

7:06 p.m.

Thursday, May 30, 1991

[Chairman: Mr. Horsman]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to commence the proceedings this evening. For those of you who weren't with us during the course of the afternoon, which was lively and interesting and during which time we heard 12 presentations, I'd like to just give you a quick outline as to the procedures.

First of all, I'm Jim Horsman. I'm the MLA for Medicine Hat, and I'm the chairman of the select special committee of the Alberta Legislature comprised of 16 members of the Legislature representing all the parties. We have divided our committee into two panels. These two panels are in different parts of the province. At the same time we're here, there is a panel in Red Deer this evening, and they will be doing just what we're doing, starting just about now.

Each presenter -- and we have a full list of presenters up until the coffee break -- will be entitled to 15 minutes. The bell will ring at the end of 10 minutes, and then there will be a further five-minute bell. At the end of that five minutes we hope that not only will your presentation have been completed but all the questions that may have arisen from your comments from members of the panel. We are going to hear, in addition, from some other people who have indicated their intention to give us their views. But in view of the fact that they had not indicated earlier than just in the last day or so that they wanted to be heard, we're going to have to probably expect that they won't be subjected to the same questioning that you might get on the other matters, because we do have to conclude and be on our way by aircraft no later than 10 o'clock this evening.

That being the case, I'd like to get under way, and I'd like now to ask my colleagues, starting on my far left, to introduce themselves, and then we'll go quickly around the table and then get under way with our first presentation.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Bob Hawkesworth, MLA for Calgary-Mountain View.

MRS. GAGNON: Yolande Gagnon, MLA for Calgary-McKnight.

MR. ADY: Jack Ady, MLA for Cardston.

MR. BRADLEY: Fred Bradley, MLA for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest.

MR. SEVERTSON: Gary Severtson, MLA for Innisfail.

MS BARRETT: Pam Barrett, MLA for Edmonton-Highlands.

MR. ROSTAD: Ken Rostad, MLA for Camrose.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On my left is Garry Pocock, who is the secretary of the committee. Garry is an official with the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

Now, Rae Alexander, please. Welcome. Don't be apprehensive, believe me, but do speak into the microphone.

MS ALEXANDER: Thank you.

The government of Canada has provided a Constitution for its people but has found it unsatisfactory in certain areas. Wisely, the government has turned to the Canadian people to ask them

for comments and ideas that would aid them in their constitutional reform. It is an honour to address such a committee.

As it now stands, the Canadian Constitution holds out many guarantees and freedoms for the citizens of this country, but however nice those guarantees appear, Canada has many deep-rooted problems. It is because I'm a first-generation Canadian and a daughter of a World War II and Korea campaign veteran that I feel strongly about taking this opportunity to address this committee when the opportunity is given to me. Other countries do not make such an offer to their people, and I'm proud to be in a country that does.

I'm deeply concerned about the state of this nation. Canada is still a very young country by world standards. It has never been torn apart by civil war, something none of us certainly wants to see. It has tried to grow in international stature by following methods of government and legislature that have proven somewhat successful in other countries. However, in its struggle for international recognition, Canada is beginning to fall apart. I do not intend to address the issue of Quebec's separation but refer to this matter only in regards to the political machine that already is in place.

Most young politicians begin their careers with a hopeful will of making a difference or of serving the people. Unfortunately, this energetic glow soon becomes lost in the din of that machinery. Perhaps our government representatives should be elected for shorter terms. This may curb the notion that once elected, their long career is automatically achieved. This country has quality control agencies in our factories but no such device in our government. I certainly do not presume that controls in our food packaging industry, for example, are not important; indeed they are. But the government is also important. The Canadian people have always trusted their government. One thing we're noted for is being loyal people. We followed our country into war, into wage cutbacks, into freezes; we've accepted other governmental policies without massive, destructive riots. But I fear that these complacent days may end.

Internationally, Canada is gaining a terrible reputation for its human rights issues and its management of natural resources. I find this very sad. Canada's aboriginal peoples are subject to a governmental Act that is the size of a comic book. This is laughable considering our general taxation laws alone fill volumes. Does Canada not care for the nations it once treated with? I have to wonder. When people are forced to hold weapons against the very agencies that are mandated to protect their freedom, I cannot help but grow concerned that the fabric of this nation is wearing thin.

