

*Routine Proceedings*

I know my colleagues from Ontario appreciate that and agree with everything I am saying, in particular, my colleague from Hamilton East. There really ought not to be a distinction.

**Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East):** I rise on a petition but I want to state on the point of order that I am sure that the Speaker did not mean to reflect in any way negatively on members of the Ontario legislature when he made his comments. I am sure he recognizes that members of Parliament, whether they are elected federally or provincially, respect decorum and respect the rules of the House. I am sure that he would want to reflect on the intemperance of the statements made about the Ontario legislature.

That being said, Mr. Speaker, this is not a petition on the CBC cutbacks even though the government has viciously closed the one person bureau of the CBC in the city of Hamilton.

It is in fact a petition on the GST as it relates to beer. In the holiday season, I am sure Mr. Speaker, that my colleague, the member for Annapolis Valley—Hants will probably want to second this petition, the reason being that the petition of the undersigned residents avail themselves of their ancient and undoubted right to present a grievance common. The Prime Minister and the Conservative government have ignored the wishes of the people and are imposing the goods and services tax. This is the important point, Mr. Speaker. The finance minister promised that the removal of the manufacturers' sales tax and the implementation of the GST would make Canadian industry more competitive and then, in the same breath, raised the excise tax on beer by 45 per cent to make up for lost federal revenues. This excise tax on beer displays disdain for small businesses that employ many people and have been taxed beyond reasonable limits. They will have to pass this tax increase along to customers and cut the number of employees.

• (1600)

Therefore we the undersigned humbly call upon Parliament to cancel the 45 per cent increase in excise tax on beer, which is designed only to recoup lost revenues as a direct result of the implementation of the unfair, regressive and crippling goods and services tax.

This is signed by more than 800 residents of the great riding of Hamilton East. It will be followed by many more thousands of signatures which I will personally be collecting over the holiday season.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The hon. member for Hamilton West.

**Mr. Nunziata:** From Hamilton to Hamilton.

**Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West):** Mr. Speaker, Hamilton is well represented in the House. My friend from York South—Weston may be surprised to learn the world does not rotate around Toronto.

I have the duty, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to represent a group of constituents from the Toronto area, seeing as they need people from Hamilton to support them.

The Government of Canada saw fit since Confederation and without hiatus to apply a zero rate of tax to magazines, books, and newspapers, et cetera. Since it is now including them in the GST, these petitioners from Toronto, Willowdale, and Arnprior are crying out to this government to reaffirm the historic principles embodied in the tax-free status for the printed word by retaining the zero rate in the GST legislation and regulations.

**Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston):** Mr. Speaker, I too would like to take this opportunity to present a petition. I would like to read the recitals; there are just a couple of them.

The Prime Minister and the Conservative government have ignored the wishes of the people of Canada and are prepared to implement the unfair and regressive goods and services tax. As we know it is now implemented and is law.

The finance minister has promised in the past that the removal of the manufacturers' sales tax and the implementation of the goods and services tax would make Canadian industry more competitive. Then he suggested raising the excise tax on beer by 45 per cent to make up for the lost revenues.

The petitioners in this particular petition ask the Government of Canada to cancel the proposed 45 per cent increase in excise tax on beer, which is designed only to recoup lost revenues as a direct result of the implementation of the unfair, regressive and crippling goods and services tax.