

However, we need special status for Prince Edward Island." I am sure Senator Rossiter would agree.

I would then say, "Let's go back to the old days when the farmers of Prince Edward Island could have their potatoes inspected free by the federal inspectors, and thus return to the way things have been done since Confederation, and not have to pay that inspection fee."

Then I would say, "Perhaps we should then stop charging those poor potato farmers a fee for dredging out the harbours in the wintertime in order that they can sell their potatoes to Africa or South America." That fee was started two years ago, and I say we could return again to the way things have been done since Confederation by stopping that charge.

After we have done all of these things, we could finally see ourselves getting to the point where we were almost on an equal basis with the rest of the country. However, by this time we have probably spent the \$1.05 billion, so perhaps we should then look for some more. I for one would like to see Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland getting almost to the point where we could start to talk to the other provinces on an equal footing. Therefore, Mr. Minister, you see the problems you are facing.

Honourable senators, I have a further point that perhaps the minister could take into consideration. Mr. Minister, since you are now the minister, you know there are many senators in this chamber who have a great deal of knowledge and experience of Atlantic Canada. There is Senator Macquarrie, Senator Phillips, Senator Rossiter, Senator Doody, Senator Rowe, Senator MacEachen, Senator Thériault and others from the Atlantic provinces. Perhaps, Mr. Minister, you could form a committee of Atlantic senators to assist you in making decisions on how best you could help that area and make it grow. Perhaps you could put all the brains, ability and energy that you have here in the Senate to work to assist you in making Atlantic Canada grow and thus show the Canadian people that this Senate is behind you 100 per cent in making that region prosper. With that kind of support, and with Senator Phillips or Senator Doody acting on your behalf in the cabinet as the minister without portfolio to answer here to the other senators, I think that together we could do something for Atlantic Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Hon. Pierre De Bané: Honourable senators, I wish to congratulate our colleague the Leader of the Government in the Senate, Senator Lowell Murray, on his new responsibilities. I do not doubt that, given his huge talent and his dedication to the Atlantic Provinces, he will want to do all he can to iron out disparities.

All the same, I would like to ask him a few questions. First, does he really believe that a yearly budget of approximately \$200 million, which represents less than one fifth of one per cent of the yearly federal expenditures, will effectively help to iron out regional disparities?

[Senator Bonnell.]

Second, can Senator Murray tell us what are the government objectives? Does it want to reduce disparities by 20 per cent in the next 10 or 25 years? Does it want to reduce them by 30 per cent in so many years? I think we must know that if we really want to appraise the efficiency of that new federal agency.

Finally, I would like to remind the senator that all his efforts to iron out disparities will be in vain unless an agency also coordinates the activities of the other federal departments that control more than 99 per cent of the budget, the 30 other departments that spend more than \$110 billion a year. For his efforts to be successful, he must also be able to coordinate the activities of other departments. So, those are a few preliminary reflections that I wanted to address, along with my congratulations, to Senator Murray. Thank you.

● (1430)

[*English*]

INTERNAL ECONOMY, BUDGETS AND ADMINISTRATION

SIXTEENTH TO TWENTY-EIGHTH REPORTS OF COMMITTEE PRESENTED AND PRINTED AS APPENDIX

Hon. Guy Charbonneau, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration, presented the committee's sixteenth to twenty-eighth reports approving budgets of the following committees:

- 16th Agriculture and Forestry;
- 17th Banking, Trade and Commerce;
- 18th Energy and Natural Resources;
- 19th Fisheries;
- 20th Foreign Affairs;
- 21st Legal and Constitutional Affairs;
- 22nd National Finance;
- 23rd Official Languages;
- 24th Regulations and other Statutory Instruments;
- 25th Social Affairs, Science and Technology;
- 26th Social Affairs, Science and Technology;
- 27th Standing Rules and Orders;
- 28th Regulations and other Statutory Instruments.

(*For text of reports see Appendix "A", p. 1187.*)

● (1440)

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall these reports be taken into consideration?

On motion of Senator Frith, reports placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at the next sitting of the Senate.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

THIRD REPORT OF COMMITTEE PRESENTED AND PRINTED AS APPENDIX

Hon. Dalia Wood: Honourable senators, I have the honour to present the third report of the Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages. I ask that the report be printed as an