This fabric was woven by my parents and the generations before them. They built this country by hard work, economic savvy, and by being willing to defend its borders. It appears now that that very country that needed them so badly has turned away from them. Proposed cutbacks in medical aid for senior citizens will hurt them deeply. These cutbacks will hurt senior single women the most. I once read in *Time* magazine that the largest consumer of pet food in the United States was its senior citizens. They were not buying this pet food for their pets but rather for themselves to eat. Is this what will happen in Canada? Will I or my daughter face that in the future?

It almost seems an academic procedure that when the Canadian government is running on a deficit, social, educational, and medical programs are the first to be slashed. How can this same government slash such programs, on the one hand, and then issue posters to the high schools illustrating that people are Canada's greatest natural resource, on the other? Is it fair or even responsible to steer our youth towards a bright future

when, unbeknownst to them, it may be unreachable? The rising cost of education in this country may limit enrollment in Canada's colleges and universities. Where will the bright minds of the future come from? Will only the rich have access to higher education, thus allowing that select group the majority voice in governmental policies?

I certainly do not suggest that the governmental agency should not review its expenditures and try to manage its budget accordingly. However, as a mother I would never cut back my daughter's medical or educational moneys in order to aid others who are perfectly capable of managing their own affairs. This is in reference to foreign aid to Kuwait. Canada must get its house in order first, before it is a good neighbour. Although that varies a way from the issue of constitutional rights, if we are talking about a Constitution, then I have the same rights as someone else living in a foreign country who is given Canadian moneys.

Alongside the rights of senior citizens, aboriginal peoples, and youth, I am deeply concerned about the plight of women and children in this country. Women are still subject to discrimination in the workplace and in the courts. According to Stats Canada women still make as much as \$1 per hour less than their male counterparts working the same job requiring the same skills. Women still comprise the largest population living well below the poverty line. I myself fit into this category. My daughter and I live on 10 times less the yearly salary paid to MPs. I'm fully aware that these jobs require expertise, but in all fairness if the country is in the dire straits we are led to believe, how can such wages be excused? The Constitution guarantees the freedom to live, but clearly many are able to do so much better than others. This is in exclusion to free enterprise.

#### 7:16

Another area related to the plight of women and children lies within our courts, the extreme situation of unfair treatment of women in courts, of course, when animals receive better protection than Canadian women. It's still a fact that any male can walk the street at night to the store or whatever; women are still not free to do so. It's just not wise.

The issue of constitutional reform is very complicated. Canada must decide how it will stand in the future. Will Canada become a haven for foreign murderers? Will we throw open our immigration doors to corrupt foreign diplomats? Will Canada become a two-tiered nation of the rich and poor, and finally will Canada become a nation filled with the human rights atrocities it now condemns other countries for? Of course, I sincerely hope not, and I'm sure that everyone who has appealed to your committee, the one in Red Deer, the other ones in other parts of Canada, are all hoping essentially for the same thing.

My presentation is very general, because the only thing I'm an expert in is myself and my own life. Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you very much, Rae. Are there questions or comments from the members of the panel? Pam.

**MS BARRETT:** I've never met you before, and I don't know anything about you, but you make a very powerful presentation. I want to ask you if what you're really talking about is some sort of social charter being put into the Charter of Rights so that minimum things you were talking about could be assured in a meaningful way. Is that what you're really getting at?

**MS ALEXANDER:** I understand your question. That could be a partial solution. I think the biggest problem is that Canada is

losing its identity. We don't know who we are on our own anymore. We are still thinking of ourselves as part of the Allies, and we have to develop our own identity. How it treats aboriginal peoples or women, social problems: all of that could fit into some sort of charter, but it's linked to the bigger issue of what is Canada. Whatever Canada is is going to be written into the Constitution. A foreigner would be able to read the Constitution and identify that that is specifically Canada.

**MS BARRETT:** I rarely have a supplementary, but this time I'm going to do it. How would you do that? Do you have some suggestions for us in terms of how you write in this Canadian identity that you're talking about?

**MS ALEXANDER:** The simplest method, of course, I think is always dialogue. The importance of a governmental committee coming to this town that is not a major metropolis is vitally important. I don't know how many people have appeared before you, but even if there were five, that's outstanding, because the nature of southern Albertans, the nature of Canadians is more or less just to leave the governing in the hands of those people who govern. We've got to, through dialogue – perhaps if people, in growing awareness from committees like this, begin writing more to their government representatives and seeing them when they're in their constituencies, that may begin the process of getting the identity the Canadians feel they should have to the government.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Rae, could I just ask you a question about the identity of Canada, and that is: do you feel that the Canadian identity is very much enriched by the fact that we are a country which has a bilingual nature; that is, Quebec, which is basically French, and the rest of us, which, while it's called English Canada, is a people of quite a lot of diversity? Do you think that's a thing that can help to unify us rather than to divide us?

