

*Income Tax Amendment*

have people on our hands who will be dangerous to the younger generation of our country. As was mentioned earlier, we might find that when a baby is born he will be given a number and not a name. What is happening here tonight is very serious.

**Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South):** Mr. Chairman, I intend to rise only to ask a question for clarification in respect of a couple of statements made by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, who my colleague from Halifax says is in favour of SIN. I should like to ask my friend whether he would qualify what he meant when he said that some of us were born. This creates a bit of a question in the minds of some people. I should also like to draw his attention to what his colleague the hon. member for York South suggested, when he said that without the computer system the work of the government would never be done because the minister of manpower could never find the people. Is he overlooking the potential and possibilities of the Cape Breton area in which to find workers to fill in for the computers which he says are so essential. I bring this to his attention simply because of the suggestion of the hon. member for York South, who seems to be aware of the problem we have. If the minister is looking for workers, I suggest that he start in the east.

**Mr. Olson:** Mr. Chairman, after the explanation by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre I suppose all of us should be reduced to the point where we would not object to licence numbers and various other serial numbers on documents and so on. It seems to me, however, that he has completely missed the point so far as the objection to insurance numbers is concerned. As he well knows, if there is to be one number attached to each citizen in Canada for the purpose of the Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security, taxation, and a number of other things which some centralized filing of this information in may come along later, and if there also is to be a computer system, then all this information which is filed in the computer can be blurted out. It can blurt out this information at the rate of 600 lines per minute.

What I object to is that in the Income Tax Act there are provisions which require that all officers who handle the files must keep the information to themselves, and now we will have a situation where we will have the same common number for every citizen in respect

of all these matters and there is no prohibition of which I know at the moment in respect of information relative to the Canada Pension Plan, the Old Age Security Act, and so on, such as there is in respect of the Income Tax Act.

Therefore, as I said, I think the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre has completely missed the reason for the objection to having all this information filed under one number in the computer. This would mean that all these departments of government would have access to the information in respect of the individual.

**Mr. Knowles:** Would the hon. member permit a question?

**Mr. Olson:** Perhaps the hon. member should permit me to finish my remarks, but go ahead.

**Mr. Knowles:** Why does the hon. member think that having a common number would result in the information from different departments being in the same file, any more than having a common name would do that? I do not see how this situation would violate the secrecy of the income tax department.

**Mr. Olson:** Perhaps not. Maybe the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre has a greater understanding than I do of computer programming and what happens when you ask for an account and information from those accounts which are filed electronically. However, my information is that when you call for a file from an electronic computer, and give a number, all the cards on this whole centralized filing system would be printed. Therefore since these accounts would be filed in a central area, people in the Department of National Health and Welfare—the people administering the Old Age Security program and other things—would have access to the income tax records of any taxpayer. Now, since all this information would be included in the same file with the same number, if a person pressed a button asking for information from this file, the computer would have the capability of blurring all the information out, and there it would be.

I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that this would be in violation of the rights of the taxpayers of this country, which heretofore have been protected. When they file their income tax returns they are guaranteed by law that no one except the tax assessors with the Department of National Revenue shall have any access to this information.