

Oral Question

that his attempt to claw back the housing rebate has a major loophole in it.

In the most recent Gallup survey, which I am sure has been brought to the minister's attention, done for the Canadian Federation of Independent Business only 7 per cent of Canadians still support the GST.

Why does the minister not admit that his tax first of all should not apply to housing? Second, why does he not do what Canadians are demanding and withdraw the GST and bring about some real tax reform based on fairness and ability to pay?

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member refers to my not accepting figures of other people. Let me refer him to a quote from *The Edmonton Journal* to tell you why I do not accept the figures of other people.

This is a statement made by an unnamed senior treasury official in the Government of Alberta who said that "the Treasurer of Alberta made a simple math error" in the figures he had been quoting quite aggressively about the impact of the GST.

I also point out to the hon. member that the provinces have a report. It was leaked over two weeks ago. We have not seen this report, but we have seen that the chief economist of the Conference Board who did the analytical work for that report has distanced himself from the conclusions that have been drawn by the provincial treasurers and finance ministers, saying that he regrets the conclusions that have been drawn by the treasurers and that finance ministers have been used; they are too pessimistic. He said he would take the more optimistic side of the analysis he presented to them. He believes that the result has been an unfortunate and misleading one.

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FISHERIES

Mr. David D. Stupich (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Yesterday, the minister joined the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans in announcing a fishing ban and consumption advisory for commercial, recreational and native fishing for crabs, clams, oysters,

prawns and shrimp. The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans is further quoted as saying that the poisonous dioxins have been found in shellfish, crabs and bottom-fish.

A lot of this food is in the food distribution system. Some of it is in our homes, some on retail store shelves, and in grocery warehouses.

The consumption advisory is what bothers me. Would the minister recommend to the people who have these products on their shelves that they consume them or throw them out? Indeed, would the minister feed these products to his own children or his own grandchildren?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, certainly not to my own grandchildren. When we issued the advisory what we did was to indicate by type of fish whether they should be consumed or not. I would be pleased to make available for the hon. gentleman copies of that advisory so he could look by type of fish, by location in terms of where it was caught, whether it poses a threat to human health, whether there should be limitations in terms of consumption, or whether it should not be consumed at all.

Mr. Stupich: I am not sure whether the minister was talking about the food that is already on shelves or whether he is talking about what might have been fished had they not banned fishing. He did not make that clear.

That is not the end of the story.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. David D. Stupich (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, perhaps my question should be to the Minister of the Environment. Environment Canada and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans are requesting the companies in the areas affected by these closures to stop pouring these poisons into the water. They are requesting them.

This is not a new problem. These problems have been operating for two, three and four decades. All we are doing at this stage is asking them not to continue doing it or asking them to change their habits. This problem arose because the government did not accept its responsibility to deal with this problem even when it knew about it years ago.