

## THE SENATE

Wednesday, May 4, 1977

The Senate met at 2 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.  
Prayers.

### HEALTH, WELFARE AND SCIENCE

#### NON-RESTRICTED USE OF CYCLAMATES—QUESTION

**Senator Smith (Colchester):** Honourable senators, I wonder if I might ask the Leader of the Government whether the government concurs in the view that the substances known as cyclamates should not have been restricted in their use by any departments of government in years gone by?

**Senator Perrault:** Honourable senators, it may be helpful to have a statement given to the chamber in that regard. I do not possess sufficient scientific knowledge to offer an opinion that would be worth very much. However, I shall endeavour to have a statement prepared which will provide the government's position on this matter.

**Senator Smith (Colchester):** I thank the Honourable Leader of the Government. I would not presume to ask him whether his assessment of his opinion in that respect would be the same as in other matters.

**Senator Perrault:** I appreciate your counsel in this regard, Senator Smith.

**Senator Flynn:** It is a question.

**Senator Perrault:** And your ideas will be given careful consideration.

### NATIONAL UNITY

#### PROPOSED DEBATE—QUESTION

**Senator Austin:** Honourable senators, I should like to ask the Leader of the Government whether he proposes that this chamber have a debate on national unity at the same time as the House of Commons might have such a debate.

**Senator Perrault:** Honourable senators, it is anticipated that there may be such a debate in this chamber. Whether it is to be coincident with the debate in the other place is now under consideration.

**Senator Flynn:** As the role of this house is one of sober second thought, does the leader not think it would be preferable for us to follow so that we might be able to correct some of the exaggerations, errors, or omissions of the other place?

[*Translation*]

**Senator Bosa:** Honourable senators, I should like to put a question to the Leader of the Government.

[*English*]

As Chairman of the Canadian Consultative Council on Multi-Culturalism, I think one of the most compelling objectives we have is national unity. I should like to ask the Leader of the Government if he would be a little more specific as to when this chamber might debate this most important subject.

**Senator Perrault:** By way of reply I can say only that there have been numerous meetings and consultations involving members of this chamber and the other place, and the Leader of the Government in this house, to discuss the entire question of national unity and how senators and members of the other place may participate effectively in attempting to foster national unity and in determining the views of Canadians on this subject.

A number of senators support the idea of having a special Senate committee on this subject or on regional aspirations. Indeed, the Leader of the Opposition, as I stated the other day, has been most helpful in providing his counsel and guidance in that regard. Another view has been expressed that a joint committee of the two houses would be an effective way of proceeding with a study of national unity and related questions.

● (1410)

Discussions are being held at the present time, and I hope that within a few days it will be possible to make a statement on the subject in this chamber. Indeed, a resolution may come before this chamber, or a joint resolution before both chambers, with respect to action that may be taken.

[*Translation*]

**Senator Asselin:** May I ask a question which is supplementary to the question which has just been asked by my honourable friend.

Is the Leader of the Government aware of the fact that in 1970-71 a joint committee of the Senate and the House of Commons examined the possible changes on the constitutional level and that this committee travelled across Canada for nearly a year? As I have just said, this committee included senators and House of Commons representatives. It reported to the House of Commons and made interesting constitutional proposals. I wonder why the Government of Canada did not examine this extremely important report itself or have it considered by the House of Commons and the Senate, and why it was left on the shelf while we must come back to the same formula today and have a committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons do this job. Then the job was done in 1971 and the report was tabled in 1972 and left on the shelf, and the government of Canada did not take it into consideration at all.