

Income Tax Act

the way, when he told me that I felt hopeful; I thought I was getting somewhere.

A number of positions have been taken against this plan by the particular official who seems to have the say. According to the act it is the Minister of National Revenue who would have the say; but, in fact, it seems to be this particular official. On one occasion he tried to tell me that the wording of the plan for the supplementary program in Toronto did not make it clear that all the members of the Toronto local had to contribute. He picked out a particular phrase which said that employees of the union may become eligible, and laid great stress on the use of the word "may".

I have since pointed out that all that paragraph refers to is clerks and secretaries who may work for the union, in the office. It does not apply to the members of the union. They must pay this additional one per cent.

The other basic objection which this particular official has taken to the plan, as indicated in letters I have had from the Minister of National Revenue, from one of the officials of the Department of Finance, and others, is that these officials look upon this plan as essentially a savings plan rather than a retirement plan. For the life of me I cannot see how that can be said about the additional one per cent that makes provision for a supplementary \$5 any more than it can be said about the two and a half per cent which makes possible the basic \$18 a week pension for retired members of the union.

The whole purpose of the basic pension plan of the International Typographical Union is to provide for retired printers a pension; and the whole basis of the Toronto supplementary plan is to provide a slight increase in that pension for retired printers.

I raise this case for two reasons. First, I feel very strongly that an injustice has been done to the members of Toronto local 91. The more I go into it, the more I am convinced that the only reason for the continued rejection of this supplementary plan is because a position was taken by a certain official, and he does not want to change that position. The other reason I raised the matter is that it illustrates a problem we may run into in connection with that part of union dues deductibility clause which rules out any of the amounts which go into a superannuation fund. It is unfortunate that it is left in this way to the discretion of certain officials. It seems to me some better way could be found to define that part of the dues so that people who pay part of their dues into a bona fide

superannuation plan will not have that portion disallowed by a departmental official when they apply for a deduction.

There are one or two other points I should like to mention, but I would ask the minister to deal with this superannuation question. We shall wait and see how that part of the definition which speaks of purposes directly related to working expenses of a union works out. I am satisfied with the definition of a union as taken from the national labour code. But I am not satisfied with the part relating to superannuation.

While I am on my feet, may I say I am glad to note that the provisions of this section are fairly wide, in that they include professional membership dues. This would include those different groups including teachers, doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects and all those others who were mentioned in the debate on February 26 of this year when my motion was before the house. I am glad to note that there is no limit to the kind of dues which may be allowed, provided they are dues necessary to be paid in connection with one's occupation.

Mr. Fleming: That is the first time I have heard the hon. member say a good word for the lawyers.

Mr. Knowles: Oh, my hon. friend should look back across the pages of *Hansard*. If he did he would find that there have been other times when I have had a good word to say for them—and I have had other words, too, of course. But, in all fairness it does seem to me that this section is good in what it does. The aim is, I believe, to be fair to all concerned. I should like to hear from the minister, particularly on the question of superannuation.

Mr. Abbott: I thank my hon. friend for the compliment he has paid to the drafters of this section. I must tell him a great deal of time was spent in working out the definition of eligibility and I think it is probably a pretty good definition. Nothing is perfect and it may be that in subsequent years it will be found it needs improvement, but I think it is a good starting point. The hon. member has raised the question of superannuation. As he has pointed out, the Income Tax Act for many years has only allowed payments into approved pension plans as deductions. The responsibility for approving those plans rested with the Minister of National Revenue. As the hon. member has pointed out, there is an officer or there are officers in the department specially charged with that responsibility. I

[Mr. Knowles.]