

ask them questions about how you deal with the GST, where it applies and where it does not apply.

Senator Molgat told us last week that a person operating a laundromat in Manitoba telephoned the department and how much does he charge. He was told that he had to charge 17/100s or something of a dollar per load of laundry. Well, you know, if anybody can understand that, I would be very surprised.

My point was simply that I think that the province of Quebec, having been the first to harmonize their tax with the GST, and having done it in their own way, which is to add their own GST on top of the GST finds it is not that easy to understand. There must have been something that was not quite right with it and something not very understandable because the minister responsible for it thought it was important enough for him to resign his cabinet post over it.

I am not in any way belittling the people of Quebec. I want to make it clear I did not do that, I would never do that, and as far as the question as to who can understand it and who cannot understand it is concerned, let us face the fact. We dealt with the Meech Lake Accord for three years and most of us still do not know what is in the Meech Lake Accord. That was my point, senator. I was not in any way belittling the people of Quebec.

Senator David: You said that the Minister of Finance resigned. It is not the Minister of Finance, who is Gérard Lévesque. It is the Minister of Revenue, I think.

Senator Lucier: I accept that, sir. It is the Minister of Revenue.

Senator David: When you say that the newspapers are so full about these questions of Constitution, I must remind you that nearly every major editorial now has its economic pages where the GST has been fully explained. How well everybody understood the explanation, that is another matter, but you cannot go from the premise that because we speak so much of constitutional affairs that we have avoided speaking about the GST. That is the only point I want to make very clear.

Senator Lucier: Yes, senator, I accept your point and I understand what you are saying. I accept what you say that the economic pages do carry that type of item, and my point, again, is that most of the people who are going to pay the tax do not read the economic pages of the newspaper.

[Translation]

Senator Gigantès: Senator David, I hope you will recall—and if not, I would ask you to look into the record at this point—that my answer was to the effect that I believe that the Quebecers are clever enough and know exactly what is happening.

I think that the Quebecers understand politics better than several other groups of Canadians. They do real well.

Senator Simard: That is why they voted against the Liberals in 1984 and again in 1988!

Senator Gigantès: Were they right to vote Liberal when Trudeau had huge majorities? No, no. Answer me please!

[Senator Lucier.]

Senator Simard: I said what I had to say. This is not Question Period. Do what you want and I will proceed as I wish.

Senator Gigantès: Would you please speak more clearly? It is a devil of a job to try to understand you.

Senator Simard: You do not need to understand what I said, as long as it is recorded in the *Debates*.

Senator Gigantès: Of course, I need to understand you. I am very curious. I want to learn things. I always expect that a jewel of knowledge . . . I would like to hear something that I could put in a box, a jewel of wisdom from senator Simard. I would put it in a box and, naturally, in my computer.

Senator Simard: They are not pearls. This is but a lot of words. Words that have been coming for twelve hours. There are not many pearls in it. I see only grains of sand.

Senator Gigantès: Would you like me to start all over again with the duty of the opposition to oppose and to air a situation like the one that exists now where the House of Commons has impeded the due democratic process and we are forced to take over and do our best to stimulate public opinion and even make it hostile to what your government is doing. Because what your government is doing is really bad for the country. What are we supposed to do until the next election in 1992? We must do something because we have no credible prime minister in Canada now. That is a serious problem. Our duty is to make few things known.

Senator Simard: Senator Gigantès trusts in the good judgement of Quebecers, in their understanding of matters such as the GST and the constitutional issue. I shall remind him that on Pierre Nadeau's TV show, last Sunday night, on this one hour talk show broadcast on the French network, during his interview with the Prime Minister, the following question was put to the Quebec audience: "What are the chances of Mr. Mulroney being reelected"? Sixty-two per cent of those who were asked said that Prime Minister Mulroney would be re-elected. I agree with them. I always thought that people from New Brunswick, people from the province of Quebec, that Canadians in general have a good judgment and, at this time, they tell us that they would re-elect Mr. Mulroney (and we know that you said the most negative things, we know that you specialize in using the most offensive epithets when you talk about Prime Minister Mulroney). Despite an unpopular tax, many Quebecers, undoubtedly influenced by the foolish behaviour of the Liberal Party in this Chamber over the last two or three months, tell us that, in two years, after the next federal election, it will not be Jean Chrétien who will lead this country, it will not be Phillip Edmondston, it will not be Audrey McLaughlin, it will not be the Liberal Party, it will be Prime Minister Mulroney and his Progressive Conservative government. So, good night, senator . . .

Senator Gigantès: Please. I miss you so much when you are not here. It is awful when you leave me. I cannot hold back my tears when you leave. Tell me, in February 1980, were you a Conservative?