

Income Tax Act

doing what we want it to do, and that is to say, look, this is unfair, you should not have to be the ones who have to pay that back. However, if they do not pay it back, they go to jail. Perhaps somebody would say the Government of Canada is amending that section so they do not have to go to jail. In other words, if they owe money to the Unemployment Insurance Commission, if they owe money to a bank or a loan company, they could quite conceivably end up in jail under our system if the right levers are pulled and if the right things are done. The hon. gentleman who is talking should have a few words to say after me because I imagine he has individual cases as well.

I suppose you will find similar sections of the Canada Pension Plan Act that are being amended. If you said to someone collecting that pension, my goodness, this section or that section is under review and is being amended today in the Parliament of Canada, someone would say, hurrah, because perhaps something useful is being done. Perhaps the Government of Canada has now changed its tune for the first time and is saying those sections are wrong, the law is wrong, it is unfair to those people to say you must do this and you must do that when it is not their fault in the first place that they are in the situation they are in.

That is why I decided to have a few words to say today. Instead of doing these things, the Government of Canada has embarked on another policy. Yes, it will change the Act. It will change a whole whack of sections today. Yet it has nothing to do with benefits to the people of Canada. It is to make sure that the changes the Government of Canada has made as far as increased taxation is concerned are carried through into the various other Acts that relate to it. In other words, to make sure again that the recipient cannot get away with what is already in the Act.

One would question as well the intent of the Government of Canada in this particular Bill to extend the 3 per cent surtax. One would question the intent and purpose of the Bill to create jobs on the principle that has been used many times throughout this country; that is, to have an area of the country set aside in which something would happen because you have set it aside for a particular purpose, either for taxation purposes or trade purposes.

The Bill will accomplish very little as far as what the Government has said it will accomplish. It is very discouraging to see Acts such as the Unemployment Insurance Act amended by the Government in this way when it could be doing so much, and when it is acting in a manner to further penalize the poor in this country and to take whatever it can out of their pockets.

Miss Nicholson (Trinity): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member who has just spoken so eloquently mentioned the 3 per cent surtax. That tax was announced in February, 1986, and made permanent by this Bill. I wonder if the Hon. Member would care to comment on some of the other taxes introduced by the Government.

For example, if you add up the income tax on individuals and sales taxes they find an astonishing \$36.8 billion which is expected to flow to the Government. Looking at the effects on a married couple, two wage earners, two children, earning \$15,000 a year, their total tax increases add up to \$470 in the taxation year 1987. I wonder if the Hon. Member would care to give the House his views on the taxing record of the Government since it has been in office.

Mr. Baker: Madam Speaker, that is an excellent question because it gets to the very heart of the matter of the general direction of the Government. One would have to wonder whether there has been an intentional effort by someone behind the scenes to scuttle the Government of Canada ever since it came to power in 1984. Some of the measures which were introduced to increase the recovery of money from Canadians were absolutely incredible. We recall the measure which was brought in to charge a fee if you telephoned the weather office. That was pure insanity. There was a measure to lay off tour guides in national parks and other such things.

• (1250)

Those measures are ill-advised for anyone trying to run a government sensibly. In order to collect money from the people of Canada a government should not tax popsicles, potato chips, and ice cream bars which young people purchase in the corner store at recess time. That all-important treat for a young child should not be taxed. With all the big banks, financial institutions, and cozy millionaires, the Government need not tax the snack foods of little children, but that is what the Government did.

In response to the Member's question, the over-all impact of the government charges has been to alienate ordinary people. After seeing the Government's sneaky summer snack attack they believe that the Government does not care about them.

The Government of Canada is now considering a tax on groceries. I suppose since they are taxing individual Granola bars which you purchase in the corner store they believe they should tax the large packages of Granola bars which you buy in the grocery store. I suppose that is the rationale. The Government even taxes popcorn. If you want to alienate a whole group of people you put a tax on popcorn, and that is what the Government did.

Therefore, one would suspect that there is someone behind the scenes who is advising the Minister of Finance to impose taxes such as that on little children's snack food which will destroy this Government for all time. It will never get past the next election if it follows such advice. However, that is what the Government of Canada did. I believe that there is someone behind the scenes scheming and conniving to destroy the Government of Canada with tax policies.

Mr. Lewis: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point or order. I want to advise the House that Thursday will be an allotted day.