

notions, then I realize I had better be very careful about what I do with the advice I get.

Supposing I had accepted what they had told me at its face value. What do you think, honourable senators, would have happened? I would have walked over to the House of Commons and said to the leaders of the house, "I have an offer you can't refuse. You will be able to get half of your bill now and half later; the Liberals in the Senate said so. The Liberals in the Senate say that, if you will just amend this little bill, so it can be returned and debated all over again, plus a second bill to cover the second half of Bill C-11, they think this will go through the House of Commons in pretty quick time. You will get Royal Assent, and there will be no problems."

If I had advanced that proposition, I suppose one would have said to me, "Well, now, what makes you think it will get through the House of Commons this way so that Royal Assent can be given without loss of time?" I would respond, "Well, the Liberal senators told me so." It would then be pointed out to me that there are some Liberal members of the House of Commons and I might have been asked, "What do you suppose they are going to do? Have the Liberal senators offered you any assurance or any guarantee or any undertaking that their colleagues in the House of Commons will take their advice and pass this bill with reasonable despatch so we can have Royal Assent?"

Senator Phillips: They are from different parties.

Senator Roblin: I would have to respond, "No, I don't think they went that far." No doubt, they would then say, "Are they urging the principle that a deal made in the Senate is a deal that is binding on the House of Commons?" I would have to say that I did not think they are making that proposition because they did not agree to the reverse situation—they did not agree that the House of Commons binds the Senate. They would then say, "Well, it is interesting to have that assurance from the senators of the Liberal persuasion."

Then, of course, they would ask me another question which would be, "What do the NDP senators think about this proposal?" I am afraid I would have to say, "There aren't any NDP senators to be found, not so far as I know."

Senator Phillips: What about Senator Argue?

Senator Roblin: He turned his coat so long ago, we forgive him.

They would say to me, "There may be no NDP senators, but there are NDP members in the House of Commons. Do you suppose this offer by Senators MacEachen, Kirby, Corbin and others holds good for them?" Honourable senators, that would give me some pause. "Don't you know," they would say to me, "that the Liberals and the NDP in the House of Commons are fighting to see who is top dog? Are you not aware of the fact that the NDP in the House of Commons does not like the Senate? Do you really think it would fly that the NDP in the House of Commons would agree to the passage of this bill which had received the unanimous support of the House of Commons but was turned down by the Senate and sent back with another recommendation?"

[Senator Roblin.]

Does anyone in this chamber think that a likely scenario, particularly as we know that, in the current Gallup polls, the NDP are points ahead of the Liberal Party in terms of public popularity? What an opportunity this would give them to establish their credentials with the Canadian people as the real opposition in the House of Commons.

If I went to them with a proposition like that, following the advice of Senator MacEachen and following the advice of Senator Kirby, they would say to me, "Roblin, you are being sold a pup." They would say, "Roblin, you have been conned, and you have been conned by two who are experts in the task; two con artists." I add to them the other members in this chamber who want me to do the same thing. Any politician who takes the trouble to use his brain will understand that the possibility of getting a quick return of this legislation from the House of Commons is nil. If you believe that, you will believe anything.

Senator Marshall: There may be NDP appointments to the Senate before we are through.

Senator Roblin: Maybe we will get them.

Senator Guay: This is the first time I have seen the Leader of the Government safeguarding the interests of the NDP.

Senator Phillips: They do not have a potential prime minister in that crowd.

Senator Flynn: Try to understand.

Senator Roblin: This short pause has given me an opportunity to collect myself after my emphatic remarks about the good advice I have been getting about how to get my act together in order to serve the public interest. Now that we have dealt with the realities of life and not the airy-fairy ideas that are propagated by some politicians in this chamber, who ought to know better; now that we have disposed of that erroneous and fallacious idea which never had a chance of flying in the House of Commons, let us get on to something else.

I want to come back to this question of getting my act together because that was one of the main themes that came across to me from what the Leader of the Opposition had to say. If he were talking about me alone, I think I have sufficiently defended my own activities to dispose of the matter; at least, it seems to me there is some merit in the defence I have offered.

However, he did not do that. He included in his strictures the Minister of Finance as one who "couldn't get his act together." When a former Minister of Finance charges the present Minister of Finance with such a grave dereliction of duty, it is difficult to ignore.

I think, in the life of any politician, there are painful moments. I can confess to that. I would not willingly expose myself to reproaches on some of those issues. I am surprised, indeed, that the Leader of the Opposition should have used that dangerous expression, "Get your act together," because he—we are all human—must have scars and wounds that are perhaps still painful resulting from his own activities of recent