

will be in the day after tomorrow—this nation will have constructive and effective advice and assistance to offer.

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

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, in thanking Senator Roblin for his very interesting summary of events at the conference I wonder if he would try to answer a question I have on my mind. To what extent are the European countries interested in Canada? I agree 100 per cent with his conclusion that it is in Canada's interest to be present and to participate. Otherwise, we will be overlooked. However, I have noticed that there is varying interest in Canada among European countries. Some are very interested in listening to us and others are not so interested. I wonder whether he has detected any of that attitude among European spokesmen, and, if he has, whether he has any explanation for it.

● (1600)

**Senator Roblin:** It is an interesting point. My impression is that Canada is not ranked number one in their concerns. I think it probably occupies a relatively low priority in the general European interest.

That was the point I tried to make in my speech, and I think my honourable friend picked it up—that is, they are solely directing their attention now to internal matters, and the relationships they have with other states—I daresay probably even with the United States itself—are no longer what they used to be. If we want to make sure that our concerns are heard, we will have to be on the spot, inasmuch as we will be allowed to do so, in order to make sure they realize that we are in business and have something to say.

I suspect that most Europeans think of the United States and add Canada as an afterthought.

**Senator Frith:** Or even think of America and include us.

**Senator Roblin:** That is even worse.

So we have to do a great deal to develop our individual personality insofar as Europeans are concerned, and it will not be an easy job. That is why I think this has to be tackled at the highest levels here and be structured so that they trip over us every time they turn around.

**Senator MacEachen:** I have heard it said by an important Canadian businessman that the country in Europe which has the greatest interest in Canada is the Federal Republic of Germany. Do you have any comment on that?

**Senator Roblin:** I hope that is the case, because it is, undoubtedly, the powerhouse in Europe today, and will become even more so after unification takes place.

Any idea of relying on the Commonwealth connection as being the "entrée" to the European Community is useful—we should not overlook that—but I do not think we should count on it. I think we would do well to make our point, if we can, with West Germany, because I believe that is the economic powerhouse of Europe.

If what my friend tells me is right, that they are most interested in us, I am happy to hear that.

**Senator MacEachen:** It is surprising to find the Federal Republic of Germany more interested in us, if that is the case, than the United Kingdom or France. That is an unusual development, but nevertheless appreciated, if that is the case.

**Senator Roblin:** I think we would be wise to cultivate all of them, but it is important to realize that the power of the European Community itself in Brussels is growing steadily, and we have to make our number with them rather than running around dealing with nations as if that were the only thing to do. I think we have to run around and make our case as frequently and as often as we can and with as many as we can, but recognizing that Brussels is the place where these decisions are being made.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** If no other senator wishes to speak, this inquiry is considered debated.

## ADJOURNMENT

Leave having been given to revert to Notices of Motions:

**Hon. C. William Doody (Deputy Leader of the Government):** With leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 45(1)(g), I move:

That when the Senate adjourns today, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday next, 20th February, 1990, at two o'clock in the afternoon.

I move that motion keeping in mind the comments I made earlier.

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Leader of the Opposition):** And the assurances given.

Motion agreed to.

The Senate adjourned until Tuesday, February 20, 1990, at 2 p.m.