

other ethnic groups, I wonder really if there exists in Canada, outside Quebec, a will to give Quebec what it wants within Canada. You may not agree, but all the polls show that what I have just said is true. I hope the Leader of the Government will recognize it.

Two years ago, Mr. Lucien Bouchard, as a minister, made some statements. What purpose did they serve? Did Mr. Bouchard's statements bring anything positive to the country?

**Senator Murray:** The honorable senator just mentioned the name of Honorable Lucien Bouchard. If I wanted, I could mention the names of Honorable Jean Lapierre or the other fellow who lives across the river.

**Mr. Jacques Hébert:** The great Hull gentleman!

**Senator Murray:** Yes, honourable senators, I mean Mr. Gilles Rocheleau, but what purpose would it serve carrying out such a dialogue in the Senate?

One of the major difficulties in this country is the tendency by some people to make disparaging remarks about those they disagree with. It is not fair to call "separatists" or "ultranationalists" those who support a certain option.

During these proceedings chaired by Mr. Keith Spicer, we hope that all Canadians will use this opportunity to open a dialogue between one and other, express their views on the future of Canada and describe how they feel people could live together in this country in greater harmony.

However, I feel my honorable friend's remarks do not bring anything positive to the debate or dialogue. There is no purpose in ridiculing the positions taken by other Canadians.

**Senator Thériault:** Honourable senators, I should like to tell the Leader of the Government in the Senate that he can mention the names of Mr. Rocheleau and Mr. Jean Lapierre. As far as I know they are not members of the Canadian government. I did say that I do not see how the Prime Minister or the government can silence all these backbenchers. I am talking about members of the Cabinet. Again I repeat my belief that if the Leader of the Government in the Senate is sincere, and I have no reason to doubt that, if he wants Canadians to learn to live together—and that is what I wish, as he does—then there are times when we should temper our remarks and try to establish a dialogue. Mr. Rocheleau and Mr. Lapierre may say what they want, I have nothing to say about that and I have nothing to do with them. I believe my colleague Senator LeBlanc has a supplementary question.

#### NATURE OF COMMISSION

**Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Beauséjour):** Honourable senators, this is not a supplementary concerning the representation of Acadians or Francophones outside Quebec, although on that point I would say that the myth some people are trying to substantiate to the effect that Mr. Roger Tassé is the representative of Francophones outside Quebec is a figment of someone's imagination.

[Senator Thériault.]

• (1520)

[English]

The question I wanted to ask of the Leader of the Government is based on an article taken from yesterday's *Telegraph-Journal* of Saint John, New Brunswick. Unhappily, articles from that newspaper are not reproduced in the *Quorum*, which tends to be based on papers delivered in Ottawa, as if Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto were the only places where news was ever produced. But that is not my point.

My point, honourable senators, has to do with the Citizens' Forum. I might comment that when I heard that title, "Citizens' Forum", my memory was jarred, especially when Mr. Spicer declared that it would be super high tech. Obviously, they were looking at great futuristic inventions with which to consult Canadians and to take their blood pressure. I suddenly realized that "Citizens' Forum" was a program on the school broadcasting system in the early days of steam radio. If Mr. Spicer is looking to the future, perhaps he should also examine the past.

My question is based on statements made by the panel member from my own province of New Brunswick, Madam Elsie Wayne, who is purported to have stated—this is not a direct quote—that she has been advised by Commission Chairman Keith Spicer that he will likely be the only one travelling. Honourable senators, this is very interesting. I had visions of this great new commission holding meetings all across the country, but obviously it is destined to be a commission of one.

As a result of what Mr. Spicer told her by phone yesterday, according to this newspaper article, Mayor Wayne believes that not all 12 commission members will travel across Canada. And listen to this, honourable senators: She doubts that many of its meetings will be held in public.

**Some Hon. Senators:** Oh! Oh!

**Senator LeBlanc:** Where will they be held, in the residence at Meech Lake? Are we back to that again? Is this to be another meeting of 12? They are not premiers this time, but representative citizens.

The article goes on to state:

Wayne told Common Council last night she has been appointed to the commission "on a regional basis" to gather opinions only in the three Maritime Provinces.

I do not know whether the Leader of the Government in the Senate is the minister responsible in this case—

**Senator Perrault:** Oh, he is.

**Senator LeBlanc:** —but I think it would be interesting to know if what we have here is a one-man show with the assistance of a number of people who are defined as "regional panellists", who may not, in fact, meet in public. I think we would all be interested in having that information.

**Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government and Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations):** Honourable senators, I think Mr. Spicer has made very clear that the dialogue among Canadians that he and the panel is encouraging will be a public one. As for Mayor Wayne, I can state with