

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough West): Mr. Speaker, I have just returned from a GST-related fact-finding tour of southern Alberta and Saskatchewan in my capacity as Official Opposition critic for revenue. I met with western Canadians in 17 communities ranging from cities the size of Calgary to towns like Turtleford, Saskatchewan.

• (1410)

I spoke with them on radio talk shows, on the streets, in town halls and in malls. I met with mayors and other local politicians.

I wish to advise the House of three basic facts which I confirmed on my visit. First, western Canadians are overwhelmingly opposed to the GST.

Second, western Canadians are overwhelmingly opposed to the imposition of the tax on January 1, in the face of the clear need to rectify many obvious flaws in the proposed legislation.

Third, western Canadians are overwhelmingly in support of the Liberal senators' fight to defeat or delay the imposition of a tax they view as being forced on them by what many describe as the Mulroney dictatorship.

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[Translation]

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, in Quebec we often talk about regional development, and since September 1984, in conjunction with our economic partners in Abitibi, we have managed to get six Community Futures Committees from the Conservative Government.

I have always said to my constituents that these committees provide the perfect vehicle for consultation. The PQ member for Rouyn-Noranda, Mr. Rémy Trudel, who ran as an NDP candidate in Témiscamingue in the last federal election in 1988, agreed not long ago that federal CFC was "the ideal formula for consultation" and "a genuine socio-economic summit".

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Mr. Speaker, every community in Abitibi will draw on its strengths to start developing new industries and diversify its economy.

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LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY

Mrs. Gabrielle Bertrand (Brome—Missisquoi): Mr. Speaker, in the December 12 edition of *La Presse*, journalist Mario Fontaine reported, and I quote: "When Jean Chrétien appears before the Bélanger-Campeau Commission, he will try to play down his federalist image". The journalist went on to say that the atmosphere at Liberal Party headquarters was very tense.

Along the same lines, backroom adviser Senator Rizuto said that Mr. Chrétien would be very flexible and indicate that he was receptive to Quebec's aspirations.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether to laugh or to cry. What kind of credibility can Quebecers expect from a man who obeyed his mentor, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, and condemned the Meech Lake Accord, a man who stated that "Canada is not negotiable", a man whose wonderful promises made in 1980 were soon forgotten in 1982, a man who convinced western Canadians he would put Quebec in its place?

I am sure there are many people who, like me, are waiting for December 21 to hear the Chrétien creed, new style, adapted to its audience and to the circumstances.

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[English]

CORPORATE TAXATION

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, this week's nominees for the corporate welfare bum of the week award are: Prairie Oil Royalties Company, which had a profit of \$5.1 million in 1989, a bonus of \$1.6 million in tax credits, and no taxes paid.

Some hon. members: Shame.

Mr. Rodriguez: Ranger Oil, with \$32.6 million U.S. in profits in 1989, \$3 million U.S. in government hand-outs and no taxes paid.

Some hon. members: Shame.