

*Government Orders*

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Vincent:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, when one is in the House representing the government and the Minister of Finance one tries to give Canadians the best information available, but as usual Members opposite are having difficulties understanding such a significant issue as the GST. Sure enough, Mr. Speaker, I did refer to my notes and I will continue to do so if only to make it that much easier for NDP Members to grasp the reality of life, at last!

You know, Mr. Speaker, they do not understand Meech Lake, they do not understand that Quebec is a distinct society, except that they are for it when they are in Quebec but against it anywhere else in the rest of the country. They do not understand the GST except perhaps when they are somewhere else in Canada, and even then so far they seem to be against the GST wherever they are. Some NDP Members are in favour of Meech Lake, others are against—

**Mr. Nystrom:** That is better.

**An hon. member:** Keep it up.

**Mr. Vincent:** See, Mr. Speaker, they get upset when we tell them the truth. But I want to go on with my remarks.

[*English*]

**Mr. Rodriguez:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I think that is much better from the member for Trois Rivieres.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Rodriguez:** We are not angered by that.

**An hon. member:** We are proud.

**Mr. Rodriguez:** We are actually very pleased that he is finally being himself.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Debate. The hon. member for Trois Rivieres.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Vincent:** Talk about a problem, Mr. Speaker, if the NDP sides with me I am in deep trouble.

**Some hon. members:** Ah, ah!

**Mr. Vincent:** I will have to be careful, Mr. Speaker, I do not like it when they are on my side.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to check my notes and point out that one of the advantages of the GST will be to reduce—

**Mr. Nystrom:** Watch it, you are reading!

**Mr. Vincent:** —reduce the deficit and, as you would know, Mr. Speaker, Canadians have made recommendations concerning the GST and there was a national debate on the issue when all Members and all interest groups had an opportunity to air their views. When the GST is implemented on January 1, 1991, when 8.7 million Canadians will have received their first tax credit instalment, and when Canadian companies and particularly small- and medium-sized businesses realize that all they need do is fill in a single 8 1/2 by 11 sheet of paper, sales less purchases, Canadians and perhaps NDP Members, I repeat, perhaps—

**Mr. Pronovost:** Impossible!

**Mr. Vincent:** My colleague from Saint-Maurice (Mr. Pronovost) says it is impossible. I am inclined to think he has a point, but perhaps the NDP Members will indeed understand the GST.

I know that some Liberal Members of the Official Opposition understand the GST and they are supportive. There are some, not many but a few.

**Mr. Nystrom:** Like who?

**Mr. Vincent:** The Liberal Finance critic was in favour of the GST. Maybe that is why he is no longer the Finance critic. He was turfed out. He was in favour of the tax, but that's nothing to be ashamed of!

Comments from associations and from the opposition were sometimes valid but sometimes, unfortunately, based on premises that did not reflect the real situation. After listening to Canadians, after listening to associations and the Opposition, we tried to come up with several amendments, tabled by the Minister of Finance, that would reflect the Canadian reality and would better serve the interests of Canada. Mr. Speaker, you know we could have done what other governments have done: change nothing.

When I was studying for a master's degree in tax law at the University of Sherbrooke in 1978, the professor who explained the federal sales tax said: "The present federal sales tax does not make sense". The federal government at the time had appointed a committee. My professor said: "I hope the committee will act on the recommendations and do something about this tax". That, Mr. Speaker, was in 1978. The Conservative Government has made its position clear. It wasn't easy. We know Cana-