

amendment would exempt pet food for a guide dog. The wording is:

Feeds and supplements for addition to such feeds for guide dogs used by people requiring their assistance.

I hope the House will consider this amendment seriously because blind people usually live on small incomes, very often on disability pensions. The small increase in sales tax on pet food is a large item if the total income is small. The issue here really is the mobility of blind people and their ability to enhance their lives and take advantage of opportunities for education and training. Many Members of this House worked in a very commendable and constructive fashion on two parliamentary committees which were concerned with enhancing opportunities for the handicapped. Members from all sides will know how important guide dogs are for blind people in enabling them to be mobile, to travel, to take advantage of new experiences and to take part-time work or to follow courses of instruction.

I would ask the House to consider very seriously supporting this exemption from sales tax on pet food in the case of guide dogs needed by blind people. The amount of money is small, but the amount of the contribution to human freedom is large.

**Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre):** It appears that the original intent of the Government, when it proposed to exempt feeds and supplements for addition to such feeds for animals, fish, fowl or bees that are ordinarily raised to produce or to be used as food for human consumption, was to get away from attempts to collect taxes on the feed that would be going into productive usage of the use of Canadians. There are a number of procedures that would be almost mind boggling if we were going to try to figure out how these taxes would be collected if feed were to be taxed. You trade feed between farms, you raise it on your farm, you tax yourself for feed that you raise for your own uses and that of your own animals. The Government decided not to try to impose a tax on these kinds of feeds.

If the Government's intention was not to impose tax on the productive sectors of society and thus reduce its productivity, should have included, as this amendment does, people who must use guide dogs in order to contribute to society. People who are blind have to use guide dogs, most of them. There is no sense of consistency here if we are going to start taxing the feed for guide dogs. As well, it makes no sense to be taxing people who have to use horses to make their living, whether they are logging or working cattle in a live stockyard, as some people do. The tax on production there makes no sense either.

So we think the amendment is consistent with what the Government originally had intended, and I am sure that is why Your Honour recommended that it was a proper amendment. I simply hope that the government Members will support this amendment as well, because it is consistent with what I think is a very good approach in the Bill.

S.O. 22

[Translation]

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, I simply want to make a few comments on the proposed change. The purpose of Motion No. 19 is to exempt feeds and feed supplements for the guide dogs trained to help many Canadians to live a normal life and be able to get out of their houses.

I believe that it would be completely fair and justifiable to show some understanding and sympathy for those people and to exempt from the tax not only the feeds, but also the additions to the feeds for the dogs which contribute to the safety and welfare of Canadians suffering from a visual incapacity, blindness or some other problem requiring the assistance of a guide dog.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this proposal is completely fair and reasonable and deserves our support.

**Mr. Pierre H. Vincent (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker—

[English]

**Mr. Speaker:** It now being one o'clock, I do now leave the Chair until two o'clock p.m.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

#### AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

### STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 22

[English]

#### ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

##### DISCOVERY OF DIOXIN IN WINDSOR WATER SUPPLY

**Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday we heard the very disturbing news of dioxin being found in the drinking water of the city of Windsor and three other Ontario communities. Today we have heard reports of a Health and Welfare study showing dioxin in the blood of Canadians in all parts of the country. Today as well, we have the report of the Joint Task Force on the toxic chemicals in the St. Clair River, a report which does not give clear and reassuring answers to the concerns of Canadians about toxic chemicals in the St. Clair River or the finding of dioxin in the drinking water of the people of the Windsor area. There is evidence that, over the long term, even small amounts of dioxin in water can have an adverse cumulative effect on health.

Yesterday in the House, the Minister of the Environment (Mr. McMillan), commenting on the presence of dioxin in southwestern Ontario's water supply, said that the quantity of substance found is minute, sporadic, and not harmful.