

The Minister of Munitions and Supply said last year that people could have purchased fuel had they gone about the matter in time. I know that many people in my district were not able to lay in fuel before the snow came, and that this was on account of absenteeism in the mines on the last day of the week. Representations to this effect were made to the government last fall. I trust the minister will be able to recommend some change in order that these workmen may work full time, which is most desirable in connection with our war effort at the present time.

Mr. ILSLEY: I should not like the hon. member for Danforth to think that I did not pay respectful attention to the suggestions he made in his speech on the budget. I thought his observations with reference to absenteeism were a constructive contribution to the debate, and I certainly appreciated it.

Any steps to be taken along the line of changing the scale or table of deductions can be done administratively and do not require an amendment to the act. But we have been extremely busy. I have started to discuss the matter several times with my colleague the Minister of National Revenue, and he has given some thought to it.

Absenteeism is a disturbing element in the life of the country. It is surprising to me that absenteeism should develop as a result of the income tax provisions. No doubt, however, there is some on that account. At the same time it is undoubtedly true that there is a danger of overemphasizing the income tax effect. Absenteeism takes effect also as the result of other causes. I point to the United States. In the United States they have no such income tax incentive to absenteeism as we have here; either they have no tax, or a flat tax is deducted. I think they have a tax which they call the victory tax, which is five per cent, and is deducted. Yet one has only to pick up United States papers and periodicals to see that absenteeism in that country is rampant. I have no reason for supposing that it is not just as prevalent there as it is in Canada. As to the causes of absenteeism, I would not care to enumerate them, though I have some ideas about them. But in so far as our income tax structure contributes to absenteeism it is a source of great worry, and if there is any way in the world we can overcome it we will do so, administratively.

Resolution agreed to.

4. That the date of filing annual returns of income by taxpayers other than corporations shall be the 31st day of March in the year following the receipt of the income.

[Mr. J. A. Ross.]

Mr. ILSLEY: There is an amendment which we wish to propose, to change the 31st day of March to the 30th day of April.

Mr. GIBSON: I move:

That resolution No. 4 of the resolutions to amend the Income War Tax Act be amended by deleting the words "the 31st day of March" and substituting therefor the words "the 30th day of April".

Mr. NEILL: Does that refer to the 1942 incomes?

Mr. ILSLEY: That does not apply to 1942 income; it applies to 1943 income and thereafter.

Mr. NEILL: Perhaps the minister would advise me—I have heard many people debating it—when does the 1942 income return have to be put in?

Mr. ILSLEY: The 1942 income tax return must be filed on or before the 30th day of June, 1943.

Mr. NEILL: No matter what class?

Mr. ILSLEY: That applies to taxpayers other than corporations.

Mr. NEILL: Regardless of whether they belong to the class where they pay quarterly, or where it is taken off at the source?

Mr. ILSLEY: Yes, that is correct.

Amendment agreed to.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mrs. Casselman): Shall the resolution carry?

Mr. FRASER (Peterborough West): No, Madam Chairman. I have a letter before me with regard to payments by sole proprietors, and I think it is relevant to this resolution. What people are complaining about is the way in which payments have to be made. Before this amendment was adopted just now, they figured out that a man in business either as a sole proprietor or partnership would make payments in 1943 as follows:

March 31, which will now be April 30, he estimates his income tax and pays the first instalment of 1943 tax.

April 15, he pays his third instalment of 1942 excess profits tax.

June 30, he pays his estimated second payment of 1943 tax.

July 15, he pays his final payment of the 1942 excess profits tax.

September 30, he makes his third payment on his estimated 1943 tax.

October 15, he again estimates his 1943 income and pays the first instalment of 1943 excess profits tax.

December 31, he pays his fourth instalment of estimated 1943 tax.

January 15, 1944, he pays his second instalment of 1943 excess profit tax.