

*Routine Proceedings*

in terms of who is playing around with the rules of the House, he should keep that in mind.

I have two quick points. We are interested in debating the goods and services tax with the people of Canada in the regions and that is why we challenged the front benches of the Conservative Party to debate this in Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland and so on, but so far we have been unable to arrange, I think with one exception, any debates.

I am prepared, on behalf of the New Democratic Party, to permit the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier to put his request for an emergency debate today. I am not certain what it is, but just having faith that whatever issue my hon. colleague would want to put before the Chair in terms of a request for an emergency debate would be a serious one, I am prepared to offer, on behalf of the New Democratic Party, our unanimous consent to allow him to be able to put that at this point.

**Mr. Hawkes:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, if the NDP are saying that they are seeking unanimous consent of the House to withdraw the motion and if they are further saying that they have no intention of any further dilatory tactics for the balance of today, then the government would be prepared to give the unanimous consent for the withdrawal of the motion.

But if we are simply trading one dilatory tactic for another and then we are going to follow with another, if they are still on the path of trying to stifle debate in this chamber about the GST then, of course, there is no way that the government will give unanimous consent for them to withdraw their motion. This is a chamber for free and open debate.

Freedom of speech is the most fundamental principle governing this place and they are attempting to cut off debate. They have been doing it since we came back in January on every conceivable occasion in every conceivable way. We take our responsibilities seriously. If they do not want debate tell us clearly, do not run to the media and say they want it when in fact their behaviour in this chamber says they do not. If they want debate we will have debate, if they do not want debate tell us and we will move closure. We will get to that stage of proceedings where debate will occur because it is under closure. If that is the only way to get debate in this

chamber, Mr. Speaker, we are prepared to act in that manner.

**Mr. Speaker:** This is going beyond a point of order into debate about other matters. I have moved the first report of the Standing Committee on Finance be concurred in. I will hear the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville.

**Mr. Nystrom:** Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to say that I think this House should agree and concur in the report of the finance committee which was issued on June 22 last year. The reason I say that is because it was one of those rare occasions when all three political parties, the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party were in accord. The interest rates at that time, mainly back last April, May and June, were too high, they were hurting this country and the Governor of the Bank of Canada, John Crow, should be doing whatever was possible to reduce interest rates.

That was last June, about eight months ago. The bank rate is even higher today than it was at the time we were considering its impact on monetary policy in this country. Mr. Speaker, I am sure that you as a westerner who depends on exports of your commodities from Alberta like we do from Saskatchewan, was shocked last Thursday when the Bank of Canada once again raised the bank rate by 30 basis points to 12.59 per cent. That is at the highest level since about April last year. We are right back in the position now where we were eight or nine months ago, perhaps even a bit higher in terms of the bank rate.

I felt I had to do this today for a couple of reasons. First of all, I am shocked at what the government whip said when he talked about a waste of money. If there is any debate that is important in this country now it is the high interest rate policy of the Bank of Canada, which is wasting a lot of money in terms of interest and the national debt, and wasting a lot of money in terms of what ordinary Canadians pay on their bank loans, what small business people pay on their loans, farmers and fishermen, consumers right across the board.

Talk about wasting money. That is an issue Parliament should be dealing with and dealing with promptly, particularly when all three political parties on the finance committee are saying the same thing. A tight money policy by the Bank of Canada, a tight money policy by the Minister of Finance is hurting this country. It is sending this country into a recession. It is creating