

nothing to do with elections. The government will respond at the appropriate time.

I would hope that he would encourage all provincial Ministers of Agriculture to come forward and help us take part in developing the proper process to give agriculture the safety nets that are certainly required for the long-term continuation of a viable agriculture.

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GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance.

The central issue for Canadians is the issue of trust. For months and months, the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister have been saying that there are no alternatives to the goods and services tax.

The Minister of Finance knows that there are many alternatives to the goods and services tax out there, the single tax being one and the Brooks proposal another.

When is he going to start coming clean with Canadians, withdraw the GST, and start studying tax reform that will bring simplicity, fairness, and efficiency to our system?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have said that there have been no realistic alternatives because we have studied Mr. Brooks' proposal and the single tax proposal. They do not make sense. It involves putting a much heavier tax burden on small business.

My hon. friend says that it simplifies the system. It simplifies one aspect of the system in that there is a one-page form, but it omits a number of other schedules to the preparation of the tax which help business people and individuals prepare their tax returns. They can avoid mistakes that are going to complicate the whole situation.

Is the hon. member suggesting that we should increase the tax rates for low income people? Is the hon. member saying that we should increase the rate of tax for small business? Is the hon. member saying we should put a far heavier burden on income tax and remove taxation totally from consumption?

Privilege

He says that, yes, he would like to do that. That would put a tremendous reduction to the incentive for working, for saving, and for investing in the country. These are things that are very important in the development of this economy.

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MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE

Mr. Speaker: I want to change the subject for a moment. I hope that what I am going to do will find favour with the House.

On behalf of hon. members, I want to express our very great regard to one of our colleagues, Mr. Stan Darling, the hon. member for Parry Sound—Muskoka, on his 50th wedding anniversary.

I think this is an unusual and wonderful event.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

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PRIVILEGE

REMARKS DURING QUESTION PERIOD

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I gave you notice during Question Period that I want to raise a question of privilege arising out of something that happened during that Question Period just completed.

After the hon. member for LaSalle—Émard finished his question, the camera and the sound cut to you, Mr. Speaker, and your microphone came on. Therefore, the entire country could see and hear the government House leader screaming into your ear. The entire country saw it and heard it. It can be viewed on the tapes.

What the government House leader was saying, in part, was: "Outrageous, absolutely outrageous." I submit what was outrageous was the blatant attempt by the government House leader to interfere with the Chair.

The government may be able to get away with that kind of thing in the Senate, but I submit the government should not be allowed—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member has raised the matter by way of a question of privilege.