

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

CANADIAN NATIONAL PENSION PLAN

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of tabling a petition signed by hundreds of pensioners and organized by the CN Pensioners Association. Mr. Speaker, your petitioners say that a parliamentary sub-committee representing all parties was formed by an order of this House on April 17, 1985, to examine the various aspects of the Canadian National Pension Plan.

Mr. Speaker, your petitioners call upon Parliament to table a bill ordering Canadian National Railways to implement immediately all the committee's recommendations on pensions.

[English]

VIA RAIL

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I have a second petition which points out that whereas the railway passenger service in Canada has been carried on by VIA Rail, it is essential for many Canadians, and has been a part of Canada for more than 100 years, it notes the savage cuts of the Conservative government in funding for VIA Rail.

It points out that this could result in a serious erosion in national passenger railway service in this country. Therefore, it calls upon Parliament to maintain the existing VIA network, upgrade VIA equipment and guarantee VIA sufficient support to carry out its mandate to provide passenger service.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present one of the hundreds of petitions that I have received from constituents in the city of Vancouver, as well as from the municipality of Burnaby, concerning the Minister of Finance's proposed goods and services tax.

They point out that it is an unfair and regressive form of taxation because of its lack of regard for taxpayers' ability to pay. It points out that the government is now trying to tax reading, haircuts, diapers, coffins and home heating fuels.

The petitioners urge the government to reject the current proposal for a goods and services tax and to reform the taxation system in this country so there is an effective minimum tax on wealthy individuals and corporations, and a truly progressive system rather than this destructive and regressive goods and services tax.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and present a petition signed by numerous residents of the Toronto area in the province of Ontario.

These petitioners call upon Parliament to reject the goods and services tax in so far as it applies to books, newspapers, magazines and periodicals.

The thing that surprises me, if I may say so, is that no members on the other side of the House from the Toronto area rise to present such petitions. One can only assume that their constituents are appalled at their support of this tax and are delivering the petitions to us to file in this House because of the failure of their members to stand up and reject this tax.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, it is my duty today to table a petition signed by several Canadians. It deals with the important subject of books, magazines, newspapers and this government's plan to introduce a tax on magazines, books and newspapers. This is a tax on learning.

Literacy is the cornerstone of democracy, culture, and education. The productive end of all this is that we have a better educated population. It is wrong, in view of these petitioners, to tax Canadians on their books, magazines and newspapers.

• (1530)

[Translation]

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, today, I have the honour of tabling a petition concerning the GST on books, periodicals and newspapers. I think it is shocking that this government does not support education, literature, libraries, reading, heritage languages and, both official languages, and discourages people from learning more by cutting the public's available income by 7 per cent, as a result, of the GST.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by a number of Canadians.