclear Limited announced its intention of terminating its operation in Uranium City, Saskatchewan. As I pointed out the other day, in doing so Eldorado Nuclear in effect signed the death warrant for the whole community,

an important and thriving community in northern Saskatchewan, a province that I am proud to represent. One labour union local said it was stunned when it first heard the devastating news on the radio, and by word of mouth, and was given no time to prepare for this unnatural disaster.

A work force of 830 miners and ancillary workers were put on notice on November 3 that as of the following June, a seven-month period, the mine was closing and their jobs would disappear. The work force of 830 was actively encouraged to leave. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, who would not leave under those circumstances? Payments were made to the employees according to law. Certain severance benefits were paid. Unemployment insurance benefits where applicable were brought into effect.

Shortly after the announcement of the closure a task force was established to determine what should happen with respect to Uranium City. It was known as the "steering committee" of the Uranium City Task Force, which had participation at federal and provincial levels. It has now been some year and a half since the report of that task force was brought down. I am sorry to report that no action has been taken with respect to one of its key recommendations concerning compensation to be paid by way of indemnification to people who had property or an interest in Uranium City and were forced to leave that community as a result of the decision by Eldorado Nuclear Limited. They lost their entire life savings and investment in the community.

● (1810)

At the time I asked my question I was saddened that once again the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Bussi eres) resorted to the old political device of talking about another circumstance, the Iron Ore Company situation in Schefferville, Quebec. I point out to the Minister through his Parliamentary Secretary that if the Government of Canada had operated in the same rational manner as the Iron Ore Company with respect to Schefferville, I would not be asking these questions on behalf of the people of Uranium City who have lost their life savings. They would not still be calling me and asking me to speak out on their behalf to the Government of Canada.

The decision taken with respect to Schefferville was applauded by the unions involved, by the provincial Government of Quebec, and with unbridled enthusiasm the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mrs. Erola) wrote a letter on behalf of the Government of Canada simply indicating how proud it was about the way in which that unfortunate situation in Schefferville was handled. When the Minister of National Revenue resorts to making reference to that situation, he does himself a disservice because he is making the wrong analogy with respect to what happened in Uranium City.

In Uranium City there are people who are now running out of unemployment insurance benefits. They are unable to find employment. They do not have any money because they invested in homes in that city worth \$20,000 to \$45,000 homes which have been lost to them. The plant in Uranium City is