

hear every point of view. Indeed, those who have misgivings may have those misgivings removed by the explanations that are given. Certainly it is my expectation that our understanding will be much improved by this inquiry.

Yesterday the Leader of the Government said that the House of Commons will be forwarding to us a resolution asking us to establish a joint committee. He wondered whether we would defy the House of Commons if they were to make that proposal to the Senate. I suggest that that proposal, if it does come, can be dealt with by the Senate as it chooses to do so.

**Senator Murray:** What will your position be?

**Senator MacEachen:** The decision on this particular motion will not pre-judge or preclude any subsequent action by the Senate. I have only to cite one precedent that will clarify the situation, and I thank Senator Godfrey for bringing it to my attention. In 1978, when Bill C-60, dealing with constitutional change, came before the Senate of Canada, the Senate joined in a joint committee with the House of Commons, and it also set up a special committee of the Senate itself to deal with the constitutional amendments. Senator John Connolly, in proposing his motion to establish a Special Committee of the Senate on the Constitution—

**Senator Murray:** But not a Committee of the Whole.

**Senator MacEachen:** —said that the Senate could make its own input in a special committee or a separate committee, and it could also join in a joint committee with the House of Commons. So, the adoption of this motion stands on its own feet. When the message comes from the House of Commons, the Senate will then decide whether it wishes to join with the House of Commons. If the Senate decided to join with the House of Commons, the present situation would be identical, except in one respect, to the situation I described in the case of the constitutional amendments of 1978. The only difference is that in this case it would be a Committee of the Whole whereas in the former case it was a special committee of the Senate. However, in both cases the Senate will have conducted its own inquiry and will have left the door open, if it wishes, to participate with and assist the House of Commons. That is all I have to say. I wanted to make those clarifying comments before the Senate was asked to dispose of this motion.

#### REFERRED TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** Honourable senators, it is moved by the Honourable Senator MacEachen, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Frith:

That the Meech Lake Constitutional Accord and texts subsequently agreed to be referred to a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of hearing witnesses and making a report.

Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Yes.

**Some Hon. Senators:** No.

[Senator MacEachen.]

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** Will those honourable senators in favour of the motion please say, "yea"?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Yea.

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** Will those honourable senators who are against the motion please say, "nay"?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Nay.

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** In my opinion, the "yeas" have it.

● (1450)

*And two honourable senators having risen:*

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** Please call in the senators.

Motion agreed to on the following division:

#### YEAS

##### THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

|           |                              |
|-----------|------------------------------|
| Adams     | LeBlanc                      |
| Anderson  | (Beauséjour)                 |
| Argue     | Lefebvre                     |
| Barrow    | Le Moyne                     |
| Bosa      | Lewis                        |
| Corbin    | MacEachen                    |
| Cottreau  | Molgat                       |
| Davey     | Neiman                       |
| Denis     | Petten                       |
| Fairbairn | Robichaud                    |
| Frith     | Rousseau                     |
| Gigantès  | Sinclair                     |
| Graham    | Stanbury                     |
| Hastings  | Stewart                      |
| Hicks     | (Antigonish-<br>Guysborough) |
| Kenny     | Stollery                     |
| Lang      | Wood—34.                     |
| Langlois  |                              |
| Leblanc   |                              |
| (Saurel)  |                              |

#### NAYS

##### THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

|               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| Balfour       | Macquarrie   |
| Barootes      | Marshall     |
| Bélisle       | Murray       |
| Cochrane      | Phillips     |
| Doyle         | Robertson    |
| Kelly         | Rossiter     |
| MacDonald     | Sherwood     |
| (Halifax)     | Simard       |
| Macdonald     | Tremblay—17. |
| (Cape Breton) |              |