

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**GOODS AND SERVICES TAX**

**Mr. Jerry Pickard (Essex—Kent):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

The GST advertising campaign is extremely confusing and misleading to Canadians. Since last fall the government has embarked on an \$11 million advertising campaign, a campaign that has been filled with inaccurate and incorrect information because of change after change.

Now, new brochures, and millions more must be spent, to attempt to correct the information already sent out to the Canadian public.

How much more money is being spent on this advertising propaganda program?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I take exception to the description the hon. member uses.

I have received a lot of very good comments from people—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** —who have received the most recent tabloid which responds to specific questions, questions that we have monitored on the phone lines, the 1-800 numbers. We have had somewhere around 250,000 to 300,000 calls.

We have taken the calls that have come from those 1-800 numbers and put the answers to the questions these Canadians have asked us in a tabloid which cost, I think, less than 10 cents a copy.

These questions respond specifically to what Canadians are interested in knowing, information that they have been asking for about the goods and services tax.

**Mr. Jerry Pickard (Essex—Kent):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister.

The tax went from 9 per cent to 7 per cent. There has been a total change in small business advertising.

Will the minister promise that they will get their act together here today, stop wasting money on propaganda campaigns, inform the Canadian people properly or take the tax back?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I do not understand the language that the hon. member has used.

The tabloid that we have just sent around to some 10 million Canadian homes responds specifically to questions that have been asked of us again and again through the 1-800 number, the information number. The responses that have been given are straight, direct responses. They are not propaganda in any form. They are specific responses to questions that have been asked by 250,000 Canadians.

The responses that I have had as a result of this tabloid have been very good. People have said: "That is exactly the information that we want to hear about the goods and services tax".

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**FUR INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture.

Yesterday when the Deputy Minister of Agriculture appeared before the agriculture committee, he informed us that the fur component in the \$500 million Supplementary Estimate is to be aimed at fur farmers and that fur trappers will not qualify for assistance to counteract the 50 per cent decline in fur prices due in part to the European boycott.

Will the minister reconsider this decision and include trappers who have also suffered from the price decline and have traps, vehicles, cabins and other equipment to pay for and maintain, as well as families to support?

**Mr. McDermid:** Why not talk to Greenpeace? They ruined the bloody trade.

**Mr. McKnight:** Are you supporting sealing now?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that this assistance package is one that was designed with the help and support of the provincial governments. It was in that context that the program was put together.

The funds will be distributed by the provinces. They are closest to the scene and in the best position to design the program in the most effective way so that it is targeted to the area that is in most need.