

Income Tax Act

legislation to Washington for approval before submitting it to this House?

Mr. Baldwin: What utter, piffing nonsense. I am suggesting that this government cudgel whatever limited brains it has to try and come up with a number of reasonable alternatives in the form of contingency plans which would be of some benefit to the hard pressed people of this country faced with damaging, serious, crippling unemployment and inflation through the actions of the government in not bringing to the country what remedies it needed under normal circumstances, and now aggravated beyond all endurance by what will be the result of the actions of the United States. That is what I have to suggest.

Has the government anything to suggest? I asked the Prime Minister today, and he replied, "Oh, we will wait a little while. We will wait and see what will happen, whether this is going to be more than hypothetical." Mr. Speaker, how much drivel can we afford to listen to from the right hon. gentleman and his colleagues? I think it is a shocking situation and obviously my hon. friend opposite, for whom I have the greatest admiration except when he makes interjections of this kind, has not bothered to examine with some clarity what no doubt will be the result in his own constituency. Further, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): You have 15 minutes more to kill.

Mr. Baldwin: Fifteen minutes? Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) should be informed that behind me are battalions of hon. members seeking an opportunity to debate this very important legislation and the amendment.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): What a team!

Mr. Baldwin: Later today there was a report filed by a presidential commission which should give some pause to our government, a report which indicated that there was a recommendation going forward to the American government that a great many of the U.S.-Canada arrangements should be rescinded. This included, as I understand it, the Canada-U.S. auto pact and a recommendation that there should be no more discussions of a bilateral nature, and only on the basis of multilateral international discussions should further agreements be worked out.

In addition there are proposals introduced in the American Congress under the DISC act which would also have an exceedingly detrimental effect on this country. Under those circumstances it surely is the right of hon. members to ask for, and the duty of the government to provide some assurance that the government has plans, has programs, has alternative proposals which will meet the situation which is inevitably going to develop during the ensuing winter months.

Under those conditions it is quite obvious that the amendment of my hon. friend from Edmonton West, which I may say was conceived some time before today, achieves added significance and importance. There is a

need for the government to bring before this country and this Parliament meaningful and realistic policies which will result in a stimulation of the economy. There must be consideration given to tax cuts of a kind calculated to improve the economy, to regenerate the kind of confidence which has been lost over so many years through the dissatisfaction of the people of Canada with the procrastinating proposals of the Minister of Finance. There is a need to consider reasonable increases in tax exemptions of further kinds which will add to the purchasing power of the people of this country. No motion could be better calculated at this time to engage the interest of the people of this country and get their support.

I say this more in sorrow than in anger to the members of the government. We know they are the ones who can initiate policies. We hope they will do so. I assure them now that if they bring forward policies and proposals which will have the effect of achieving what my hon. friend, on behalf of this party, has laid down in his amendment, they will secure our support.

I know there are other hon. members who wish to speak. I will not take my full time because I know there are hon. members on this side seeking the opportunity to advise the House of additional reasons to support this amendment. I hope that before this debate is concluded some members on the government side may have the fortitude to stand up and indicate their position with respect to the amendment.

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): Mr. Speaker, after nine years of gestation I think all members of the House are ready, willing and able to speak at the drop of a hat on tax reform. If this bill of over 700 pages, which certainly will help the pulp and paper industry even if it does not help the average Canadian taxpayer, were tax reform in the full sense of the word, then I think we would likely have moved on with second reading and voted on the very stirring amendment advanced by the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) and allowed by His Honour, which pinpoints in a general way some of the ills which are besetting this country and where tax changes should be directed to help a very stagnant and stuttering economy.

• (9:50 p.m.)

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, while this bill has the complexity of the Medes and Persians in all their doctrines of ages ago, it is not tax reform. Indeed, it will just create a tax jungle, and from tax jungles you do not get tax justice. From a tax jungle you will not have tax reform.

It is for that reason and a multitude of others, Mr. Speaker, that I have the privilege to stand in my place tonight, where I hope to stand other nights and other days as we go through these 700-odd pages, to try to impress upon the government the error of their ways so that this country in time may have legitimate tax reform that conforms more to the principle, so-called, of a just society than within a tax jungle which will make a jest of the just society. It is for that reason, in a very general way, that I stand here tonight.