

Income Tax

United States, some relief is given to home owners because their mortgage payments are taken into consideration in calculating income tax. Mortgage interest charges are deductible from taxable income in the United States. I am not particularly touched by the desire of the government to lend people money to build houses, because we know that the current rate of interest is 9 per cent, if not more. A sum of \$200 million will not build all the houses we need in Canada, not by any means. The people who need the money the most are not in a position to pay 9 per cent interest on it.

Some 20 years ago I lived in Ottawa. At that time I could have bought any number of lots within commuting distance of Ottawa at anywhere from \$200 to \$300. Today those lots sell for \$4,500. If the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) or the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Côté) are looking for other places to find money I suggest they should heavily tax the land robbers, the people who are buying up farm land around our major cities, and making young people pay \$4,000 for 50 foot lots.

At present if you do not have \$5,000 in hand to buy a lot you are no longer a Canadian; you have no right to live here. Or you may need to borrow \$5,000 at 9 per cent interest just to buy a 50 foot lot. A great many of our young people just starting out cannot afford this, let alone the cost of a \$15,000 or \$16,000 house on such a lot. What are you going to do when you retire? The 500,000 civil servants in Canada today have no security of tenure. What are they going to do if they have a \$5,000 lot and a \$15,000 home with all the burdens of increasing taxation.

● (4:20 p.m.)

Only ten years ago I built a home in a village and my taxes were \$200 a year; today they are \$700. I am not blaming the municipality since everybody is asking for services and the municipalities are carrying a great deal of this cost. When the federal government wants to escape responsibility, after having brought in many socialistic ventures like medicare, they just pass the cost on to the municipalities who find it a crushing burden. Why take the money from the homeowner? Why not go where the big money is being made? Every Canadian has a right to own a home but at the present time faces a crushing burden if he earns \$6,000 or \$7,000 a year and is trying to raise a family.

[Mr. Bigg.]

There is nothing wrong with the principle of equalization of taxes if everybody gets the same services. In Alberta, however, you pay the same taxes in a village as in a city. For the city dweller, there is the advantage that all the family can live at home while attending school and university while it usually costs the country dweller \$3,000 to \$5,000 a year to send a child to university in the city.

I want to compliment the member for Parkdale for bringing up this matter. One of the reasons there is such a poor attendance in the House today is that my party has people at the Chateau Laurier working on the white paper. No doubt when the press write their reports it will be said that the Conservative Party is against the white paper and tax reform; that we represent too many of the landed aristocracy of Canada and the multimillionaires. This is nonsense. We represent tax reform on a sensible basis and we believe that taxation in Canada today is inequitable. I think we should come up with an answer and get the money to run the cities, the provinces and the country at the place where exorbitant profits are made, wherever that may be.

Before I get any suggestions from the labour side, I have a message for labour as well. I want them to draw the line somewhere. I attended a labour conference once and all I heard was that they wanted more.

An hon. Member: Shame.

Mr. Bigg: More is not good enough when you are getting enough. I am not afraid of the labour vote. Labour votes for me because I tell them the truth, that every labouring man in Canada is entitled to a good living and entitled to relief from double taxation. That is why I am even agreeing with my so-called political enemies, but my enmity remains inside this House. When I go out I shall compliment the member for Parkdale for taking a maverick stand. If enough members took the same stand we would not be down-graded by governments of all kinds, as we are. I am a maverick in my party, too. I am not afraid of big government, whether it be Conservative, Liberal, CCF, NDP or Social Credit. Give them too much power and they will abuse it.

One thing that alarmed me more than anything else was being told in this chamber that I do not amount to anything. I do not mind that; my skin is thick and my shoulders broad and I am sure I shall take worse criticism before I die. But to say that the seat I fill is not important to the people of Canada