

I do not intend to argue the pros and cons of the Meech Lake Accord. I have certain reservations about what was in it, as I have previously stated.

Senator Murray: Some reservations? You fought it every inch of the way. Don't try to rewrite history now!

Senator Olson: I suppose "certain reservations" could mean what the leader has just said.

Senator Murray: You fought it every inch of the way, tooth and nail, root and branch.

Senator Olson: I was not there every inch of the way. The leader was there every inch of the way, and he messed things up so badly that now we have a completely different country.

In many ways I am sad about that, because we did have a country that could get together under previous governments, although we did not always agree. This great country, as the leader describes it from time to time, is the result of those previous discussions. I do not think we can have such discussions any more because of what has happened. The minister responsible for federal-provincial relations surely has to take the bulk of the responsibility for that.

There are many ways to measure something, and one is to look at the result. I am told that there was a great deal of intimidation, especially of the leaders of Manitoba. There were threats of serious economic consequences for Manitoba if the Meech Lake Accord was not passed. I do not know why Hibernia is being held up in the House of Commons today, but I have my suspicions, \$2.7 billion worth, and if that happens there will be another consequence because of the mismanagement of Canada's national affairs by this government.

That is the message that seems to be coming from the other place today. During Question Period in the other place only questions on Hibernia were being asked. I hope the government does not have in mind severe economic penalties for Newfoundland because of what has happened. However, after what I have seen, I would not be surprised if the government tried to do that, but it will do so at its peril.

Let me get back to what I was saying a minute ago respecting the western provinces. The Liberal Party and the Progressive Conservative Party, to be honest, have lost control in the west. If there is not to be a corresponding accommodation for what western Canada has been asking since Meech Lake came along, the beneficiary of western Canada will be the Reform Party. That party will wipe out every seat the Progressive Conservative Party now has in Alberta. In fact, that may well happen right away, but things will get worse. The government might well realize that it will not get away with this.

In Saskatchewan and British Columbia another party, other than the Conservative Party, will be the beneficiary. I do not know at this moment whether or not it will be the Liberal Party. That happened a couple of times before, and there were some rather interesting consequences.

I was a member of the Social Credit Party. I believe the Social Credit Party won all but two seats in western Canada in the federal election of 1935. The west at that time had given

up on both the old parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives. That is how the CCF got its start in Saskatchewan and in other provinces across the country. In frustration, the western provinces dumped both old parties. If you think they are not ready to do that again, you are just not listening. I think it would be a terrible disservice to Canada to have that happen now.

However, there is more to it than that. Western Canada believes, just as Quebec does, that it can get along without the rest of Canada, if Canada carries on in the way it has. The oil wells will flow, the gas wells will flow, the trees will grow, and the coal mines will be mined. We have great seaports in Vancouver and Prince Rupert. If the government thinks it can intimidate western Canada, it better not kid itself, because western Canada is not listening any more. Western Canada does not want to listen any more. If the government wants to start down this road, and sit around like the Prime Minister and the minister responsible for federal-provincial relations is doing, trying to blame somebody else, they had better rethink that strategy.

I think the government has to do an enormous repair job, and not only in Quebec is there need for a repair job to be done. Even the government members will understand that if they think about it for a moment.

One tries to understand what has been taking place, but western Canada was given short shrift. What was Alberta offered? Two more Senate seats five years from now—that is, if there is not Senate reform in the meantime.

Senate reform, by the way, is a myth. The provinces really want a redistribution of power so that they can be masters in their own houses, to some extent. I do not know whether the Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations ever understood that. He has said that Senate reform might come about. I have been around here a long time and I know very well that there will not be a Triple-E Senate in my lifetime, or in the leader's lifetime either. He knows very well, for example, that the House of Commons would never vote for that, and that is where constitutional amendments eventually have to come from. We have been through this two or three times since I came here 30 years ago. When it gets right down to the wire, the House of Commons will not vote that the residue of power will be vested in the Senate, whether it is a Triple-E Senate or whatever.

Neither would the first ministers transfer that power to an elected Senate, but perhaps we will not have any more of those conferences anyway. I happen to believe, however, that there will be others occupying the Offices of the Premier of Quebec and the Prime Minister of Canada who will not take this kind of head-on, devil-may-care attitude and try to impose that on the rest of Canada.

● (1930)

As I said, honourable senators, I do not intend to make a long speech. There is one other thing, however, that is becoming irritating to the people in western Canada, and that is the expression, "It is the English." I want to tell honourable