

Government Orders

So it is hard for me to be against renewing this equalization program, because I think that it gives all provinces the money that they need, according to their needs. But after giving some support to Bill C-60, Mr. Speaker, I should criticize some things. My criticism will concern mainly the issue of harmonizing the provincial tax and the federal tax, commonly called the GST.

I know why so many provinces do not want to harmonize these two taxes. They know their voters very well, better than the federal government does. Yes, they are afraid, but this fear is real. Unfortunately the federal government and my friends and colleagues opposite did not share this fear, because it is based on reality, I believe. The reality is that when Parliament headed by this Conservative government is in session, our pocket-books and purses are not safe.

As for the federal government, the GST and harmonization, if you, like me and my party, are against this tax, the GST, you can hardly be for a law that would harmonize these two taxes. We agree that the provinces can have their own taxes, but we think that the federal tax, the GST, should be abolished.

Now people will say, "Hold on. Abolish it?" The Liberals do not claim that it should be abolished. The Liberals claim that it should be—I don't know what the Liberal leader said just recently—transformed or changed, but kept and modified. Okay. We already heard that before: kept and modified. I think that one reason the government is so unpopular and why it will be beaten in the next election, Mr. Speaker, is not so much the Constitution or even other legislation affecting VIA Rail, Air Canada or anything else. No, it is not that. It is not because of privatization either.

Members from Quebec know why the government will be beaten in the next election. Members from British Columbia and members of that party from western Canada know why they will be beaten. It is not so hard to understand; it is clear. It is because they passed a law that allowed the GST to exist. And now, Mr. Speaker, when I talk about abolishing the GST, it means that we would not have to harmonize the provincial tax with the federal tax and charge one on top of the other, because that is what happens. I must tell you what the government could have done instead of passing an act to implement the goods and services tax. Again, you do not

need magic to do it, and there are several things that can be done.

• (1310)

There is a gentleman, who is not a member of the NDP, nor a Liberal or a Conservative. I do not know what he is, but he is a gentleman who wrote a book entitled *The Canadian Legislatures*. He is the former administrator—I believe he was a bureaucrat—of the legislature of Ontario. His name is Mr. Robert Fleming. He talks about governments expenses, not only the federal government but both the federal and provincial governments. Mr. Fleming compared salaries, privileges, pensions, all kinds of expenses of the federal government—the Senate and the House of Commons—and of the provincial governments that make useless expenses which are in fact a real squandering of money.

In his report, Mr. Fleming tells us how much those governments cost us. As you know, Mr. Speaker, if I ask that we abolish a tax, I must also ask that we reduce the federal government expenses. In order to know where to reduce expenses, we must know where there are a lot of useless expenses, where there is a lot of money that is being squandered. According to Mr. Fleming, for all governments in Canada—that includes the federal and provincial governments—total expenses were of the order of \$410 million five years ago. Today those expenses have climbed to \$580 million, which represents an increase of 9.2 per cent each year. By gosh, if I were a union leader in Quebec and had obtained a contract giving the union members a 9.2 per cent raise per year, those workers would keep me there for life.

Mr. Speaker, the members of this House are not elected for life, nor in the legislatures elsewhere. In my opinion, it is indecent to have a 9.2 per cent increase per year, every year.

So if the government wants to make voters happy, if it really wants to do what must be done to harmonize taxes with every province, the solution is clear: it must abolish the GST, reduce its expenses and, finally, pass legislation that most Canadians and Quebecers could support.

[English]

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the member for Chambly. In his opening remarks he mentioned that the people of Quebec feel that the equalization payments, the transfer