

[English]

Yes, members appointed accuse the government of doing things piecemeal or bringing in piecemeal legislation. Senator Perrault and others have raised that point. I say that Senator Perrault is guilty of the same practice. Surely his party could have come up, in this session or last year, with suggestions on a revamped plan for student loans. They are doing the very thing of which they are accusing us. They are saying, "We recognize that there are faults in the system — abuse, failure to collect and so on. The government will have to address these matters shortly, but there are other problems with the student loans program."

I had hoped that Senator Perrault would have given an indication of where his party stood on the matter. Perhaps that will come, if his party comes forward, as I hope it does, with recommendations before the election.

I sympathize with the students. I hope they realize that this measure is grounded in the larger context of deficit reduction measures and of the need to get the federal treasury in order, and that the students must do their little share at this time.

I had intended to be partisan, but I will not go into that today as there will be other moments. However, I would like to read into the record parts of an editorial written by Alain Dubuc in *La Presse* this morning.

[Translation]

In today's French paper *La Presse*, Alain Dubuc tries to explain the magic recipe which Kim Campbell seems to have discovered.

**The Hon. The Speaker *pro tempore*:** Honourable senator, your speaking time has expired. Does the house agree to allow Senator Simard to continue?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Yes.

**Senator Simard:** Alain Dubuc's editorial has prompted me to reflect further on this bill and perhaps it will have the same effect on other senators. Mr. Dubuc said and I quote:

What the sympathy for Kim Campbell suggests is that the electorate's attitude towards the Mulroney government is more complex than we think. Canadians and Quebecers, even though they hold a terrible grudge against Mulroney, know in their hearts that the fight against the deficit and the austerity measures which

caused the Conservatives such unpopularity were unavoidable. This is a perfect example of the love and hate relationship which by the way helps explain the intensity of the negative reactions to this government.

And he goes on to say:

So, for all their resentment, they are not interested in voting for a candidate who would evade this question they know to be crucial, who talks about a painless solution like Jean Chrétien or promises a brighter future, like Ms Audrey McLaughlin.

The Canadian people do not want to get dragged into an adventure, however appealing, that they would never see the end of paying for. Without being schizoid, they can see what is going on at the provincial level, where all governments, regardless of their ideologies, including Bob Rae's government, have no choice.

Further:

Of course, Ms Campbell has yet to reveal the colour of her opinions. Mind you, her positions are no more mysterious than those of Jean Chrétien who is still keeping his budget plans strictly secret after leading the Liberal Party for nearly three years.

That goes to show how important it is for those aspiring to run this country to cut out the clever woolliness and dare to lay their cards on the table. Twenty years ago, a politician's platform was built on promises. In the 90's, it should be built on where he or she intends to make cuts.

Incidentally, honourable senators, I have decided not to vote along with the Liberal minority on this motion. Neither will I vote against Bill C-76. The fact of the matter is that, on a question such as this one, I refuse to join even for a moment the Liberal opposition in this place whose voting record since 1984 speaks for itself. I believe that the Canadian people would have expected to find support in the Official Opposition, both in this chamber and the other place, for a fiscal or financial bill aimed at reducing the deficit, be it through expenditure control, as this government has tried to do. As for transfer payments, whether statutory or not, one must recall that, in my province, they have increased tremendously from year to year between 1984 and 1990.