

Government Orders

That Bill C-20 be amended by deleting Clause 8.

He said: Mr. Speaker, talking about this manufacturers' sales tax, as has been said prior, in 1984 it was at 9 per cent and now we are trying to raise it to 13.5 per cent. It is certainly not going to help our industry to compete internationally and domestically. This is why I think it is essential that this tax be defeated. The government has not shown restraint.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I regret having to interrupt my friend but we are dealing with Motion Nos. 10 and 11. Both motions deal with the same subject, that is Clause 8, and with the proposal that the sales tax be imposed on laundry detergents at the wholesale trade level.

If I understand the purpose of both the NDP motion and motion of the hon. member from Calgary, one wants to amend laundry detergent to non-biodegradable laundry detergent and the other wants to delete the whole clause. We are speaking to both motions and I fail to see the relevancy of the remarks of the hon. member right now. That is why I am trying to get you, Mr. Speaker, to tell me if indeed relevancy is being applied.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Member just began speaking. With the first two or three sentences, I regret that I am not sure whether he is being relevant or not. If the hon. member will give him another two or three minutes, then I will naturally watch very closely.

Mr. Kindy: I think whatever raises taxes is relevant. The Minister of Finance talked about the growing public debt and said that we have to react to it and therefore increase taxes. Those taxes would be only temporary until 1991 when the goods and services tax comes into effect. The goods and services tax is certainly a major component of the Budget speech of the Minister of Finance. I would like to elaborate on that specific tax because it is part of the big scheme of raising taxes.

• (1650)

The goods and services tax is certainly inflationary. It is regressive because it punishes low-income people, and it does not pass the test of fairness. A study in the United States showed that it creates bureaucracy. As I said prior, we would have to increase by about 4,000 the number of employees at Revenue Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member just heard the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier speaking with regard to relevancy. I would hope that he would get to the cause and not just speak in generalities. This is both on his clause and on the clause of the Hon. Member for Yukon.

Mr. Kindy: Mr. Speaker, creating more of a bureaucracy is not going to help the taxpayer. It is not going to help the housewife who has to buy detergents. It certainly is a big factor in reducing government spending. Therefore, I would suggest that we should delete as a package Bill C-20 so that there would be fairness to the consumer.

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I would like first to respond to the comment about housewives who have to buy detergent and suggest to the House and to the hon. members within, particularly those of the male gender, that I believe that we have passed the day when only housewives buy detergent. I believe we have also passed the day when only men are concerned about the environment. On this point is where the hon. member who wants to delete this motion and the people on this side of the House are prepared to part company. I think it is very very important that we take this fine opportunity to set an example and to get really serious about the environment.

We have launched a study about the environment in which we are working here in the House of Commons. We have talked on all sides of the House about the environment across this country and how vitally important it is. Here we have a clause put forward by the Hon. Member for the Yukon suggesting that we only apply this tax to non-biodegradable detergents. What an excellent opportunity for us to show that we are serious about what happened in our environment.

I would like to see this apply to not only non-biodegradable detergents. It is a real pity that this clause does not allow for us to include taxation on anything that is unfriendly to the environment, but we are faced with just this amendment on non-biodegradable detergent, and I think that hon. members on the other side of the House, if they are serious about the laundry and if they are serious about the environment, would vote in favour of the amendment of the Hon. Member from the Yukon.