

Louis Robichaud and the Constitutional Debate

Wendell Fulton

Researcher, Office of the Official Opposition,
and Former Executive Secretary of the Liberal Party

In a country like Canada, peopled by diverse races, a Federal Government is the one under which may best be preserved that healthy individualism which, in its enabling rivalry, stimulates to its full extension the action of those vital political and social forces that give to a State vigour, freshness and valiant self-reliance. Our past history proves that it would be unjust and impossible to endeavour to reduce our national elements to a dead and waveless level. **And our past history also teaches to those in power this lesson: That, to concede in reason and in justice is to disarm discontent and danger; is to satisfy and to retain!** [emphasis added].

Written more than 125 years ago by Samuel James Watson, librarian of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, these words were very likely inspired by someone of the stature of Louis J. Robichaud, premier of New Brunswick in the 1960s and today a senator with a long history of involvement in Canadian constitutional issues.

For the ten years between 1960 and 1970 Louis Robichaud as premier of New Brunswick participated in an important series of constitutional discussions. While efforts during this period failed to achieve amending and patriation formulae for the Constitution, those negotiations and discussions contributed to several important features of what later became the Constitution Act, 1982. Those features include the entrenchment of our two official languages, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and a commitment to reduce regional disparities. In these important areas Louis Robichaud played an important leadership role.

Until its patriation in 1982, Canada's written Constitution was an 1867 statute of the British Parliament, the British North America Act. In 1932 the British Parliament, through what became known as the

1. Samuel James Watson, *Constitutional History of Canada*, 1 (Toronto: Adam Stevenson and Company, 1874), 143.

Statute of Westminster, legally declared the self-governing Dominions autonomous communities, equal in status with the United Kingdom itself. The British Parliament would have been delighted had Canada then decided to discharge Britain of its responsibilities for any amendments to the British North America Act, but there was not at that time an amending or patriation formula acceptable to the federal government and the provinces. The ensuing sixty years saw intermittent constitutional discussions in Canada, but these were not resolved until 1982, when patriation and an amending formula were accepted.

New Brunswick has had a unique position in constitutional conferences in that its population of approximately two-thirds anglophone and one-third francophone most closely represents the national linguistic pattern. It has had a long experience in dealing with the complex realities that language presents to government activity, both at the provincial and federal levels.

Three New Brunswick premiers, other than Louis Robichaud, had interesting roles in our constitutional development, or lack of it.

In 1935, in a country ravaged by economic depression, a federal-provincial conference was called by Prime Minister Mackenzie King to deal with relief payments to the unemployed and assistance to the destitute. A move by the previous Bennett government to bring in an unemployment insurance program was held by the Supreme Court of Canada to be *ultra vires* the federal government. It declared that powers in this area fall within the jurisdiction of the provinces. All the premiers agreed that there should be patriation and amendment to deal with the crisis, except for Attorney General McNair (later premier) of New Brunswick, who argued that this would “permit extension of the Dominion field of legislation at the expense of the provincial legislatures.”² Lacking unanimity, this nearly successful attempt at patriation failed.

Patriation was eventually achieved with the Constitution Act, 1982, but it was not accepted by Quebec. In preliminary discussions, Richard Hatfield, who supported patriation and amendment, found himself allied with Premier Davis of Ontario and Prime Minister Trudeau against the other premiers. In April 1987, in an effort to accommodate Quebec, the Meech Lake Accord, which included the

2. *The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1935 and 1936 (Toronto: The Canadian Annual Review Company, 1937), 439.

recognition of Quebec as a distinct society, was accepted by Ottawa and all the provincial premiers, including Richard Hatfield. The accord required the legislative approval of all the provinces and the Parliament of Canada, but for some reason Richard Hatfield delayed referring it to the New Brunswick legislature for consideration. A few months later, in the October 1987 New Brunswick provincial election, Frank McKenna won all the seats in the New Brunswick legislature. During the campaign he expressed concern about a number of Meech provisions, opposing what he saw as opting-out provisions, the treatment of Aboriginal peoples, the failure to recognize the fundamental characteristics of New Brunswick, with its two official languages and two linguistic communities, and an unsatisfactory amending formula for federal institutions. Shortly after taking office, however, McKenna came to support the Meech Lake Accord, but there followed changes of government in Newfoundland and Manitoba, and its fate was sealed. It was widely believed that McKenna's initial objections encouraged opponents of the accord, and that that led to a reopening of the debate and ultimately to its downfall. Between 1960 and 1970, when Louis Robichaud was premier, there were intermittent constitutional negotiations, with key ones taking place between 1968 and 1970.

