

*Government Orders*

Motion No. 78.

That Bill C-62 be amended by deleting Clause 59.

Motion No. 79.

That Bill C-62 be amended by deleting Clause 60.

Motion No. 80.

That Bill C-62 be amended by deleting Clause 61.

Motion No. 81.

That Bill C-62 be amended by deleting Clause 62.

Motion No. 82.

That Bill C-62 be amended by deleting Clause 63.

Motion 83.

That Bill C-62, be amended by deleting Clause 64.

Motion No. 84.

That Bill C-62 be amended by deleting Clause 65.

Motion No. 85.

That Bill C-62 be amended by deleting Clause 66.

Motion No. 90.

That Bill C-62 be amended by deleting the Title.

• (1640)

He said: Mr. Speaker, in dealing with the amendments proposed to Bill C-62, I want to point out that we want to be very consistent in this. As was indicated in the minority report prepared by the Liberal party when the technical documents were considered by the finance committee, we stated that no amount of tinkering or changing some of the details of the GST would make it acceptable.

Certainly, our experience in listening to literally the hundreds of people who came before the committee, both as individuals and as representing companies or organizations, indicated that, in fact, that was the case. Without exception, although some people might come before the committee supporting the principle of the goods and services tax, they certainly did not support the proposal that is presently before the House.

What is very interesting in all of this is that the government has taken the approach that it believes the tax will be good for people and that people simply do not understand it. That is a debate that will undoubtedly go on across the country as we continue to consider this particular piece of legislation.

I feel that the Canadian Labour Congress, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, senior citizens in this country and university students will be more than able to defend

themselves and explain why they are so concerned about the goods and services tax.

Canadians must recognize that the argument being made is that the present federal sales tax is a very difficult tax to administer, it has a lot of leakage and we are not getting as much money out of it as we should. Of course, the government moved it from 9 per cent to 13.5 per cent during the time it has been the government in this country. So, if it was a silent killer of jobs back in 1984, it has become a very effective killer of jobs in 1990.

Beyond that, the point that has to be made is that whenever we discuss the issue of the federal sales tax, which has been in effect for some 60 to 70 years, the Minister of Finance and other members of government talk about visibility. So I would like to restrict my comments today to three or four issues that were made issues by the government itself.

The government came forward with its technical documents in August of last year. In the documents surrounding the draft legislation that was made available to us last fall the government said that most important in dealing with this new tax policy was that it should be visible, that it should be integrated with the provinces, that it should be fair and that it should be revenue neutral.

As I have indicated many times before, one of the strategies taken by the government is that anybody who does not support its tax does not understand it, or prefers the existing federal sales tax, or does not have an alternative. The government has had six years to work on an alternative and it has produced one that has 80 per cent of Canadians against it. I would not think that the Minister of Finance or anyone else would be pushing too hard to have other people come up with specific alternatives when in fact the government after six years, has so miserably failed. The reason that the government has failed is because it has not consulted with Canadians. It has not consulted with the provinces. There were discussions at the officials level with provinces, and then last April, after having met with finance ministers here in Ottawa, indicating, I am told, that at some point there would be further discussions and negotiations, the Minister of Finance unilaterally, within a matter of couple of weeks, stated that he was going to go ahead on his own and that the federal government would install a tax at the federal level unilaterally.