

Brunswick Legislature on 15, June. According to the news broadcasted by Radio-Canada tonight, the government of New Brunswick would have asked the federal government to take its time and to avoid a backlash, etc., and to go slowly with the entrenchment of Bill 88.

● (2000)

Honourable senators, I can assure you that it was not so. I checked with the Prime Minister's Office at noon. I checked again with reporters a few moments ago. The New Brunswick government and legislature considered that they finished their job. Even though the formal request was made within the context of the debate on the Meech Lake Accord, the New Brunswick government and legislature thought that the federal government had everything it needed to proceed.

I invite the government, the leader of the government in the Senate and all other ministers and members of the House of Commons to proceed bilaterally under section 43. That is what I am told.

I was happy, as most of us were, to see that, despite the failure of the Meech Lake Accord, the Prime Minister and his government seemed willing, to a great extent, to respect the spirit of that accord with regard to Supreme Court and Senate appointments, at least in the provinces which supported the accord.

I think it would be unfortunate that, fearing a backlash, the government of Canada postponed indefinitely the entrenchment of Bill 88. Acadians have been neglected for too long. We cannot wait for another round. We cannot wait for people in Newfoundland, in Manitoba or anywhere else to be ready.

Hon. Jacques Flynn: You are asking Quebec to wait!

Senator Simard: Quebec is going to study its structures and tell us which place it could occupy in a renewed federalism.

Messrs McKenna and Mulroney seem to agree to proceed bilaterally, and I invite them to do the same thing in New Brunswick with respect to Bill 88.

Honourable senators, I insist on this because, in politics, you never know what can happen. In New Brunswick, we have a government with no opposition whatsoever. It has 58 members and its chances of being re-elected are good, perhaps.

In Ottawa also, we have a sympathetic government well implanted in Quebec, with a strong base in that province, which is going to say "no" to a Jean Chrétien who, of late, was telling us again he was in favour of the five minimum conditions. He would like to change a few commas, a few question marks . . . a bit like we did this afternoon.

We wanted to talk about our motion but because . . . you know . . . I don't know . . . it might be better to wait, there are other things . . . like this comma which was not in the right place!

That is what they said this afternoon. Finally they kept the floor for an hour and they talked about Meech as they liked.

They negotiated a bit like Quebec in the old days, one against eleven, one against ten. Sénateur Murray did very well. Patiently, we managed to get our debate, and it is continuing.

[Senator Simard.]

I don't think Quebecers are going to forget some rather ambivalent declarations by Mr. Chrétien. I want to quote what he said, as reported in *Le Soleil* of March 27, 1972.

Senator Flynn: In 1972?

Senator Simard: Yes, senator Flynn, 1972.

We know, Mr. Chrétien has been telling us for the last six months. He said it again during their convention and since then. He is betting on his experience to assume power and solve the constitutional problem. Well, his experience dates back to 1972, when he was saying:

French Canadians are in no danger of being assimilated, and the last few years are here to prove it.

This was reported in *Le Soleil* of March 27, 1972.

On March 14, 1990—he certainly is consistent Mr. Chrétien—he was reported by *The Telegraph Journal* as saying, and I quote:

French-speaking Quebecers are afraid to be assimilated by the English-speaking majority in Canada and to lose their language and culture, but their fears are unwarranted.

As was reported in the *Telegraph Journal*, two days earlier, Mr. Chrétien was in New Brunswick, where he said:

The Accord, in its present form, would give French-speaking Quebecers too much influence on the decision-making process concerning linguistic policies in Canada.

He added:

One million Francophones live outside Quebec. Acadians are more French than were are in Quebec.

So that is what Mr. Chrétien, who has great experience in that field, is suggesting. He thinks he can really put Quebec in its proper place, he can succeed at Quebec's expense. He knows that we, Acadians, will not be assimilated, that that is impossible.

Whatever Mr. Chrétien says or does, I think Quebecers will remember the positions he took. What if history was repeating itself . . . in a friendly conversation he was having with a colleague of mine this afternoon, he was blaming the authors of the Meech Lake Accord, the first ministers, for dealing with this issue behind closed doors.

He mentioned that quite often. But let me remind you that Mr. Chrétien was in the kitchen of the Chateau Laurier while the Quebec delegation . . . I, myself, was taking part in that conference, but I was not invited to the kitchen of the Chateau Laurier. Had I been, I probably would have refused to attend anyway. That is where they decided what to do with Quebec.

Senator Olson, you said Quebec was not driven out that night, how would you know, you were asleep when it happened! You were not in the kitchen, at the Chateau Laurier. That's where everything was concocted. The chef was Mr. Jean Chrétien, his assistant, Mr. Romanow!