The constitutional amending process was a fascinating subject for many politicians, academics, and bureaucrats, with its many complex and even arcane aspects. For Louis Robichaud there was the dream of nationwide social, economic, and linguistic equality of opportunity under a revised Constitution. However, while interested in constitutional debate and already a full participant in the discussions, he was not consumed by the process. His primary concerns were the chronic problems that beset New Brunswick, and to address them he was able to obtain considerable federal assistance through bilateral and other federal-provincial agreements, including assistance from the ARDA program, highway construction grants, regional development programs, and other measures. This was Louis Robichaud's life outside the world of constitutional negotiations.

Noteworthy among his achievements was the Programme of Equal Opportunity, by which the government of New Brunswick assumed responsibility for education, health, welfare, and the administration of justice — establishing acceptable standards throughout the province instead of having them determined by the level of prosperity in the municipality where a person was born. He had been successful in implementing the program because in dealing with municipalities,

which were creations of the province, he could and did change their powers and boundaries through the simple provincial legislative process, whereas provinces were not the creations of Ottawa, and the starting point for constitutional amendment was a statute of the British Parliament.

Louis Robichaud was a dynamic, driven leader and reformer. He was determined that New Brunswick should not continue to be a have-not province, he was determined to attack regional economic disparities and to work for linguistic equality of opportunity in his province and in the nation, and he was determined to take these and other issues to the national stage in the ongoing constitutional discussions.

On becoming premier in 1960, Louis Robichaud, in his other role as attorney general, was almost immediately involved with the federal and other provincial governments in an effort to patriate the Constitution. Within two weeks of becoming premier he attended his first federal-provincial conference, at which Quebec premier Jean Lesage, also newly elected, called for patriation of the Canadian Constitution. Initial proposals put forward by Davie Fulton, minister of justice in the Diefenbaker government, went nowhere, but following the election of the Pearson government, new proposals were made by Fulton and the federal Liberal minister of justice, Guy Favreau. This Fulton-Favreau formula of 1964 had as its basis that no constitutional change could be made in the federal-provincial division of powers respecting the use of the English and French languages without the unanimous consent of all the provinces, and most other amendments would require a 7/50 rule — i.e., approval by a minimum of seven provinces together with 50 percent of the population. All the provinces initially accepted this formula, and Premier Lesage declared, “We have lived a historic day today.” However, it soon became apparent that this was not acceptable to the new political realities in Quebec, and in January of 1966 Premier Lesage told Prime Minister Pearson that approval of the Fulton-Favreau formula would be delayed indefinitely in his province.

At a federal-provincial conference in Charlottetown in 1964, called to coincide with the hundredth anniversary of the Charlottetown meeting of Maritime leaders held to discuss Confederation, Louis Robichaud garnered the headlines at the low-key meeting when he introduced the idea of a modern Maritime union:

Perhaps Premiers Stanfield, Smallwood, Shaw and I may get together today and on this first centennial of the first meeting in Charlottetown and decide to reduce the number of Canadian Provinces from ten to seven. Should this occur, the focal point of progress and activity in the nation would unquestionably and rapidly take a marked shift to the east.³

In the meeting's final communique, however, a statement said that "much more consideration"⁴ would have to be given to the idea. In spite of opposition from Prince Edward Island's Shaw, Robichaud proposed that the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia legislatures "authorize a study of the advantages and disadvantages which would be involved in a union of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick."⁵ In the end, of course, there was no Maritime union. Was Robichaud serious? Some political observers saw this as an attempt by him to capture headlines and to encourage new cooperative efforts among the Maritime provinces.

The failure to achieve agreement for the Fulton-Favreau formula slowed the pace of federal-provincial constitutional discussions. In its place, increased emphasis was given to the findings of the Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, which for many Canadians came to a startling conclusion: "Canada, without being fully conscious of the fact, is passing through the greatest crisis in its history."⁶ This statement had a dramatic effect in encouraging constitutional discussions.

