

the honourable senator from Toronto-Trinity (Hon. Mr. Roebuck), having been passed, became a record of the house, and a committee was set up. What she did was to make a motion to withdraw her name, and when the honourable senator from Toronto-Trinity rose he spoke to that motion, and not on the Orders of the Day.

The Hon. the Speaker: I must point out to the house that I asked honourable senators if it was their wish to consent to the request of the honourable senator from Peterborough that her name be withdrawn, and the house agreed that it be withdrawn. That closed the debate.

Hon. Mr. Reid: I would appeal your ruling.

Hon. Mr. Quinn: There was no motion.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: It is the first time in my experience that a person has not been allowed to explain his position. Go ahead.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

ADDRESS IN REPLY—POINT OF ORDER

On the Orders of the Day:

(Translation):

Hon. Athanase David: Honourable senators, I believe there has never been a greater desire in Canada for a better understanding between the different groups which make up the population. Anything liable to jeopardize or endanger this unity must be avoided.

What is said in the Senate is important because this chamber is composed of elderly men, of serious-minded and wise men who have had wide experience and who, moreover, have assumed a great responsibility.

The Hon. the Speaker: If I may be permitted to interrupt I believe the honourable senator should first outline his point of order.

Hon. Mr. David: I think I am being extremely courteous and I believe that, in this case, Mr. Speaker, I should proceed very carefully. I shall not discuss the point raised but wish to refer immediately to the speech made in the Senate on the Address in reply to the speech from the throne on March 22 last, by the senator from Calgary (Hon. Mr. Ross), to which I take exception. After having congratulated the mover of the address, the honourable senator said:

As to the seconder, I presume he spoke well in French, but I have asked him next time he speaks in the house to use Parisian French, because a number of us do not understand Acadian French too well.

Hon. Mr. Leger: There is no difference.

Some Hon. Senators: Oh, oh.

Hon. Mr. Ross: I have no doubt that he spoke well in Acadian French, because when he undertook to speak in English he made an excellent job of it.

For more than a hundred and fifty years, wherever there is in Canada a settlement of the minority group of French origin, we have fought, we have strived, we have educated ourselves, we have endeavoured to speak French properly, in order that those who brought the language we speak to the shores of the St. Lawrence may not have to be ashamed of us.

To claim that there is an "Acadian French" means—since Acadians speak exactly the same French as do all Canadians of French origin who speak French fluently—that one still holds to the old legend that our French is a patois, a provincial dialect.

Had this statement been made, as is sometimes the case, by uneducated or uninformed persons, it would hardly rate a reference. But in this chamber a statement of that sort takes on such importance that, much as I would like to, I cannot honestly let it go unchallenged.

It is my duty, not a painful one because in defending the language I speak I am defending one of my most treasured possessions. But I am sorry to have to defend it against a man who has occupied a high place in Canada and still does here, in the Senate.

True, some have said: "It might have been meant as banter, perhaps as a good joke". But that is not so, for there are certain things, including language, nationality and religion, about which one does not jest, or of which one does not make sport.

You may rest assured, Mr. Speaker, that I shall remain perfectly calm and speak with the utmost dignity in raising this point of order.

I admit that men may not always be masters of their feelings. But it seems to me that when they have reached a certain age they should at least be able to control their thoughts, their actions and their utterances.

If the honourable senator felt called upon to make such remarks, I shall not insult him to the point of believing that he had given no previous thought to them.

If he had, may I be permitted to say that we French-Canadians, whatever part of Canada we may come from, are somewhat tired of hearing this legend about a dialect, even though it may not be offered with malice aforethought, but which is too often repeated lightly and without the slightest justification whatsoever. The man most responsible, though unvoluntarily, for this