

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### EXCISE TAX ACT AND EXCISE ACT

#### MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-20, an act to amend the Excise Tax Act and the Excise Act, as reported (without amendment) from a legislative committee, and on Motions Nos. 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 standing in the name of the hon. member for Calgary Northeast.

**Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At that time I was speaking in support of the amendments put forward by the hon. member for Calgary Northeast on Bill C-20. I had pointed out that the facts show that this government is tax crazy. I listed and enumerated, since 1984, the tax increases that the government has brought about on the people of Canada and that in fact Canadians are fed up with the way in which this government has been reaching into their pockets, left pocket, right pocket and back pockets, and taking their hard-earned money from them.

At the same time, I think Canadians are thoroughly shocked by the way in which the government treats the wealthy in this country. It seems that Michael Wilson, finance minister, once said in a speech in Montreal: "The problem with Canada is that there are too few rich people". I do not see why they seem to think of it as their mandate to try and increase the number of rich people by taking from the poor to give to the rich. This is a new version of Robin Hood.

In fact, just to give you an idea of how people feel, these are ordinary folk—who express in their own way—the way they feel about this government and taxes, I have received a couple of letters in the last week from two diverse places, one from here in Ottawa. I will read parts of the letter into the record because I think it is apropos. It is written to me and it states:

Dear Sir:

We are quite concerned as seniors of middle-income means as to the possible impact the GST and claw-back on the OAS is expected to have on our group—

We were both born and raised in a low-income and hard-working milieu. We, however, studied hard, worked hard and struggled all our lives in order to better ourselves and thus achieve a reasonable,

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comfortable life style for our children and ourselves. We planned for our retirement the best that we could on a middle-income salary. Suddenly, we find that these last two conservative governments are undermining all our efforts to ensure ourselves of a self-sufficient and decent life style.

We have corresponded with Mr. Blenkarn regarding our grave concerns—

Good luck to them.

—only to receive the attached response.

The attached response is the same offhand dismissal that Mr. Blenkarn has treated the people of Newfoundland, Alberta, British Columbia and northern Ontario to. If they are not from his income bracket, he just dismisses them. Nevertheless, this couple wrote to Mr. Blenkarn thinking that he was the chairman of the finance committee, that somehow or other he is the person you write to, or at least he might listen.

• (1510)

The letter continues:

We are neither naive nor stupid enough to believe that we are not likely to be seriously affected by the proposed GST, claw-back of the OAS and God only knows what else this government may be proposing for the future to further undermine our financial status and thus our life style.

We hope and pray that members like yourself, Mr. Douglas Young, Mr. Lorne Nystrom, to name a few, will continue to fight on our behalf and on behalf of people of the lower income levels. These two levels are the most vulnerable and least protected in Canadian society, yet the government is taking dead aim at them.

That is written very simply and from the heart. This gang seems to come from the head. They go from the head to people's pocket-books. This couple is writing from the heart, the way they have experienced it. They have worked all their lives and here comes this Tory government, acting like a Tory government. Of course we know the whole idea is to restructure the tax system so that the wealthy get off scot-free while you take it from middle and low-income Canadians.

Here is another letter from a couple of women in Lively, Ontario. It states:

Dear Mr. Rodriguez:

I am tired of the government doing what they want, everyone complaining and no one doing anything. I think the problem is that people feel helpless to fight the government and we don't know how to do it or what to do about it. We do not live in a democracy as we are led to believe. The government is far too powerful in this country.