

NATIONAL PARKS

PERPETUAL LEASES—ACTION TO REINSTATE THOSE TERMINATED

Mr. Ken Hurlburt (Lethbridge): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Two years ago the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that perpetual leases in national parks were valid and could not be altered. Why, then, has the government not instituted proceedings to reinstate those perpetual leases which were terminated?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I doubt if a question asked in those terms is in order. The minister may reply briefly, after which we will call orders of the day.

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, we are now studying this problem. We have already taken certain steps with regard to the new leases which expire and are studied again by the government. The whole question is now under review and I do not know exactly when we will be able to make a decision with regard to the leases which were renegotiated a few years ago.

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[English]

SUPPLY AND SERVICES

IMPLEMENTATION OF TAX REDUCTIONS ON APRIL PAY CHEQUES

Mr. John Lundrigan (Gander-Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. When the answer from the Minister of Supply and Services reached me, it sounded as if the minister said he would take the question as notice. I have been advised by some of my colleagues that the answer was something different. I wonder whether it would be possible for the minister to clarify this very important matter.

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Pierre Goyer (Minister of Supply and Services): Mr. Speaker, I have in fact signed a letter to that effect which has been sent to all employees of the federal government.

[English]

Mr. Lundrigan: That is fine, Mr. Speaker. I understood the minister this time. I now rise on a question of privilege. In view of the fact there was no translation system, I would have thought the minister would have had some respect for my Irish background and answered in English. Be that as it may, I want to bring to the attention of hon. members something which I consider to be of very substantial importance. We have before us a bill which has to do with the basic income tax exemption proposed by the Minister of Finance in February.

I have in my hand a copy of a letter which was sent to the minister's officials. It indicates that the deductions from the April cheques will be along the lines proposed by the Minister of Finance. If this move had been made by a company, corporation or anyone outside of the govern-

Income Tax Act

ment, it would be understood to mean something, namely, anticipating the behaviour of parliament. Out of respect for the Minister of Supply and Services, I will not use the word arrogant, but I certainly consider it to be an affront to parliament when a member of the Privy Council circulates a document through his office indicating that changes will take place. In doing so, he is anticipating the behaviour of parliament. The minister did not indicate that there might be a change in the basic exemption or that there would possibly be a change. The minister, himself, decided that there will be deductions from the April cheques along the lines proposed by the Minister of Finance.

Despite the fact that we welcome the proposed change, and hopefully it will be in effect before the end of April, I consider the minister's actions to be completely out of order. I think the minister owes this House an apology. It is an affront to parliament. The minister should have a little more respect for this House of Commons.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

INCOME TAX ACT

The House resumed, from Friday, April 6, consideration in committee of Bill C-170, to amend the statute law relating to income tax—Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton)—Mr. McCleave in the chair.

The Chairman: Order, please. The House again in committee of the whole on Bill C-170, to amend the statute law relating to income tax. The discussion will commence with clause 1 of Part I.

On Clause 1.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Chairman, 18 months after the beginning of the discussion on Bill C-259, we find ourselves in a very interesting situation. We have a bill before us that is about one seventh as big as the previous one. However, it introduces many amendments. I hope that members on the government side have not accepted these on blind trust because Bill C-259, which was accepted on blind trust, was shown to be terribly deficient. I want to make a couple of observations on clause 1 because of what I said on Thursday last about the complexity of this bill and the difficulty in dealing with it in detail as we should.

I know that hon. members, as well as the media, shun an income tax bill like the plague. They do not want to put their hands near it. In fact, many do not even want to hear of it. They are afraid it is contaminated. I think hon. members will recall the bitter experience when we were dealing with Bill C-259. The difficulty lies in comparing the bill as presented with the ways and means motion. That in itself, is a complicated procedure. We then have to mesh the bill with the Income Tax Act so that it makes