

Scotia and New Brunswick, against the larger population in what was then Upper Canada and Lower Canada, than on anything else. There is no doubt—and I have not read all of the debates, although I have read some of them—that if Upper and Lower Canada had not agreed to a bicameral system with an upper house known as the Senate with the authority that it presently has, there would not have been a Canada. The other provinces would not have joined the federation if they had not received that undertaking. That is why the Senate has the power to reject measures that are discriminatory against regions.

Members opposite should take these responsibilities seriously. It did not say in those debates that the Conservatives should do one thing and that the Liberals should do another. It said that this house should examine legislation and specifically identify and correct any discriminatory matters in the legislation. The Senate was given the power and authority under the Constitution to do it, and that is why I plead with members opposite now. It is so clear that if the Senate intends to discharge its responsibilities to the Fathers of Confederation and the people of Canada, this is what it ought to do.

Some 85 per cent of the population does not like this tax. Members opposite say, "Nobody likes taxes." That is not quite good enough. That is not what I heard as I travelled across the country with the Banking, Trade and Commerce Committee. People asked us over and over again to find a way to reduce expenditures and to increase taxes. They are ready to pay more taxes, but they do not want this kind of tax with all its injustices. Of course, they went on to point out the injustices. We will introduce six more amendments that deal with some of the injustices. Here is an opportunity for the Senate to perform its function. I do not think that anyone over there would disagree that this measure is an injustice against certain regions. So, in conclusion, I plead with honourable senators opposite to take up their responsibility as senators and as part of the body that is supposed to protect the regional interests of this country.

**Hon. John B. Stewart:** I wonder if Senator Olson would permit a question. I have been listening to what he has been saying, and I suspect that his pleas are falling on deaf ears.

**Senator Olson:** I hope they are not.

**Senator Stewart:** If the honourable senator will look at what has been said by the ministers of the present government for the past five or six years, he will discover that their position with regard to the Senate is almost virtually the same as that of the CCF and the NDP since 1933. They argue, as did the Labour Party in England, that there is no place in a modern democratic country for a body such as the Senate of Canada. The NDP argues consistently for the abolition of the Senate. In contrast the Progressive Conservative ministers say, "You have no role. Oh, yes, you have the role of doing a little, minor, sober second thinking, so long as you do not touch anything that is important, so that you can maintain the illusion that the Senate is doing something. Then, of course, we will make lots of patronage appointments to the Senate." That is really the

function of the Senate, a place that receives patronage appointees.

I can document those comments and I intend to document them, from the mouths of Senator Murray, Prime Minister Mulroney, Harvey Andre, and on and on and on.

**Senator Lynch-Staunton:** And John Turner.

**Senator Stewart:** And John Turner. It is a consistent view that has prevailed in this country. Some of us came here in 1984 with the notion that if this place could not be changed, it ought to be abolished. We knew that we could not make it equal, that we on our own could not make it elective, but we thought that perhaps we could make it efficient. However, we ran into a general attitude that the Senate had nothing important to do, that it was improper for it to do anything.

**Senator Cogger:** What is the question?

**Senator Stewart:** John Turner and Brian Mulroney have the same attitude. Of course, the NDP has a hostility toward the Senate because as long as the Senate is here and has a legitimacy, they anticipate that it will veto their socialist measures. We understand that, but it amazes me that the Progressive Conservative government has taken exactly the same position.

I ask Senator Olson —

**Senator Cogger:** He does have a question!

**Senator Stewart:** I ask Senator Olson perhaps to save his efforts. Why should he plead with people who have taken a position that is even more hostile to the Senate than that of the CCF or the NDP?

**Senator Olson:** Honourable Senators, I am always hopeful. I travelled across the country and listened to many presentations on this tax. If the witnesses did not volunteer during their opening remarks that they believed that the Senate should take a hand in the matter of this bill, and, indeed, kill it, I would ask them: "Never mind whether the Senate has the authority under the constitution, do you think, in this modern age, 1990, that the Senate ought to assert its authority and defeat or, at least, severely modify this legislation?" Of those I asked, 137 said, "Yes, the Senate ought to use its authority now."

I will not say that I despair. I am still hopeful that enough of the Senators opposite will take their responsibilities seriously and correct this situation with respect to the discriminatory practice of taxing heating fuel. You could do that tomorrow, and people across the country would cheer for you.

**Senator Grafstein:** Tell them to sleep on it.

**Senator Olson:** Think about it carefully. The Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations has indicated that he would be interested in modifying Bill C-62 as it applies to fuel oil and electricity. He realizes that his government faces trouble in the courts. Some provinces are already taking the federal government to court over a measure that requires them to pay taxes to the federal government.

**Senator Murray:** It doesn't though.

**Senator Olson:** Oh, but it does.