

Government Orders

tions. There is only so much there. After awhile there will be nothing left.

How far can the government take it? If the government in effect says to heck with this House, to heck with the opposition, to heck with precedent, if that is the view of the government, how much more down the road can it go? We all know how low it is in the polls. What if we have not had an election by the summer of 1993? What if we have not had an election by the fall of 1993?

An hon. member: Heaven forbid.

Mr. Harvard: According to the law of the land, we are supposed to have an election. Will this government find some reason to postpone the election? Will it find some reason? Is it possible that this government would decide, in its self-interest, that an election in the fall of 1993 would be an unfortunate irritant, an unfortunate obstacle? This may sound kind of apocalyptic, but if it can do whatever it likes with the traditions of the House, why not postpone an election? We might as well try the whole ball of wax.

I hope this debate can continue. I would hope that something would strike the government and it would realize, for once, that it has gone too far. It has really gone too far. This is an example of trampling on Parliament, trampling on the rights of the opposition, and of course by extension, trampling on all Canadians.

I suppose we should not be surprised. All we have to do is look at the record of the government. We can recall all the stories the government put out about the proposed free trade deal back in 1988 and how it was going to be a Godsend for us, it was heaven-sent to us. Of course, if we rejected the free trade agreement the country was going to fall apart, its economy was going to fall apart. Remember those days? Well, here it is, more than two years after the implementation of the FTA and yes, the economy is falling apart.

We are cognizant of what this government tells the public. What did it tell us about the goods and services tax? The then Minister of Finance told us that prices were going to go down. After all, manufacturers would not be paying the old 13.5 per cent manufacturers' sales tax anymore. Of course, since they would not have to apply the old tax anymore, that saving would be passed on to the consumers. Remember that story? Remember how the government told us that story over and over again? Do not worry about the GST, it is the greatest thing since sliced bread. If we could only get rid of the old MST and apply the GST, it would do wonders, lower

prices, boost the economy, increase exports. Remember all that? Remember that wonderful story the Tories told us. They went from one end of the country to the other and told us it over and over again. It did not matter what Canadians said. As many as 85 per cent of Canadians said: "We don't believe you. We think it is a pack of lies. We do not think manufacturers will pass on the savings, certainly not all of the savings. So we do not believe you." But the government said: "No, we are moving ahead. We are going to bull our way through this."

• (1930)

The government did move ahead despite all the petitions, protests, hearings and speeches in the House. Despite how bad the polls were against the GST, the government said: "No, we are going ahead with this bill." And they did.

Here it is, just a few months after the implementation of the GST, and what do we find? We are discovering surveys, which of course the government would like to question, which say prices are not going down, prices are going up. Why have the prices—or at least most of them—gone up? It is because—surprise, surprise, surprise—the manufacturers did not pass on the savings from the removal of the old manufacturers' sales tax. In other words, a lot of the manufacturers just took the 13.5 per cent and put it in their pocket.

That does not surprise me and I do not really think it surprises any Canadians, except maybe this government, particularly at a time when the economy was in recession. Why would beleaguered and besieged manufacturers not reach for anything, including the old manufacturers' sales tax or the removal of same, and take those savings and not pass them along to the consumers of Canada but put the money in their own pockets? It makes a lot of sense, particularly in an economy where you are trying to survive. So that is what the manufacturers did. It came to no surprise to anybody in the country except this government.

Mr. Speaker, I guess I am hoping against hope, but I would hope that the government would rethink this motion. It is a bad motion, it is going to hurt this Parliament and it is going to increase the cynicism that is felt in this country. People are already in a bad mood. They are in a sour mood. They are down on us. They are down on all of us. They are particularly down on the Prime Minister. All of us in this House feel that. We are all getting a blast from the people because of how