

[English]

Clearly again, the word "s'engagent" is to be the translation for "committed".

A third case occurs under 36(2), still at page 67:

Parliament and the government of Canada are committed to the principle . . .

[Translation]

And in French, section 36.(2) clearly says:

Le Parlement et le gouvernement du Canada prennent l'engagement de principe—

[English]

We then have clear precedence for the translation of "commitment" to "engagement". Why is it that we cannot proceed now to make that clear change, in view of the fact that there are clearly precedents in our present Constitution?

**Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, a day or two ago I saw a draft reply to the question of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I approved it for tabling. I thought it had been tabled yesterday. I have sent for it again. I may indeed receive it in a very few minutes. If so, of course I shall table it. If not, I shall do so tomorrow.

My recollection is that the reply makes two points. One is that "attachement" is perfectly proper French for "commitment" and second, that those two words recur throughout the Charlottetown agreement, but I am ad libbing the response which I will table in due course, and which states the case in somewhat more detail than I have done.

## THE ECONOMY

### BELOW-CAPACITY PERFORMANCE—GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

**Hon. L. Norbert Thériault:** Honourable senators, I have a question for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. It is more or less an appendix to my leader's question on the article in the *Toronto Star*.

I take it for granted that in fact, although you did not say so, there will soon be an announcement regarding the TransCanada Highway and the provinces.

Based on the admission that the government is working on some ways to help get this country out of the terrible economic mess it is in, is the Leader of the Government prepared to comment on an article in the *Globe and Mail* today headlined, "Short by, oh, about \$70 billion"? It says that the economy is performing 90.8 per cent, the 9.2-percentage-point gap in the output being the biggest gap since the last depression.

Yesterday I talked about the depression. The only reason we are not in a depression, and that we are in a state of what is still called a recession, is the existence of the programs that were put in place by former Liberal governments.

[Senator Molgat.]

Is the government now prepared to accept the fact that it has to act and get this economy going again, so that we do not slide into a real depression?

**Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I think it is fair comment to say that the economy has been operating at below capacity. Having said that, there are various ways of measuring capacity, and I do not think there is any valid comparison to be made between the situation during the Great Depression of the 1930s and the situation we face today.

Second, it is obvious to most people that what we have been going through in this country—and what much of the rest of the world has been going through—is not just a cyclical downturn, although there are elements of that, but a longer-term structural problem, and that structural adjustment has to take place.

It is the considered opinion of people who study these matters, such as the IMF and the OECD, that Canada is well ahead of many of the other countries in making those structural adjustments. This is demonstrated by our success in curbing public spending, in getting inflation and interest rates down and in providing the basis for a sustained longer-term recovery.

Third, with regard to the question of infrastructure, let me be very clear: The *Toronto Star* article to which the Leader of the Opposition referred indicates that the government had decided on a rather massive, multi-billion dollar expenditure on infrastructure. I have stated that no such decision has, in fact, been made by the government.

With regard to the TransCanada Highway, there have been many discussions. The most recent that came to my attention involved the Minister of Finance and the premiers of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, although other provinces would obviously also be involved. I think that those discussions are coming along well, but I am not in a position to make the statement which the honourable senator attributes to me, namely, that there will be an early announcement on this matter.

**Senator Thériault:** Honourable senators, the Leader of the Government in the Senate may cite statements by the IMF and OECD, but the fact of the matter is that the countries that are suffering most from the effects of economic right-wing philosophy are going through the worst of this recession, namely, England, the United States and Canada.

It is a known fact that the Americans are suffering from the policies of the Reagan-Bush administration. This country is suffering from the policies of the Mulroney administration and the United Kingdom is still suffering from the policies of the former Thatcher government. I hope that the policies in the United Kingdom are being rectified to some degree by the new Prime Minister, and that economic policies in the United States and Canada will be rectified by new governments.

However, this article says: