

Summary of Speech

- The Goods and Services Tax may not be popular but it is necessary -- honest Albertans will recognize that this is the best way to change a system which now does serious damage to Alberta and Canada. P.1.
- It is always difficult to replace a hidden tax with a tax you can see. The present sales tax is well hidden. Many Albertans honestly believe they pay no sales tax now. In fact, the Manufacturers Sales Tax (MST) took over \$1.3 billion from Alberta in 1988, \$600 for every man, woman and child in the province. P.1.
- Previous government commissions didn't like it (the MST) because it's a hidden tax on Canadian exports. They didn't like it because it's a tax which subsidizes foreign industry trying to compete against Canadians in Canada. They didn't like it because it is a tax full of loopholes which cause you, and cause me to pay higher taxes elsewhere. P.3.
- The Goods and Services Tax is a replacement tax, not a new tax. It replaces a tax which punishes our exporters with one that puts our exporters on an even playing field with their foreign competition. It replaces a tax which rewards foreigners trying to get into our market with a tax which removes their unfair advantage. It replaces a tax full of loopholes with a tax which will be shared equitably and fairly across the economy and across the country. P.5.
- As a government we believe it is fundamentally irresponsible and unfair to ask our citizens to bear the cost of economic renewal if the government itself is unwilling to bear its full share to the burden. P.6.
- Fact one. In 1984, the Government spent \$16 billion more on government programs than we had coming in the door in revenue. This year we will be bringing in \$9 billion more than we spend. P.6.
- Fact two. The cost of operating the government is actually 10 per cent lower today than it was 5 years ago.
- Fact three. We've chopped the size of the civil service by 12,000 over the last 5 years.
- Fact four. Expenditures on government programs have fallen. By 1993 they will be at the level of the late 1960's. P.7.
- Fact five. Only Alberta has matched our record of controlling program expenditures.
- Fact six. We've sold off or dissolved 18 Crown corporations.
- Fact seven. We have done all this at a time when new initiatives have been required in areas such as the environment, in support for East Coast fisheries, and in support for the ravaged farmers of Western Canada - who received in 1988 alone the equivalent of \$30,000 per farmer in federal support.