

Supply

I will never give approval to appointing people to legislative bodies that have no accountability to citizens through the democratic process.

Speaking of the premier, he said: "He supports the continuation of an appointed Senate—an anachronism in this day and age of a sovereign nation. The Americans did away with it, as my colleague reminds me, in 1913. Why we have fostered and continued that hotbed of irrelevance, that hand-picked retirement bone-yard for old party hacks, and call that a Senate in terms of response to the electoral needs of the people of this country, I don't know. But when you ask me to pay tax dollars to keep that Senate going, when I've never had a chance to vote for them, then I say nay, nay, nay—never!"

• (1550)

What he should have said afterwards, in anticipation of this day, is, "Unless, of course, I saw some partisan advantage for the New Democratic Party". That he might have said.

I can go on at length to quote from that party but I know it is unparliamentary to use that famous word that starts with H and ends with Y and rhymes with "pocrisy". When the hon. member was talking about comparisons to Italy, he reminds me of a fellow who said, "Well, Mussolini at least got the trains to run on time". The Senate at least can kill GST. He is willing to make a pact with the devil if there was a partisan advantage. Could the hon. member stand up and tell us the difference between him and Dr. Faust?

Mr. Barrett: My dear friends, may I respond to the last question first. Dr. Faust wore no clothes and, like this government, is easily exposed. If members wish for me to go on in poetry, I can think of other ways to do it. However, I am glad my friend, the hon. minister, reminded the House again of my position, which I will restate. I want the Senate abolished; the sooner, the better.

I am not in power. I hope some day, in my lifetime, that social democrats are in power. However, if it is my hon. friend's position and the Liberal Party's position to keep the Senate, then be responsible in your request if you want it to work. Is it just a burying ground for old political cronies? Is it just a place to pay off political debts, like I have always felt?

The simple answer is to prove that it has some worth and not so much for the Tories but for the Liberal Party who has consistently fought and packed the other Chamber which I oppose. They cannot have it both ways. They cannot say in this Chamber they are opposed to the goods and services tax and sit back without a Liberal Party commitment to attempt to coup it within law that exists in this country.

Madam Speaker, the Senate exists.

Mr. Andre: Do you believe in democracy?

Mr. Barrett: My dear friend, if you want to elect the Senate, that is another argument. But it is not elected, it is appointed and they do have influence.

What is the philosophy of those appointees? If it is the Liberal Party philosophy, then we expect consistency. I am glad my colleague entered this debate. I am glad my colleague reminded the Canadian people of my position. My position has not changed.

If they have the legal power, and if that Party over there supports the concept, which I do not, then prove once and for all that the reason the Canadian people support the Senate is because they want to see it act and they want to see it act consistently with their position. The hon. member talks about the word beginning with H and ending with Y. You cannot have it both ways. I say we should abolish the Senate. It is there legally and I do not have the legislative authority to abolish it. You justify it and you want it, so I say to the hon. member, "Don't kid the troops".

An Hon. Member: Maybe the Tories should abolish it.

Mr. Barrett: They won't. The fact is we are seeing a political game here and I do not think it is very healthy.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Madam Speaker, I hope to seek the floor to make an address myself. I am not going to be as tough on this question as was the minister from Calgary Centre, because I am willing to allow the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca to walk both sides of the street. Let him call for the abolition of the Senate and let him also call for the Senate to fulfil this remarkable role that he chooses to lay out for it.

I am glad he mentioned that he hoped his grandson was sleeping while he was making this speech and while this debate was going on. The question that went through my mind and that I wanted to address to the