**MS ALEXANDER:** I do very much so. I lived in Montreal for almost a year, and I truly loved it and was treated without any kind of bias by French Canadians. I lived in the French quarter, so my neighbours were people who spoke very little English in comparison. I talked to them about that and what they thought, and they asked me what I thought as well. I think it does enrich Canada. I see no problem if there's a vast variety of people all living within the same borders. I think Canadian people are sophisticated enough to do that without any sort of animosity between them.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Yet as we've gone across the province, we've been hearing that language has become a divisive thing, and we've heard that from many people. Do you have any idea, if you agree with that, why that might be the case?

**MS ALEXANDER:** A lot of times when we're confronted by something we don't know of or don't know very much of, it creates in us some sort of fear. When you're trying to communicate to someone who doesn't speak your language, that sets some sort of fear. Perhaps because the rest of English-speaking Canada is not fluent in French, they're not fluent in the history of Quebec and how Quebec has struggled for its own identity – if there was more knowledge of that in English Canada, then perhaps that would tend to lessen the tension between the two.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Any other questions?

Thank you very much, and we very much appreciate you coming forward. I hope the next time this type of thing happens, you won't feel the least bit nervous. You did very well indeed. You should be proud of yourself.

MS ALEXANDER: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ken Knox, please.

MR. KNOX: I'm glad to be here. What I'd like to do, first of all, is tell you who I am, where I come from, and where I've been. My name's Ken Knox. I was born in Lethbridge. I've lived in Quebec for two years. I've lived in Yukon. I've lived in B.C. I've lived in Ontario and Manitoba. So I think I've been around Canada a little bit. I'm back here in my hometown, and I'm quite happy to be here.

As far as who I represent, what I've done over the last couple of years is I've brought up certain questions that are on my own mind and I've discussed them extensively and thoroughly with people who I work with, who I associate with, my neighbours. I've gone through the whole gamut of asking them, and I never say, "I'm asking you a question about this to find out your opinion." We just discuss it. What I'm about to say is the large consensus of what they've said. As you can see, I have copious notes. Okay?

I think that over the last little while there's been a lot of commissions. A lot of those commissions have gone out and said, "We want to talk to the people of Canada." What I'd like this committee to understand is that it takes a tremendous amount of, for lack of a better word, bravado for somebody to get up here and speak to you with those people there behind them. I can't see them, so you see it's okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let me tell you something: they're all your friends. Think of it that way. They're all smiling, and they're all giving you encouragement. Isn't that true?

MR. KNOX: Yeah. Good.

The point I'm trying to make is that when this committee goes out on the road, quite often what you're going to get – and it's the same as a lot of committees – are people who are accustomed to public speaking. They're accustomed to making briefs and typing them out and being prepared to present them, to argue their points, to say this, to say that. What you're not getting are people like me, in the vast majority of cases, I believe. That's the people who are middle income earners, who never have an opportunity to do any public speaking, and they don't want to bring their ideas up. It scares the heck out of them. Okay? So I thought that maybe for once I'd take the big risk.

I think that this commission – I see that you're all from Alberta. You're all MLAs, except Garry there, who probably robbed me of two minutes, because he set that clock before I got here. You know, I'm watching you, Garry. Anyway, you're all from Alberta, so what I'd like to talk about is what I feel Alberta's position should be in the upcoming negotiations that are bound to happen for Canadian unity within this country.

7:26

I believe – and I believe firmly – that the Canadian government, the federal government, should not be involved in deciding whether Alberta should be bilingual or Quebec should be bilingual or Manitoba or Ontario or B.C. I believe each province should have its own individual right to decide whether

the language of government and the language of commerce within that province will be English, French, German – I don't care what it is. But it should be up to that province. If the federal government chooses to conduct its business in two languages, I believe that should be the federal government's business, not the Alberta government's business.

I believe firmly that the federal government should enact a law that makes it virtually impossible for any businessperson or other person to conduct business in any language of their choice, whether that language is Chinese, Japanese, Hungarian, Ukrainian, German, any of the Slavic, French, or English. I don't think it is a government's position to tell me that I cannot open a store and put an all-Chinese sign on it and have all Chinese labeling to benefit myself as a businessperson or as an individual. I think Alberta should carry that to the federal government. I was deeply offended when Quebec said that if I chose to move there tomorrow, I could not open a business and conduct business solely in English. And I think anybody from Quebec should be deeply offended if the Alberta government said, "You cannot move here and conduct your business solely in French."

