

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (President of the Treasury Board and Minister of State (Finance)) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-91, an act to amend the Financial Administration Act and other acts in consequence thereof.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

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PETITIONS

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition signed by numerous residents of Ottawa and Nepean who object to the goods and services tax. In particular, they object in so far as it applies to books and the printed word.

These petitioners note that books have been free of tax in Canada since Confederation. Indeed, I think it is a fact that they are free of tax in almost every other civilized country on earth, but now this Tory government is going to impose a goods and services tax on books and the printed word.

These petitioners, like so many millions of other Canadians, are opposed to this tax. They call upon the Parliament of Canada to reject the tax.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I would like to place before this House petitions from many people from my riding who are urging the government to honour the commitment it made in October 1988 when it put funds forward to begin the cleanup of the hot spots in the Lake Ontario area.

Of course, the worst of those hot spots is the Don River which flows through my riding. We are hoping that the government will soon honour its commitment to begin that process.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, I rise pursuant to Standing Order 36 to present a number of petitions signed by hundreds of Canadians from Halifax, Dartmouth, Winnipeg, Fredericton, New Brunswick and Ottawa in which these people state that they are ap-

Routine Proceedings

palled at the imposition of the GST on books and magazines.

They call upon Parliament to reaffirm historic principles embodied in tax free status for the printed word by retaining the zero rate in the GST legislation and regulations.

They add most particularly that it is an egregious error to tax such books as the Bible and the Koran.

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, we were just discussing the fact that the Bible and the Koran are being taxed by this new nefarious and poorly conceived tax, the goods and services tax which, as you know, is so regressive. It is hurting the people across this land, and they do not want it.

I have hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of petitions from Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, *ad infinitum*. The petitioners do not want this tax on books.

As my colleague so aptly said: "Not on the Bible; not on the Koran; not on anything whether it is plain literature, religious literature, a magazine, a book or a newspaper." Get rid of the GST.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present three petitions with several hundred names on them.

The petitions are from a number of communities throughout the Algoma—Manitoulin area including Tehkummah, McKerrow, Espanola and other communities, calling on the government to withdraw the goods and services tax.

It would have to do that in the Senate now, because the bill has passed here, but these constituents of mine and other people are fully opposed to it. They want the bill and the tax withdrawn. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that in the public opinion polls this morning, 75 per cent of Canadians want the tax defeated.

• (1120)

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I wish to present three petitions today, all asking the Government of Canada to withdraw the imposition of the government's goods and services tax as it relates to books and literature. The petitioners are from such communities in Atlantic Canada as Halifax, Dartmouth, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, as well as individuals in Toronto.