

Routine Proceedings

tax. I do not think it is better illustrated anywhere in its regressiveness than when it is applied to books.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition also on the subject of the goods and services tax on books. These petitioners are opposed to this tax and call on the government to uphold the historic principle embodied in the tax free status for the printed word. Canada will be one of the very few countries in the world to tax books if this tax is imposed.

I note that this petition is signed by residents of the city of Mississauga who are represented in this House by among others, the hon. member for Mississauga South, who is on record as supporting this dreadful tax.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, first of all I have a petition on behalf of constituents from Lac La Jeune, Paul Lake, Red Lake, Savona, Chase, Westwood, Little Fort, Clearwater, Barrière, Logan Lake and Kamloops. The petitioners are pointing out their concern for the government's decision to proceed with the goods and services tax in spite of the overwhelming opposition to it. They are asking, even at this late hour, for the government to reconsider continuing with the imposition of the GST, as it is known.

VIA RAIL

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): On another matter, Mr. Speaker, again on behalf of constituents from Vancouver, Medicine Hat, Victoria, Oakville, Port Moody, Burnaby, Jasper, Winnipeg, Brantford, and even some communities in New Zealand—I guess they probably do not count though on the petition—are pointing out that Canada ought to be expanding their VIA Rail service as opposed to cutting back on it.

The petitioners are asking the government to reconsider this rather regressive move at a time when we should be moving people around Canada in the most environmentally friendly manner possible. They are asking a reconsideration of the decision to abandon much of VIA Rail.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): On another matter, Mr. Speaker, and again to join with many others in the House this afternoon, I have a petition indicating that the government plans to tax reading. I think this is the

only government in the world that taxes literature and children's story books, for example. The petitioners are saying that this is a rather peculiar policy to have at a time when we are trying to develop more literacy in the country and they are asking the government to reconsider applying a GST to reading material.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of presenting petitions signed by hundreds of Canadians, including many of my constituents from Burnaby—Kingsway expressing their concern and their anger at this government's attempt to even at this point, despite the overwhelming opposition of Canadians, push through the goods and services tax. They urge the government reject the goods and services tax. They urge a meaningful reform of the taxation system so that there is an effective minimum tax on wealthy individuals and corporations. They demand that the government stop this proposal which will shift the tax burden on to ordinary Canadians through a regressive consumption tax instead of through real tax reform.

• (1700)

I am sure that they speak for literally millions of Canadians in urging the government to stop the GST. Axe the tax.

GUN CONTROL

Ms. Barbara Greene (Don Valley North): Mr. Speaker, I am presenting a petition with another 477 names in support of more gun control legislation.

The Metropolitan Toronto Police have documented a 48.4 per cent increase in violent crimes between 1984 and 1989. The use of guns has increased by 51.9 per cent. This trend is evident in other parts of Canada.

My constituents and I think that gun control legislation is essential.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of residents of Delta, Langley, the south Fraser Valley, and other communities across Canada represented by my colleagues on the other side of the House. The petitioners bring to the attention of us all in the House the very serious concern about the imposition of the goods and services tax and the unfairness of that tax.