

*Federal Sales Tax*

punishment scares people like you and I, criminals could not really care much less. But the point is a matter of responsibility. Indeed, are you in a position to utter the same remarks? And you said briefly, Mr. Speaker, that one cannot render justice because God alone knows the facts—God alone, you said, knows the facts. If we were to carry your argument to its logical conclusion, since we never know all the facts we should also close down our prisons. That is the question I want to ask the Hon. Member.

[English]

**Mr. McCurdy:** First, Mr. Speaker, I must pose a corresponding question to the hon. gentleman. Is he willing to be a participant in the application of the death penalty to someone who is innocent? Is he willing to share in that guilt? Is he willing to play God?

In addressing the issue of capital punishment, I have already indicated that the logic of the Hon. Member's argument must inevitably lead to the imposing of corporal punishment in all cases of violence. In each of those cases of violence one would have to face the victim and justify how that person is sitting in jail eating meals and so on. The depth of the tragedy that anyone might experience as a result of the murder of a husband or child is not going to be addressed by killing the murderer. That does not solve the problem. What will solve the problem is for the guilty to be brought to trial quickly, the punishment a certainty and proportionate to the crime, but not irrevocable, as execution certainly would be.

● (1800)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The time for questions and comments has now terminated.

It being 6 p.m., pursuant to order made Friday, June 12, 1987, the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS--MOTIONS

[English]

### THE DISABLED AND THE HANDICAPPED

#### ADVISABILITY OF FEDERAL SALES TAX REDUCTION

**Mr. Bill Tupper (Nepean—Carleton)** moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of introducing a measure to provide for the reduction of the federal sale tax for disabled persons.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am delighted this evening to rise in my place and share with the House some thoughts about Motion M-72, that in the opinion of this House, the Government should consider the advisability of introducing a measure to provide for the elimination of the federal sales tax for disabled persons.

I have been interested in the welfare of the handicapped community for a long time. I am not alone in that objective. As I have come to know my colleagues here in the House of Commons and beyond, I have found many share this interest. I believe that our objective is to provide mechanisms which will allow all handicapped persons to enter as fully as possible into the mainstream of Canadian society. That is my objective and I am confident that it is the objective of this House. What I have to say this evening is with that in mind.

Some 14 per cent of all Canadians are handicapped. In Canada that amounts of some 3.5 million persons. For reasons which are not clear, the rate of disability tends to be higher in rural areas than in urban areas. Tragically, the rate also seems to be higher among females than among males, and dramatically, tragically, about 80 per cent of the handicapped persons in Canada are not in the workplace. Of the 20 per cent who are working, most are employed by Government, federal, provincial, municipal and their agencies. Not all that many are really employed in the private sector. Furthermore, some 54 per cent of disabled persons who are in the workplace earn less than \$10,000 per year.

I could go into a long process this afternoon, telling Hon. Members everything about the handicapped, where they come from, what their handicaps are, and about the difficulties they have in facing life. However, I will forego that. They are indeed an underprivileged group in educational achievement, in their earning power and by the numbers who are in the workforce. Their opportunities in life are highly restricted. There has been a great deal written about the handicapped in Canada. Perhaps the best outline available to me is entitled *Profile of Disabled Persons in Canada*. It was written by the Department of the Secretary of State and published in November of 1986. I commend it to all Hon. Members to gain some insight into the handicaps of the disabled.

At the same time, I know that much has been done for disabled persons in Canada by this House and by other jurisdictions. The funding for the Disabled Persons Participation program has been increased to \$16 million for the coming four or five years. These moneys will be used for a variety of projects to help disabled persons meet their objectives. In addition, the housing renovation program has been changed so that a subsidy of \$5,000 is available per unit to upgrade and modify housing units for the handicapped. There has been improved access to federal and other Government buildings and to the universities. Employment opportunities for the handicapped have also been enhanced.

As a part of tax reform, the special deduction for disabled persons will be replaced by a federal tax credit of \$550 starting in 1988. The disability tax credit is not to be refunded to the taxpayer, but the unused portion will be transferable to the disabled person's spouse, supporting parent or grandparent. I think that is a welcome initiative.

Furthermore, the present law provides for a deduction of nearly \$2,900 in 1987 for disabled persons whose impairment