

Today, the debate was launched mainly by senators from Quebec, all of whom have spent a lot of time and energy to convince their fellow Quebecers who are more inclined toward the separatist option. One can understand their sorrow, their disappointment and their emotions which they expressed after Meech Lake was dead.

The debate has been launched by the senators of Quebec and I would like to join them because Acadians are Quebec's natural allies. The Acadians said yes after some hesitation because they believed it was a first step even though the accord was imperfect, incomplete. A few years later, they wished to demonstrate their well-known generosity and supported Quebec's demands, Canada's demands, constitutional demands which were approved by 95 per cent of the Canadian people, by nine provincial governments, Newfoundland having withdrawn its support a few years later.

The House of Commons had done its homework, but not the Senate, as Senator David said. It is the Senate that set the ball rolling when it wanted to give a forum to the ex-chief and ex-prime minister Trudeau. They worked hard. They do not seem to have been able to convince the Canadian people but they succeeded with allies like Mr. Wells and others. We know the end of the story.

● (1950)

Honourable senators, whatever the Liberal majority in the Senate or the Liberal Party of Canada may say or do, I think that Brian Mulroney, supported as he was by Mr. Peterson, Mr. McKenna and others, has done a good job. I would like to read a paragraph of an article by Paul-André Comeau in today's *Le Devoir* about the generosity of the eight other prime ministers. Quebec came out of this process more united and certainly not isolated.

I think it is all to their credit. We owe these people all our gratitude. In fact and here I quote Paul-André Comeau:

It did not reintegrate the Constitution with honour and enthusiasm as was intended at the outset, but Quebec owes it to Mr. Mulroney to have resisted temptation to isolate it as is unfortunately the tradition. Some will continue to criticize Ottawa's tactics in this matter. But the essential point is not there. Quebec does not come out divided or torn apart of that round of negotiations. It may right away and with lucidity start a process in which all living strength and healthy minds will be able to contribute to the creation of a new project.

Of course, Quebec will work on that new project, that new federalism. Acadians will also want to participate as well as Ontarians, the 500 thousands of Franco-Ontarians. Mrs. Rolande Soucie, retiring chairwomen of ACFO, is deeply saddened by the death of the Meech Lake Accord. According to an article in today's *Le droit*, here is what she says with respect to Franco-Ontarians, and I quote:

We will now have to consider—

She is speaking about Franco-Ontarians.

—that there must be a new constitutional arrangement in this country.

She hopes, in the name of her association, that Franco-Ontarians will take part in the adjustment process of this country.

If people are talking about a new arrangement of this country in Quebec, in New Brunswick and in Ontario, there must be a problem! Canada is bound to be different from the country we have known for so many years.

The general secretary of the Francophones outside Quebec, Mr. Aurèle Thériault—who happens to be the son of our kind colleague, Senator Norbert Thériault—told us last weekend that as far as he was concerned, language problems in Ontario and New Brunswick were all settled, that there was nothing to worry about.

Mr. Aurèle Thériault should go back to his province of New Brunswick. There is a political party in that province, the "Confederation Party", which is threatening to repeal the provincial legislation on official languages in New Brunswick as well as Bill 88 that I will tell you more about in a few moments.

That law was passed unanimously in 1982. It recognizes the existence in New Brunswick of two official linguistic communities and the government's obligation through its programs, its budgets and the establishment of distinct institutions, to promote and protect these two communities.

So, Mr. Thériault should not be so confident, for his mandate is to advocate and put forward projects and help establish a consensus. He says that things seem to be settled in New Brunswick. I can tell you that it is not so! Once in office, the "Confederation Party" will get rid of the provincial legislation on official languages and of Bill 88.

In Ontario, thanks to M. Peterson, they had Bill 8. I wonder if another government might not be tempted to delay, take its time and possibly to repeal Bill 8 in Ontario.

Nothing is established until it is guaranteed under the Constitution. In New Brunswick, we want to make sure that Bill 88, recognizing the linguistic communities, will be there permanently. We want to have it entrenched in the Constitution. That is what the Acadians agreed on as soon as they could, while giving their approval to the Meech Lake Accord and urging Mr. McKenna to sign. We want to thank the Premier, even at this late hour, to finally have seen the light and supported the Meech Lake Accord.

Finally, to conclude this part of my speech, I want to come back to the Federation of Francophones outside Quebec and to tell them that in New Brunswick, things are not settled for ever, nor are they in Ontario. I invite them to go on, as Mr. Thériault told us at the end of last week, putting pressure not only on the federal government, but also on the two provinces and in other parts of the country, on the people of Manitoba, on the people of Nova Scotia and on other provinces.

Honourable senators, talking about Bill 88, a short while ago, I was passed on some news, though it was erroneous and incomplete. I was told that the government of New Brunswick had asked the federal government to take its time to follow up the formal request unanimously made by the New