

Today I am the only member in the country to disclose my privileged and budgetary spending. My constituents are very proud of my decision, and there is no reason why hon. members should not opt for voluntary disclosure.

* * *

[English]

TAXATION

Mr. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Revenue says that there are \$8 billion in unpaid taxes. If he is so sure, why has he been so negligent in their collection? After seven years of tolerating this delinquency he will now leave no stone unturned to get what is owing.

What has he been doing all of this time? Why is he establishing a target of only \$160 million for collection? Perhaps he is not giving the real picture.

Last year the government was able to make good its claim on only 47 per cent of taxes under appeal. Delinquency was not a factor in those claims. Thirty-eight per cent of all claims adjudicated went completely against the department.

What the minister really wants is money up front for claims in dispute, knowing full well that most of that money will have to be returned to the taxpayer.

Let him instead go after the non-filers and freeloaders his negligence has created. While he is at it he should also make his department more responsive to small manufacturing retailers like St. Germain Framing that has been waiting for six months for a GST rebate application on its inventory. In its case the department's sluggishness is causing a double taxation and a restriction of cash flow.

Perhaps the minister should stop talking and start doing.

* * *

THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. Ken James (Sarnia—Lambton): Mr. Speaker, in my riding of Sarnia—Lambton there has been a great deal of interest generated over the federal government's constitutional proposals: *Shaping Canada's Future Together*.

S. O. 31

For example, I have expressed my support for a constituent assembly spearheaded by local constituents and involving participation from various segments of our community.

All members of the House will be pleased to know that the Sarnia—Lambton constituent assembly is now up and running and will be holding a number of group discussions in ensuing weeks. As well it will be holding information booth sessions in the malls throughout our area. It will give citizens in Sarnia—Lambton a chance to offer suggestions and solutions to our constitutional challenges.

I plan on making the constituent assembly's report known to the constitutional committee and hopefully to all of Parliament. I feel it is incumbent upon all members of Parliament to encourage this kind of group discussion in their ridings.

This is an opportunity for Canadians to participate. This opportunity must be promoted and supported by all members of Parliament.

* * *

THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. Bob Wood (Nipissing): Mr. Speaker, in line with my colleague who just spoke, last week I had not only the privilege but the duty of hosting several constitutional forums in my riding of Nipissing.

The forums were held to solicit the opinions of my constituents on a wide range of constitutional issues and to seek possible solutions to the difficulties confronting our country.

There were several points that emerged from these hearings. Canadians are very patriotic and optimistic people who believe that we can solve our problems together. They want a united country with a strong, federal presence and they are growing increasingly cynical of political machinery that spends millions of dollars travelling the country only to intimidate the people we most need to hear from, the average citizen.

In organizing and hosting these forums my role was to facilitate dialogue in a cost effective way. I was not there to argue or debate the views of my constituents. I was there to listen. For our system of democracy to function as effectively as it can we must know the wishes of the people we represent before we can speak on their behalf.