

The Budget

from the Official Opposition or the NDP, will present alternatives. We are proposing a fiscal reform which, I sincerely believe, will in the end win us consideration and respect of Canadians who will see the value of our reform.

[English]

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, let me at the outset apologize for being unable to put this question in any language other than English. It is my own failing.

I listened through translation however with fascination as the hon. member detailed his claim that all of the people he is talking to in his home riding and his home province are in fact in favour of la TPS, that the support that it enjoys is commensurate with his estimation of its propriety.

This, I must confess, quite puzzles me because it is my understanding that the results of a Gallup poll undertaken in the province of Quebec that were published about a month ago, showed about 70 per cent of Quebecers in strong opposition to the—

An hon. member: Who is right?

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): I am getting to that. Madam Speaker, it is an intolerable thing when one is heckled by one's own benches.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): The Chair must agree with the hon. member on this point. I would also like to remind the hon. member, if I may, that this is only a five minute question and comment period. To allow the member who just finished his speech to answer, maybe the hon. member for Edmonton East would put his question.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): Forgive me, Madam Speaker. I shall proceed with celerity. Acknowledging that, for example, his children must be expected to support their father as must his spouse and presumably other members of his family, I am wondering where he gets the rest of these people who are so obviously out of

tune with the 70 per cent overwhelming majority of Quebecers.

[Translation]

Mr. DeBlois: I would like to thank the colourful Member for Edmonton East for his question. In fact, it is a very easy one to answer. If you ask people: "Are you in favour of a goods and services tax?", I would be the first one to say no. But, if you let me explain— New Zealand's experience in this regard is very interesting. As that country's former Minister of Finance told the Finance Committee, three months before the GST was introduced, 66 per cent of New Zealanders were against the tax. Two months later, the proportion was reversed: two thirds of the people supported the GST. We are willing to bet that, once the GST has been implemented and the opposition has stopped its witch hunt, people will see that the world did not come to an end and that, on the contrary, we will be better off thanks to increasing exports and to a much more consistent and balanced tax reform.

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Madam Speaker, today I am making my maiden speech as the elected member of Parliament for the riding of Chambly. I would like to take a moment to say how proud I am to be here among my colleagues, several of whom I already know on both sides of the House. I would also like to thank those who helped me get elected in the riding of Chambly and especially my wife, Michelle, and the militant women in the riding.

In Chambly, we have been particularly affected by the budget of the Minister of Finance and we believe that, in a sense, this budget is what we would call a separatist budget. I will explain.

It is separatist in the sense that the government is trying to shirk its obligations towards the provinces. It is a strange way to sell federalism and it is even the opposite of what I call profitable federalism.

Regarding the importance of the Meech Lake Accord, even in today's context where Newfoundland has proposed to withdraw her support, we, in Chambly, like many others in Quebec think this rejection of the agreement is directly tied to the Finance Minister's budget. I will explain why the Wilson budget does a bad job of selling federalism to Canadians.