

Income Tax Act

5 per cent under the terms of the new bill. Surely, this is not the action of a government which genuinely believes in participatory democracy. Co-operatives and credit unions are among the few business organizations where the members carry on their affairs—and membership is open to all—for the sole purpose of providing goods and services at cost on a non-profit basis and whose operations are directed solely by those who use them. At this time when we are threatened by the growth of huge commercial monopolies, home-grown and foreign, it is dismaying to find the government introducing policies whose effect will be to restrict if not seriously damage these co-operative institutions which have proved themselves capable of surviving and standing up to the practices of private business.

• (12:40 p.m.)

It seems to me that if the government were serious about providing ways and means of developing Canadian identity, Canadian strength and the Canadian economy, it should not choose this moment in which to find ways of wiping out or seriously endangering the life of organizations which have proven themselves capable of standing up to the commercial private monopolies which in their most monopolistic form come from the other side of the border.

There are many other features of the tax bill with which I should like to deal individually, but this can be done during the clause by clause study. I have tried to explain some of the reasons I must oppose this tax bill on general principle. As hon. members will gather, I do so for two main reasons. First, the bill is unjust, and, in the second place, it is self-defeating in that it widens the gap between the haves and the have-nots with all the surrounding implications of waste and inefficiency. To sum up, the bill reminds me of the story of the small boy who came home crying from school. When his mother asked him what had happened he told her he had been punished for telling a lie. "But Johnny," his mother said, "you knew it was wrong to tell a lie." "Yes," he sobbed, "I knew it was wrong. But it was worse than that. It didn't work." That is the size of this tax bill. It is not only wrong, but it won't work.

The people of this country have been led to believe that the government would reform the taxation system to make it more just and more efficient. They have been patient. They realized that the government had problems of all kinds with which to deal. But they had confidence. They believed the government would honour its undertaking to introduce a taxation measure which would lead toward a more just and more fair society. They have been deceived on both counts. You can fool all of the people some of the time and some of the people all the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time. The New Democratic Party and its supporters throughout the country have never been fooled by this government's protestations about wanting a just society. Every bit of their legislation takes from the poor and gives to the rich as far as it is possible so to do by act of Parliament. The people of this country we run into from one province to another, the people who were well-wishers and boosters of the government are beginning now to forget about the rhetoric, the charisma, the halos and the flood of government propa-

ganda which goes out through every one of the media and are starting to look at the actual measures which are being ground out by the legislative mill.

The House has recently been considering one clear example. All the farmers of western Canada, all three Prairie governments all the farm organizations, have said: we do not want the legislation which is being put forward. The government has insisted that papa knows better. But papa will not get away with it in this instance. Papa does not know best. The farmers know what they want and they are determined to get it. Similarly, the taxpayers generally know what they will put up with and what they will not put up with. The bill before us is another piece of pure evidence of unjust, unfair and unworkable policies. This is why I shall vote against this measure, and I am confident that more and more of the Canadian people share my point of view.

Mr. McBride: Will the hon. member permit a question? I followed her speech with much interest. She said the government had promised a bill which would be more just and more fair. Is it her opinion and the opinion of her party that the bill is, in fact, less just and less fair than the present tax system? After all, it is one thing to talk about an Utopian ideal. I ask the concrete question: are we making a significant step in the right direction? Everyone realizes there is always room for improvement; we live in an imperfect society, and we realize that the tax bill is not a perfect one. But is it, in fact, less just and less fair than the present system?

Mrs. MacInnis: The people of this country are not interested in hair-splitting of that kind.

Mr. McBride: It is not hair-splitting.

Mrs. MacInnis: I am speaking for the people in my constituency. The people in my constituency are not interested in finding out whether this bill is one inch better than the last. They are interested in the policies of a Prime Minister who said he intended to bring about a just taxation system, who led them to believe that the recommendation in the Carter Report that taxation should be levied in accordance with ability to pay was to be implemented. These proposals crack down on the poor, who are heavily taxed as compared with the wealthy. I shall not argue about whether this measure is better than the present act in one particular or another. There are some respects in which it may be an improvement. But basically it is not what was promised.

Mr. McBride: Is there any area where it is not an improvement. Is this a step forward or not?

Mrs. MacInnis: The hon. member has my answer. It is not what was promised, and I am not interested in weighing whether it is better or worse in some of its particulars.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Frontenac-Lennox and Addington.

Mr. Alkenbrack: I wonder whether, having regard to the closeness of the luncheon adjournment, we could call it one o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Mahoney: The opposition forces us to "blow" a good deal of time. I do not see why we should "blow" another ten minutes.