

financial and economic mess they have created in eastern Canada.

Having said that, I think that what we need to look at is the fact that the voters of Atlantic Canada are extremely astute. If the hon. member would take the time to look at the polls, he would see that the voters there have indicated a preference for the Liberal party. That was reflected in the last campaign and no doubt will be reflected in the next campaign. The Liberal party was paced at 47 percentage points ahead of its nearest rivals, the Conservatives. The New Democratic Party is trying to jump on this Liberal bandwagon. It feels that by opposing these bills to which we have already announced our opposition that it can benefit somehow from the phenomenal rise that the Liberal party is experiencing across Canada.

We in the Liberal party are delighted to have the support of the New Democratic Party in our opposition to government measures. We recognize, as they do, that the voters would not normally bother to elect them if they had a reasonable choice. We know that the hon. member who just spoke, and to whom I address my comments, is elected from the province of British Columbia. He was just citing to us the difficulty the electors of British Columbia have. They elected a Social Credit government. Well, it is the only province in Canada that made such a silly mistake.

• (1210)

We in the Liberal party offer an alternative across the country. The hon. member is an example of the problem that the electors of British Columbia have in saying they always want to jump on the Liberal bandwagon but do not quite manage to do it when it comes to votes. I know that the member would want to invite them to vote Liberal the next time so that they can get in the true opposition spirit to oppose Conservative government policies. He knows that we have opposed those policies. He knows that we are leaders in opposing those policies and Canadians know it too, as reflected in the polls. I invite the member to comment on that.

**Mr. Gardiner:** I appreciate the question from my hon. friend on Bill C-26. First, what is it that is an indication and a sign to Canadians in any part of the country that a political party in this House is concerned about a

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particular issue? What do we do within our own caucuses? We try to work within our caucus to convince our leader to know and get to understand those issues. Which leader was in Canso just a few days ago expressing the concerns of Atlantic Canadians? Audrey McLaughlin, the Leader of the New Democrats was there recognizing the importance of that issue.

The Liberals do not have a leader. The hon. member is so confident. Those who live by the polls die by the polls. We will see in the next election campaign just where the polls are sitting when Canadians finally see just what the Liberal party's position is on the GST, on Bill C-26, on helping the wealthy with Bill C-52, really what their position is on free trade.

This debate and the news this morning really struck a chord with me. The lead item on the news was how a baffled Liberal MP wandered into a finance committee meeting last night. Where is their participation? If that keeps up, we know where they will be in the polls very shortly.

I cannot sit down without making the comment to friends in my party and members of the public that Atlantic Canada has been kicked around by Liberals and Conservatives year in and year out. People ask me why do they still vote for Liberals and Conservatives. I think a change is in the wind. We are going to see a change. In the next election campaign, the people of Atlantic Canada will know who their friends are. They will know who is fighting the GST, they will know who is fighting the VIA Rail cuts and they will know who is taking a leadership role on Bill C-26, Madam Speaker, and you will see what the results are in the next federal election.

**Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James):** Madam Speaker, after listening to the nonsense from the hon. member from British Columbia the last few minutes, I wish to heaven that the New Democrats would come to realize who the political enemy is in this Chamber and in this country. They are not on this side of the House, they are over there and Canadians well understand that. All you have to do is look at the last poll. The Liberals are over 50 per cent in popular support, and there are the New Democrats down with the Tories at 22 per cent and 21 per cent. Canadian people understand that but certainly the New Democrats do not.