I think Alberta should spearhead the absolute abolishment of multiculturalism in Canada. I don't believe it creates a unified country. I don't think it does anything to keep the Canadian people proud to be Canadians. I'd like to relate a little story on that issue. It has to do with my family. My grandfather came from another country. He met my grandmother, who was already here. In my entire life I never heard him call himself anything but a Canadian. He was adamant that he was a Canadian. He spoke another language, which is largely dead now, and he never once was upset about the fact that people didn't recognize his language in this country. He came here for one reason and one reason only. Maybe I'm more fortunate than others because he came here and instilled in me, his grandson, the feelings and the thoughts that he came to a better life, and by so choosing to come to that better life, he chose to raise a family in this country. That family is Canadian.

I've heard the issue of native self-government brought up, and I've heard it brought up just about strictly in the papers. I may make some mistakes here because I get my information out of the papers. I have a couple of native friends who have taught me a great deal, but I don't discuss this issue with them, because it's a little sensitive. I believe Alberta as a province should support and spearhead native self-government. I think the politicians, everybody but Garry, should be quite adamant that they should have self-government, and I think they should quit making it so complicated. To me self-government means that you take the Blood reserve that is out here and make it the county of Blood. You give them the right to tax their own people, and you give them the right to have all the transfer payments that the county of Lethbridge gets. You give them all the rights that any self-governing people have. There's only one proviso I would put in; that is, if they choose not to follow the Canadian Criminal Code within the boundaries of the Blood reserve, they don't have to. But outside those boundaries they're bound by Canadian law, which is our Criminal Code.

When I hear a native say, "I want self-government," I'd gladly give them self-government. I'd gladly give anybody self-government. Self-determination, self-right: take it; it's yours. But with that comes the responsibility of self-government. [A bell sounded]

Oh, gee, you scared me there, Garry.

I would like to make one final statement. I hear quite a bit about this on the news, and I wrote this as my final statement before I heard it on the news. I got the long form, unfortunately

ly, for my census. I came to question 15. I have a 13-year-old son, and unluckily he was sitting at the table. All heck broke loose in my house, because question 15 said: what is your ethnic origin? It listed about 10 or 12 ethnic origins. I read down it, and I couldn't find Canadian. I was really, really upset. I left that blank. I wrote, in the "Other," Canadian. I wrote on the back in the comments that I am Canadian, I was born Canadian, I'll always be Canadian, and that's all I've ever wanted to be.

Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Ken. Believe me, you've been one of many Albertans like yourself who've come forward in the last few days not as a special interest group or as a lawyer. We've had a few of those. We're kind of a necessity too in life, whether you like us or not, but I certainly appreciate . . .

MR. KNOX: Can I have my taxes back now?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anyway, I certainly want to thank you for your views. I want to say that you and I have one thing in common: we support the same hockey team.

MR. KNOX: Yeah, but you don't have one with Mullens on it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, but that was a good year, though.

MR. KNOX: Well, it was. Nothing but the best.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Bob Hawkesworth.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let's hope we have another good year like that very soon.

I just wonder if you could clarify one point that you raised. On one hand, I heard you say that language rights should be left entirely up to each individual provincial government to decide what's okay within their bounds. On the other hand, I heard you say that you're quite upset that the Quebec government might have outlawed the use of English on a storefront sign. Is there any way of reconciling that? If we turn over the power to decide language to a provincial government, then along with it is the right for them to decide that you have to use this language and only one language. On the other hand, we could say that the provinces can't have it, or if they can have it, it would be by recognizing minority rights to use of language on their signs. How do we reconcile those two things, do you think?

MR. KNOX: Okay, Bob. What I said was that the provincial government should have the right to decide what the language of government and the language of commerce is. In other words, if I phoned the Legislature in Edmonton, I know that if Alberta has said that we're an English-speaking province because of the vast majority of people or whatever the reasons, I will get an English-speaking operator. I have no right as a citizen to demand that I get a Ukrainian-speaking operator because of the number of ethnic Ukrainians in this province.

All I would like to see the federal government do is say, "We have a law that no province could subvert." I'm sure you realize that federal law overrules provincial law. So we have a federal law that says that the government cannot restrict any individual human being in this country from conducting business in the language of their choice.

