

Supply

Party of Canada. I might point out that there is no answer.

Referring to the GST during the leadership campaign, Mr. Chrétien said that cancelling it presented a danger unless there were alternatives available. That is what he said during the leadership race. But in addition to that he said, and I quote— Well, this is from the *Ottawa Citizen*, it will be up to him to confirm or deny this, but the article quotes Mr. Chrétien as having said:

[*English*]

“There is no great tradition in Canada for the Senate to block fiscal measures”.

[*Translation*]

Apparently that is what he said.

Later, it seems he changed his mind when he stated:

[*English*]

“I have my own personal opinions but I am not alone in the Liberal Party”.

[*Translation*]

A great demonstration of leadership!

Later still he said he would let the Senate act as it saw fit. But later again when the Senate announced it would kill the GST he is reported as having said:

[*English*]

“They will not do anything that I don’t want them to do”.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude quickly by quoting the member for the Ottawa region who is in the House, the hon. member for Ottawa South, Jim Manley, the junior finance critic who said:

[*English*]

—says he supports the Senate’s efforts but he is worried that in the battle for public opinion kazoo blowing might very well cost the Liberals support. I personally find the antics of obstructionism offensive and I don’t believe that most Canadians want that to be the way their public policy is decided”.

[*Translation*]

Apparently, Mr. Speaker, that is what he said.

So I want to ask the hon. member for Hamilton East what was her position during the leadership race, whether or not she agrees with the position of her new leader, Mr. Chrétien, or whether she has maintained the position she had at the time?

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows Mr. Charbonneau, the Speaker of the other place, who decided last week that rules no longer existed.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker, if he can stand there and defend the position of his colleagues in the Senate who are willing to throw out the rule book, he and his colleagues in the House of Commons are aiding and abetting the demise of democracy. You can talk about any democratic movement around the world but one of the primary tenets of democracy is to respect the rules of the House and the Senate. If you do not like the rules of the House and the Senate, then you move to change them. In 1986 there was one political party that moved a unanimous motion for an elected Senate and that was the Liberal Party.

• (1720)

This is a hypocritical government, Mr. Speaker. The Prime Minister stands in his place and beats his breast about the Senate, but he was very quick in appointing his friends there. And who is there now as the president of the Senate? One of the key people who behind the scenes orchestrated Joe Clark’s overthrow. You know the story, I know the story. It is as clear as the book written by L. Ian MacDonald, the Prime Minister’s official biographer.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, I respect the rule book. I am prepared to change the rule book so we can have an elected Senate. But I wish those phoneyes on the government side of the House would be willing to stand up and support the Liberal call dated in 1986 for an elected Senate.

Mr. Charest: Point of order, Mr. Speaker. I would like the record to show very clearly that the MP for Hamilton East refused to answer the questions I put to her.