

Oral Questions

Hon. Gilles Loisele (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, I will resist the temptation to tell the hon. member that I am very caring about her particular problem because I happen to be the owner of a very nice animal. But that is not the point.

What she fails to take into account is the fact that all the inputs presently paid by the veterinarians will no longer be paid after the GST is implemented. This will constitute a considerable diminution of the prices.

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LITHUANIA

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It has to do with the growing tension in Lithuania and concern over the demand by Mr. Gorbachev that Lithuanians surrender their arms within a given period of time.

It seems to me that this image which is being portrayed of the Lithuanian people is as a violent people who need to be disarmed by the Soviet Union. The Lithuanians have come a long way in their struggle for independence in a remarkably non-violent way through free and fair elections, through the declaration of a freely and fairly elected parliament, et cetera, and with absolutely no violence whatsoever.

• (1440)

I would hope that the Secretary of State for External Affairs, on behalf of the Government of Canada, would be able to reject this view of the Lithuanian people as a people who are seeking to exert some sort of violence over their own destiny, rather than pursuing it in the democratic way that they have up until now and in which they intend to proceed doing so.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I think the House would agree with two things. The first is, as the hon. member has said, there has been a remarkable demonstration of a dedication to a peaceful and democratic means on the part of the people of Lithuania.

Second, the House would believe that the Soviet Union should recognize that and reflect that realization in its actions.

We are concerned about the pressures that the Soviet Union is placing upon Lithuania. We have called in the Ambassador of the Soviet Union on various occasions. I welcome the opportunity the member has provided me to convey that view publicly to the Soviet Union. I think I speak the views of the whole House. I will follow it up in correspondence to Mr. Shevardnadze with whom I have already been in touch respecting this matter.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, part of the problem, it seems to me, is that the Lithuanian Parliament feels that in order to gain the international recognition that it seeks, it has to put in place not only these *de jure* declarations of independence, but also *de facto* signs of independence, like border patrols and customs, et cetera. It seems to me that these are part of the problem in terms of the negotiations with the Soviet Union about how to realize independence.

Is the Secretary of State for External Affairs, either within the Government of Canada itself or in consultation with other members of the international community, looking at ways to convey the recognition of the independence process in Lithuania in a way that does not have to wait entirely for all these *de facto* signs of independence to be displayed? It seems to me that those things are part of the problem in reaching that very independence.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, that is a very interesting suggestion and one that I would follow.

Given the non-partisan nature of these discussions on this matter in the House, it might be useful if I could have the benefit of the views of members of the three-party committee who travelled to Lithuania, as well as the members of the standing committee with whom I would consult informally with regard to practical initiatives that Canada might follow to this end.

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[Translation]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State (Small businesses and Tourism). In the brief sent to the Quebec MPs in Ottawa by the *Conseil du patronat du Québec* they express great concern about the economic impact of the GST, its administrative complexity and its high costs