

*Government Orders*

This tax will be coming out of everyone's pocket or purse. It will be coming out of our savings accounts, pension cheques, family allowance cheques, unemployment insurance cheques, budgets for clothes, shoes and food. It is going to come on top of our rental payments, mortgage payments and utility bill payments.

For the first time in the history of Canada, for the first time in the history of most countries, including the European countries that he sets forth as an example for his tax, we are going to have a tax on books, on learning, a tax on literacy. The Prime Minister in a hypocritical fashion talks, as we have talked, about the one million adult Canadians who can neither functionally read nor write in this country. We back him on this. Now there is going to be a tax on the books and material to overcome this scourge in our country.

We were a frontier people. The Governor General was sworn in today, and I am not bringing the Crown into this. He came from frontier stock, homesteading stock. At night under coal and kerosene lamps they attempted to educate themselves with any book they could buy, borrow, and sometimes they had to borrow it for some length of time before returning it. This tax puts a tax on learning, literacy and education for the first time.

It is also a tax on pollution control equipment. We talk about pollution, about our environment being a priority. It is a tax on sickness. It is a tax on housing. It is a tax on raising children. It is a tax on the necessities of life and, this minister is relentless, it is even a tax on death.

Why did we get here? We got here because of the government's own mismanagement. This is a tax to pay for the government's own incompetence. Even the minister's own business supporters confirm that he has not done the job he said he would do. He has had a strong economy in this country for most of his term, in fact for all of his term. Despite that economy with vastly increased government revenues, he has raised taxes on 31 separate occasions against Canadians over the period in which he has held office. They are unprecedented high revenues, 31 increases in taxes from all sources.

This same minister inherited a public debt about which he complained, but he has doubled the public debt of Canada, the whole cumulative debt incurred since Confederation in five short years despite those strong reve-

nues, those tax increases. Canadians are saying: "That is not the custody we asked of this minister or this government. That is not the fiduciary way to handle the moneys of Canadians. We will not take it any more. You have not done the job. If you are trying to bail yourself out with this tax, no, sir, we do not want it. Scrap it." The people are saying scrap this tax and scrap this minister.

This minister and this government have made a complete mess of the fiscal situation. Now that they have botched it, they want Canadians to try to rescue them and pay the price. Apart from anything else, the timing could not be worse. The minister admits to the House of Commons and to the country that we are entering a period of slower growth. Recent analyses by financial institutions, the Bank of Commerce and the Royal Bank, most recently, indicate that we are in a period of slow growth.

The timing could not be worse. The timing of any tax and the timing of any expense is vital. It is crucial. This minister will throw us into a recession if this bill goes through the House of Commons.

Therefore, I say to the minister that we cannot help him rescue it. It cannot be rescued. This tax cannot be tinkered with. It is so fundamentally flawed that it has to be scrapped. The minister has to go back to the drawing board and withdraw the tax. It is a bad tax.

Canadians are fed up with the phoney rhetoric, with the breach of promises, the fact that it is a different style of tax than was promised. Canadians are fed up with a 7 per cent tax and they are fed up with this government.

I am saying to the Prime Minister and his minister that they better listen to what the people of Canada are saying to us and to your members. It is coming in loud and clear whether it is from Whitehorse, Vancouver, Saskatoon, Toronto, Corner Brook or Trois Rivieres. It is coming from the elderly, it is coming from students and single mothers, it is coming from the handicapped, it is coming from the old age pensioners, that's for sure. It is even coming now from the business community, and it is virtually unanimous.

Canadians are saying to this minister: "Scrap this tax. No more double-talk. No more extravagant newspaper ads. No more phoney sales pitches. No more of this tax.