

that it is Monique Bégin who made that kind of comments.

On the third point concerning Mr. Bourassa, it is true. We tried to harmonize our tax with the provincial tax. Provinces are not particularly interested in a harmonized tax because they would lose the tax on the tax. We would like to have a harmonized tax with each province and to have only one system. I am sure that the day provinces accept our offer, they will be able to sit down and negotiate.

I would like to say to my colleague that some statements are political. Of course, Mr. Speaker, when we brought forward the goods and services tax proposal, in the middle of the election campaign in Quebec, it was not very popular. Any premier will jump on that and say that it is not popular. The same thing happened when the premier, who is an economist, said that there should be different interest rates in Quebec and in Ontario. I said to him: Listen, apart from the fact that we are in the middle of an election campaign, have you ever seen different interest rates in Quebec and in Ontario?

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being seven o'clock the House will now adjourn.

I regret the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville did not have an opportunity to raise a question. He will be the next speaker for the NDP when Bill C-62 comes up in the House again.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 is deemed to have been moved.

PROPOSED GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Nunatsiak): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity tonight to return to the issue of the goods and services tax. On October 2 I pointed out to the Minister of Finance that the GST discriminates against the residents of the north.

Adjournment Debate

Because the cost of living in the north is the highest in the country, each northerner will pay more of this unfair tax. The public documents released on the GST do not mention the north.

I asked the minister why the north was omitted from the government's technical paper on the goods and service tax proposal. I also asked whether the government had done any background studies on the impact of this tax on the north and, if so, would the minister release these studies to northerners.

The minister replied that the government had done a good deal of work on the impact of the tax on the north and that the impact on the north is about the same as the national average. The minister said that the GST would improve the economic fortunes of the north by about 1.5 per cent. I was not satisfied with that answer.

My office followed up with the minister's office and asked for the studies and information the minister said he had on the impact of the tax on the north. We were told that it would take a little while to put it all together and that it would be sent to us in a very short time. It is now almost four months from the time I asked the question and we do not have those studies yet. Frankly, I do not believe they exist.

At the time I asked my question the finance committee studying the GST proposal had not put the Northwest Territories on its travel itinerary. I urged the committee to include the Northwest Territories in its travel schedule and a lot of pressure from the north was placed on the committee chairman to the same end. Eventually, that committee did go to Yellowknife to hear submissions on the GST, and it got an earful.

In a letter to the finance committee chairman the NWT Minister of Finance outlined the areas where the tax will adversely affect the north and other isolated regions much more than it will in southern Canada. He said:

The significantly higher costs in the Northwest Territories mean that northerners will pay much more under the goods and services tax than will other Canadians, while the proposed sales tax credit and other announced measures will be insufficient to offset the higher cost resulting from the tax.

It is the view of the government of the Northwest Territories that the GST will make the attainment of their goals of greater independence and self-reliance more difficult.