

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Government): Perhaps, honourable senators, we can consider this delayed answer debated.

REQUEST FOR ANSWER

Hon. Jack Marshall: Honourable senators, while we are on delayed answers I should like to point out that, some time ago, I asked the predecessor of the Leader of the Government a question regarding the law of the sea. At that time I was concerned about the fact that, while Canada was going to be a signatory to the Law of the Sea Convention and the treaty, the most powerful countries in the world, such as the United States, Russia and West Germany, were not going to sign the treaty. There has to be some basis for that reasoning. In view of the fact that the Law of the Sea Treaty will be signed in Jamaica on December 6, could the Leader of the Government make a statement on the position of the Government of Canada with regard to the Law of the Sea Conference, as opposed to the position taken by, especially, the United States.

● (1450)

Hon. H. A. Olson (Leader of the Government): I will take that question as notice, honourable senators.

INTERPRETATION ACT BILLS OF EXCHANGE ACT CANADA LABOUR CODE

SECOND READING—POINT OF ORDER—SPEAKER'S RULING
RESERVED

On the Order:

Resuming the debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Olson, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Frith, for the second reading of the Bill S-30, intituled: "An Act to amend certain Acts in relation to Canada Day".—(*Speaker's Ruling*).

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, last night when the debate took place a point of order was raised on procedure. If honourable senators see no objection, I should like to think it over until tomorrow before I give my decision. It is a very complex matter, it is important, and I should like to give the best decision I can.

Is that agreed?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

NATIONAL FINANCE

"GOVERNMENT POLICY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT"—
CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF STANDING SENATE
COMMITTEE—DEBATE CONTINUED

The Senate resumed from Wednesday, October 27, the debate on the consideration of the report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance entitled *Government*

[Senator Roblin.]

Policy and Regional Development, tabled in the Senate on Monday, October 25, 1982.

Hon. G. I. Smith: Honourable senators, on October 27, immediately after Senator Everett and Senator Steuart had spoken on this report, I made a brief comment, the substance of which may be found at page 4870 of *Debates of the Senate* of that day.

Therein I indicated that the report, as presented verbally and eloquently by Senator Everett, did not sound the same to me as I had read. While I still stand by that statement, I think my comment was unfair to Senator Everett, because I think the difference can be accounted for very simply in two ways. The first is the difference between the presentation of a subject verbally and a somewhat lengthy written text. And the second way in which I think the difference may arise is that the words of Senator Everett, when carefully scrutinized, seem to me to be somewhat more precise and present the matter more succinctly than the report itself did. So far as that comment goes, I believe I was being unfair to Senator Everett, and I extend to him my regrets for having thought even for a moment that a senator with his long service and great distinction would somehow go astray in presenting the contents of a report to the Senate.

However, there are a couple of things that I noticed in this more careful scrutiny of the matter that I should like to make reference to. In looking at the list of witnesses contained in the report, I think it is very difficult to avoid the conclusion that the mixture of views was preponderantly that which emanated from academic people and members of the bureaucracy, without a great deal of leavening by testimony from people who have had in the past, and have now, the responsibility, as elected persons, of dealing with the subject of regional disparities. I suspect that had that leavening been on a somewhat more generous level, some of the comments in the report, although not necessarily the remarks of Senator Everett, might have been somewhat modified. However, I do not intend to make any further comment on that point.

The second matter is that it seems to me, in a general way—and I shall be very brief on this—that the report tended to consider disparities wherever they might exist in a province rather than what I think is the major problem in our country, which is disparities that exist in a whole region of the country, such as the one from which I come. It seems to me the treatment of these two kinds of disparity must be very different and must present very different problems, and present them to different levels of government.

Having said that, I say it is perfectly clear that the report is a very careful study of the problem and should make a valuable contribution to its understanding, if not its solution. I congratulate the committee on what was obviously the product of a lot of very hard and diligent work.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Arthur Tremblay: Honourable senators, I apologize, because I thought one of the senators on the other side of the house would adjourn the debate and subsequently rise to