

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): As I was saying, that is why my colleague, the Hon. Member for Saint-Henri-Westmount put the following amendment to that Bill:

—“this House will not proceed with a Bill to provide borrowing authority for a fiscal year for which the Government has not provided complete details of spending requirements or revenue projections”.

That was November 28, 1984. It has been said by the media and the Government that we did not take the same position in the House as our colleagues took in the Senate. That is absolutely untrue. We took the same position in the House that was later taken in the Senate, and the same position taken by the Conservatives when they were in opposition. It is a principle which I accept fully. The NDP also proposed a motion opposing Bill C-11 and used identical wording to that presented by the now Secretary of State for External Affairs in July of 1982. Realizing that the Government with its huge majority intended to proceed anyway, and wanting a debate on universality before the House rose at Christmas, the NDP and the Official Opposition, in order to get that debate, agreed, after putting our objections to the Bill, to allow it to go through.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, fiction prevails.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): No.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Oh, Mr. Speaker!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): We agreed in order to get the debate on universality. There was no mention of the Senate in that agreement. Obviously an order of this House cannot bind the Senate just as an order of the Senate would not bind this House. There is also a long standing principle, one which the Government has chosen to ignore in its condemnation of the Senate's response to the borrowing Bill.

Let us examine what happened when the Bill arrived in the Senate on January 22. It could not get there any earlier because the Government Leader had adjourned the Senate until January 22. That was not our responsibility on the Liberal side of the Senate. That responsibility lay with the Government House Leader. The Bill was then referred immediately to the Standing Committee on National Finance.

The Senators had no problem with the first part of the Bill relating to the current fiscal year, but it objected, as we had here, to having \$12 billion tacked on for spending for which there was no Budget and no Estimates. The Senate asked that the Bill be split since the Government did not need the second part until April 1, 1985. They would pass the first part and then pass the second when the Estimates were provided. This was a constitutional position buttressed by precedent and citations, and in no way unreasonable and out of the ordinary. In other words, the Senators said stick to the principle that borrowing authority not be given until the Estimates are provided. Conservatives have always taken that position, we took that position and the NDP took that position, but suddenly there was an eruption; righteous indignation poured forth

The Constitution

from the Government, reinforced by the media, the likes of which we have not seen in many years. The Senate was hijacking Parliament.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: The Liberals in the Senate.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): They were thwarting the will of the people. They were being high-handed and destructive to democracy in upholding the same principle this House of Commons has upheld for the last 50 to 100 years. The Government seized the opportunity to denounce what the Prime Minister called the old Liberal clique, a clique of Senators who were somehow purposely subverting the will of the people. The press picked it up, there were great stories and headlines like “Old Gang of Liberal Senators Thumb Nose at Tory Majority”.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Right on.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Let us look at the old gang for a minute. I want to talk about this old gang. In spite of all the rhetoric and hysteria from the Government on the issue, what were the facts? Who were in the old Liberal cliques which so frightened, angered, and enraged the Prime Minister by demanding that this principle of long standing of no money before the Estimates or Budget be adhered to? The report on the Bill from the standing Senate committee said:

● (1510)

The Committee recommends that the Senate remain reluctant to approve any request for borrowing authority if such a request is not supported by a Budget or by Main Estimates for the period for which the borrowing authority is being requested.

That is nothing unusual. It is fully in accordance with principle. That resolution passed the committee without a single negative vote. Who were among that old Liberal clique? There was Senator Kelly, co-chairman of the committee, past chairman of the Progressive Conservative Ontario fund and close buddy of William Grenville Davis. There was Senator Doody, Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate, and a former Minister of Finance of the Newfoundland Government of Conservative Premier Frank Moores who was appointed to the Senate by the Secretary of State for External Affairs when he was Prime Minister. There was one of our newest Senators, the still pure and uncorrupted Finlay MacDonald. He was a member of that committee and endorsed that unanimous report.

That was the old Liberal clique. They agreed to the report of the committee which states very clearly that by not splitting Bill C-11, the Government was violating a long-standing principle. Conservative Senators wanted to uphold that principle too, as I am sure everyone in the House wants to. That was a unanimous report. It was not a Liberal clique. Every Conservative Member agreed to it and voted for it. Let us not hear any more talk about Liberal cliques in the Senate trying to subvert the House. It was not true then and is not true now.

Then we had the great bravado of the Prime Minister in the House. On March 5 he challenged me, saying, “If you agree to