

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS

EIGHTEENTH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the Eighteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections concerning Private Members' Business.

[Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.]

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PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, it is my duty to present to the House a petition signed by 25 Canadian citizens who wish to express their objections to the goods and services tax, especially as it applies to books and magazines.

Mr. Speaker, your petitioners maintain that free distribution of printed matter constitutes the cornerstone of our democracy, our culture and our educational system. Your petitioners claim that an educated and productive society will suffer as a result of this tax.

Your petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to re-emphasize the underlying principles of exempting printed matter and to provide for such exemption in the GST bill and regulations.

Mr. Speaker, these people are right. The government should listen and realize that taxing publications means putting a tax on reading.

[English]

Mr. Bob Speller (Haldimand—Norfolk): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present the first of a number of petitions that were signed by people at the Norfolk County Fair.

These petitioners are asking and calling upon this government to reject the goods and services tax.

This petition has been certified by the clerk of petitions.

Mr. Joe Fontana (London East): Mr. Speaker, it is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present a petition to Parliament from hundreds of petitioners from

across the country, including Montreal, Mississauga, and Ottawa, pleading with this government to reaffirm the historic principles embodied in the tax-free status of the printed word by retaining the zero rate in the GST legislation and regulations.

In other words, do not tax books and do not tax education, so that our young people can, in fact, learn to read and contribute to our society. Imposing the GST on books and reading material will not do that.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to present a petition, pursuant to Standing Order 36, on behalf of a number of constituents from Kamloops.

The petitioners point out that the government plans to tax religious reading materials, that is, periodicals and books of a religious nature. This would make Canada the only country in the world that taxes religious books. These petitioners are asking that the government stop taxing religious literature of all kinds, by repealing the goods and services tax.

Mr. Speaker, I have a more general petition, on another matter, again from petitioners from Kamloops, British Columbia, who are concerned in regard to the government's continued decision to go ahead with the goods and services tax.

The petitioners point out that with winter coming on, the additional tax on home heating fuels will add a serious burden to northerners, which means Canadians, generally, with the exception I suppose, of the greater Vancouver area. The fact that we all have to buy more heating fuel will mean more money being paid out through the GST and this is an unfair burden. These petitioners ask the government to simply drop the GST.

REQUEST FOR MINIMUM TAX

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I rise under Standing Order 36, to present a number of petitions regarding taxes.

The first petition is from workers in the area of Mission—Coquitlam who have found that the tax burden on average families is roughly \$1,000 greater now than it was in 1984. They call on the government to establish a minimum tax on profitable corporations and to ensure that the burden of tax is more fairly spread among individual and corporate taxpayers.