

*Message from the Senate*

and hide behind the skirts of the Senator from "Lake Anno", or whatever you call that lake up there in Cape Breton. I am just absolutely shocked as a Nova Scotian that this could happen. I was hoping that the ACOA legislation would be in place before the bureaucracy and administration has to close down and thus put in jeopardy many of the applications which will provide jobs in Atlantic Canada. That is what will happen if the Senate keeps playing tic-tac-toe with Bills from this House, especially this Bill.

I have the highest respect for my hon. friend from Cape Breton personally, but for him to stand here on a Friday morning and suggest that the Senate can do anything with the Bills that this democratically elected place sends it and then hide behind the skirts of the Leader of the Liberal majority, the Senator from "Lake Anno", was too much. I could not believe my ears.

Obviously the Hon. Member for Churchill is completely correct. We do not accept something back from the Senate in a half-baked way. Let MacEachen play his little games. His myopia over Devco has put in jeopardy the whole ACOA program for Atlantic Canada and even he should not be able to get away with it and we should not condone it for one more minute.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

● (1020)

**Mr. MacLellan:** Mr. Speaker, I have no objection to supporting the Hon. Senator from the other place up by the lake, but I certainly would not want to support the Hon. Member for Annapolis Valley—Hants (Mr. Nowlan) who, as evidenced by his arguments, is up the creek.

The arguments of the Member for Churchill (Mr. Murphy) and the Member for Annapolis Valley—Hants go to the very foundation of the Parliament and the Constitution of this country. When the Constitution was first developed it called for two Houses of Parliament, the House of Commons and the Senate. The Senate was set up to look after the regions of this country. The seats in the Senate were allotted in accordance with the regions of the country.

There is no better example of the Senate acting in the interests of a region of this country than the Bill which we are presently discussing. To say that the Senate cannot split this Bill is to say that the Senate cannot act for the regions of the country and that the Senate and Senators from Atlantic Canada cannot act for Atlantic Canada. To say so would be in violation of the Constitution of the country.

**Mr. Speaker:** I will ask the Hon. Member to assist the Chair further. Is the Hon. Member saying that having split the Bill, as the Senate has apparently done, this House must accept it in the split form? Is that the suggestion?

**Mr. MacLellan:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I am saying that this House does not necessarily have to accept the second portion.

However, I submit that the House should accept the portion which has been returned to the House because it is in complete agreement and complete fidelity with the intention of the Government in proposing this Bill initially.

The Government presented this Bill in order to set up the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. That has not changed. The provisions relating to the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency have not changed one iota. All the provisions which the House passed have been returned intact by the Senate. The intention of Bill C-103 was to provide the vehicle for the operation of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, and that has not been changed.

What has been taken out of the Bill is the clandestine attempt by the Government to jeopardize and devastate the Cape Breton Development Corporation, which was not the original intention of the Bill. That is not a fundamental principle of this Bill.

Whether the House should accept the second portion, if there is a second portion returned to the House, remains to be seen. That depends upon the content of that second portion, upon whether that second portion relates to the Cape Breton Development Corporation. We will not know that until we see that second portion. However, this portion is in complete agreement with what the Government intended when it presented this Bill to the House of Commons and I think it should be accepted.

**Mr. Speaker:** I thank the Hon. Member. The Hon. Member for Halifax West (Mr. Crosby).

**Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West):** Mr. Speaker, I will begin by reflecting on your own suggestion to Members of the House that this was a matter of process and procedure, that is to say, we have to be certain that the proper procedure was followed in the House and in the Senate in dealing with the Bill approved by the House of Commons. I will address that point and then indicate how it reflects on other points.

When the Bill was before the House of Commons Members of this House, including the Members in the Liberal Opposition, and especially the Member for Cape Breton—The Sydneys (Mr. MacLellan), had the opportunity to seek the approval of the House for any amendment they wanted to make to the Bill. If Members of the Opposition in the House of Commons, or indeed government Members, thought the Bill dealt with two separate matters, thought the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency ought to be separated, they could have taken the appropriate action. If they had taken such action it would have been voted upon. The answer would have been given in this House of Commons and the House of Commons would have spoken on the matter.

The House of Commons, having approved the Bill in that form, having decided that it dealt with one and the same matter and was in proper form, presented it to the Senate. What right do the people in the other place have to say to this House of Commons: "You have done the wrong thing, you