

Honourable senators, I want to say just a word about Quebec and the Constitution, and perhaps Senator Murray will elaborate upon and correct my imperfect understanding of the intentions of the government. I am certainly pleased that the Speech from the Throne mentions again that our Charter of Rights and Constitution remain incomplete without the adhesion of Quebec. The Prime Minister has made it abundantly clear that one of the great goals of his government would be to bring Quebec into the Constitution. In fact, the 1984 Speech from the Throne stated:

...it is obvious that the constitutional agreement is incomplete so long as Québec is not part of an accord... my Ministers will work to create the conditions that will make possible the achievement of this essential accord.

It is understandable that the government, in the ensuing months, kept away from the issue until the election of a Liberal government in Quebec. What is less understandable is that the Prime Minister should have waited so long to appoint, in the person of Senator Murray, someone responsible for meeting this great challenge. Here, again, the government seems to be in the process of abandoning the agenda which it set for itself in 1984, because this Speech from the Throne carries quite a different message on this subject from that conveyed in the 1984 speech. In the speech we heard last week, it was stated that:

Should there appear reasonable prospects for agreement, formal negotiations will proceed in the expectation that Quebec will take its rightful place as a full partner in the Canadian Constitution.

What appears to be happening is that the Canadian government is no longer prepared to throw its full weight behind the search for a solution. The government seems to be content with touching base with provincial governments to test the prospects. At best, negotiations will be initiated.

Contrast that with the other great negotiation which was to be a landmark in the history of this government. The Canadian government initiated trade negotiations with the United States and pressed ahead despite a clamour of opposition in the country. I would simply ask: Why not similar determination in the case of Quebec? Instead of determination, instead of throwing its full weight behind the effort, instead of working to create the conditions that will make possible the achievement of this essential accord, this Speech from the Throne stated: "Should there appear reasonable prospects for agreement, formal negotiations will proceed..."

Honourable senators, I must also say a word about that other pillar of the Canadian government's future; namely, constructive internationalism. That is one of the big items in the Speech from the Throne. Well, I was quite disturbed by the section on internationalism in the 1984 Speech from the Throne because the government committed itself to renewing the tradition of constructive Canadian internationalism. It highlighted the vital relationship with the United States, dealt with defence, multilateral institutions, the importance of trade and of trade liberalization. The list was rounded off with a

reference to Canada's record in official development assistance and the continuing need of the developing countries. As honourable senators may recall, I said that a good deal of rewriting of history had been necessary to talk about renewed Canadian internationalism, as though that great tradition had disappeared during the years in office of former Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau—a view held, perhaps, in the back rooms of the Conservative Party, but certainly not in the great capitals of the world. I am pleased that the term "renewed" has conspicuously been dropped from the Speech from the Throne we heard last week. This government is now committed to constructive internationalism. This phrase has at least the merit of being used in the report of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on Canada's International Relations.

What is it, then, that the government proposes as constructive internationalism for Canada in 1986? Can we glean any new insights from the Speech from the Throne as a result of the seasoning and knowledge gained by the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs from two years' experience in conducting Canada's foreign relations and after much travel abroad? Honourable senators, I do not need to repeat the highlighted areas of Canadian interest. It is the same old list as that contained in the 1984 Speech from the Throne. Are we to become any the wiser when we are told that "our foreign policy essentially rests on the respect for our engagements towards the multilateral institutions and organizations of which we are members"? I am relieved to know that Canada will continue its efforts in the Commonwealth, in la francophonie, the United Nations and NATO. But such commonplace utterances are self-evident and do not require insight or experience or travel or, indeed, much knowledge.

It is clear, as I mentioned earlier, that our relationship with the United States has lost its choice place at the top of the foreign policy agenda. We have been told under the heading of Economic Renewal that the government pursues "a mutually advantageous trade agreement" with the United States—a far cry from the historic event of comprehensive free trade. The Speech from the Throne remains silent on how the government intends to cope with the current dramatic trade issues with the United States, and with other no less dramatic issues, such as the problem of acid rain.

● (1510)

I wonder if the maple syrup producers of Quebec, or the forestry industry in the east, or the tourist industry—those who cherish the beauty of our land—will be satisfied with a statement in the Speech from the Throne that the government

... remains determined to pursue with the United States the rapid implementation of the recommendations of our Special Envoys with respect to acid rain.

Will that satisfy the public or the urgency of the situation?

The Speech from the Throne should also have told us what the government has done since September 1985 to protect Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic. After the humiliating episode of the voyage of the "Polar Sea" in the Northwest