

*Government Orders*

In response, I think this government has no sense of where it is going. It rules from the centre. It rules for the centre and rules to where the numbers are at. That means that if you can withdraw fiscal support to create a level playing field in places like Atlantic Canada, so be it. If it means that you can pit one part of Canada, east against west, you do it because all the Conservatives are concerned about is pleasing their buddies down on Bay Street and they do not know the first thing about national unity or the role that national infrastructure like railways, ports and small craft harbours play in keeping this great country together.

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands):** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have an opportunity to participate in this debate today because I noticed the President of the Treasury Board on his hind legs this morning telling us about the virtues of Bill C-91. I thought that it was appropriate to indicate some of the disasters.

I note that the bill is an act to amend the Financial Administration Act. Really, for this government to introduce a bill that has to do with good administration was an incredible sight. We had the minister standing there telling us how much more efficient this bill was going to make the government. Well, anything would be an improvement. There is no doubt about that. I have grave doubts though. When the minister talks about efficiency, he talks about nothing more than gouging and screwing tax dollars out of Canadians, which this government has shown itself to be so good at.

**Mr. Worthy:** Be positive. Don't be so mean spirited.

**Mr. Milliken:** The parliamentary secretary suggests that perhaps I am being mean spirited. I suggest that is not the case. The minister beamed and smiled his way through his presentation. He did very well, considering the material he had to work with. I suggest that what we have to do with this bill is have a good long look at it and look at the very bad administration that Canadians have been treated to under this government.

I want to turn to the supplementary estimates which the minister tabled the other day because I think they reveal something of the ability of this government to administer—

**Mr. Sobeski:** Is this a point of privilege or debate?

**Mr. Milliken:** If the hon. member listens for a moment, I think he will enjoy these comments. Page 32 of the supplementary estimates has some of the costs of the goods and services tax which this government is applying to Canadians. It is establishing a goods and services tax consumer information office. If you do a little arithmetic, Mr. Speaker, not complicated, a little arithmetic, you can see that they are hiring 20 new people, 20 person years are authorized. If you divide that into the amount of money for personnel that is shown in the estimates you get an average salary of \$54,150 per annum for those individuals. That sounds a little high, but I will come back to that.

If we turn to page 84 the hon. member will see that in the Department of National Revenue, Customs and Excise, 1,163 lucky Canadians are going to be hired as tax police to enforce the new goods and services tax at an average salary according to these estimates of \$41,490. You will notice that is down a little from the previous group that is working with the corporations.

Then if you look across the page you will see in the Taxation Division of National Revenue they are preparing and planning for pre-payment of the tax credits. In other words, this is the group that hands the money out to Canadians that we are all supposed to be so thankful for. The average salary of the 642 people being hired in that department is \$33,124. Why would it be so much lower for the individuals who are going to pay out the revenue to Canadians, the great bonanza that they are getting back, than for the ones who are going to gouge and screw the tax out of Canadians? I know why. The government is more interested in getting the money than it is in paying it out. Why pay someone a lot of money to give money back to Canadians? Pay it to get it out of them. That is the priority of this government. That is what it means about better administration under the Financial Administration Act.

• (1840)

If that is not enough to convince the hon. member, he can turn to page 100 of the estimates. There we have the people who are actually going to send the cheques. "Preparation and planning for the prepayment of the GST credit to taxpayers", that is the people who actually write the cheques, I presume, in the Supply and Services Department, since that is where cheques are issued. The average salary there is the lowest yet. They are expecting to hire 45 people for this work at an average salary of