Now, I'm sure that if I opened a store in Kipp, Alberta, that was all Chinese and I only spoke Chinese, I wouldn't be a very

successful businessman. However, if I opened a store in Chinatown in downtown Vancouver that had nothing but Chinese labels on the cans – no French, no English, nothing but Chinese – I could probably be a very successful businessman. Well, why would the government of B.C. be given the right to tell me that I must put a sign outside my building in English or French or both? That should be my individual choice. However, as the Chinese businessman, if I phone the B.C. Legislature, I cannot demand that the person who answers the phone speak to me in Cantonese.

7:36

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, we have a couple of other quick questions for you, Ken, I think. Jack Ady.

MR. ADY: Yes. You did a really good job of really giving detail on the points that you made, but there's one I want just a little bit more on. You said that the federal government should have the right to decide what language they want to conduct their commerce in, and I want to know if you would extend that to the federal offices within the provinces. In other words, if they chose three languages to conduct federal business in, would that necessarily mean that all of our park signs would be in three languages and that the RCMP must speak three languages, that type of thing, or would it just be restricted to Ottawa?

MR. KNOX: I really didn't want to talk about the federal government because this is an Alberta type of thing, but I think the federal government would have to say to themselves, "Supply and demand" or whatever. Banff wants to put all Japanese signs up, and I think 80 percent of their visitors are Japanese or something. Well, I think it's good economics to put up Japanese signs.

All I can do to respond to that is give you one personal example. I wanted some information from the government in Ottawa. So I phoned down there three times. It took me three times phoning because the first two times – and I'm a little bit hard of hearing – the person that I got on the toll-free number spoke such poor English that I couldn't understand what they were saying, so I said, "Well, thank you very much," and hung up and phoned back right away. Okay? I won't say what language. It was such poor English. I think that didn't bother me, but it would have been nice to get the English-speaking operator the first time. I think that if 99 percent of your calls are from English-speaking people, then that office should have 90 percent of the people who are answering those calls speak English. Rather than try to have everybody in that office bilingual, why don't you say, "We've got 10 people who answer these calls, nine of whom are English" – or nine of whatever – "and one speaks . . ." If you get somebody who wants to speak in that language from the federal government, then transfer that call to that person. That would make sense to me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Gary Severtson.

MR. SEVERTSON: Yes, Ken. I just want to ask you: on the native issue, when you said self-government, you insinuated to me a municipal level of self-government, or do you mean provincial or an independent nation government?

MR. KNOX: I don't think it's an independent nation. Due to my employment I have been in contact with a lot of natives. I know a couple very well that are really, really super good people,

and they've taught me a lot about patience. They're really patient. What I meant by self-government was that if somebody wants self-government within the reserve, then I think you've got to accept that as self-government. In other words, quit saying, "We want self-government and self-determination, but we don't want any of the pain that goes with it." In other words: "We don't want to impose a tax on any of our people. We don't want to do this; we don't want to do that. We still want all the money that comes as transfer payments given to us, and we want all the rights." Now I'll list a few. Anybody on the reserve or any native in Canada who wants eyeglasses gets them for free. Anybody who wants dental work gets it for free. Anybody who wants ambulance rides gets them for free. Anybody who wants any of this or that – health care – all get it for free. Maybe it's time that we said: "If you want self-government, then you've got to start to pay like everybody else."

I've had this argument with one friend – I'm 38 years old, which you can tell because I have no hair left. He's 36 years old. He's no more Canadian than I am. I didn't say to my grandparents, "Move here." I didn't say, "I want to be born in Canada." If I went back to the seven countries I'd have to go back to, I can't demand of those governments to give me anything because my heritage is that country. I think we get carried away with this trying to live in the past and make up for the mistakes of our fathers. I'm afraid there is nothing I can personally do to make up for the mistakes of my grandfather, nothing. I'm willing to live in the present, and I'm willing to work for the future, but I'm not willing to pay or have my children or my grandchildren pay for the mistakes of their great-great-grandparents.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ken, for coming forward and expressing your views so eloquently and not leaving us in any doubt. Thank you very much. By the way, Ken, the census form is designed by the federal government.

MR. KNOX: PCs, aren't they?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, that's what they say.  
Okay. Les Visser.

