

two or three weeks. I would be glad to give the hon. member an answer at that time.

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INCOME TAX

INCORRECT RETURNS PREPARED BY PRIVATE TAX CONSULTANT OFFICES—REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION

Mr. Bill Knight (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Revenue. In view of the fact a recent study showed that 11 tax offices offering assistance to taxpayers for a fee in filing their income tax returns produced 11 different results from the same facts, would the minister inform the House whether his department is carrying out an investigation into this situation or has he any proposals to make to the House?

Hon. Robert Stanbury (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is referring to tax consultants' services. Returns coming from such services are watched to try to ensure that there is not a pattern of inaccuracy or unfairness to the taxpayer. We shall continue to watch these returns and take such action as we can in order to make sure that taxpayers receive every benefit from the Income Tax Act.

Mr. Knight: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the minister in charge of consumer affairs. In view of the national presence of some of these outfits like H. & R. Block, can the minister say whether his department is investigating the situation I have referred to in view of the fees charged taxpayers for the assistance that is given?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, this is something that perhaps could be looked into under the misleading advertising provisions. I would be happy to take note of the hon. member's question and pursue the matter further.

SUGGESTED SENDING OF ADVERTISING MATERIAL TO PRIVATE TAX CONSULTANT FIRMS

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of National Revenue. If 11 different opinions can be given by various officials across Canada appointed for the purpose of simplifying income tax forms and ensuring that ordinary Canadians understand them, in view of the fact that the minister's department has an advertising program costing \$1,200,000 concerning income tax forms for 1972 entitled "It's new and easier than it looks", would he send copies of this advertising to those officials?

Hon. Robert Stanbury (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I think the right hon. gentleman has misunderstood the previous question.

Mr. Diefenbaker: No, I have not.

Mr. Stanbury: It was not officials but private tax consulting services which were the subject of the previous question.

Oral Questions

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, if these people who are versed in income tax forms can give 11 different opinions and ideas, does the minister not think that something more should be done to let the Canadian people know for 1972 that "it's easier than it looks"?

Mr. Stanbury: Mr. Speaker, we have already extended the advertising program along the lines suggested by the right hon. gentleman, and I was glad to have his endorsement of the program and his suggestion that it be extended to the weekly newspapers as I had already asked my officials to do. We will see whether there is any additional aid we can give the tax consulting services, but I do not think we can vouch for their services, particularly when some seem to have hired a good many extra people who perhaps have not received as good a training as they might have been given. Nevertheless, I am glad to see in the article, cited by the hon. member who asked the previous question that the district taxation office was able to confirm the calculation pretty much as the reporter had made it, and the reporter concluded that is someone followed the guide he could do it quite well by himself.

• (1440)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There are a number of members seeking an opportunity to ask supplementary questions. I wonder if we might not try to go to a different subject for a few minutes and return to the matter later.

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[Translation]

AGRICULTURE

MEASURES TO ALLEVIATE SHORTAGE OF VETERINARIANS—FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO SAINT-HYACINTHE COLLEGE

Mr. Claude Wagner (Saint-Hyacinthe): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture, of which I have given him notice.

Further to my representations to the minister concerning the serious problem of the Saint-Hyacinthe College of Veterinary Medicine, would the minister have an encouraging report to bring forward here today so that the desirable progress of that school may become financially possible?

[English]

Mr. Speaker: If the minister can reply briefly to the question he will be allowed to do so, but generally speaking I have the impression this is the kind of question that could be considered at the time of adjournment. Certainly the minister may reply briefly to the hon. member's question.

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I have been authorized by the government to enter into deliberations with my provincial counterparts in Quebec, Ontario and Saskatchewan to discuss the enlargement of veterinary colleges.