

getting on with what is widely regarded internationally as one of the best things we can do to improve the competitive position in our economy.

I have been listening. This is something that the Minister of Finance really does not want to participate in, which is primarily what a member of Parliament's responsibility is supposed to be. We are agents of our constituents here. We are supposed to be listening to them.

Do you think I would be standing here talking about this if my constituents were not really delivering me a message? The secret to world class competitiveness is to treat people fairly.

• (1915)

How can you motivate people? How can you change the attitude on the shop floor and in the executive office if there is a feeling of unfairness and the basic system is unfair?

Mr. Speaker, what I am telling you is that phase one of this government's tax reform has not been done. Phase two, which is the GST, is not fair, and this unfairness is a disincentive to productivity, the productivity that the minister hopes we can get in this country.

The minister continually says that there are no alternatives. Professor Brooks has put forward an alternative. You know that I have worked hard with many people across the country on the single tax, which is a much more simple, fair, efficient and workable system which will bring the government the same amount of revenue.

There is also a system from the University of Toronto called the alternatives to the goods and services tax. So, Mr. Speaker, I wish and I plead through you to the Minister of Finance that when he stands up to answer questions in the House that he stop following that line, what is the line we are going to put out, and really try to deal directly with the questions put to him.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre H. Vincent (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am saddened to hear my colleague on the other side of the House say that his constituents do not understand and do not

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accept the GST. Mr. Speaker, I should think that the first responsibility of a member is indeed to explain to the people the nature of the legislation adopted by the House of Commons. And if the constituents of my colleague do not understand the GST, his duty is to explain it to them, not to criticize it. In response to my colleague's arguments concerning Canadian companies, here is what Canadian Appliance Manufacturers Association Vice-President Steve Snyder had to say, and I quote:

The Canadian appliance industry believes that the GST will go a long way towards increasing fairness in the sales tax system.

Stephen Baker, Chairman of the Committee on Intergovernmental Relations of the Canadian Gift and Tableware Association stated, and I quote:

Our association supports the GST because it feels that during the 90s and at the beginning of the next century the GST will lighten the tax load of the manufacturing sector and spread it more equitably among all sectors of the Canadian economy.

Here is another statement, this time from Canadian Manufacturers' Association Vice-President Jim Wright:

CMA officials have been advocating a reform of the sales tax for over 35 years, and they are quite pleased that their proposition has finally been acted on.

For his part, CMA President Laurent Thibault stated:

As you will see for yourself the comments we have had indicate that most of our members support the goods and services tax.

And this from Strong Equipment Corp. President Jordan Sullivan:

The industry is in favour of the GST [-]

Ingersoll-Rand Canada Inc. Controller Charles England put it this way:

The new tax will solve that problem because we will no longer have to determine whether a product is taxable. Collecting the sales tax will be simplified.

Stelco Inc. President Frederick Telmer said this:

The new goods and services tax—applicable to consumer goods rather than income—is a worthwhile measure.

And from WCI Industries Ltd. Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Bill Lutton:

WCI Canada management endorse the tax because we believe the new tax is a positive measure which will make the sales tax system fairer and more readily understandable.