MR. VISSER: First of all, thank you for the invitation to appear before this committee. All I did to earn such an honour was to phone in a request for some information, and lo and behold, I got a phone call. When I was invited, I took it upon myself, like Ken, to solicit some opinions from friends and from people I work with. I've written these comments down, some very strong statements here. I think they should be taken with tongue in cheek to a certain extent, but I think these comments accurately reflect the sort of comments I've heard from the people I deal with, and I think that's probably a fairly representative cross section.

Having said that, if you glance through this small paper, you can see that there are some fairly draconian recommendations here, and I think it's unrealistic to expect solutions like this to go forward without probably the transition of a lot of time. I think Canada is in for a real shock over the next 10 years, and the big reason for that is our economy.

I think if you look at the first paragraph there, under economy, our deficit spending, heavy debt load, and swollen bureaucracy are making Canada a very difficult place to do business, and it's going to get worse. Our manufacturing sector has lost its competitiveness. I think Canada is going through a period of self-doubt right now. We seem to be afraid to take initiatives.

We're not going after foreign investment. We're not looking for opportunities overseas as hard as I think the Americans are. As a result of that, Canada is going to come to grips with some financial realities over the next number of years.

When those financial realities hit, I think it's inevitable that our social programs are going to have to be fine-tuned. Canada's got a great set of social programs. I think they're unsupportable, and they will become increasingly unsupportable over the next number of years. If we go to Hong Kong, for example, I understand they have a 3 percent tax rate there. In Hong Kong society people look after their elders. They don't have CPP; they don't have UIC; they don't have a lot of things. That's one extreme. I think Canada is almost at the other extreme. I think we can find a happy medium, but I don't know how we're going to compete against Asian nations with the kinds of social programs that we have right now.

Moving on to Quebec, this ties into the economy as well. I took this quote out of *Alberta Report*: "Quebec accounts for roughly one-half of today's \$400 billion federal deficit." That may or may not be true, but I think it's true to at least some extent, and I don't think Canada can afford to keep doing things like this. I really don't. Quebec has cultural requirements that it wants to see go through. If they want to see certain cultural facilities and rights in that province, they should have to pay for them, quite frankly. I don't think the rest of Canada should have to foot the bill. I think Quebec really has to pay for its own ride. I've lived in Quebec; I've enjoyed Quebec. But I don't think Albertans, for example, should be a net contributor year after year to a province that doesn't seem to be at all grateful.

Could I just ask the panel here – I'm here to gather some information here as well – what sort of programs make up the bulk of our transfer payments to Quebec? Does anybody know that?

7:46

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, quickly on that. The transfer payments are handled through the federal government. The federal government taxes each individual Canadian or corporate Canadian, they put that into a pool, and based upon a formula as to the economic well-being or otherwise of those provinces, they receive certain amounts in transfer payments to be used by the government for whatever purposes they see fit. There are only three contributing provinces. That is to say the people of three provinces contribute more, and those are Ontario, British Columbia, and Alberta.

MR. VISSER: I understand that, but is it CPP or UIC or which programs?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. That mixes things up a little bit, unfortunately. Of course, there's education through established programs financing for education and health care costs, and the same is true for Canada assistance programs, which cover social programs. It covers such a wide variety of programs, it's hard to give you a detailed analysis quickly, but we could get you some more information on that.

MR. VISSER: Okay. Actually, to further that point. This is not just to pick on Quebec. I think that over time we may see the provinces increasingly demand a reduction of transfer payments and more of a stand-alone system per economic region – I think we're seeing that in Europe – a sort of Canadian

economic community, if you will. I think it's more realistic and equitable.

On the native Canadian issue I think that's one where we're really looking at some serious problems in the short term. If we've got natives here in Alberta, in Quebec, and in other provinces that are ready to go violent on us, I think it's high time we acted on it right away. These land claims: I understand some of them have been in front of the courts for up to 100 years. It just has to be dealt with.

Again, it ties into the economy. I think land claims and treaties aside, native Canadians have to become responsible for their own economic future. We can't keep shipping money into the reserves. It's got to be earned after a certain point. I don't think the Indians have an economic base to do that with right now, but I think if these treaties and the land claims were settled, that would give them an economic base to deal from. So in a sense I'm talking about native self-sufficiency and self-government, but I'd be very reluctant to see something like an actual government within a government in Canada. I think that's just breaking Canada up into too many pieces entirely. But as far as a \$20 billion bill goes, we're in the hole for a lot already, \$400 billion. Another \$20 billion is a lot, but it's not going to make or break us. I think once the natives go violent across the country, it's going to be like getting the toothpaste out of the tube: I don't think we're ever going to get it back in there.