In 1967, after the collapse of the Fulton-Favreau proposals in January 1966, Premier John Robarts of Ontario, who believed that Quebec's dissatisfaction with constitutional arrangements must be addressed, invited provincial premiers and the federal government to what was called the Confederation of Tomorrow Conference in Toronto. The effect of the Centennial celebrations and dramatic events between January and December of 1967 (including General de Gaulle's "Quebec libre" statement, René Lévesque's departure from the Liberal party, and the founding of the Sovereignist-Association Movement) drew support for such a meeting. Peter Russell, author of *Constitutional Odyssey: Can Canadians Become a Sovereign People*,

3. John Saywell, ed., *Canadian Annual Review*, 1964 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), 75-76.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Peter H. Russell, *Constitutional Odyssey: Can Canadians Become a Sovereign People*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 78.

says that one aim of Robarts was to “give Danny, as he called Premier Daniel Johnson ... the biggest soap-box in Canada to tell the people of the country what he really wanted for his province.” Russell says, “The success of and momentum generated by the Conference was such that Ottawa moved virtually immediately to take charge of the entire constitutional dossier.”

At the Confederation of Tomorrow Conference, Louis Robichaud supported a position outlined by Quebec, describing it as an eminently sensible and sensitive statement of a practical, realizable objective:

What French Canadians want is to be themselves and develop normally, like any other people, in Quebec and other parts of Canada.... They also want it to be possible for members of their community settled in other provinces to develop as English-speaking Canadians can do in Quebec.... In a country like ours, we must begin by ensuring public education at all levels in Canada’s two official languages wherever the English or French-speaking group is sufficiently large. Obviously, this does not rule out the necessity of providing the French or English-speaking groups with means of acquiring good command of the majority language in their environment.⁷

This fitted in very well with Louis Robichaud’s views on language with respect to education in his own province.

But for Robichaud, more than language was involved. He repeated his recurring theme of economic and social disparities in the regions in his address to the conference. Disparities, he said, diminish human freedom and opportunity; they frustrate social progress and development. On language, he argued, we must develop new forms and processes of partnership between French- and English-speaking communities in Canada by insisting that the new partnership will protect the precious traditions of French culture and language, while at the same time giving francophones an opportunity to find fuller expression in the new political community of Canada. Unless this is achieved, he warned, the result will be a balkanized Canada.

Hoping to regain control of the constitutional amendment process, and as a result of the impetus provided by the Confederation of Tomorrow Conference, Prime Minister Pearson called a federal-provincial constitutional conference in 1968, which continued on right up to the Victoria Charter of 1971. A decision was also made to establish a continuing conference of officials, whose purpose would

7. Confederation of Tomorrow Conference, *Proceedings* (Toronto, 1967), 108.

be to develop proposals for the consideration of the premiers and the federal government. This gave the provinces an opportunity to outline their views on a wide variety of constitutional issues.

At the 1968 constitutional conference, Premier Robichaud made it clear that the government of New Brunswick was in full agreement with the principal recommendation of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism and that the province of New Brunswick should officially and practically become a province of two official languages, English and French. He also said that this would be done within the context of federal initiatives to achieve a new national regime on language. He noted that federal funding would be needed to provide for equal partnership of linguistic groups and warned that aspirations would not be met if linguistic ghettos resulted. As for the recommendations of the commission, Premier Robichaud said official bilingualism for New Brunswick could be achieved by early amendments to sections 133 and 93 of the British North America Act or by the early adoption of a charter of rights, which he said would be preferable. We should not wait, he said, but should act immediately. Premier Robichaud presented a white paper on official languages to his legislature, and in it he outlined his approach to legislation that would be introduced the following year giving French and English equal status in New Brunswick government institutions and in 1970 making New Brunswick Canada's only officially bilingual province.

At the 1968 constitutional conference, Premier Robichaud made it clear that his philosophy and priorities were multidimensional:

I am convinced that uniformly strong provincial governments are possible only when we maintain the forces of national cohesion through a strong central government. I want full linguistic and cultural equity for both the English-speaking and the French-speaking people of New Brunswick. But I am just as determined to achieve for our people economic equity, decent jobs, adequate housing, a proper range of quality of public services. In other words, I want for New Brunswick, I want for the people of New Brunswick, full participation in the opportunities and possibilities of Canadian society. And I say strongly that our government will settle for nothing less than that.⁸

Louis Robichaud attended all the constitutional conferences, having first assembled a strong and talented team of ministers and

8. *Constitutional Conference Proceedings*, 1st meeting, 5–7 February 1968 (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1968), 105.

officials for his constitutional discussions and to participate in the conferences. His principal advisors were Dean Maxwell Cohen of the McGill Law School, Dean W. F. Ryan of the University of New Brunswick Law School, and Douglas Rouse, deputy minister of justice, who attended all sessions relating to the constitutional conferences between February 1968 and September 1970. Other officials involved were M. M. Hoyt, Charles Forsyth, Robert Pichette, Nick Mulder, Pierre Vachon, Barry Toole, and John Bryden, who for the most part attended meetings of the Continuing Committee of Officials on the Constitution.

