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Sometimes there are examples that highlight why people outside Ottawa think all politicians are morons. Here's one.

Today, instead of reporting on [a Nanos poll that shows the Liberals and Conservatives shockingly tied](#) (hard to fit that one into the narrative, I suppose) many media outlets are dutifully copying and pasting, often unchallenged, [the latest talking points](#) from the Conservative War Room mothership. Ctrl-C, tab to browser, control-V, post.

The Conservatives say, to media delight, that silly Michael Ignatieff wanted Parliament back so badly, and now in the second full week back he's off [talking to students in Newfoundland](#) or some fool thing, instead of performing for their amusement in Question Period and giving them clips on the detainee issue so they can go on TV and ask why he's talking about an issue that is only of moral importance and isn't giving him any polling traction (ignore Nanos) instead of getting out of Ottawa and talking to real Canadians or something.

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Were I to don my Liberal hat for a moment (it's more of a beret, really)

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I'd make a few observations, though:

One would be that the tour was scheduled previously, as Parliament was scheduled to be recessed this week for Spring Break. Cancelling on everyone would be quite the hassle. Particularly if they didn't buy travel insurance. Cancellation fees these days are mad.

Second would be that Parliament is sitting this week because Stephen Harper, smarting from prorogation and needing damage control, decided to cancel spring break, because there was so much gosh-darned important stuff for Parliament to be working on. In fact, the media thought that [Harper had laid a clever trap for the opposition](#), who checked with Admiral Ackbar and replied "sure, cancel it, and let's come back even sooner," to which Harper had no clever retort.

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Third would be to mention that, despite it being supposedly so gosh-darned important for Harper to cancel the spring break (besides damage control) because he had such important matters to put before Parliament, since the House came back, the Conservatives have yet to introduce, or re-introduce, any significant legislation. They scheduled three opposition days this week. There's been pro-forma throne speech and budget debate. And ... that's about it. Still waiting on them to even try to bringing the bulk of their crime legislation back. Where's the beef, Steve?

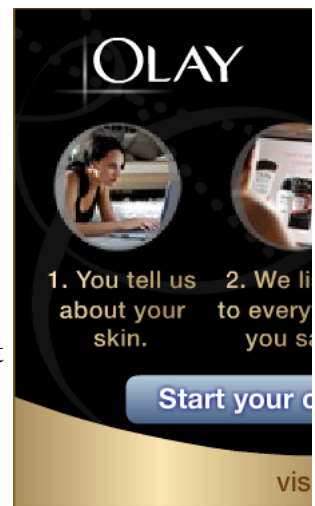
And fourth, I might mention that Parliament can keep on working just fine with Ignatieff taking a few days to go about the country. Harper stayed in his office most of Monday, and life went on just fine.

Were I to now doff my Liberal chapeau and take a more critical look at all this, I'd mention that to accept the Conservative position is to completely invalidate their previous position. Indeed, it requires the Liberals and Conservatives to flip positions.

For during prorogation, while the Liberals argued Parliament needed to be sitting so work could be done, the Conservatives responded work doesn't just happen in Parliament, we're out there meeting with real Canadians. And now that Ignatieff is out there meeting with real Canadians, the Conservatives say real work is being in Parliament, debating opposition day supply motions and not talking to real Canadians like we were saying before.

So for the Conservatives to attack Ignatieff for being out there meeting with Canadians instead of in Parliament, they're also admitting their response to prorogation attacks was invalid (and expecting us to ignore the contradiction).

As well, they're reminding everyone about prorogation too. Indeed, they're now chortling about Ignatieff "proroguing himself" when just weeks ago they were saying prorogation was a completely normal parliamentary procedure. Now they think they're cleverly contradicting the Liberals, but they can't make that case without contradicting



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themselves too.

When you think about it, it's really all pretty stupid. Which is why, perhaps, [Mike Duffy is so opposed to critical thinking](#).

Thankfully, there's little of that happening in Ottawa these days, not when Ctrl-C is so easy.

National Post

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