

Time Allocation

delighted that the members opposite now are coming to their senses, that they realize that the tax that must be axed is the federal sales tax, which for 65 years has been holding back this economy.

We are committed to bringing in this legislation. That is the essence of the direction that we are going in as a government.

The member for Gloucester yesterday talked about the consistency of the position of the Liberal party. This is a delightful thought to try to consider.

First, he said the existing tax has to go. Shortly after that he changed his tune, possibly because someone in his party got after him. The previous Liberal finance critic was yanked because he talked some sense. The members of the Liberal caucus said he could not stay on in that position. So I guess my friend from Gloucester felt that same heat and changed his position.

What has been perfectly consistent since that time is that there have been no alternatives. There have been no options. There have been no new ideas—

Mr. Mills: That is not right. You know that is not right. How can you say that with a straight face?

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Let me complete my thought. There have been no thoughts put forward, no options put forward that represent the position of the Liberal party.

My friend from Broadview—Greenwood has a little book that he has written about tax. We have the position of Mr. Chrétien, who is running for the leadership of the Liberal party, who said: “I would not scrap the GST if it comes in”.

Then we have the position of Mr. Martin, the member for LaSalle—Émard who says: “I’ll scrap this tax, if we do not have some negotiations going on over here with the provinces”. Or he says: “I’ll scrap the tax, if there is not an opportunity here to improve the existing tax”.

The whole nature of what we are hearing from members of the Liberal party is that they are on a bandwagon. They are political hijackers. They are trying to hijack the political process, because they do not have any options.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): They are trying to jump on the bandwagon. They are trying to get on the bandwagon of opposition, saying: “We are against this tax”. That is what they are saying to the Canadian people. Then, when they get crowded a little as to what would happen if we had—God help us—a Liberal party in place, what do we hear from them?

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. We have listened to this drivel for 10 minutes, which I thought that was the maximum amount of time we would have to be exposed to such comments.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member started at 4.42 p.m. He is finishing at 4.52 p.m.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have been interrupted by such thunderous applause from time to time that you have had to extend the time for my speech.

• (1650)

I want to close, if I could, by commenting on what the member for Gloucester said yesterday when he stated that this tax is not visible. I do not know how much more visible the member for Gloucester could want this tax.

Is there anybody in this country who does not know about the 7 per cent GST? Is there anybody in the country who is aware how much existing federal sales tax they pay in the price of a jacket, a coat, a car or in the price of a chocolate bar?

Mr. Riis: How about a haircut?

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): No. The existing tax is totally invisible. The 7 per cent tax is a very visible tax.

I have said on many occasions that it is a very democratic tax. Governments in the future will be held far more accountable by the fact that the GST is a visible tax. Canadians understand this tax. They will know that if any government wants to change it in the future, they will be able to punish that government if there is not a good, appropriate reason for it. That is the reason why we on this side feel it is the right way to go.

It is not popular, and we understand that. We were not elected to do the popular things. We were elected to do the things that are right for this country, things that will improve the economy, improve the treatment of senior