On the Canadian national identity I agree with what the previous speaker said. Canadians don't know who they are anymore, and I think to a large extent that's because we've been flogging this Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to the point it just doesn't make sense anymore. It's a rare day that goes by when you cannot look in the paper and see some ridiculous court case going on where somebody has challenged a criminal charge or challenged this or challenged that, based on the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It's just really gotten out of hand. The most obvious ones are the turban and braid thing in the RCMP. I mean, if we took that to a ridiculous extreme, we could have people moving here from the South Pacific who carry religious war clubs and want to carry those around with their uniforms as well.

I think we have to draw a line somewhere. I'm not a lawyer. I'm not sure how we would do that, but I think a commonsense suggestion would be having a panel, almost like a jury system, I'd like to say, of fair-minded Canadians that can override some of the obvious nonsense that we see going on in the courts. I think this case of Charles Ng in Calgary is one of them. We've got people out there that are swinging a hammer to make 10 bucks an hour, and they're paying probably 20 percent of that in taxes. It takes a lot of guys like that to come up with the \$2 million that we've spent on Charles Ng. I don't think that's defensible. Further to that, I really think the Canadian legal system is in trouble because of this sort of decision, and I think the Charter of Rights and Freedoms has a lot to do with it. It's opened the door for the most ridiculous litigation, and we see more and more of it every day.

As a result of that, we have such a promotion of the different ethnic subgroups in Canada that nobody knows what a Canadian is anymore. This is a comment from a friend. It's a bit hard line: we should be promoting Canadian nationalism instead of changing our national identity every time a new boatload of immigrants arrives on our shores. That's a bit extreme, but I think you know what I mean. I'd like to see Canadians singing the national anthem, being Canadians and not hyphenated Canadians. This is a legal matter. I don't know how to address

it, but I'm representing some of the views that I've heard at work and in other places.

Finally, the triple E Senate: a great idea. I can't see why on earth Ontario and Quebec would ever go for it, but I think if we can push that as much as possible, it's well worth while.

That's all I have. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Are there questions?

Fred Bradley.

MR. BRADLEY: I had one question. Thank you for your presentation. You mention in your brief, in talking about the economy, that we should eliminate some of Canada's expensive social programs. We've heard from many other people in our hearings that they believe that some of our present health and other social programs should be constitutionalized in some sense. In terms of the suggestions you're making, do you have any specifics as to which social programs you think are so expensive that we can't afford them?

MR. VISSER: I think your job as politicians is going to get harder and harder as time goes on because we're going to see the money running out, and I don't think we can maintain these programs. My suggestion to people who want more social programs - I know it's unrealistic, perhaps - is that they take a bit of a trip, go to Hong Kong, go to the Caribbean, go to eastern Europe: just take a look around. Canada has got it made in a lot of ways. Things are so good here. People that have never left our shores really don't have a feel for how bad it can get overseas. If you watch the news, you get a bit of a feel for it.

The UIC: a very difficult one to handle. I think it can use further improvements. If you get a fisherman earning \$30,000 in six months and then collecting UIC for the balance of the year, I think that's ridiculous. We have to lower the cap on UIC. If you've made a certain amount of money in the rest of the year, you shouldn't be eligible for it: that sort of thing. I think this universality of programs is ridiculous. We've got seniors in society here, in Lethbridge, and lots of them, who probably are worth a quarter of a million dollars, and they're applying for programs on fixing up their houses. It's just a drain on provincial money. They don't need it; they shouldn't have it.

I think that if we looked at every social program there is, we could find cuts, and there's going to be a fallout in terms of people being hurt. I think a worse fallout, though, is for the Canadian economy to get so far down the drain that there's no employment here. Then we'll really see what hurts. I think we have to make some tough choices. I think the bureaucracy to support all these programs is swollen too. Again, tough choices. There have to be layoffs in that sector because it's really a nonproductive part of society; it's not a producing part of society. In this global economy we're going to be judged on what we produce, not on how we circulate paper, basically, within our society.

MR. BRADLEY: Just a follow-up on that. In terms of the suggestion that has been made to us that we should constitutionalize some of our health care, or the right to health care, et cetera, do you think that is something that should be in the Constitution?

MR. VISSER: Not at all, no.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Other questions, comments?

Yes, Yolande Gagnon.

