

What is Harper hiding from? In a word---democracy. But wasn't it Stephen Harper himself who said that to "cut and run" is un-Canadian? And by trying to prorogue Parliament to avoid a non-confidence vote, after postponing it once already and promising on Friday that it would be held this coming Monday—he is trying to "cut and run".

Our parliamentary system is built on the cornerstone of confidence. And the majority of the MPs in the House of Commons no longer have confidence in Stephen Harper, or his government. This is not "politics"—the lack of confidence comes from Stephen Harper's inability, or unwillingness, to deal effectively with the economic crisis facing Canada. And his desire, instead, to play politics. Do not believe for a minute that it was anyone other than Harper who started this.

And, just when this lack of confidence is about to be expressed—which Harper is trying to run away from—Harper wants to prorogue Parliament, exactly at the time when this country needs government.

We face a clear lack of confidence; Harper's running away from the democratic process will only make the lack of confidence worse.

To the question of the arrangement with the "separatists". I am not a separatist, nor a sovereigntist, nor do I agree with or support any of those positions held by the Bloc. But in odd way, I'm extremely proud of the fact that in our Canadian democratic process, much as I don't like the result, we can have people who hold those views in Parliament because they were democratically elected by a majority of people in their respective ridings.

A large number of people in Quebec voted for Bloc MPs. That is, under our system, their democratic right. Just as it is the right for anyone in this country to vote for anyone of whatever race, creed, colour, sexual orientation or political persuasion. That is the messy but beautiful part of our democracy.

And I will remind Mr. Harper that only a couple of years ago, he himself signed a similar agreement among the Conservatives, the NPD and—wait for it—the Bloc.

At a time utter negation of responsibility for the economic crisis, our parliamentary process ensures respect for those MPs, and for the majority of Canadians who voted for that same majority of MPs. When they have lost that confidence, they are to make that clear in a vote. Democracy at work. But Harper knows that he'd lose that confidence vote. His first move was to postpone that vote to this coming Monday.

And if all of this weren't enough---today, we saw a new low in parliamentary process, and in Canadian democracy. The Prime Minister lied today in the House of Commons. And over something not particularly critical—he said that yesterday there were no Canadian flags present at the press conference announcing the Liberal-led, Liberal/NDP coalition. He knew otherwise, but for effect, said there were none, somehow to suggest that what was happening was un-Canadian. If he will lie on such things, what will he be prepared to do or say, just to ensure that position?

On the contrary, having the Prime Minister lie is un-Canadian.