

interested in that would have taken the trouble to look at the latest statement of November 8, which was followed by a bill about 20 days later, in order to acquaint themselves with the information—information that they will never find in the estimates they are waiting for, and which they say is the principle upon which their present policy of obstruction and of negation is based.

**An Hon. Senator:** False.

**Senator Roblin:** I think that argument bears little examination. If my honourable friend wishes to express himself, let him do so in parliamentary language, and let him do so on his own time. He is not going to do it on mine.

There has been no flip-flop, Senator Kelly—no, I apologize, it is Senator Kirby. If Senator Kelly were here, I would apologize to him. There is no flip-flop, Senator Kirby. We were consistent in asking for the financial information relating to income, expenditures, debt and borrowing when we were engaged in debate on this matter in the other place, and in this case and in this chamber we have given them—and we have given them in a timely manner so that they could be used by those legislators who were concerned about the application of business principles to government. There has been no flip-flop. That has been the consistent position of the Government of Canada.

I now wish to deal with another issue. I wish to deal with the concept expressed by the last speaker, which was dealt with at some length by Senator Kirby last evening, and which was a recurring theme in the speeches made by the Leader of the Opposition, and mentioned perhaps by every other person who has objected to the manner in which the government has handled this bill. It has something to do with, I suppose, “get your act together”, because the suggestion has been made that if we are in a pickle today, if the Canadian dollar is being influenced by what we are doing in this house, we have only the government to blame—and particularly the Leader of the Government in the Senate, I suppose.

**Senator MacEachen:** Not really.

**Senator Roblin:** The recurring theme has been not only is the leader to blame, he had the solution in his hand. All he had to do was, somewhere along the line, agree to the reasonable proposal made by honourable senators opposite that the bill be amended. They recommended that the bill be amended by cutting out Part II, which has to do with the next fiscal year. They asked that we restrict it only to the money required for this fiscal year, and lo and behold, not only would the bill be passed by the Senate, but according to Senator Kirby, Royal Assent would be secured.

When Senator Kirby spoke last evening he used a phrase that I think was a kind of throw-away line that came to his mind as he spoke, but that throw-away line certainly put me on my guard. Quite gratuitously, and having nothing to do with this bill whatsoever, he accused the administration of being interested in “managed news”.

Well, I found that a singular expression to come from a gentleman like that, because when listening to Senator Kirby,

I remembered that he is an expert at “managed news.” I think he is even better than Senator Davey at “managed news,” and that says something. There are some of us who have been around here long enough to remember the struggle that took place in this country over our Constitution and its patriation.

One of the most striking events of that whole discussion was a revelation to the general public that a memorandum had been written, which for lack of a better term I will call the “Kirby scenario.” That “Kirby scenario” was a recommendation, written by a civil servant who, of course, had no political ties or inclinations, to the government of the day, and I imagine a copy went to my honourable friend sitting opposite—

**Senator MacEachen:** Absolutely.

**Senator Roblin:** —which advised a course of action as to how the government could get its way on the matter of patriation of the Constitution.

I am not going to read that report because it consists of 64 pages, but I have in my hand a number of news comments of the day, perhaps half a dozen of them. There is one that I intend to read, and that is the comment that appeared in the *Ottawa Citizen* of September 11, 1980 regarding this document and the government responsible for it. That comment states:

The arrogance, the sneakiness and, yes, the naiveté of some of the language of the 64-page document is bad enough—

It's sneaky in outlining options for setting one province against the other, for confounding the opposition in Parliament, for ducking through loopholes in the law and for brainwashing the people in order to achieve this end.

That is what I call management of the news; not only management of the news—

**Some Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Senator Roblin:** —but management of the opposition, management of the government in Parliament and management of the people. A more cynical and unsavoury proposal for the manipulation of the public by a government has seldom surfaced, and yet this gentleman gave me advice.

**Senator Thériault:** Until now.

**Senator Roblin:** Well, he will not give me any more. I am glad of that, but he was giving me advice. So, when I get advice from a source such as that, I tell you that that puts me on my guard. He said that if I had only done what he told me to do and split the bill, I would be home free. That is not the worst of it because another gentleman with acknowledged parliamentary skills, not to say accomplishments, the Leader of the Opposition, is the man who first gave me that idea.

• (1430)

If I consider the advice of the Leader of the Opposition and couple it with the advice of Senator Kirby and reflect upon the capacities of these gentlemen to conceive of interesting