With respect to constitutional discussions for New Brunswick the Committee of Ministers for the province was composed as follows: Hon. Bernard Jean, fundamental rights and the judiciary; Premier Robichaud and Hon. Wendell Meldrum, official languages; and Premier Robichaud, the Senate.

In February 1969, New Brunswick outlined responses it developed in 1968 to constitutional propositions prepared by the Continuing Committee of Officials in Ottawa. There were fifty-nine in all. The other provinces also presented their responses to the committee's propositions. The lead paragraph of the New Brunswick statement explaining its approach said that the New Brunswick government advocated the entrenchment of equal language rights for English- and French-speaking Canadians in the Constitution. Premier Robichaud, however, noted that he considered the propositions "a working document only." He said that New Brunswick did not propose to take a fixed position on constitutional matters. He said, "It is only through a spirit of negotiation and a willingness to work together that the federal and provincial governments can successfully resolve the matter of a Canadian Constitution."⁹

While the propositions were described as only a working paper, they did give a 1968 snapshot of Premier Robichaud's approach to constitutional development. While New Brunswick's response was stated as "merely ideas of a preliminary and tentative character placed into the general pool of thoughts and frank reflection for the common use of all governments as our officials wrestle in a preparatory way,"¹⁰ they reflected the government's viewpoint. There was strong agreement on the proposition that the English and French

9. Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, Records of the office of Louis Robichaud, RS 416: 8. Printed Reports and Publications, B13, Federal Constitutional Conference.

10. *Ibid.*

languages were the official languages of Canada, and it was also agreed that this principle should be converted as speedily as possible into constitutional rights and administrative operations, federally and provincially. New Brunswick also drew attention to the need to consider the practical details concerning the proposition that English- and French-speaking Canadians should have entrenched in the Constitution their rights to be educated in or have relations with legislatures, governments, and courts in one or both official languages. Finally, New Brunswick said that some important questions remained to be fully explored, either bilaterally between the federal and provincial governments concerned or by the Committee of Officials (its Official Languages Sub-Committee) and the Constitutional Conference itself. These questions included the complementary interactions between federal and provincial legislation in the development and administration of the two-language policy (an important issue *vis-à-vis* New Brunswick) and federal action required to make New Brunswick's official-languages policy operative in the courts. Another important question was the sharing of costs, particularly the heavy start-up costs to be borne, for example, by New Brunswick as the province with by far the largest proportion of French- and English-speaking people in Canada and therefore facing possibly the highest relative costs for total bilingualization.

In another proposition on official languages, New Brunswick made it clear that bilingualism did not mean unilingualism with reluctant concessions to bilingualism. While mother tongues might predominate, they would no longer exclude, and this attitude must prevail on both sides of the linguistic divide. There must be opportunities to acquire in schools and in the public service a working knowledge of both languages wherever this is desired. And at the same time there would be schools essentially giving instruction in a single mother tongue, thereby preserving the integrity of the mother culture.

New Brunswick supported an entrenched charter of fundamental rights and freedoms but had some concerns. It noted that care must be taken not to attempt to entrench social, economic, and welfare policies and objectives, such as full employment, social security, minimum wages, hospitalization, etc., in constitutional terms. The answer might be to provide a new theory of state duties enforceable on Parliament or the legislatures through the application of orders by the courts on such issues.

The other issue of technical and policy significance was the effect of such a bill of rights on any theory of legislative supremacy — a theory that has dominated constitutional thought and practice in the Anglo-Commonwealth system even where written constitutions have been involved, e.g., Canada and Australia. There was concern that judicial interpretation of a charter could result in courts having the last word in determining the validity of legislation independently of the principle of division of powers.

On the role of the Senate, the New Brunswick comment has become interesting in light of Senator Robichaud's current strong defence of Canada's second chamber. The Senate was described as "weak" from its inception, though it was observed that its role may have been underestimated over the years as a valuable instrument of Canadian federal legislative machinery, particularly in light of its committee work and its occasional insistence on its right to take a sober second look at legislation enacted by the House of Commons. The comment was also made that it would be quite possible for Canada to get along without the Senate.

