

with the rights and obligations of that member to fulfil his responsibilities as a member of Parliament.

[Translation]

At the same time, however, the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell explained that the Federal Business Development Bank subsequently agreed to release the documents.

It would therefore appear that the question of privilege relates to a delay in the delivery of documents to the hon. member for York Centre which prevented him from keeping his appointment with the RCMP as originally planned. While the member may have been inconvenienced, it is difficult for the Chair to be convinced that this constitutes a question of privilege.

[English]

While there was a delay, it does not seem to be clear that the hon. member was hindered in the performance of his duties. Inconvenienced perhaps, but not interfered with.

I might also add that even though it was claimed that the documents were in the public domaine, it appears to me that, in fact, these documents remained the property of the bank. If by virtue of an internal decision or mix-up, and I do not want to suggest motives, the documents were not delivered when the member from York Centre had expected them, it seems to me that it is a matter to be resolved between the member and the bank.

As it happens, the bank has agreed to release the documents and that agreement was evidently made before this question of privilege was raised here. The matter, therefore, would appear to be resolved.

I thank the hon. member for bringing the matter to the attention of the House.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

INCOME TAX ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of report stage of Bill C-28, an Act to amend the Income Tax Act, the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements and Federal

Government Orders

Post-Secondary Education and Health Contributions Act, the Old Age Security Act, the Public Utilities Income Tax Transfer Act, the War Veterans Allowance Act and a related Act, as reported (without amendment) from a Legislative Committee; and on Motions Nos. 4, 6 and 7.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): Resuming debate. The hon. member for Mount Royal.

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Madam Speaker, I rise to speak to Motion No. 4 and Motion No. 7, on Bill C-28, but do sincerely regret that we are under a time allocation threat in this House. It is one that is used constantly and I think shows disrespect for the democratic process that would reflect our ability to speak to this issue in the name of all of our constituents.

This debate really symbolizes the Conservative party's true agenda. The issues we are discussing include the clawbacks of seniors pensions and family allowance. They are fundamentally an erosion of the universality principle that has always guided the social programs in this country.

The Conservative agenda appears aimed at cutting and reducing that caring aspect of government while saying that it is "in the national interest".

• (1510)

Well, I do not think that we agree. This is where we part company because we believe in a far more balanced approach and a much more fiscally responsible approach, always respecting a more compassionate tradition upon which our country was founded.

Throughout Canada's history, with all the change that has been wrought over its 120 years, there has always remained this one deeply held fundamental principle. That conviction has been a cornerstone of our national life and has not changed for many decades. It is our tradition of universal access to social programs, whether they be our medicare programs, our unemployment insurance programs, family allowance, Old Age Security and where needed, guaranteed income supplements, veterans allowances, et cetera. It was Canada's way of being fair and tolerant as a society.

Yet in 1984 that tradition had begun to unravel. It is this unravelling that I would like to talk about today. Since coming into office the Conservatives have time after time, year after year, continued a slow and very deceptive but always real plan to dismantle the safety net