

Income Tax Act

monitor that closely. The reason it is not the full \$454 is that we want to make sure we are not incorrectly prepaying too many people, because it is a very awkward situation when people have to send money back. We also want to encourage them to file tax returns.

● (1450)

We are going to monitor this because it seems to me that when we move to the \$15,000 threshold, to which the Hon. Member referred, the higher threshold increases the likelihood of an incorrect payment. We are going to monitor it, though, and it could be that we can move it up. I am sympathetic in looking at it, as I know the Government is. Based upon the comments of the Hon. Member, I am sure he would be sympathetic. We will monitor it carefully. There is nothing to prevent us from doing that. I thank the Hon. Member for his suggestion.

Mr. Gauthier: I wonder if I heard the Minister properly when I heard him say we could, or the Government could, change the \$300 at any time. I refer the Minister to the Bill, Clause 3, Section 164.1(1), which states:

—the Minister may, after the beginning of a taxation year and without application therefor, pay to an individual for the year one or more amounts, the aggregate of which does not exceed \$300 or such greater amount as may be prescribed for the year—

How will this operate? Will the Minister announce his intention ahead of time? Can the Minister give us some indication of how this will operate? Will there be a bureaucratic decision made by God knows who?

Mr. Hockin: It means it will be changed by regulation, and a pre-payment of something this important, as the Hon. Member knows, will be a decision that will have to be made, not by technicians but by people who make these major decisions. As I have said to the Hon. Member's colleague, we will monitor very carefully this level to see if it can be increased in the future, and it can be done by regulation.

Mr. Gauthier: I have the assurance of the Minister that this will be a budgetary item? In other words, it will be in the Budget for the coming year and we will be able to discuss that at the time of the Estimates, and the House of Commons will be called upon to pass judgment as to whether the amount is sufficient or not?

Mr. Hockin: I thank the Hon. Member for the lesson in the ins and outs of budgets and so on. However, this clearly can be done through Order in Council. There is no need for this to be part of a Budget.

Mr. Gauthier: That is what I feared. That is exactly what I did not want to hear. I guess that is the interpretation the Minister attaches to that clause. We could ask then, if it is going to be done by regulation, will it in any way be available to Parliamentarians, *per se*, to review that regulation at appropriate times? If so, how do we review these regulations?

Mr. Hockin: My understanding, Mr. Chairman, is that all regulations, of which this is typical, are part of the statutory instruments which are referred by committee and by Parliament.

Clause 4 agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported.

Mr. Garneau: May I ask the Minister of State for Finance (Mr. Hockin) or perhaps the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski), if we agree on third reading, is there an intent to have a very long debate on it or can we agree to—

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that there are a couple of Hon. Members on our side who want to make a few comments, but it will be fairly short.

Mr. Prud'homme: As long as they are not provocative.

Mr. Mazankowski: They will not be provocative. Our Members are very rarely provocative unless they are provoked.

Mr. Gauthier: Just so I understand all these negotiations, I take it, Mr. Speaker, by unanimous agreement we will pass to third reading of this Bill and that the Government will not introduce any further legislation today? When this Bill has received appropriate debate, it will then be for us to decide what hour of the day it is, to see the clock, in other words?

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I did indicate to the House we were going to be going on to another Bill, Bill C-4. It was my intention to call that Bill which would be consistent with the pronouncement I made yesterday.

Mr. Prud'homme: But we could relieve you of that.

Mr. Dick: They could talk forever on this.

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the same point, we are certainly willing to let the legislation pass. From what I understand, the Government has two speakers. We have one or two speakers each from our caucuses. But we would really hate to see a piece of legislation introduced at 4.30 or 4.45 p.m. I think it would be in the best interests of serious study if we finished this legislation and called it five o'clock.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, assuming that this would take us to a 4.40 or 4.45 p.m., I think there would be a disposition to accommodate the Hon. Member. I was assuming we might get through this Bill sooner than that. If that were the case; if we were to get through this by 3.30 or 4 p.m., I think we would be viewed as being somewhat wasteful in not moving on to other important pieces of legislation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: When shall the Bill be read the third time? By leave, now?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.