

*Government Orders*

hurt people going into the remote communities of this country. It certainly added an extra, unfair burden of taxation on those people and on those communities, because it was a percentage tax and because the tax was based on the higher air fare that those people had to endure. As a result, people in northern Canada, people in the remote parts of Canada were paying a much higher percentage and a much higher dollar value of tax than those in the south.

For those same arguments, I would like to support the motion put forward by my colleague, the member for Yukon. What we are trying to do with the motion that she has presented to the House today is to recognize that some taxes which are imposed on a basis of a flat percentage rate do add an unfair, unnecessary burden on people in the remote and northern areas of this country. Every time a tax is brought in which is 5 per cent, 6 per cent, 7 per cent, 8 per cent or 9 per cent across the board, what the Government of Canada does not recognize is that some people already have to pay so much more for what is a basic and cheap service in southern and more populated areas. Every time an extra one cent is added to the cost of gasoline, every time a 10 per cent tax is added on airline tickets, every time a tax is placed on long distance phone calls, what you are doing is giving a double burden, an extra burden of taxation on the people in these communities.

For that reason, as we look at this particular tax measure or as we look at other tax measures such as the notorious GST, we have to make sure that we really recognize what we are doing by passing these measures. I do not think the members on the government side recognize that. I know there are a number of members on the Conservative benches who represent communities that have been hurt by the dismantling of the northern tax benefit. Those members have not been able to get up in the House of Commons and say: Hold on, you are hurting communities in northern Alberta; you are hurting communities in northern B.C., in northern Saskatchewan, in northern Ontario, or in Atlantic Canada. But they know that that is happening and they know that their government, through its taxation policies, is hurting the very communities that they are supposed to be here representing.

It is unfortunate that from time to time government back-benchers feel that they cannot criticize their government. I applaud the government member who got up earlier today to speak in favour of our motion because it has taken that courage to speak out against his ferocious whip and the cabinet ministers of the government.

**Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt):** Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words in support of the motion presented by the hon. member for Yukon.

Let me begin by pointing out to Canadians who are watching that this is only a prelude to a government gone tax crazy. I mean, you have got to think about it. When this government came to office there was no tax on telecommunications. In the space of five years, it has tried to muzzle the people of this country by taxing their ability to communicate. This has got to be the ultimate in a government gone mad. It has let power go to its head and it seems that its sole existence is to tax, tax and tax.

Even the so-called manufacturers' sales tax, that silent killer of jobs, when this government came to office was 9 per cent and in the short period of five years it has gone up to 13.5 per cent. The only thing the government understands is to tax, tax, tax. Canadians are sick and tired of the government reaching both hands in both their pockets and their heads in some other part of the anatomy taking the hard-earned dollars out of the pockets of Canadians.

This particular tax on telecommunications is very bad in itself, but particularly so for people who reside in the northern part of our country. For example, in the Nickel Belt area there are many people in communities, primarily native communities, who have to use radio and telephones. When they have to phone the school that their children have been taken to, it is not like you or I, Mr. Speaker, picking up the telephone and phoning locally. It is a long distance call on the radio telephone. This government is going to tax that 11 per cent, moving it up one more per cent.

In fact, a study was done by the Public Interest Advocacy Centre on northern consumers and telecommunications policy. In their appearance before the regulatory body they stated: "In 1981, in connection with Bell Canada, it was found that Bell subscribers in the Northwest Territories, northern Quebec and northern Ontario spent an average between \$625 and \$650 per year on toll