

Income Tax Act

is thus calculated to undermine the unity and strength of the Commonwealth; gives excessive discretionary powers to the executive without any provision for appeals; will be widely regarded as introducing a colour bar into our legislation; and, though providing for health checks and for the deportation of those convicted of certain criminal offences, fails to deal with the deplorable social and housing conditions under which recent Commonwealth immigrants and other subjects of Her Majesty are living.

In 1964, in connection with the resale prices bill the following was moved and accepted as a reasoned amendment:

That this House declines to give a second reading to a bill which may threaten the livelihood of many small independent traders without attempting at the same time to deal with restrictive practices by large commercial monopolistic organizations and trade unions which have a far more profound effect on the national economy.

In connection with the bill dealing with race relations, the following was moved and accepted as a reasoned amendment:

This House deplors discrimination whether on racial or religious grounds but declines to give a second reading to a bill which introduces criminal sanctions into a field more appropriate to conciliation and the encouragement of fair employment practices while also importing a new principle into the law affecting freedom of speech.

The following amendment was moved and accepted as a reasoned amendment when the land commission bill was under discussion:

This House, deeply concerned to secure an increased supply of land for building, while thinking it right that a reasonable charge should be imposed on increased values resulting from the grant of planning permission, declines to give a second reading to a bill which seeks to set up a land commission which is wholly irrelevant to the collection of a levy and which will reduce and make more expensive the supply of building land, so retarding the housing of the people and essential building programs.

Here is another amendment accepted as a reasoned amendment to the motion for second reading of the prices and incomes Bill:

This House, believing that price stability can only be achieved by a comprehensive economic policy which would include the sharpening of competition, the reform of trade union law and the removal of harmful restrictive practices, and accepting that a productivity, prices and incomes board has a useful function in such a policy, declines to give second reading to a bill which makes no contribution to the solution of the serious problems facing the nation caused by the collapse of the economic policy of Her Majesty's government and which introduces a measure of compulsion which will inevitably lead to state control of prices, wages, dividends, and to direction of labour.

I conclude on this note. I ask Your Honour to the extent you exercise a judicial function, to take judicial notice of the fact that debates in this House have tended to decline in quality mainly as a result of the introduction of new rules which have failed to provide adequate compensating factors to private members, particularly members of the opposition. I believe it is in the interest of strong and healthy debate to provide as many opportunities as can be found within the four corners of the rules for expressing disagreement, and that the discretion given to the Chair should be exercised as far as possible on the side of permitting opportunities for clearcut and decisive debate and decision. With respect, Mr. Speaker, this can only be done—

Mr. Mahoney: By changing the opposition.

Mr. Baldwin:—by providing an opportunity for amendments of this kind to be considered, in order that we in the opposition and private members on the other side, if they have the intestinal fortitude to do so, may put forward amendments containing reasons for opposing a bill on second reading—a resolution declaratory to some principle adverse to the bill the government is introducing.

Mr. Speaker, we are concerned now about the economic situation. It cannot be argued that a budgetary measure of the kind before us, legislation which extends beyond the usual budgetary matters to questions of tax reform, will not have a major impact on the economy. Indeed, from speeches which have been made both inside and outside the House we gather that the point of the bill is to improve the economic situation of the country generally. Concern with the economic situation is the gist of the first part of the motion, that we decline to give second reading to a bill which fails to provide the stimulus the economy needs.

• (5:50 p.m.)

I suggest that there is no way in which we can do more to bring ourselves within the scope of citation 382. I urge Your Honour to exercise the discretion that you have in allowing this amendment, hopefully to initiate not a spasm of these amendments—because I realize that they must be reasoned amendments—but to bring about beneficial debate in this House. I know that Your Honour cannot go beyond the rules that the House has given you, but in light particularly of precedents in the United Kingdom I suggest that the time has now come when we should enlarge opportunities for debate on second reading by moving reasoned amendments.

Mr. J. A. Jerome (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I will take only two minutes to say that, if I read correctly between the lines of the remarks made by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin), I am sure what he is really saying is that he knows perfectly well that this amendment goes totally beyond the rules as we understand them but that he wishes it did not.

Mr. Baldwin: No. On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, if the argument that the parliamentary secretary is going to make conforms with his first remarks, then I think he might as well sit down now.

Mr. Jerome: Well, Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. member will agree with me that it is extremely clear under our rules that an amendment should be just that—a proposal to change the motion presently before the House in some way, not completely to negative it. Obviously, the effect of this amendment that he so seriously argues is, he must agree, directly to negative the motion for second reading by saying that the House votes against the motion. The first part of the amendments sets out the mood of the House and the latter part gives reasons why the measure itself is not acceptable and why in the opinion of the opposition it is inadequate.

Although these are interesting questions for debate, surely we are not being asked to come to the stage where what is passed off as a reasoned amendment on second reading is nothing more than a description of the reasons why the opposition rejects the motion for second reading.