

Supply

realize that the people in your province—entrepreneurs and private citizens—are in a recession?

[*English*]

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend from Acadie—Bathurst for an excellent presentation. I want to come back to something that the minister put to him a moment ago, because by inference there is a suggestion that should not be overlooked.

The minister made much of my friend having alternatives—

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): No, not having alternatives.

Mr. Simmons: —made much of the need to have alternatives. I think he will agree that is a fair statement of what he was saying. I am submitting to the House, I say to the minister, that part of his question, part of his comment, was that the member for Acadie—Bathurst ought to have alternatives. Does he agree on that?

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Yes.

Mr. Simmons: Yes. I am glad he agrees on that because I want to put a question to my friend from Acadie—Bathurst. He is a man of considerable memory and, although he was not here pre-1984, he was in elected politics and I am sure he has researched the record extremely well.

Can he affirm for the House that the Minister of Finance, who now advocates that he—the member for Acadie—Bathurst—ought to have specific alternatives, espoused the proposed goods and services tax when the minister was in opposition? Can he tell us that that was the case? I am sure it is the case judging by what the minister has said in this Chamber, but can he assure us that it is indeed the case?

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The period set aside for questions and comments has now expired, unless the House gives unanimous consent.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Resuming debate. The hon. member for Burin—St. George's. On a point of order?

[*English*]

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The question was not put to the minister. Point of order.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The hon. member for Burin—St. George's, on his point of order, but briefly.

[*English*]

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I submit that the member for Acadie—Bathurst ought to have an opportunity to answer my question. I had risen at the same time as the gentleman from the backbench and you, Mr. Speaker, recognized two from the same party in succession, which is not the practice in this House.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): I am sorry but the Standing Orders are quite clear: without unanimous consent, the period for questions and comments is limited to ten minutes. Resuming debate. The Minister of Finance.

[*English*]

Mr. Simmons: You can't answer the question.

An hon. member: He will answer you, don't worry.

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, there were two questions—

Mr. Simmons: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The hon. member for Burin—St. George's on a point of order.

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker, the tradition in this period of questions and answers is that the member to whom the question was put gets, however brief, enough time to respond, I submit in not allowing him to respond, Mr. Speaker, are not allowing for a fair debate in this Chamber.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The Chair has no objection to continuing questions and comments but it must have the unanimous consent of the House. Do I have unanimous consent?

[*English*]

Some hon. members: No.