

If Senator Simard wants more information on this matter, I will consult my colleague, Mr. Clark.

Senator Simard: Thank you, Senator Murray.

I accept your answer, but we will remain vigilant and ask questions here and elsewhere.

I hope that Mr. McKenna will give up this strategy of again linking the Acadians' request to the negotiation of constitutional agreements on subjects that require, for some, eleven First Ministers and, lately, the native people as well, and for others, the consent of seven out of ten provinces having 50 per cent of the population.

NEW BRUNSWICK

IMPOSITION OF SURTAX ON WOOD PRODUCTS—EFFECT ON BUSINESS

Hon. Jean-Maurice Simard: Honourable senators, I apologize to you; it is not my habit to take too long! I leave that to the Liberals, who do not unlike me, always have access to the Leader of the Government in the Senate! I must ask one last question on a completely different subject, but it still concerns the Premier of New Brunswick.

As far as I know, the Premier of New Brunswick, Mr. McKenna, is the only Canadian, certainly the only New Brunswicker, who was glad about the American decision last week to impose a surtax on softwood lumber from New Brunswick and all of Canada. Has the Leader of the Government in the Senate or someone else in the government understood what the Premier of New Brunswick meant when he said that it might be good in the long run?

Has the federal government studied this statement by the Premier of New Brunswick, which surprised and shocked business people and workers in the forestry industry in that province?

Senator Murray, I await your reply.

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I was not aware of the statement attributed by Senator Simard to Premier McKenna.

Nevertheless, I will be pleased to draw the attention of my colleague, Mr. Wilson, to the question raised by Senator Simard. If there are any comments from my colleague, Mr. Wilson, I will be pleased to bring them up here in due course.

Senator Simard: Thank you, Senator Murray.

THE CONSTITUTION

FRENCH-SPEAKING CANADIANS OUTSIDE QUEBEC

Hon. Gildas L. Molgat (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, it seems to me that the questions raised by Senator Simard require a supplementary.

The government decided last week to include in the process the government of the Northwest Territories, which represents approximately 60,000 people, and that of the Yukon, which represents about 30,000 people and four native associations . . .

[Senator Murray.]

I want to say at the outset that I am very happy that the government has decided to include them. My question does not concern the fact that they were included. It concerns those who have not been included, that is about one and a half million francophones who live outside Quebec.

What role did the government intend to give to those groups who have a particular interest in the constitution with regards to their protection in the future? It must be very clear that those groups have to rely on the federal government for protection.

Therefore, will they be included also? Will the government ensure that those groups have a say in the matter, just like the others groups who were included last week?

● (1450)

[English]

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, before the Leader of the Government answers that question, I must advise senators that, under rule 23(7), which limits Question Period to 30 minutes, the 30 minutes are now over. However, I believe the leader may want to answer the question, owing to the fact that it has been posed.

[Translation]

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government): There again, honourable senators, I can consult with my colleague, the President of the Privy Council and Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs. But for now, I do not want to leave Senator Molgat unsatisfied.

The hon. senator will not dispute that linguistic minorities are not on the same footing as the governments of the northern territories, which will be at the table as a government. Representatives of the native people will be at the table because we are discussing native self-government.

We must also recall, as Mr. Bisson of the Federation himself admitted yesterday, that the situation of Francophones outside Quebec is different from the situation of native people. Many groups expressed their opinion to the Beaudoin-Dobbie Committee and the official-language communities were represented at all constitutional conferences. Mr. Clark and the Prime Minister are committed to pursuing the consultation process begun with the Federation.

We have made a great deal of progress on recognizing linguistic duality and this question will be discussed with the provinces in the same way as all other proposals.

[English]

DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. John Lynch-Staunton (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have a number of delayed answers to oral questions raised on February 13. There are responses to a question from Senator Marsden regarding Sri Lanka, one from Senator Molgat regarding the effects and monitoring of depletion of the ozone layer, one from Senator Molgat regarding the possible reactivation of a disused rocket station, another from Senator Molgat regarding the costs of