

Will the Deputy Prime Minister relieve the anxiety of Canadian child care centres, nation wide, and will he today undertake to axe the tax?

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should realize that moving to a broader based tax gives benefits to many areas which previously would have been paying the 13.5 per cent manufacturers' sales tax. In the long run, the change from a manufacturers' sales tax to a broader based value-added tax is going to make our industries more competitive.

There are areas for zero rated products that will benefit as well. There are areas where input tax is not included which will release \$9 billion of new economic activity and will benefit all Canadians as a result.

On top of that, the change will make Canadian manufacturers, producers, and exporters more competitive, thereby benefitting all Canadians as a result.

Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, I apologize if the hon. minister did not understand my question.

As bad as the GST is, if child care services were placed—and I will say this very slowly—in the zero per cent category instead of the tax exempt category, the centres could at least get a rebate on their supplies.

If the minister will not axe the tax, will he at least be sensible and change child care status—I will repeat it again—from tax exempt to zero per cent? Clear?

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, every time one of the opposition members gets up on the GST, they take out of context one little element of the GST.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Jelinek: The bottom line in the hon. member's province is that every man, woman and child is paying over \$700 per year in federal sales tax. That is true right across the country. On top of that, in her province, once the GST comes in there will be a reduction by some \$10 billion of tax being paid by people from her province.

Oral Questions

On top of that, low and modest income Canadians are going to be getting GST credits.

The hon. member, if she is honest with herself, knows that this is a long overdue tax which will benefit the people of her province and all people across the country.

* * *

OKA

Mr. Ray Skelly (North Island—Powell River): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

The Conservative government and the Conservative members of the aboriginal affairs committee have done everything possible to prevent that committee from investigating into the affairs at Oka.

The Conservative member for Delta, on the other hand, has proposed that this matter be investigated by a commission similar to the Dubin commission that investigated into the use of drugs in sports.

Will the Minister of Justice agree that this is an excellent suggestion and order a judicial inquiry into the affairs at Oka this summer, as the NDP has called for time and time again?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Ray Skelly (North Island—Powell River): Mr. Speaker, to the same minister.

Canadian taxpayers have paid \$16 million in relation to that crisis at Oka with no debate in this House. The government refuses to co-operate with an inquiry.

Will the minister indicate to this House when the government is going to stop covering up this issue and get on with an effective judicial inquiry into this matter?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, unless I am gravely mistaken, that issue was in fact debated very fully in front of this House in a motion, which if I am not mistaken is still before this House.

The standing committees of the House of Commons have control over their own agendas. There is enormous leeway and scope for members of this House of Commons to be involved in such a discussion or inquiry, and I invite the hon. member to take that opportunity.