

Oral Questions

Mr. Bouchard (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the member could understand the mandate of the commission. We have been very clear about the mandate of the commission, which has been set up by the Prime Minister to determine the vision of integration of all transportation modes for the future. Exactly what we are trying to avoid is the short view proposal made by the member.

If we deal, as the Liberals did for 20 years, for three or four months, if we deal for another three or four months without any kind of vision for transportation, we make a decision for the day and the day after. We just wake up with a \$300 billion debt with the deficit that the Liberals created. This is what we can avoid. The Royal Commission on Transportation has been set up to deal with the future of transportation. The mandate is clear. The members have been selected and the commission will work in the way that we have decided that it will work.

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PROPOSED GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister, and it too is on what the chairman of the finance committee has called the gouge and screw tax.

What I want to know from the Deputy Prime Minister today is: What are the federal government figures in terms of the impact on the provinces? We saw the study released yesterday in which the provinces say that they will lose some 400,000 jobs and \$7 billion worth of provincial revenues. We know the Minister of Finance has now confirmed that Alberta will certainly be a loser.

I want to know how many jobs will be lost. How much money will be lost? Is the minister really saying in this House today that 10 Premiers representing about three or four political parties are wrong and that he is right, that he knows it all? Can he put up or shut up in the House today?

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, what we are saying is not that 10 Premiers are wrong. We are saying that their analysis is wrong, the analysis that has been produced for them. They did not produce it themselves. The Conference Board study on

the same subject has varied tremendously over the last few months.

• (1130)

I would like to remind the hon. gentleman that the same accusations were made of us in the past by his leader. In 1984 he said that the Minister of Finance knew that his program would lose between 50,000 and 100,000 jobs. He said of the minister, "Rather than admit it, the minister is trying to keep the truth from the people". We are not keeping the truth from the people, Mr. Speaker. We created jobs in 1984. We created jobs in 1985, 1986, 1987, and we will continue to create jobs this year and next year, thanks to the GST which is a modern way of organizing our fiscal system.

Mr. Nystrom: Mr. Speaker, I am sure that even you will remember that a year ago the Minister of Finance was saying that the world was beautiful, the economy was booming, and jobs were being created. Yet they will not even give us the documents on which they base those statements.

The minister has said that the analysis that was done for the provinces is wrong. The Minister of Finance has also said publicly that many premiers agree in private with the GST, yet every single premier has said no. I want to know today whether the minister can get up and identify those premiers who agree with the GST. If he cannot do that, will he stop misrepresenting the premiers of this country. Put up or shut up.

Mr. Loiselle: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will recognize that for practically two years, the provinces worked with us very closely on preparing what is the GST; a very similar tax, the same model. The fact that it is provincial and federal does not change the basic issue. On that subject, we stand by that.

As far as the analysis is concerned, I would like to advise the hon. member that we have, and we are very proud to have, a very sophisticated method, which has been explained in more detail publicly today, which takes into account the IMF and OECD inputs and which has given results which indicate, without any doubt, that in the short term, and even more in the medium and long-term, this will be beneficial for the economy.

The Minister of Finance, my colleague, said it is a nice world because job creation is a nice thing.