

percentage points less as a per cent of their income than people in upper income brackets. That is why we say the GST is a fairer tax.

If he wants to talk about people being clobbered by sales tax, they were clobbered by sales tax when he was in the government.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, there would be no tax on haircuts without the GST, there would be no tax on muffins, there would be no tax on popcorn, and there would be no tax on funerals. No wonder the government's funeral is being brought about by this GST.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, according to the Supplementary Estimates, the government intends to waste another \$14 million on a propaganda campaign for its own GST. I want to ask the minister why his government wishes to undermine the freedom of thought of Canadians by taxing books, when it has no scruples about promoting its own GST and does so without regard for the cost to Canadians.

[*English*]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, it is no surprise that the Leader of the Opposition is using these questions as a diversion from what is going on in Canada today.

There is a poll of Canadians done by Angus-Reid which said that respondents do not believe Liberal Leader Jean Chrétien's promise to kill the tax if his party forms the next government. Sixty per cent of Canadians do not believe the Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada. Sixty per cent of Canadians say if he comes in—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Mr. Speaker, 70 per cent believe that we are going to have this GST in place, so they believe what we are saying.

We are committed to the GST, but for good reasons. We are committed to the GST because it is going to help our exporters. It is going to put Canadian companies on a level playing-field with imports when imports now pay one-third less tax. It will result in a reduction of the cost of new investment of 4 per cent for all of Canada and, for those provinces that harmonize, 7.5 per cent.

Oral Questions

There are good, solid economic reasons why we are bringing in this tax, in addition to the fairness that the GST credit will bring to low-income Canadians. Those are the reasons why we are going to bring in this tax.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

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PERSIAN GULF

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, last month the House passed a motion on the gulf crisis condemning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and affirming Canada's support of the UN approved multinational military effort enforcing sanctions against Iraq. At the time, the Secretary of State confirmed to us in correspondence that the government agreed to bring Parliament into debate on any change in our countries involvement in the gulf.

The government benches are quite empty today, but I wonder if a minister in the name of the government will immediately guarantee that parliamentarians will have the opportunity to debate the present gulf situation before Canada votes on a new resolution this week?

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, this Parliament has had an opportunity to debate the gulf situation and, of course, the opposition can always bring forward a motion for a debate on the gulf situation any time it wishes.

With respect to any other debate on the gulf situation, I will pass on to the Secretary of State for External Affairs the member's suggestion. He will announce on behalf of the government whether or not that is a request that can or should be acceded to later in the week.

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, Canada holds the position at the UN Security Council of vice-chair of the Gulf Sanctions Committee.

In order that Parliament could have a debate, and in order that parliamentarians and the Canadian public can evaluate the effect of sanctions, will the government immediately provide the House the fullest possible documentation concerning the history and effectiveness of the Iraqi sanctions to date?

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.