

Mr. ROBB: This is material that might be put in the hands of a retailer who had already paid the tax. Then he sells it, and it comes under this tariff item 445A, and he is entitled to a refund.

Mr. MEIGHEN: My hon. friend from West York (Sir Henry Drayton) has pointed out that the tax was paid under a law that made no provision for a refund; consequently the money is in consolidated revenue. Now a new law is passed and the money is required to pay that back. That money should be voted in the regular way.

Mr. ROBB: The hon. gentleman is wrong.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Of course the thing is as plain as can be. You might as well bury any estimate in that way. The minister admitted the point himself in the House a few days ago. I recall it myself. He thanked the hon. member for West York for making it clear. The law under which he paid the money made no provision for refund at all. Consequently the money is in consolidated revenue, properly so under that law, and not subject to any refund. Now he wants it refunded and the only way to refund what was paid in under the other law is by an estimate.

Mr. ROBB: I will be prepared to report to parliament the amount of refund and the names.

Mr. MEIGHEN: That is all right, but it does not appear in the estimates, and the minister's leader gets up and tells us what the payments are; but all this will be paid out, just the same as the branch lines money will be paid out, and there will be no opportunity to correct it.

Mr. JACOBS: The hon. gentleman can correct it when it comes up.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I cannot correct everything.

Mr. JACOBS: Why do we have a leader of the opposition?

Mr. MEIGHEN: To get things right when he can, and he would like to get the co-operation of the hon. member for George Etienne Cartier (Mr. Jacobs). Why does my hon. friend waste his time sitting away in the back, when he might put things right?

Mr. JACOBS: Would the leader of the opposition promise me a front seat?

Mr. MEIGHEN: The front in all good works.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: Why has the minister departed from what he himself said?

Mr. ROBB: I have looked into it and I think this is the simplest way to do it. I shall be prepared to give to parliament the refunds and all the names.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: Why not put it in the estimates?

Mr. ROBB: We do not know what it is, we cannot put it in the estimates.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: The same suggestion was made before, and I pointed out to my hon. friend that the estimates were only estimates because we did not know the amount. Everything is an estimate. If we are to understand that the estimates are not to include the cost of carrying on the country, all right, let us understand it.

Mr. ROBB: We must have legislation of this kind, otherwise we could not provide for this refund. We have consulted with the officers of the department, and they consider that this is the best and simplest way.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: It is the simplest way to get out of showing the financial condition of the country. It is the simplest way of evading the necessity of putting down in black and white just what this precious legislation is costing the country. It is the simplest way of bedevilling the country's bookkeeping, so that nobody will know where we are. And there are other things going on just the same. My hon. friend, if I remember rightly, told us that there was no reason why it should not appear in the estimates. That being the case, why has he changed his opinion? Surely he will tell us at eight o'clock why he has done so.

Mr. ROBB: I have consulted the officers of the department and they inform me that this is the better way.

At six o'clock the committee took recess.

After Recess

The committee resumed at eight o'clock.

The CHAIRMAN: When the committee rose at six o'clock we were considering section 8.

Section agreed to.

Bill reported.

Mr. SPEAKER: When shall the bill be read a third time?