

time to be extremely partisan. I did not mean my comments in an extremely partisan way.

• (1820)

I do not think that what I said today is inconsistent in any way with what I was quoted as saying in the paper—which is an accurate quote. Any thoughtful Canadian would probably feel the same way.

I have regard for the situation that we are in. I think the remarks that he refers to Mr. Chrétien making should be regarded in the same way as well. This is an unusual situation where the Senate is opposing a government bill. That is clear. I do not think that is a surprise or mystery to anybody. It is a very significant departure from practice in Canada that that is happening. Very significant.

The question really is, is the Senate justified in the circumstances to do what it is doing? That is really what I was trying to address, not in a partisan way but really in a philosophical way as someone who is very concerned about the situation we have in Canada—the status of our institutions, the respect that our people have for the institutions and what is happening.

I am sure I do not need to remind my friend of this quote by a Greek philosopher who said 2,000 years ago: “If we are to have freedom, our politicians must do what we want them to do”. I acknowledged in my speech the difficulty of establishing that in a pluralistic society, but in this case they have succeeded in persuading only about 15 per cent of the people that what they want to do is right.

Can it be right that a government which was not elected on a mandate of putting in this particular tax, as I think I demonstrated in my speech, as opposed to a government that was elected because of a campaign that was very much focused on another issue and was voted for by about 43 per cent of the population of the country, really claim that they have the legitimate authority to override the will of 85 per cent of the population with a measure?

**An hon. member:** Absolutely not.

**Mr. Manley:** I think there is a limit.

**An hon. member:** That is right. And you reached it.

**Mr. Manley:** And you have crossed it.

### *Supply*

**An hon. member:** They surpassed it.

**Mr. Manley:** They crossed it and what they are doing, Mr. Speaker, is wrong.

Now if we have a system where we have a House of Commons and a Senate in this country, which we do, then it is necessary for the leadership in the House of Commons to take into account the views of the Senate.

In six years, what has this government done to significantly reform the Senate? Nothing. Nothing.

**Some hon. members:** No, no.

**An hon. member:** They did, they added some 20-odd senators.

**Mr. Manley:** Even what they proposed in the context of Meech Lake—

**An hon. member:** They never got it through.

**Mr. Manley:** —did not reform in one way the powers of the Senate, so I presume since the government advocated those reforms of giving the provinces the right to appoint the senators, that it must have thought that the powers the Senate has under the Constitution were adequate.

**An hon. member:** Yes. Absolutely.

**Mr. Manley:** The only reform that they have brought about with respect to the Senate is to increase it by eight members.

I might add in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that at the very least, this government has the obligation to ask the Supreme Court of Canada whether it had the authority to add eight senators to the Senate. If not, then it should not be proceeding in the way it is and it should be taking into account the views of the Senate as the Constitution of Canada requires.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois):** I will allow very briefly, because we only have one minute left, 30 seconds of questions to the hon. member for Prince Albert—Churchill and 30 seconds for a reply from the hon. member for Ottawa South.

[*English*]

**Mr. Ray Funk (Prince Albert—Churchill River):** Mr. Speaker, I admired the somewhat unsuccessful attempt by the previous speaker to be non-partisan, in contrast to his colleague for Hamilton East who suggested that the