

Question Period 06 Feb, 2008 Government Contracting

Finance

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Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): 

Mr. Speaker, the finance minister still has not said that he is sorry for illegally paying a Conservative friend \$122,000 to write his budget speech.

Does this sentence, costing taxpayers nearly \$600, constitute good value for money?

From the majestic peaks of the Rocky Mountains to the rugged shores of Newfoundland and Labrador, many of the most beautiful places on earth are in Canada.

For 600 bucks, could they not check an atlas to see that Canada does not end at the Rocky Mountains?

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Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC):  

Mr. Speaker, I know the member opposite thinks that Canadian geography ends at Steeles Avenue in the GTA but it is not so.

Many people in Canada disagree with the member for Markham—Unionville when he says that he wants to raise the GST by two full percentage points, when he talks about saving the GST and restoring the GST. If he actually cared about Canadians from coast to coast to coast, he would not advocate raising the GST, raising taxes on Canadians.

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Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.):  

Mr. Speaker, apart from that GST nonsense, I have not heard anything so geographically challenged since the public safety minister told Canadians that the Niagara River flows south.

[Translation]

I have heard that the Prime Minister's two favourite words are "discipline" and "consequences".

Why was this minister, who broke the rules, not disciplined, and why did he not suffer the consequences of his violations? Will the Prime Minister at least apologize to Canadians?

[English]

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Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC):  

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite says that the GST is nonsense. He ridicules Canadians and the taxes they pay by saying that the GST is nonsense.

The GST is a permanent tax reduction for Canadians, a \$12 billion per annum tax reduction for Canadians. He would raise it. When he was asked about the GST, the member for Markham—Unionville said, "It's an option. All I can say is that it is consistent with our approach".

The Liberal approach is to tax and spend and raise taxes.