

Tax Reform

House of Commons in order to consider the financial structure of the government.

However, I agree with the hon. member of the New Democratic party who believes that since many senators belong to such or such a company, that could have strong bearing on the matter because some decisions could favour high finance.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we are for tax reform, but it is the whole structure from top to bottom, as it were, that should be examined. There are in the field of taxation gross injustices which could be labelled as antisocial.

Basic exemptions are not high enough and in relation with the increased cost of living, low income groups pay too much in taxes.

In our economy, several companies are not taxed as they should be. There are many kinds of reserves that big institutions may keep. They withdraw from those reserves, and they are legally allowed to do so. The law guarantees those rights they enjoy. There are many kinds of reserves which should be taxable in part, because they are much too big.

Some citizens pay too much in taxes. As for those who enjoy extraordinary benefits that are granted to them by the house or joint committees such as the one whose establishment is now being considered—in order to give all possible opportunities to large institutions which already enjoy great privileges—they should pay more taxes.

If we have to pay interest on money for high finance by overtaxing, it should be done equitably and all taxpayers should be on the same footing. The same income tax return should apply to everybody. That would only be fair, Mr. Speaker.

If that committee intends to study the problem in that light, we are for its establishment. We do not object to sitting between sessions; we are ready to devote the necessary time to study that serious matter of taxation. Moreover, we should consider the other existing problems. It is well to tax citizens but they should be able to receive some income.

A great many people do not earn enough to live on. We must look into this problem in an attempt to find some solutions so that everybody may get an adequate income, because it would be pointless to set up further taxes only to pay interest to financiers. Let us bring down interest rates, let us cut taxes, so that the taxpayers may breathe a little, may live.

Mr. Speaker, if the Carter report which cost \$3.5 million is not to be studied by that

[Mr. Latulippe.]

committee, we will object to its being established.

However, if that committee is set up to study the report and implement all its recommendations, we are favourable, that is that we will not only promote the setting up of the committee but will also be prepared to sit on it.

We expect only one thing: some improvement in our tax system and a little more justice for the taxpayers.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: Is the house ready for the question?

Mr. Gray: A point of order was raised by the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert). I thought it was a useful point and on moving the motion I undertook to check it with the officers at the table. I believe I should deal with this now because once Your Honour hears it stated, I think Your Honour will agree it should be disposed of now.

The hon. member for Edmon'on West pointed out that while the motion would authorize the committee to sit during sittings and the adjournment of the house, it did not deal with the question as to what it could do in any hiatus between the prorogation of a session and the beginning of a new session, and also with respect to the effects of prorogation on the existence of the committee itself.

I am advised that it is correct that the Standing Orders of the house do provide that the membership of the standing committees and the joint committees mentioned therein would be continued from session to session in a parliament. I am referring to Standing Order 65(4)(a), but that in any case any order of reference to such committee will expire on prorogation. In so far as a motion to set up a special joint committee of the House of Commons and Senate contains within it an order of reference, which I think in effect is the case here, this aspect of the motion at least would of necessity expire on prorogation.

I wish to suggest to the house that at the very least we can deal with the matter of continuing the membership of the joint committee by adding to the motion the wording on this point which is found in Standing Order 65(4)(a). We could add the wording that the membership of this joint committee "shall continue from session to session within a parliament." This is exactly the same wording—