

senators that there are a lot of us out there who are not "the English" doing all of this. Many of the premiers from various provinces, Ontario and others, including the Premier of Alberta, heaped praise upon, and indicated their support for, Meech Lake, wanting to go all the way with it. What is happening now that it has failed? They are trying to make out that it was some kind of rejection of Quebec, which it never was. I am sure the minister may make that argument again, but I say that this was no rejection of Quebec.

I will tell senators what it was: It was a rejection of the process. If we look into it a little deeper we will find that it was not only the process but the tactics that were used in the process that really were annoying. Those who attended those meetings for seven days and seven nights, or whatever it was, said they would never go through that again. I think almost all of them said that. I know Premier Getty returned to Alberta saying that he would never again participate in that kind of process. Premier Filmon, according to a newspaper article, will never forget how Ottawa treated him. He said that he would never participate again in that kind of process. The article states that, while claiming to recognize the aspirations of Quebec, the premier indicated that constitutional discussions directed only at satisfying one province were unworkable.

**Senator Murray:** Do you agree with that?

**Senator Olson:** Yes, I agree with that. I think the government has to treat Canadians all over Canada in the same way. If you are not prepared to do that, then you have no right to be the Government of Canada.

**Senator Murray:** You do not think there was some unfinished business after 1982?

**Senator Olson:** I believe you have misrepresented what happened in 1982 every time you have spoken about it. I was there, in case you have forgotten. You keep reminding me over and over again that I was there.

**Senator Murray:** I was seated over there at the time and I voted against it.

**Senator Olson:** Well, I attended the federal-provincial meeting in 1982. I was a junior minister, but I was there. And I know one other thing—Premier Levesque was there too.

**Senator Murray:** Yes.

**Senator Olson:** And he was invited to sign. He decided that he would not sign the constitutional amendment, so why are you saying that somebody isolated him? We knew very well that he would not sign anything that strengthened Canada because he was philosophically opposed to such a thing.

**Senator Murray:** What position did Mr. Ryan, the Liberal leader, take?

**Senator Olson:** You keep coming back to the argument that somehow the government of the day drove Quebec away from the meeting. That is not true! And no matter how many times you say it, it will not make it true. I sat for hours between the Prime Minister of Canada and the Premier of Quebec and listened, as did other ministers who were there. Quebec was

not asked to leave. Quebec was not driven off or isolated, as the Prime Minister has stated, in any way. Of course, if you do not want to accept that, if you do not want to admit that the Premier of Quebec at that time was philosophically opposed to such a strengthening of Canada, that is one thing. He was a separatist. He was in favour of sovereignty association. How would anyone expect him to sign something that would strengthen the Constitution of Canada? He did not want to belong.

**Senator Murray:** It was imposed upon him against his wishes.

**Senator Olson:** It was not imposed upon him.

**Senator Murray:** Oh, yes, it was!

**Senator Olson:** Oh, come on, you were not there. You act as if you were. It is mischievous to take something like that and perpetuate it as if it were a fact. It is not the truth!

Honourable senators, as I said, I did not intend to make a long speech. I think, however, that some of these things need to be placed on the record, in case anyone has any happy idea that Canada will be the same after what the Premier of Quebec and the Prime Minister have said they will do. It will not be as simple as Quebec's indicating that it will not come to the meetings so we will not have any meetings. I do not think any province, and I don't care which one we are talking about, can make some kind of deal that will be denied to the other provinces.

**Senator Murray:** Where do you see that?

**Senator Olson:** That is the consequence of this whole situation. Premier Bourassa has said that he will have bilateral negotiations only from now on.

**Senator Murray:** They all do.

**Senator Olson:** Oh, they do. So is there now to be a French Canada and an English Canada? That is a false statement right from the word go. There is a lot more to Canada than a division between English and French. There are the Aboriginal peoples, for example. And what about the nine million people who are not English at all? What about us?

I could go on to tell honourable senators a few things about whether the first to arrive here were the French, the English, or the Vikings. They are my ancestors, and they landed on the continent first. I think Senator Doody could tell us what they have done in northern Newfoundland about that. I do not know what they did with the people—they found their remains, but none of them ever got back to Norway.

**Senator Doody:** How do you know?

**Senator Olson:** There is no record of it.

**Senator Doody:** Well, that's different.

**Senator Olson:** On that note, honourable senators, perhaps I should close by saying that I think the government has made a terrible mess of what was a great country. We do not know what will happen. I think we have enough strength in all parts of Canada, including Quebec, to perhaps repair the damage.