

crop rotation, stripe cropping and conservation tillage. These are all essential for sustainable agriculture.

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[English]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, did you know it is the policy of the Conservative government to apply the goods and services tax to medals won by Canadian athletes competing outside of Canada?

A case in point: a constituent of mine from the Leander Boat Club in Hamilton coached his rowing crew to an impressive fourth place finish at the Head of the Charles regatta in Boston. The team members did not receive their medals at the regatta. They were subsequently shipped to Hamilton. Do you know what happened? Customs Canada sent an invoice for the GST due on the awards.

The constituent wrote to the Department of National Revenue asking for an explanation, but the department did not even have the courtesy to write him back a letter. The government spends millions of dollars telling Canadians how to pay the GST, but all this constituent of mine got was a scribbled note on the bottom of his own letter: "Awards duty free, but pay the GST."

While it is the policy of the government to charge GST for bronze medals, it is not for the gold medal. The same constituent ran into Brian Boitano at a reception and asked whether he paid for his gold figure skating medal. Boitano, was amused and said: "Of course not".

The medal winning Minister of National Revenue knows well the spirit of competition. I say to him: Do a favour to our athletes and not tax them for their awards.

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FRASER RIVER

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, the mighty Fraser River in British Columbia is one of the busiest waterways in Canada. It is used for fishing, shipping, boating and by the forest industry for its mills and booming grounds.

There is multiple use and multiple responsibility. Those who live and work on the river depend on each other to assume that responsibility.

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Because the Council of Forest Industries and the federal and provincial governments benefit from the forestry's use of the river, all three have committed funds to a debris control board.

The board clears 75,000 cubic metres of wood waste from the Fraser River and another 75,000 cubic metres from the Strait of Georgia every year. Without this work, fishing boats, pleasure craft, float planes, bridges, docks and houseboats would be at risk.

As of April 1, the federal forestry and fisheries departments have both eliminated their \$45,000 share of the annual cost of debris control board.

No one seems to be able to explain why. No one seems to be prepared to tell the users of the Fraser, especially the fishing fleet, why these federal departments have abandoned their share of the responsibility for an inexpensive cost-effective program that potentially saves millions.

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[Translation]

TRADE

Mr. Nic Leblanc (Longueuil): Mr. Speaker, those who have business experience know that trade today is international.

Quebec's business people know that very well.

That is why they massively supported the Free Trade Agreement with the United States.

These days, we have the honour to receive the President of Mexico and on behalf of the business people of Quebec, I wish to welcome him.

I also want to tell him that we Quebecers strongly desire developing our trade relations with Mexico in a harmonious way.

At the present time, the success of this initiative depends, for now, on the federal government.

That is why, as a member from Quebec, I intend to be vigilant.

Quebec's present and future interests are at stake and we must ensure that the federal government discharges its responsibilities to Quebecers.