

Income Tax Act Amendment

were thrown from the general gallery to the floor of the chamber. Thanks to the alertness of the House of Commons protective staff, the offender was partially frustrated in his attempts and he was forthwith taken into custody. The individual identified himself as one John Richard Campbell of no fixed address.

Standing order 14 reads in part as follows:

Any stranger admitted into any part of the house or gallery, who misconducts himself... shall be taken into custody by the Sergeant-at-Arms; and no person so taken into custody shall be discharged without the special order of the house.

I should now like to obtain directions from the house before proceeding further.

Hon. L. T. Pennell (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, first of all perhaps I might be permitted to commend the protective staff for their vigilance in this matter.

Then, I should like to move:

That without prejudice to any later action that may be taken elsewhere, the person who identified himself as John Richard Campbell be forthwith discharged from the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Mr. Speaker: Does the house so order?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: It is so ordered.

The house will now resume the business interrupted a moment ago.

INCOME TAX ACT AMENDMENT**INCORPORATION OF PROVISIONS ANALOGOUS TO THOSE IN CANADIAN VESSEL CONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE ACT**

The house resumed consideration in committee of Bill No. C-259, to amend the Income Tax Act and to repeal the Canadian Vessel Construction Assistance Act—Mr. Sharp—Mr. Batten in the chair.

On clause 21—*Application for assignment of social insurance number.*

Mr. Olson: Mr. Chairman, when the committee was considering clause 21 of this bill last Tuesday I raised a question of the Minister of Finance concerning the manner in which these records would be handled by the computing system, so as to make certain that all of the information filed, such as the income tax returns that I presume will be stored by these electronic devices, is kept confidential in conformity with the law.

[Mr. Speaker.]

There are a number of problems involved here, Mr. Chairman. I am advised that there are a number of ways in which these electronic devices store this information which is fed to them. For example, I am told that these memory banks or storage devices are controlled by tapes, or by discs, or by drums. There are also other data cells which can store information. I am also advised, Mr. Chairman, that codes or labels are attached to the various files containing the information that goes into this data storage centre. I am advised that these data cells can in fact produce a formula in the form of a label, number, code, or whatever you want to call it, and this activates a device which by means of a track or a channel leads to what is called an address at which the records are located.

So far, Mr. Chairman, we have had no indication from the Minister of Finance whether this is the kind of system which will be used to make certain that the confidential information contained in the income tax files does not get into exactly the same place as, for example, information filed under the Canada Pension Plan, the Old Age Security Act, or other measures which require the use of these numbers for computing purposes.

For example, Mr. Chairman, we are aware that the number which the minister is insisting under clause 21 be attached to an individual's income tax return is exactly the same number as that used for his social security account. I have learned from talking to some university people who are knowledgeable in programming techniques and computing devices that if these files are not going to be used for comparison with files used for other purposes, then there is no advantage in retaining the same number for each file. Therefore I have to assume that the minister does intend that there be some advantage in retaining the same number.

I want to dissociate myself completely from the remarks made in this chamber the other evening by the hon. member for Battle River-Camrose, who suggested that there may be some socialist, communist or other sinister plot involved in the use of a social security number on income tax files. I accept the minister's statement wherein he said that this is done for administrative convenience. However, Mr. Chairman, the fact remains that under our income tax law, which I think is good law, information contained in income tax returns is confidential and cannot be revealed unless a court order is obtained. Even then, I suggest, it is very difficult for anyone