

Government Orders

standing up for the rights of small business, for the rights of people to have some democratic chance to speak out.

Mr. Heap: They did not ask the Liberals to speak for them?

Mr. Langdon: No, I am sorry. I have to tell my colleague from Spadina they did not send copies to the Liberal party. For instance, the Wetaskiwin Chamber of Commerce from Alberta wrote to us saying: "The chamber feels that more groups should be heard, as not sufficient people have been given the opportunity to express their dissatisfaction and opposition to the proposed GST." That one is signed by Ron Noel, president of the Wetaskiwin and District Chamber of Commerce.

• (1550)

I could quote from another letter which I received from the Sherwood Park and District Chamber of Commerce, which is also in Alberta. The last time I checked, all of these constituencies from which these various pieces of material have come are all held by Conservative members of Parliament. I quote to you from the Sherwood Park and District Chamber of Commerce which said after the government attempted to shut down the hearings on the GST:

On March 20, 1990, the Board of Directors unanimously voted to request your committee to continue with the GST hearings for groups that wish to be heard. Closure on the GST hearings is not appropriate for such an important issue.

I could go through sheet after sheet from business groups, trade union groups, hospital groups, teachers groups, groups across this country that communicated absolutely clearly that they did not want these goods and services tax hearings to be stopped. Yet, despite that there was an act which I have to say as a member of Parliament I have never seen an equivalent to in terms of the completely arbitrary, illegal and totalitarian methods employed.

It was an action that ran completely against anything in Beauchesne's, anything in the Standing Orders of this House or the Standing Orders which affect committees of this House, an action completely anti-democratic and completely totalitarian.

These kinds of letters were pouring in to the chair and the clerk of the committee and to myself as a member of the committee. These communications were coming in from across this country, not just from trade union groups, not just from groups in Alberta, but from groups

from every province in this country, including *solidarité populaire* in the province of Quebec, from chamber of commerce groups in the province of Ontario, from small businesses in Saskatchewan, from small business professional groups in the province of Manitoba and the province of British Columbia. There were hundreds of communications telling us that we must not stop these GST hearings before the people of Canada have a complete chance to speak out as they wished to. When the people across the country people saw what was taking place, they saw to it to communicate as effectively and as quickly as they could to ensure that their positions were put forward in front of this committee. Because this wave of communication was coming in, the chairman of this committee cut it off. He cut it off in a way that was totally unparliamentary, totally undemocratic, and totally totalitarian.

To conclude, this is a government of incompetence and a government that has acted stupidly. It is a that government continues to act without a sense of strategy or purpose in its economic policy. It is a government which has moved this week to take totalitarian and undemocratic actions which I certainly cannot accept and my party cannot accept. For this reason, we will proudly stand up and vote against giving authority to this bunch of spendthrifts and incompetents to borrow yet another \$25.5 billion.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Mackenzie—The economy; the hon. member for Parkdale—High Park—Food Banks; the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan.

There is no period for questions and comments after the first three speeches. Resuming debate. The hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

[*English*]

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak today in this debate.

What is the government asking us to do in Bill C-65? These Tories across the way want us to let them borrow \$25.5 billion for public works and general purposes, so