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Editorial: Parliamentary Farce

Once again Parliament has failed to either support or defeat the government.

In the House of Commons last Friday, the federal Liberal party stated that they had no confidence in the minority Conservative government, and initiated a vote with the avowed intention to defeat the government and to force a general election.

Their motion lost, 144 to 117. As one would expect, the Conservatives voted against it. The Liberals and the Bloc Quebecois voted for it; the NDP effectively supported the government by abstaining altogether.

While it has been said that 'politics makes strange bedfellows', this is one of the strangest pairings. Liberals and the Bloc, bitter rivals in Quebec, share one bed; Conservatives and NDP, ideologically poles apart, share another. It is hard to imagine that loving intercourse took place in either; political promiscuity is more like it.

It is also, of course, hard to believe that such combative, partisan unanimity exists within each of the parties; it is particularly unusual for all the NDP MPs to find themselves totally unable to express an opinion.

Some will say that the price for this astonishing silence is the introduction by the government of changes to Employment Insurance; some will also say that this horse-trading is how a minority government works. Some will say that the media is ignoring the really useful work that is being done.

Nonsense. This has not even the appearance of government; it is irrelevant bedroom farce. It is a waste of the nation's valuable time.

Canadians, disgusted, can only say 'a pox on all your houses'. It is time that they not only said so, but expressed their real needs loudly and forcefully. Their continued silence just encourages these parliamentary shenanigans.

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