

Government Orders

In response to the question, there has not been any study, nor could a study ever be done in a controlled scientific fashion to test the hypothesis whether abortion will be a valuable therapeutic procedure for psychological problem that may be related to pregnancy. But there are well established scientific and medical principles. The first principle is do no harm. Now, the Hippocratic principle is a very valuable one. What it tells us is that if we cannot prove that a treatment procedure is valuable, we have to accept that it ought not to do harm. Evidence has shown that in fact, abortion has induced psychological trauma in women. There is no proof that abortion is a valuable therapy for psychological problems.

In response to the question, even on medical grounds, we cannot allow abortion as a therapeutic procedure on just the request of a woman for psychological, emotional or economic difficulties, with all respect for the concerns of the women who truly may be in distress. But I would like to see alternative forms of therapy like counselling be provided by government and an assurance that societal help will be offered.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being 6 o'clock p.m., pursuant to an order adopted on Tuesday, November 7, 1989, the House can now move to resume and complete third reading consideration of Bill C-20, An Act to amend the Excise Tax Act and the Excise Act.

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[*English*]

EXCISE TAX ACT AND EXCISE ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Monday, October 23, consideration of the motion of Mr. Loiselle that Bill C-20, an act to amend the Excise Tax Act and Excise Act, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to participate in this debate, and I wish to do so only briefly. As you will know, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues in the Liberal caucus and I, as well as my colleague for Ottawa South, will be speaking more extensively later on this bill. We have rejected this bill and do not feel that it is in the best interest of Canadians. The member for Ottawa

South will describe in a far more eloquent way than I can how wrong this bill is for our country.

We are discussing this bill at the same time as the Prime Minister brings us his so-called tax reform. It is very important to discuss these two issues at the same time because the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance keep telling us that some of the taxes we have right now are unfair, that they are wrong. We have at present a 13.5 per cent federal excise tax. That 13.5 per cent is applied right now by the government but under existing legislation, that rate is only 12 per cent. Of course, through the motion of Ways and Means and so on, that 12 per cent has been increased to 13.5 per cent. This bill today would formally place that into effect.

What is interesting, and I am sure you will be interested in this, Mr. Speaker, is that this federal excise tax has been qualified by the Minister of Finance as being a silent killer of jobs. It was a silent killer of jobs when it was 12 per cent, so what does the government propose to do with the 12 per cent silent killer of jobs? Increase it to 13.5 per cent.

Mr. Walker: Amazing.

Mr. Boudria: Amazing indeed. Perhaps the Minister of Finance can explain this to us later. I know he is paying very close attention to my speech, I can tell from looking across the way. Later he will want to react to this and tell us how increasing a silent killer of jobs from 12 per cent to 13.5 per cent is going to make things any better. I challenge the minister to rise right now in his place. I know he will not do it. I know the Minister of Finance will not answer these questions that I am asking, otherwise he could rise immediately in his seat and discuss this with us.

Some Hon. Members: He is afraid.

Mr. Boudria: That's it, my colleagues say he is afraid and that is why he is not reacting. I know that that is the case.

To make matters worse, this silent killer of jobs which has increased now to 13.5 per cent was only 9 per cent when the Conservatives took office. The Conservatives are proposing was the appropriate rate, why did they not leave it there to start with? Why did they bring it up to 12 per cent, and by the way it took three tries to bring it there. They brought the tax from 9 per cent to 10 per cent and so on and then to 12 per cent, and today to 13.5 per cent. This is the fourth time since the Conservatives have been in power that they have increased the federal