

Government Orders

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South): I would like to begin by expressing my disbelief at the fact that the NDP would try to silence me in making the deeply felt objections that I have to the goods and services tax.

I would like to say that I travelled across Canada with the member for Yorkton—Melville.

Mr. Rodriguez: Point of order.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Nickel Belt on a point of order.

Mr. Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, my point of order is that it is a well known practice and rule that no member can reflect on a vote. I think that what the hon. member is doing is reflecting on a vote which has been decisive and has been taken.

Mr. Waddell: Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order. My colleague is right.

Also, the NDP was not trying to silence the member. We are trying to hear another member, a member who is opposed to and not for the GST. That is what we are trying to do. We are not like the Liberals.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Ottawa South has the floor on debate.

Mr. Manley: Mr. Speaker, their intellectual bankruptcy is only exceeded by their arrogance.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Manley: I am here not to talk about that left wing rump, what is left of them down there as they recede into irrelevance. I am here to talk about the government and what it is doing to the people of Canada with this regressive tax.

I have a question that I would like to ask of government members who are here. Who is in charge over there? Yesterday we saw in the polls that not only are most Canadians opposed to the GST, not only do we see that Canadians from all regions of the country are opposed to the GST, but 56 per cent of people who identify themselves as Conservative supporters are opposed to the GST. Who over there is in charge? Who is listening?

Maybe I have an idea about that. We know how much the government likes the corporate model. We know how it thinks that the private sector is really the model for everything. I think that the Prime Minister considers the Government of Canada to be just kind of like the

Iron Ore Company. I think that he figures he is the chairman of the board of a great big corporation.

We all know in the corporate structure there are different groups, especially in big corporations. There is this group, that group, the finance group. There is the production group. There is the human relations group. There are all the different sections of a corporation. I think what has happened in the Prime Minister's board of directors is that the finance group has gotten control. I think those who are in charge of human relations in the corporation of the Government of Canada have been shut out.

Those people are listening to the bean counters and they are not concerned about the people. That is what has gone wrong. They do not care about the people. They have the bean counters lined up. They have the economists lined up and they are saying: "Well, we have devised a method to reform the old manufacturers' sales tax, that old tax that we have wanted to reform for so long. And here it is, the streamlined system. Look how neat it is on paper. You can draw a flow chart for it and you can put it on an overhead projector. You can run pictures of it in the boardroom. You can use multicolour, overlapping slides to explain how to do it. It looks terrific". But nobody is asking the people how it is going to affect them. All the government is doing is looking at these numbers.

So who is in charge? Who is listening to the people of Canada? Who is listening to the Conservatives of Canada? Their members of Parliament are not.

I think the question that the government has to ask itself before it proceeds any further with this tax is whether it has any remaining credibility, whether the Minister of Finance has sufficient remaining credibility to put this tax into effect.

There is a big problem lurking here for the people of Canada and for the Government of Canada. What happens if there is a massive tax revolt? What is the government going to do when the people of Canada finally say: "Enough is enough. We are withholding our taxes"? What is it going to do? Unless the government has the credibility, and unless its Minister of Finance has the credibility to put this tax into effect, then they enact it and implement it at their peril, and at the peril of order in Canada.