

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, July 8, 1988

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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[*English*]

## MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

**Mr. Speaker:** I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has divided Bill C-103 into two Bills as Bill C-103 Part 1, an Act to increase opportunity for economic development in Atlantic Canada, to establish the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and to make consequential and related amendments to other Acts, and Bill C-103 Part 2, an Act to establish the Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation and to make consequential and related amendments to other Acts and . . .

[*Translation*]

. . . and that it has passed Bill C-103, Part I, without amendments.

[*English*]

For the benefit of Hon. Members, copies of the two parts of Bill C-103 are available at the table.

**Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of State and Minister of State (Treasury Board)):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I wish to address a brief point of order to the Message from the Senate. I advise the House that the Government, and I think every Member in the House, should take exception to the proceedings in the other place which are reflected in the message you just read.

First, the message which you have just put before us contains not the Bill that this House voted to send to the Senate but two Bills by virtue of the fact that the Senate split the Bill. To me, that means that there are two Bills originating in the Senate rather than one Bill being sent to the Senate and a reply being sent back addressing the one Bill.

There are financial provisions in the Bill that was sent to the Senate. I suggest that it is unconstitutional for the Senate to send Bills to us which have financial implications.

I suggest that the Royal recommendation which was contained in the original Bill sent to the Senate has been breached by the Senate majority. I also suggest that the

Senate amendment to split the Bill, by not having an accompanying recommendation which is a constitutional impossibility, breaches our Standing Order 87 which states that the Commons alone can grant aids and supplies, not the Senate.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, in your position as our Speaker, to indicate in a ruling, if you will, your position on this matter. It is no longer hypothetical, it is very real. If you would do so, the minute you do so, we will then be guided by your wisdom and will be in a position to take action in the House.

That is the procedural argument. I cannot let this go without saying that I feel that it is not beneficial to Atlantic Canada to have the Senate interfering in this way. The Western Diversification Agency deals with four provinces and it was passed by the Senate as one piece of legislation. This piece of legislation deals with the Atlantic Provinces and the Senate is excluding one particular area. For that reason, we are unable to go ahead with the legislation.

I think that what the Senate has done is an affront to Atlantic Canada. It is an affront to the House of Commons. I think it is an affront to every taxpayer in Canada. I ask you, Sir, to rule on this as soon as you can.

**Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys):** Mr. Speaker, the affront to which the Deputy House Leader referred has been made by the Government, not by the Senate. This Government tried to attach to a Bill that was to be primarily for the financing of important regional development projects in Atlantic Canada a portion that had absolutely nothing to do with the development of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. The Bill for the development of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency is for the development of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and should not involve any other subject. Yet the Government put in a completely separate section to do away with the industrial development division of the Cape Breton Development Corporation. That was completely separate from what it wanted to achieve with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

● (1010)

This is an affront to Atlantic Canadians. The Government chose to put a rider on the financing of the projects that Atlantic Canada deserves. It said that if Atlantic Canada wants this Bill, then it has to do away with the development division of the corporation. That is not fair. The people of Atlantic Canada cannot accept that rider because it is devastating to an area that needs assistance most of all.