

I see my time is running out, Mr. Speaker. May I call it six o'clock?

● (1800)

## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 45 deemed to have been moved.

NATIONAL REVENUE—REPAYMENT OF MONEY TO RESIDENT OF  
COCHRANE, ALTA.

**Mr. Gordon Taylor (Bow River):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked the Minister of Revenue (Mr. Bussi eres) the following question:

When will the Government return the \$1,000 that the Department of Revenue misplaced, lost, or stole from the new Canadian living in Cochrane, Alberta?

The Minister replied:

—unfortunately, I do not remember this particular case.

In this adjournment debate I once again outline the bare facts of this case which has now been done on the floor of this House a number of times, to say nothing of the pages and pages of correspondence.

In 1975 a Canadian citizen living in Cochrane, Alberta who was operating a service station sent a \$1,000 cheque to Revenue Canada as his installment payment through the Mercantile Bank. The cheque was cashed and stamped by Revenue Canada. The \$1,000 was credited to my constituent's account. The cancelled cheque was then returned. After the money was credited to the account of my constituent someone in the Department decided, for some reason, that the \$1,000 should not have been credited to this account, and transferred it. Where? I do not know.

As soon as they found out about this the Canadian citizen and his accountant advised the Department of the mistake. The officials in Calgary advised the accountant and the constituent, who made weekly calls to the Department, that it was simply a computer mistake and that it would be corrected shortly. The matter dragged on, however. My constituent inadvertently found out that Revenue Canada, because there was about \$1,000 owing on his account after the \$1,000 was removed in error by the clerk, had gone into his bank account and taken out \$1,000. The Department of Revenue did not notify my constituent about this confiscation of \$1,000 then or later. He found out inadvertently through the bank manager. Again the accountant went to Revenue Canada and was simply told that there was a computer mistake and it would be corrected shortly.

About this time the records of Revenue Canada were moved from Calgary to Winnipeg. The citizen continued to make

### Adjournment Debate

representations to have this matter cleared up but was advised that the file had been closed and the files destroyed.

In May of 1981 this matter was brought to my attention. We asked the Minister of the Department of National Revenue to check the file and correct the error. In a letter dated August 7, 1981 the Minister advised me that the letter of February 18, 1981 from the Winnipeg taxation office advising that the records had been destroyed had been sent in error. So the files were not destroyed after all.

To complicate the matter even more, on September 25, 1981, the Director of Winnipeg Taxation sent a letter to my constituent stating that the cheque in the amount of \$1,000 dated October 14, 1975, had never been received. What do you know? After months of negotiation the Director suddenly decided that they did not even get the cheque.

The Mercantile Bank wrote to Revenue Canada on October 28, stating that it would appear that the \$1,000 payment was included in a \$2,121.69 cheque of October 20, 1975, which was cashed by the Receiver General on October 22, 1979. On or about June 15, 1982, I was advised that a total remittance of some \$2,000 was returned to the Mercantile Bank in Calgary as it did not carry any identification. The Minister assumed that this was the \$1,000 about which we were speaking. The Mercantile Bank, however, states that they have no record of the \$2,000 being returned to them. They want a copy of the letter that was sent to them from the Department. This, the Department claims, it cannot provide. The Mercantile Bank then said that there was nothing it could do about the matter as their records had been destroyed.

On November 1, 1982 the Sectional Head of the Revenue Accounting Department in Calgary wrote to the manager of the Mercantile Bank and stated in part:

The trail appears to lead to the return, by the Ottawa Taxation Centre, of \$2,000 to your office on November 6, 1975, due to missing vouchers. Our Head Office advises that all records from 1975 have been destroyed—

Now they are destroyed again.

—and we are therefore unable to provide a copy of the settlement. Our investigation of this matter has ended and there is, therefore, little to add in response to your query of September 15, 1982.

● (1805)

You will notice that National Revenue is saying the files are destroyed.

Further representation was made to the Minister. Again, on November 19, 1982 the Mercantile Bank manager wrote to my constituent. He said in part:

As we have checked all our records—

They are destroyed but he still checks them.

—for the period involved and could not find a trace of the receipt of the settlement in question, we are unfortunately unable to pursue this matter until it can be proved to us that we received the funds. As is usual, in matters of payment, the onus of proof is on the remitter and we have absolved ourselves by presenting our cheque with the endorsement of the Receiver General.

On April 25, 1983, the Minister of National Revenue wrote to me in a letter: