

Oral Questions

purpose of this Chamber. Their games played here belong in Romper Room. The New Democratic Party has demonstrated again that they have made a complete farce of their own principles.

It is a known fact that the big winners of the GST are low and modest income Canadians and the biggest losers are the rich. What a shameful demonstration by Wonder Woman and her romper room brats.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: In the event that a similar statement is made by any hon. member, I just want to give notice that the last comment was pretty clearly directed at an individual, and I know that hon. members would know that that is not acceptable in this House.

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CHILD POVERTY

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Institute of Child Health released a report on the health of Canadian children today that is a national tragedy. This report found that our children are at the bottom of the priority list of both the federal and provincial governments. Without the political will for immediate action our children will continue to suffer.

Figures show the death rates for poor children are 56 per cent higher than those for higher-income children. Native infant mortality rates are twice the national rate. The economic level of families can determine the health of our children.

Poverty does not mean that a child will necessarily have health problems, but poverty does mean children in poor families are at greater risk of illness and death. Poverty often means a child plays on the street or comes home to an empty house because parents cannot afford adequate child care.

The Tories, by shelving a national child care program, have done nothing to reduce the risk. The Tories have ignored this risk. The Tories have failed our children. Canadians must demand that we increase the value we place on the well-being of our children. It is their right and it is an investment in the future of our country. I support the Canadian Institute of Child Health's recom-

mendation and call on this government to create a national child health policy.

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[*Translation*]

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr. Charles A. Langlois (Manicouagan): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce has given us, as government members, and the Canadian people a very clear message: cut federal spending.

Mr. Speaker, the deficit is eating into the government's financial resources, threatening the very existence of our social programs, and exerting enormous pressure on the Canadian economy by depriving it of the capital needed to ensure the smooth operation of this country's businesses.

The solutions are difficult but obvious: a three-year freeze on government operating expenditures; saving programs which contribute to economic growth and provide for the security of the various classes; and further substantial cuts in the public service.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

PROPOSED GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. It concerns the economic rationale of his new goods and services tax. Everyone, even his Minister of Finance, is predicting that the country is now entering a period of slow growth. The Prime Minister chooses now to introduce a massive new sales tax. The Prime Minister says that he will not bring interest rates down because he has to fight inflation. Indeed, the bank rate went up again this morning. At the same time the Prime Minister is introducing a brand new sales tax.

The Prime Minister claimed this week in the House of Commons that he is committed to the less favoured regions of the country, yet he introduces a brand new sales tax which will hurt and inflict the most hardship on the regions of the country.

If he is so concerned about inflationary pressures, if he is so concerned about slower economic growth, if he is so