

Income Tax Act

Finance, the President of Privy Council and the Prime Minister understand. He can tell them this: Canadian are glad of this initiative. If only we could make up our minds to get out of this financial ironcollar, to get rid of this machinery from outside the government which controls the financial affairs of our country, I can assure you, Mr. Chairman, that if the government, the Minister of Finance and the President of the Treasury Board had this courage, the government would remain in power till the end of times, because the Canadian people would be delighted to be liberated from their financial chains.

Mr. Chairman, clause 30 of Bill C-56 is at the centre of this whole debate. For our workers gone to work at remote work sites where they cannot maintain a home, a house, normal housing with their families, well, with this bill they will get some benefits. I am entirely for that.

As for the other clause regarding retirement savings plans, I have already talked about that—the hon. member for Saint-Denis is making faces. He looks as if he was saying: "Gee! That makes sense, but I do not have the guts to say it." Well, I have the guts to say so.

Mr. Prud'homme: You speak too loud.

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): Me, speaking too loud? That is my natural voice. We will never speak too loud in this House to wake up those who are sleepy, those who sit here only to vote at the call of the bell but who have no guts to rise when it is time to do so. Mr. Chairman, to sit on the majority side and form the majority when the time comes to vote, that is not what is called courageous. I have seen hon. members on the majority side who do not agree with this bill. Oh, my God! I see one over there who refrained from voting. But there are others who in the past have spoken in this House and accused the others of being fence riders, people with no spine. It was the hon. member for Compton who accused his colleagues of sitting on the fence. Well, Mr. Chairman, during the vote yesterday, he gave me the impression that he was the chief fence rider, because he voted for a bill which he denounced on television.

Mr. Chairman, I do not think that I am being insulting because it is the hon. member who said that first, not me, he said that there were such people who just swayed in the wind, one way and then the other, but who nevertheless continued to sit on their fence. Well, I do not want to be a fence rider, I want to know where I am going; the hon. member for Roberval knows where he is going. We may not have a large team, but we are not a team of fence riders, we are a team of people who know where they are going, we want financial reforms to put the economy back on its feet, we want to bring harmony in our country so that French Canadians and English Canadians will love each other, because after all, we eat the same way and we react the same way. When we look at one another, we find a striking resemblance, so why should we not be able to get along? Simply because there are financial considerations

[Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse).]

which separate us, because we create dividing interests, and that is why we cannot understand one another in this country.

Mr. Chairman, I take this opportunity to invite all my colleagues in the House to consider seriously in the coming months the bill which was introduced regarding chartered banks in Canada. It is that thick! It is an extraordinary bill, but it is a bill which can generate harmony among us, the federal government, the provincial governments, the municipal governments, and among Canadians. It is an extremely important bill and I would invite all my colleagues, during recess, if it can be called that, to scrutinize all the clauses in the legislation so that we can be well prepared to study it objectively when we return to the House.

Then it will be referred to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs so that we can also consider it seriously, and finally bring in the necessary amendments to enable the Liberal, Progressive Conservative, NDP or Socred government to meet the aspirations of all Canadians, to give equal opportunity to all citizens, all individuals, to the private sector, to municipalities, to provincial governments and to the government of Canada. This is, Mr. Chairman, what a genuine Canadian constitution is about: first put some order in the financial system and the rest will come to us naturally.

● (2152)

[*English*]

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Chairman, I have only a few minutes in which to speak. I remarked to the Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance that if the hon. member for Bellechasse ever made a speech like that in Saskatoon, he would get a standing ovation.

Miss Bégin: Would he be elected?

Mr. Hnatyshyn: That is a good possibility, especially if he ran in the riding of the Minister of Transport. He would be a shoo-in there.

I want to direct a few questions to the Minister of Finance. As you pointed out in your ruling earlier today, Mr. Chairman, there is an opportunity in clause 1 for us to deal in a general way with some of the fundamental principles of this bill. I should like to ask the minister some questions on the amended ways and means motion as I am anxious to have a better understanding of it.

I must say I was very upset at the attitude taken by the minister this afternoon when he refused to answer questions on anything except clause 1. If we are to make any progress in committee of the whole he should not ignore this opportunity to try to clear away some of the misunderstandings and misapprehensions some of us have about this bill.

The way in which the bill has been handled up to this point reminds one of "Alice in Wonderland". It has been an unfortunate scenario of incompetence—of stupidity, I am sorry to say, as demonstrated by the minister. I should like to try and help him get the best possible arrangement under the circum-