

Income Tax Act

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Obviously there is not unanimous consent. I recognize the hon. member for Frontenac-Lennox and Addington.

Mr. A. D. Alkenbrack (Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): I rise to speak in this debate in ominous and perilous national circumstances. Canada, as this House and all its citizens know, is in a perilous economic and social position. Recent headlines tell us, for example, that 42 per cent of the gross national product goes for taxes. At this rate, no citizen in the category of the average Canadian can protect his or her solvency with any assurance of success. At the present rate of drain on the economy through taxation no business can be assured of freedom to function, of being able to employ the labour it usually requires, of being able to take care of its load of overhead and inventory and hope for a profit at the end of the year.

• (12:50 p.m.)

The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), his cabinet and the administration in general will go down in history in a surge of superlatives. First, the Canadian people will tag them as the most expensive; second, as the most careless of the Canadian general good; third, as the most arrogant; fourth as the government that accomplished the least at the greatest expense to the taxpayer. Then this morning, Mr. Speaker, we had evidence that they will also be tagged the "captains of confusion", as shown by the affair exposed this morning regarding the appointment of parliamentary secretaries, 28 yesterday, 27 today, and the law calls for not more than 26.

The Trudeauania that swept the country has now turned to Trudeauaphobia.

Mr. Mahoney: You will not convince the public of that.

Mr. Alkenbrack: But the Gallup poll will convince them. After all, the Gallup poll has been an instrument dear to the heart of the Liberal party.

Mr. Pepin: What does the Gallup poll have to say about the Conservative party?

Mr. Alkenbrack: The Gallup poll proves my statement that Trudeauania has changed to Trudeauaphobia. As I say, the Gallup poll is an instrument dear to the Liberal party and has been frequently abused by them in the past to attain their own power-seeking ends. According to a Gallup poll published in the *Montreal Star* on September 22:

Mr. Trudeau's economic policies may well cause him some trouble at the next federal election, for, to date, the voting public is not impressed with them. Little more than one in ten—

Mr. Mahoney: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. Is the hon. parliamentary secretary rising on a point of order?

Mr. Mahoney: Would the hon. member permit a question, either now or at the conclusion of his remarks?

Mr. Alkenbrack: I will deal with the questions at the end of my speech, Mr. Speaker.

Little more than one in ten (13 per cent) believe they are sound, while twice as many (27 per cent) claim they are not. Less than

[Mr. Mahoney.]

half the electorate (47 per cent) give them the faint praise of calling them fairly sound.

Moreover, it is among the largest segment of the working force, labour, where the greatest criticism lies, as only one in ten believes they have been good—but three times as many are very critical. Executives and professional men and women, are more inclined to describe them as fair than other segments.

That attests to what a poll reveals when the man in the factory, the man behind the plough and the man in the street is interviewed.

I had planned to bring a copy of Bill C-259 to my desk in the House, Mr. Speaker; not that I had intended to read parts of it to the House, but rather to remind me that this government continues to confuse quantity with quality. All of us can remember the ballyhoo and the fanfare that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) engaged in when he inflicted this so-called tax reform bill on this Parliament. I am reminded of my childhood days when circuses were in vogue, or at least more so than they are today. When a circus was due to arrive in my town, or a town nearby, we were alerted to the fact by what was called the advance man. This advance man swept into town with a great flourish and in no time at all he had all of us entranced. He pasted up posters and handed out a few free tickets. We held our breath while he talked of the elephants and the bearded ladies and the tallest or the strongest man on earth. More often than not, the spiel was better than the circus. Very often we learned that the elephant caught the flu and had to be left behind in Peoria. And sometimes the tallest man on earth lost his balance and we discovered that he was wearing stilts under his trousers.

What I am trying to say is that the Minister of Finance is the best advance man I have ever seen in this House. I am often entranced by his spiel, but I have found so far that his predictions and ballyhoo are better than his circus. In respect of Bill C-259, I must admit that the finance minister did not deceive us on one fundamental point. He did not say that there was anything of any great significance in this bill, at least not in the beginning. He told us that the combined budget-tax reform package weighed about 30 pounds. He told us that, to his knowledge, it was the heaviest package of legislation ever tabled in this House.

In my opening statement I mentioned the fact that I had planned to bring my copy into the House. However, I had second thoughts when I heard the hon. member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador (Mr. Peddle) say that he had to rest three times when he brought his copy down from the fifth floor. I would have had to bring mine from the west block, and when you consider how little there is in that weighty volume that is worth while you can understand why I had second thoughts.

Another member of this House has already noted that the finance minister has obviously failed to look up the definition of the word "reform" in the dictionary. The meaning is altogether different from the definition attributed to it by the government. It is equally obvious that the minister has confused the word "reform" with the word "proliferation", which is understandable since the present government is confused on most things. Understandable, Mr. Speaker, but certainly not excusable.

May I call it one o'clock?