On the issue of patriation of the Constitution, vested wholly in Canadian federal and provincial legislative processes, it was suggested that the extensive studies and discussions that led to the Fulton-Favreau formula should be re-examined for constructive ideas.

On the issue of distribution of powers between the federal and provincial governments, the New Brunswick position was that a priority study would be needed before trying to sort out the question. The statement also noted that New Brunswick believed that any future Canadian Constitution would have as an objective "the elimination of regional disparities."

Premier Robichaud stressed that his province supported retention of a strong federal government based on a parliamentary system and advocated cooperation among all levels of government to overcome regional disparities and to assist in the full development of all parts of the nation. On the place of regional disparities in the Constitution, there were a variety of approaches, including reference to the issue in a preamble, a stated financial figure, or some other approach. In the end New Brunswick favoured a "goal" and a "power" in the preamble, but drafted it so as not to raise questions about the federal spending power in general. Ultimately, regional disparity had its own section 36 in the Constitution Act, 1982. It stated that the provinces and the federal government are committed to promoting equal opportunities

for the well-being of Canadians, furthering economic development to reduce disparity in opportunities, and providing essential public services of reasonable quality to all Canadians, with the Parliament of Canada and the government of Canada committed to the principle of making equalization payments to ensure that provincial governments have sufficient revenues to provide reasonably comparable levels of public services at reasonably comparable levels of taxation.

In 1970 there was optimism that a constitutional agreement could be reached using a formula which became known as the Victoria Charter, so named because of a scheduled constitutional conference to be held in Victoria in 1971 to mark British Columbia's centenary in Confederation. Its basic rule for amendments would not require unanimity but rather the approval of the House of Commons (the Senate could delay approval for ninety days) and any province with 25 percent of Canada's population, two Atlantic provinces, and two Western provinces with 50 percent of the population. This in effect gave both Quebec and Ontario veto powers over any amendments. While Premier Bourassa indicated his initial support for the Victoria Charter, he later became dissatisfied with its implications for social policies and finally rejected it. Louis Robichaud had left office a few months before Quebec's rejection of the charter in 1971, but he was involved in its development until the fall of 1970 and gave it New Brunswick's support.

Louis Robichaud's political philosophy and his constitutional vision of Canada were best outlined at one of his last constitutional conferences in 1969, when he called for a nationwide program for equal opportunity:

It is ironical, isn't it, that it should be more difficult for a country like Canada, with a hundred years of development and peaceful expansion behind it, to undertake a fundamental revision of its Constitution.... The present constitution was written before the automobile, before mass transportation, before urban sprawl, before problems of pollution and the wide-spread problems we have in welfare and education. Despite this it has stood up remarkably well. The fathers of confederation could not foresee the increasing demands that wide-spread health and welfare and education services would impose a crushing financial burden on provincial governments.... Without reservation I support the Federal Government's view of the overriding national importance of health, welfare, education and other fundamental social services.... I therefore propose that the government of Canada assume the same responsibility for these basic services on behalf of all Canadians as the government of New Brunswick did for its citizens when we introduced the Programme for Equal Opportunity. What I am proposing cannot be achieved without difficulty,

analysis and discussion. It has far-reaching financial implications for both levels of government. It will require a re-examination of provincial-federal financial relationships in other areas, notably equalization and taxation, to ensure that all governments have adequate resources to meet their respective responsibilities. Canada is a country of ethnic groups, of various cultures, and of two official languages. This is our special strength. We are not a melting-pot. Within a flexible federal framework, regions, provinces and even municipalities have been free to develop, within the limits of their resources and their imagination, the kind of life that suits them, and the country as a whole is the richer for this. However, no Canadian, wherever he may be or whatever his language, must be deprived of essential services in the areas of health, education, welfare, suitable housing, adequate salary and equality before the law simply because he lives in a part of the country which does not possess as many resources as certain other parts.¹¹

Louis Robichaud's government was defeated in the 1970 provincial election. After a brief appointment to the International Joint Commission, he was summoned to the Senate of Canada, where he has taken an active role in the debates. He was forced to give up his Senate seat in 2000, when he reached the age of seventy-five. In his nearly three decades in Canada's upper house, he made a number of significant interventions in the constitutional debates. The role of Senator Robichaud has been quite different from that of Premier Louis Robichaud. As senator he continued to take part in the constitutional debates, but he no longer held the levers of power. He expressed his views on the 1982 patriation issue, the Meech Lake Accord, and the Charlottetown Accord and participated in Senate debates on linguistic equality.

