

Government Orders

reading. The question was put on that day without further debate and the motion was carried, not even on division. No one from the New Democratic Party objected to the bill. It is evident from *Hansard* that NDP members were in the House but apparently none of them objected to second reading of this bill.

To anyone who is listening and does not know, second reading means approval in principle. For all the ranting and raving we heard today in the speech of the hon. member for Essex—Windsor about their great opposition to this bill and how determined they have been in fighting this legislation tooth and nail from day one, where were they on April 11? Why was he not here to object to the bill when it carried and it was not on division? This is the bill they have been fighting tooth and nail and they were not here to say that it went on division.

It is absolute rubbish that we have been listening to from the hon. member. It is one of those homilies that perhaps would be better preached in a church than here. I suggest that all his pious utterances about the Liberal Party changing its position is just so much nonsense. Certainly we opposed the bill in committee. Certainly we had concerns with the clauses in this bill. There is hardly a bill that this government introduces in the House that we do not criticize, as I am sure is the same with the New Democratic Party.

We recognize that some bills on balance are reasonable, so sometimes we will go along with them as reasonable, not perfect, far from it, especially the bills that are drafted by hon. gentlemen opposite. We know they are fraught with difficulty from the day they are brought in. The ministers who are here know that. I suspect they realize they are not perfect, but they do not like to admit it.

We do not claim perfection. We are not a party that shifts principles right, left and centre. We accept that things are less than perfect in the world and recognize that fact. We have matured. I urge the hon. member for Essex—Windsor, before he starts hurling stones at the Liberal party for having allegedly changed its position, to look at *Hansard* of April 11. People living in glass houses ought not to be throwing stones. The New Democratic Party is in a green house and is at great peril on this one.

• (1730)

Mr. Langdon: Madam Speaker, I have to say that I prefer piety, if that is what it was, to clichés.

If the member for Kingston and the Islands had been here for my speech in its entirety, as he suggests he was, he would have heard, as other members in the House can attest, that I indicated very clearly that we supported this bill in principle at second reading because we thought that its basic thrust was useful and important. But I also indicated that after our attempts to change this very serious problem of retroactivity, which his colleague from Montreal and myself both fought against in committee, and which I moved an amendment on few minutes ago in the House, certainly our view is that the failure of the government to accept a straightforward, consistent and absolutely clear amendment meant that we could not support it as the bill now stands.

The member also made some interesting comments with respect to our position on the Senate. I have to assure the member that our deep and abiding faith in the Senate of Canada remains as abysmally non-existent as ever. We challenge the Senate to put up or shut up because we know perfectly well that the Senate and the Liberal majority within the Senate will not listen to the majority of people in this country, will not defeat the GST as it should and will not see to it that democracy holds in this country. I challenge all of the Liberals who are here to make as much use as they can of their contacts with their fellow Liberals in the Senate to try to prove me wrong.

If I am proved wrong, despite my piety I shall be ever so pleased to get up in the House and apologize to the Liberal Party in the Senate for ever having distrusted their lack of will. But let me put it clearly at this point. I think that will does not exist and I think time will prove us correct in that.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy Ricard (Laval): Madam Speaker, first I congratulate you on your new appointment. I did not have the opportunity to do so publicly and I think that the tradition in the House is to congratulate you and wish you every success.

I should like to direct a question to the hon. member for Essex—Windsor (Mr. Langdon). In his remarks he indicated that the member for Laval would support the bill but finds such a retroactive motion unacceptable. I agree with him to some extent because a piece of legislation adopted today should not apply retroactively two or three years before. The one thing he did forget to