

Government Orders

There are a number of other things in this bill. It says that it establishes a detailed framework for administration agreements dealing with all types of taxation. Oh, oh. This says an awful lot, but we are not quite sure. Does this mean there are going to be more tax points transferred to the provinces? Is that what that means? I do not know. If it means that, then it means the dismantling of the power from the centre to the provinces, which is not something my party really believes in at this time, especially when it comes to health care and post-secondary education.

Mr. Edmonston: Except for Quebec.

Mrs. Marleau: My colleague to the left here is saying except for Quebec. I disagree very strongly, but we will not get into that debate now.

There are designs to the tax system in this bill that would facilitate the collection and administration of taxes from both the government's and the taxpayers' perspectives. Is that to facilitate the collection of taxes at the border or is that to facilitate the harmonization of the GST and the provincial sales tax? It could well be, but we are not sure because it does not mention which taxes it would like to harmonize. We know the government wants to harmonize the GST.

Was this also negotiated with the provincial premiers? Has there somehow been a secret deal with some of these premiers that they would harmonize the GST. I wonder if the Premier of Ontario has agreed to the harmonization of the GST and the PST? The people of Ontario would really like to know whether that is really what this is about.

Mr. McDermid: The people of Ontario would like to see it so there is only one tax.

Mrs. Marleau: I have no idea whether the people of Ontario would like to see it. One of the things I do know is that the people of Ontario would like to know what kind of deal this government has cooked up behind closed doors on that.

Is that what this legislation is about? Are we going to see harmonization very, very quickly of our GST-PST system? That is one thing that leaves me to speculate.

The government is in a very big hurry to pass this bill. Perhaps it is necessary because it tells us that the end of the original agreement on the Established Programs Financing and on the transfer and equalization payments is in view.

We must give very serious consideration to the ramifications of this bill to make sure that we are protecting those areas which we, as Canadians, hold very near and dear.

There are very few areas now that we as Canadians can still feel very proud of. One of them is our health care system. We are still proud of it, despite some of the deficiencies that may or may not appear from time to time. It is still the best in the world.

I would hope that this legislation would not detract from it or deter from it. I would hope that all national standards be applied at all times and that a Canadian, whether he is born in Newfoundland, British Columbia, northern Ontario or Quebec would have access to the same kind of medical care no matter what his income, no matter what his position in life. I think it is very important that we ensure this.

I want to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for being very generous and allowing me to speak for as long as I have. Before I sit down, I would like to say that I have received a note from the people in my party. Yes, we do agree to having this bill sent to the finance committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Before I recognize the hon. member for Chambly, I believe there is unanimous agreement for the motion of the Minister of State for Finance.

Motion agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Debate will therefore resume on the motion for second reading of Bill C-60 and reference to the Standing Committee on Finance.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Mr. Speaker, before commenting on the motion moved by the Minister of State (Finance and Privatization), I would like to outline very briefly what Bill C-60 proposes to do.

Bill C-60 is about equalization, but it is also about the harmonization of provincial and federal taxes, which is