In a Senate debate on 15 February 1979 (in the report of a special Senate committee relating to constitutional amendment prior to the 1982 patriation), Senator Robichaud stressed the importance of tolerance in connection with constitutional debate and amendment. A Toronto publisher had sent him a book entitled *Bilingual Today. French Tomorrow*. That, he said, was one side of the story — the extremist side; he pointed out that there were extremists on the francophone side too. He said, "I cannot condone all that is contained in Bill 101 in the Province of Quebec, for instance, because I believe in the protection of minority rights in this country."¹²

11. *Constitutional Conference Proceedings*, 3rd meeting, December 1969 (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970), 29–30.

12. Canada, Senate, *Debates*, 30th Parliament, 4th session, 559.

In this debate, Senator Robichaud suggested it might be better to leave the Constitution alone, to leave it intact. Or, he suggested, the Senate could look into some of the constitutional problems, especially since it had experts in so many fields. In an earlier debate, Senator Robichaud said he did not believe that the majority of Canadians wanted the Senate abolished, nor did he think it ever would be.

Louis Robichaud supported the 1982 patriation of the Constitution in a debate in the Senate on 4 December 1981. He took the view that while the Constitution lacked perfection, it could be improved upon through the amending formula, and he would therefore support it. He was very proud of its provisions for linguistic equality, and quoted with approval the sections recognizing equality of status and equal rights and privileges for the French and English languages in New Brunswick. He also noted with approval, without taking any credit for it, that in 1970 New Brunswick became the first and only Canadian province to proclaim English and French as its two official languages, and drew attention to the fact that his government rejected bilingual districts for New Brunswick, making the entire province one bilingual district. In an interview he said, "There will be no linguistic ghettos in New Brunswick."

Senator Robichaud did not support the Meech Lake Accord. He was initially undecided, but he was persuaded to oppose it by former prime minister Pierre Trudeau when he delivered a lengthy address to the Senate expressing his own opposition to it. Senator Robichaud's opposition was probably based on a fear that the accord would result in a weakened federal government.

Senator Robichaud said he tended to get upset when he heard the expression "the nine English provinces." He said that New Brunswick was not an English province; New Brunswickers were not living in England nor in a French province; New Brunswickers were not living in France. He said his province was bilingual, and "I am just as francophone as René Lévesque." Some were saying that a government totally foreign to Quebec, the government of Canada, wanted to force the Charter of Rights on Quebec, but Senator Robichaud declared, "The Prime Minister's name is Trudeau, the Minister of Justice is called Chrétien, and the co-chair of the committee is called Joyal."¹³

13. *Ibid.*

In a debate on the Charlottetown Accord on 15 September 1992, Senator Robichaud said, "I think we should have left the situation the way it was after 1981."¹⁴ He said he thought a monster had been created and that it had been created by the government. Commenting on the Charlottetown Accord, he said, almost with weariness: "We have to take a vote on the 26th of October. We should not have to, but we have to. And we have to make a decision. But I have decided that I will vote 'yes.' I will vote 'yes' because it is a lesser evil. And I say this to my fellow Canadians. Let us get on with the work. Let us get this problem behind us. Let us get on with the country. Let us get on with the economy of this country. I will vote 'yes.'"

On 16 December 1992 Senator Robichaud strongly supported the entrenchment in the Constitution of the principles of New Brunswick's Bill 88 of 1981, which addressed the equality of francophone and anglophone communities in the province. Commenting on the resolution Senator Robichaud said, "The principles of linguistic and cultural equality embodied in this resolution truly reflect the degree of political maturity that has evolved over the centuries in my native province. I say *maturity* deliberately."

Louis Robichaud can claim considerable credit for this maturity. As a social and economic reformer who looked outward all his public life, he has had the courage to exercise leadership in the face of opposition, controversy, and vested interests. Fearlessly embracing the future and innovation, he blazed new trails for the people of New Brunswick and Canada. New Brunswick's contribution to our country's history, Constitution, and institutions has been greatly enhanced by the determination and leadership of Louis Robichaud.

14. Canada, Senate, *Debates*, 34th Parliament, 2048.