

*Excise Tax Act*

this measure should be adopted. I hope that the house will take a vote on this motion as soon as possible.

**Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I propose to be very brief on this matter. Reserving the submission I made to you on the point of order, Mr. Speaker, I remind the house that at the last session of parliament on the recommendation of the government parliament reduced the excise tax on motor cars by one-quarter. To introduce this amendment now, assuming for the moment that it is in order, would simply mean that the important reductions and exemptions provided by the bill and which are, I think, eagerly awaited by the Canadian people, will be postponed. That is the effect of the amendment. It would postpone the reductions under the Excise Tax Act that are provided by the bill. The Canadian people should not be denied the benefit of these reductions, nor should they be postponed. For these reasons I urge that the amendment should be defeated, its purpose and effect being simply to withhold from the Canadian people or delay their receiving the benefit of the important tax reductions and exemptions provided by the bill.

**Mr. L. D. Crestohl (Cartier):** Mr. Speaker, I think the last statement of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fleming) is rather ingenious, to say the least. I repeat that to say that to accept the amendment will delay benefits to which the people of Canada are entitled is a rather ingenious device to gain some favourable publicity which actually is not deserved. The minister knows perfectly well that the date of the coming into force of the bill can be regulated according to the date of his choice and not the choice of the house. Therefore to say that the bill cannot be made retroactive to whatever date the minister desires in order to give the people of Canada the benefits he intends to give them as of the date he intends to give them is not presenting the facts in their proper light.

**Mr. Hamilton (Notre Dame de Grace):** Mr. Speaker, I presume in the course of the debate you are also taking representations on the point of order.

**Mr. Speaker:** If the hon. member will permit the debate to proceed, I would prefer to have that done at one time. If I come to the conclusion that there is any doubt about the amendment I will give him the opportunity before the motion is put.

**Mr. Erhart Regier (Burnaby-Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, like the previous speaker I fail to see any validity whatsoever in the minister's argument because paragraph 13 of the resolution states very clearly that any enactment founded upon the resolution shall be deemed to have come into force on the eighteenth day of June, 1958. Therefore, provided that in the final analysis the resolution itself is carried, I fail entirely to see how the adoption of the amendment would have any bearing at all upon the effective date of the benefits that might accrue to taxpayers.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** May I ask my hon. friend a question? Is it not clear that that clause of the bill cannot be put until the present motion is carried? The whole point is that the amendment prevents the bill from being put and carried. When the bill is adopted that clause will have a retroactive effect but until we have the bill carried the clause is simply writing on a piece of paper that is before the house. That is the point involved.

**Mr. W. M. Benidickson (Kenora-Rainy River):** Mr. Speaker, I think that the argument of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fleming) is very technical and specious. An opportunity is provided to hon. members of the house by the rules to have reconsideration of things that are not covered by the minister in his bill. We are very surprised at some of the inadequacies of the bill, particularly because the minister has been a member of the house for a great number of years. During that time he was never hesitant about expressing his views, especially when he was on this side of the house.

I hope to have an opportunity at another stage in the debate to discuss in a broader way some of the views of the minister with respect to sales and excise taxes but at the moment I will simply confine myself to his views and those of his colleagues since they are now in power and have the opportunity to carry into effect their advocacy with respect to automobiles made over a number of years. I think the house had every reason to expect that the present administration, particularly when the automobile industry is admittedly in the doldrums, would have brought in something by way of legislation that would have been a stimulant to that industry and not only would have increased the opportunity for employment in the industry but would have encouraged people to purchase the product.

Over a year ago the present Prime Minister (Mr. Diefenbaker) was travelling up and down the land saying that the additional 10 per cent tax on automobiles over and above