

has not been resorted to in more than 40 years. The government regards it as dormant and does not intend to revive it. It has been replaced, as the honourable senator knows, by the exchange of written messages and by informal contacts between the members of the two houses and between the government and members of this house, which, over the past 40 years, we have all found to be a more effective way of achieving our objectives.

Senator Stewart: Could we conclude from that that the mere elapse of time will have the effect of expunging from the constitutional practice of this country not only conferences but federal disallowance of provincial acts and the like? Is that the proposition the Leader of the Government is now asserting on behalf of the Government of Canada?

Senator Murray: Not necessarily, honourable senators.

Senator Stewart: I hope not.

Senator Murray: The honourable senator knows how long it has been since disallowance has been resorted to, and he will also be familiar with the cases of the past 15 or 20 years whereby the government of the day was invited to avail itself of that power but declined to do so. I find it interesting that the honourable senator feels that the power of disallowance should be revived and used more often. I look forward to hearing him cite the specific cases in which this should be done.

Senator Stewart: Honourable senators, now that Senator Murray has decided to engage in further obfuscation, may I say that I made no such proposition.

Senator Roblin: That is a good thing!

Senator Simard: We have had problems with the answers today.

Senator Stewart: All afternoon Senator Murray has engaged in obfuscation. He declined to answer Senator Olson's question; he declined to answer Senator Grafstein's question; he has tried the same tactic with me now. But putting that aside, I ask him—

Senator Simard: You do not have to like his answers.

Senator Stewart: Obviously, I do not like them. In view of the representations Senator Simard has made, will Senator Murray do everything in his power to expedite the enactment of Bill C-21 in a manner acceptable to this house?

Senator Barootes: He answered that with a no!

Senator Murray: Honourable senators, I am sure there is a solution to the problem of Bill C-21.

Senator Simard: Leadership on the other side!

Senator Murray: In my judgment, the solution does not lie in reviving the process of a conference between the two houses, which has fallen into disuse.

Senator Barootes: Try Washington, D.C., for that.

Senator Gigantès: Will you roll the dice at the last minute again?

Senator Corbin: Flip a coin.

Senator Stewart: All of these street-wise references are beyond me, honourable senators.

Senator Flynn: No doubt!

Senator Roblin: Obviously!

Senator Stewart: I thank the honourable senator for his assurances that attempts will be made somehow or other—

Senator Roblin: You have been in the clouds for a long time.

Senator Stewart: —to resolve the problem of Bill C-21 in a reasonable time, hopefully, before the two houses adjourn for the summer.

[Translation]

EXCHANGES BETWEEN SENATE GOVERNMENT LEADER AND
PREMIER OF NEW BRUNSWICK—REQUEST FOR INCLUSION IN
DEBATES OF THE SENATE

Hon. L. Norbert Thériault: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

I want to ask him whether he would be prepared to put on record in the *Debates of the Senate* the request concerning Bill C-21 which the Premier of New Brunswick made to the government, to Senator Simard and to other senators?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government in the Senate and Minister of State (Federal-Provincial Relations)): As I explained earlier, honourable senators, Premier McKenna did talk to me briefly on two or three occasions, most recently during the First Ministers Conference here in Ottawa.

This was not a written request from him.

Senator Thériault: If there was a conversation between the Leader of the Government in the Senate and the Premier of New Brunswick concerning Bill C-21, could we not expect that all senators be told what was said?

Senator Murray: That is what I just did, honourable senators.

The Premier of New Brunswick told me that, in his opinion, it is very important that the bill be adopted by this chamber at the earliest opportunity.

Senator Thériault: Honourable senators, I also want the *Debates of the Senate* to show that never ever did the Premier of New Brunswick ask your humble servant that Bill C-21 be adopted. I discussed the matter with him, but he never asked me to urge the Senate to pass the bill. Perhaps my New Brunswick colleagues, Senators LeBlanc (Beauséjour) and Robichaud—

Hon. Jean-Maurice Simard: Are you refusing to take Senator Murray's word?

Senator Thériault: —all the senators from New Brunswick, except Senator Simard, had conversations with Premier McKenna. I for one did not have any conversation concerning the adoption of Bill C-21.

The Premier of New Brunswick never gave me the impression that he supports every single provision of Bill C-21.