

*Government Orders*

can agree upon and perhaps we can proceed in that fashion.

**Mr. Speaker:** I thank hon. members for their contributions. I should explain that under the rules, the Chair has no power to unilaterally postpone the draw. I am sure hon. members know that.

There seems to be a general disposition to postpone it pending discussions between all three parties. Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### EXCISE TAX ACT

#### MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) that Bill C-62, an Act to amend the Excise Tax Act, the Criminal Code, the Customs Act, the Customs Tariff, the Excise Act, the Income Tax Act, the Statistics Act and the Tax Court of Canada Act, be now read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Finance; and the amendment of Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra) (p.7569).

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** When the House recessed for the lunch hour, the hon. member for Ottawa South had 13 minutes left plus 10 minutes for questions and comments.

**Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South):** Mr. Speaker, again we have had lengthy argument over the NDP wishing to interfere with the delivery of this speech. I can well understand when they elect a new leader and immediately drop five points in the polls why they would not like to have anyone else get up and give a reasoned and detailed explanation of objections to the GST. I can certainly see why they do not want 20-minute speeches. They do not have too many members that are capable of giving a 20-minute speech on the GST.

I would like to refer you, Mr. Speaker, to a white paper that the government put out back on June 18, 1987, in which it set out the objectives of tax reform. It states:

The tax reform proposals have been designed to meet five broad objectives: fairness, competitiveness, simplicity, consistency, reliability.

This is the objective of tax reform. The question I have for the government is how can it come before the House and suggest that the goods and services tax proposal that is before us for consideration meets those five objectives. I suggest that there is absolutely no question that it does not.

What about fairness? I do not know what fairness means to you, Mr. Speaker, but we have an idea based on what the minister said yesterday of what fairness means to him. Reading from page 7559 of *Hansard* yesterday, the Minister of Finance described the vision of Canada that he is putting forward. I quote:

It is a vision of conservatism at its best, which is to preserve what is good and to leave a better quality of life to those who follow us in terms of both a higher standard of living and a healthier environment—it is a vision deeply rooted in reality and expressed through decisive action, not empty rhetoric.

What I agree with in that is that his vision of Canada as evidenced by the goods and services tax is a vision of conservatism at its best. It is conservative. It is a conservative view that says that we do not need to care about the poor. We do not need to care about the illiterate. We do not need to care about students. We do not need to care about the people who live in the disparate regions of this country. We do not need to care about the north.

The seniors of this country, those who are living on fixed incomes, who are surviving and making do, are the ones who begin to be hurt first by this measure. Government members have told us, and we have raised this point many times, that there is a refundable sales tax credit for the poor and they pontificate as the minister did yesterday saying, "We have raised it in the past. Of course, we'll raise it in the future."

Let me tell you what the government really thinks about the elderly. At least one of its members speaks openly and says what he thinks. This is the Chairman of the Finance Committee, the member for Mississauga South, commenting on the elderly which was printed in the *Toronto Star* of September 27, 1989, and I quote:

They live at a slower pace and they don't spend money in the same sense that you and I do. Older people don't wear out their clothing. They don't wear out their furniture. They don't run around and all of that costs dough.