

Income Tax Act

er financial basis, since caisses populaires, co-operative movements or some co-operatives are now enjoying a certain stability. Of course, privileges have been granted to them and I dare hope they will be maintained. I hope the government will not hesitate to support and help an organization which has the interests of the community at heart.

It is most important to give such an opportunity to these movements that enable every citizen to capitalize at a level that gives him economic strength. Every citizen wishes to control at least a good part of his savings.

Co-operatives and the Desjardins movement pursue the noble aim of seeking the participation of citizens and giving them economic guidelines for the benefit of their area.

Keeping in mind such high and commendable objectives, I urge the government to give special consideration to granting whatever assistance it can to those co-operative movements. I am convinced that not one hon. member in this House intends to object to such a policy. And even though the hon. minister knows all about the representations made by the various movements, I feel that more should be done for them.

I believe the hon. minister, who might not as yet have had the opportunity to take an active part in co-operative movements, will have heard so many opinions and claims as to appreciate the significance of this issue. I even hope that the Quebec members, of all parties, will not hesitate—

An hon. Member: Do not forget the independent members!

Mr. La Salle: Of course, the independent members are always anxious to take part in a debate over a serious matter. Thus, like other members, I am, in a very independent way, acting as the spokesman for those movements that operate in my riding. I would hope to see other members do the same and realize that it is their duty—apart from any party considerations—to fight for the interests of their co-operatives and credit unions the fruitful achievements of which are well known to us all. If we act this way, we will succeed in shedding enough light on the matter for the Minister of Finance so that it will be a pleasure, and not a duty, for him to inform these organizations that they will keep their particular character, their privileges, for the good of their operation and for the economic wellbeing of their members.

[English]

Mr. Gleave: Mr. Chairman, I just wish to point out two things. The parliamentary secretary said that if we on this side of the House stay with certain limits, what we say will be noted in due time. It is very nice of him to be so kind to us. He said that some representations will be fruitful and, by implication, that some will not be fruitful. When he was speaking he did not make one of the most important observations he might have made, which is whether the particular amendment before us is acceptable. He says that debate on specific terms will be accepted, and so on. This is a specific amendment.

In all kindness to the parliamentary secretary I would say the opinions and debate he is getting on the question of co-operatives should not surprise him at all, because surely before this House recessed at the end of June there

[Mr. La Salle.]

had been discussion on taxation proposals with the co-operatives and how this legislation would affect them. To my knowledge, members of co-operative organizations have been coming to Ottawa and talking to the department concerned about the taxation proposals set out in this bill. They were here last summer and fall, and the minister and his parliamentary secretary have not lacked notice of the attitude of co-operatives and their members to these proposals.

• (9:00 p.m.)

The government made the basic mistake of accepting the advice and opinion of certain organizations which tried to peddle the line that co-operatives are one thing but that members of co-operatives are quite another. That reminds you of the line sometimes taken in foreign affairs. People say, "People in this other country would be very nice if only they were not represented by such objectionable leaders".

An hon. Member: As in this country.

Mr. Gleave: This government is saying that co-operatives are very nice, that the principle is fine and the only trouble is that sometimes they get big enough to do something for the people who put them together.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gleave: I have read statements by the responsible minister—

An hon. Member: The irresponsible minister.

An hon. Member: Which one is responsible?

Mr. Gleave:—and I have never seen such nonsense. During the time I have been farming I have put money into co-operatives. I have lent them money and collected dividends. I have had dividends retained by co-operatives because they had to do certain things which were required. This legislation is saying, Mr. Chairman, "If you have a little co-operative that is all right, but don't let it get too big."

Mr. Mahoney: Is that a family co-operative?

Mr. Gleave: What was that intervention?

An hon. Member: Don't bother; it was not worth while.

Mr. Gleave: Does the parliamentary secretary think it is more important for me to have access to a co-operative store in Biggar where I can buy fuel for the farm or groceries, or to have access to a co-operative of the nature of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool which can build a terminal at the west coast and handle my grain? Is the government really trying to peddle this line to the people of Canada and to this House?

Mr. Mahoney: You tell us which is more important.

Mr. Gleave: I will tell the parliamentary secretary. Probably the terminal at Vancouver is more important because nobody but the co-operative would build it. The government "Joe'd" the co-operative into building it. Furthermore, the government Joe'd the co-operatives to set up XCAN. I do not know whether the parliamentary