

given by the House of Commons for refusing to accept a number of amendments proposed by the Senate.

Generally speaking, those reasons are in line with the positions we took in this Chamber in the course of the debate. The amendments with which the House of Commons disagreed are a contradiction of the fundamental principles contained in Bill C-21. Basically, they are a clear rejection of the basic thrust of this bill.

I don't think this is the right time to get involved in details. For the time being, I am satisfied with this description of what I see as the fundamental reason for the response transmitted to us by the House of Commons today to the proposed amendments to Bill C-21 sent by the Senate to the House of Commons.

[English]

MESSAGE FROM COMMONS AND MOTION FOR CONCURRENCE  
IN COMMONS AMENDMENTS AND FOR NON-INSISTENCE UPON  
SENATE AMENDMENTS REFERRED TO SPECIAL SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON BILL C-21

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I, like Senator Tremblay, will be very brief. This is not the time, at least not for me, to enter into a major discussion of the message from the House of Commons. It is necessary for us to give the House of Commons at least the courtesy of reading the speeches by the ministers and members of the House of Commons before we make a statement. I do know that a number of amendments to which we attach importance were turned down by the House of Commons for which no explanation was given, to my knowledge. Certainly, they would not fit into the category referred to by Senator Tremblay.

However, I should like to move:

That the question, together with the message from the House of Commons on the same subject, dated March 13, 1990, be referred to the Special Committee of the Senate on Bill C-21, An Act to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act and the Employment and Immigration Department and Commission Act, for consideration and report; and

That the said Special Committee for such purposes be revived.

Honourable senators, we have followed this practice on a number of previous occasions. It is not breaking new ground to have the message sent to the committee that studied the bill and formulated the amendments. It is certainly not my expectation that the committee, apart from considering its view on the amendments, would conduct new hearings or travel, or anything like that. It is my expectation that the committee will do its work promptly and report quickly to the Senate, and that that we will have an opportunity at that time to speak in greater detail on the substance of the matter before us and to decide what attitude the Senate will take on this particular motion.

[Senator Tremblay.]

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** It is moved by the Honourable Senator MacEachen, seconded by the Honourable Senator Hébert:

That the question, together with the message from the House of Commons on the same subject, dated March 13, 1990, be referred to the Special Committee of the Senate on Bill C-21, An Act to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act and the Employment and Immigration Department and Commission Act, for consideration and report; and

That the said Special Committee for such purposes be revived.

Honourable senators, is it your pleasure to adopt the motion?

**Hon. L. Norbert Thériault:** Honourable senators, very briefly I want to point out that I support the motion of the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, but I should like to make one point. I have not read everything that was said in the other place yesterday but I listened to most of it and it is very simple to me: the government did not give one good reason why it should not accept our amendments. The only reason for the amendments being bad was that they came from the Liberal majority in the Senate. In my view, that is a very weak reason.

**Senator Flynn:** It is a good enough reason!

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** Honourable senators, is it your pleasure to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

**Hon. C. William Doody (Deputy Leader of the Government):** On division!

Motion agreed to, on division.

• (1410)

## QUESTION PERIOD

### THE CONSTITUTION

MEECH LAKE ACCORD—DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN PRIME  
MINISTER AND PROVINCIAL PREMIERS

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I have a question for the Leader of the Government that relates to a statement made this morning, I believe, by the Prime Minister, in which he is reported to have said that he himself is conducting ongoing discussions with the premiers. I am pleased to note that. I ask the Leader of the Government whether this is the type of ongoing discussion to which he referred yesterday, which is going on more or less as a matter of routine, or is there a special new type of discussion being conducted by the Prime Minister?

**Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government and Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations):** Honourable senators, as I have previously stated, either the Prime Minister