

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak to the same question of privilege, since my name was not mentioned. It was on Thursday, October 1, that I mentioned in a statement in the House of Commons that the hon. member for Burin—St. George's had spent \$118,865 on travel expenses.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I made this statement on the basis of information taken from the Public Accounts of Canada, available to all members of this House, and I merely said what appeared in the Public Accounts. I only reported the truth.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the best thing to do would be to leave it as I said. I will see the hon. member and other hon. members if there is difficulty.

We have tried to be very careful in this matter. I think hon. members can understand why.

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PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant): Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege and honour, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present this petition signed by Canadians from coast to coast.

The petitioners implore the government not to impose a GST on journals, magazines, books and other reading material, and to maintain the tradition in Canada that taxes not be placed upon reading materials and the promotion of literacy in a country that needs that kind of promotion.

RADIO LICENCE FEES

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition to present, pursuant to Standing Order 36. It is from residents of the town of Dominion in my constituency, primarily those individuals who have been associated for quite some time with the Dominion volunteer fire department.

As duly noted in their petition, fire departments provide a vital service protecting the lives and property of all citizens. Because the federal Department of Communications has now imposed huge increases in licence fees for radio telecommunications including all emergency service radio equipment, the petitioners call

upon the Government of Canada to exempt fire departments such as those in communities such as the town of Dominion. I would call upon the government to act forthwith.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, on another subject matter, I have a number of petitions to present, pursuant to Standing Order 36, signed by individuals from across the country, from places such as like Markham and Don Mills, both in Ontario.

The petitioners are calling upon the Government of Canada to withdraw the goods and services tax and in particular the tax which has been levied upon books, newspapers, magazines and various other materials. They would hope that the members of the government would see their way and acknowledge the outright opposition that Canadians have from coast to coast with regard to this particular measure and in particular the effect that it has on magazines, books and newspapers and that the GST be withdrawn immediately.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, this petition has been certified correct as to form, pursuant to Standing Order 36. Your petitioners do not support the government's intention to apply the goods and services tax to books, magazines and periodicals.

[English]

These people find that the dissemination of the printed word as a corner-stone of democracy, culture, and education and of a literate and productive society will be negatively affected by the GST. The petitioners call upon the government and this minister to understand the impact. A 1 per cent increase in books is a 2 per cent loss in sales. As this is the year of literacy internationally sponsored by the United Nations, this is a very serious matter and I hope the government through the Prime Minister's good offices—because he agrees with us—that this tax will be withdrawn.

Mr. Robert E. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present a petition signed by just over 250 residents of Edmonton, Alberta, and St. Albert, Alberta. They are petitioning the government and the House of Commons to apply a zero rate of tax to magazines, books and newspapers now as it has done in all of the years since Confederation.