

**Senator MacEachen:** While the leader has this question under reservation, would he reflect upon what I understand to be the commitment made by the Government House Leader that if a consensus is formulated by the provinces and the Government of Canada, at that point there will be consultation on the resolution with the leader of the New Democratic Party and the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons? I have no objection to that, but could the Senate be upgraded to the point where it will be consulted in the same fashion as the leader of the New Democratic Party?

**Senator Roblin:** I shall bear in mind that the honourable senator has disclaimed any right of the members of the House of Commons to tell him what to do or to tell the party what to do and that he reserves the independence of his position and that of the Senate.

**Hon. Hazen Argue:** That is the purpose of the Senate.

**Senator Roblin:** I quite understand his reluctance to allow discussions to take place in the House of Commons as if the Senate were not a party to this important constitutional matter. I can assure my honourable friend that the same consideration will be extended to the leadership in the Senate as is given to the leadership in the House of Commons.

**Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I thank the Leader of the Government for his comments. This matter involves two parts, the timing and the substance. In talking about the substance of the negotiations

the leader said that the principal subject is the matter of time allocation. Is it safe to assume that at this stage that is the only subject, that methods of appointment and other items are not the subject of negotiations at this time?

**Senator Roblin:** As far as I can determine at present, the subject matter of the resolution that Parliament will ultimately be expected to consider in very short order will be limited to the question of time allocation. However, I would not like anyone in the Senate to assume that other aspects of Senate reform will not come before us for consideration as well. I think it is quite probable they will. I am merely saying that at the present time, within the immediate purview, the one item that I have spoken about is the one that we shall be discussing.

I do not want anyone to inscribe these words in steel. I am always conscious of the fact that when negotiations are taking place and when you are giving a report on progress, something might change before they are finished, and I would ask honourable senators to bear that in mind. As things stand at the moment, the question of time allocation will be the only subject of the constitutional proposal.

Again, I repeat to members of the Senate that I am reasonably certain that at some time—I am not sure when—in the future we may expect other aspects of Senate reform to be before us.

The Senate adjourned until Tuesday, March 19, 1985 at 2 p.m.