**MRS. GAGNON:** Thank you. Taking the fisherman, again, who has earned \$30,000 in the six months of the fishing season, let's say he's got three children. How would you expect him to live the other six months? Go on welfare? You know, you can't really save if you're making \$30,000.

**MR. VISSER:** Yeah, there's always tough cases like that, and I would suggest that we ask people in other countries how they do it with no UIC at all. I think it would take a rethinking of our whole spending and thought processes. It wouldn't be simple; it wouldn't be easy. But if we don't do it, really we're going to be uncompetitive, and everybody's going to suffer. I see programs that almost encourage – for example, say you have a single girl that becomes pregnant. We have programs in place that fund her way through school, et cetera, et cetera. I'm afraid that some of those programs actually act as a bit of an incentive, a negative incentive, indirectly. I've read an article on this. It can act as an incentive to do things that are not responsible.

7:56

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you very much. There's one question I'd like to pose to you. You touched on the language issues here briefly and the Quebec matter. Do you believe the bilingual policies of the government of Canada have been beneficial for Canada in helping us to maintain a Canadian identity which is unique in the world?

**MR. VISSER:** I went to Quebec on a language exchange program, and I gained an appreciation for the beauty of Quebec and the people and the language; I really like languages anyway. But I don't think that policy has done much for us. We've had bilingualism across the country, and all we hear in Alberta from a lot of people is that they don't want French shoved down their throats. They don't want to pay for it; they don't want to see bilingual packaging that costs money. No, I don't think it's been a good policy.

**MR. HAWKESWORTH:** Just a quick question on that. You said in your brief that we must devise a sovereignty association with Quebec. Are you more or less welcoming the mood, or what seems to be the mood, of some Quebecers to sort of break away from the rest of Canada and establish an independent country? Do you sort of welcome that direction they're taking?

**MR. VISSER:** I don't know if I welcome it so much as just realize it is inevitable, simply.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Okay. Thank you very much for giving us your views and those of some of your colleagues, friends, and neighbours you've discussed this matter with.

Larry Conley.

**MR. CONLEY:** What I hope Garry is doing is passing out a copy of my brief.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Yes, we have a copy. Go ahead, Larry.

**MR. CONLEY:** Thank you. I'd just like to identify myself, who I am. I'm a member of the Alberta apprenticeship board and past president of the Lethbridge and District Labour Council.

My brief will primarily deal with labour concerns. The constitutional issue is a huge one, but to get across the points that I feel very strongly about, I thought it was important that I deal primarily with those types of concerns. To contribute to the discussion of Canada's constitutional issue, here follows a discussion paper from a labour perspective dealing primarily with workers' concerns.

Political reform is absolutely a necessity to ensure that in the future a majority of Canadians are consulted and involved in major decisions facing our country. An item on the constitutional agenda should be a clarification of Canada's national purpose by entrenching in the Constitution federal obligations for the environment, for health, equalization of regions, individual access to a basic income, and research and development. No government in history has tried so hard to exclude and divide Canadians. The basis of the current national crisis lies squarely on the shoulders of our leadership, pitting the east against the west, province against province, English against French and, finally, worker against businessman. The government of Canada now talks about the need to strengthen unity in Canada, but their policies effectively dismantle the essential programs that held Canadians together. Cutbacks in Via Rail and the CBC and the privatization of Air Canada have cost Canadians their jobs. Cuts to transfer payments jeopardizing our universal health care system and our quality education system at a time when Canadians are struggling with their own identity do not show a commitment to a strengthened body.

You will hear submissions from any number of groups on how to strengthen Canada as a nation, but the one thing that will be common to all these people is their need to provide financially for their families. Canadians have the right to support their families as comfortably as this country can provide. Canadians have the right to a decent and dignified existence and should not be deprived of the right by a single political party and its ideological commitment to increase benefits to transnational corporations. Can you imagine the wisdom that went into the decision to pursue the free trade agreement and now a trilateral trade agreement involving ourselves, the United States, and Mexico without being united as a sovereign country? I do feel we should have a stronger federal government committed to Canadians in order to eliminate many of the trade barriers between the provinces and to enforce such an agreement. Only then should an international trade deal be sought. We do not subscribe to the vision of a new world order where Canada's role is to enrich the core economy of the United States with our national resources and where Canadian jobs are secondary and our industrial development is written off. Economic relations between countries don't have to be based on exploitation of people or resources. The workers of Canada need a better understanding of what will happen.

Again, no government has the right to manipulate a work force to suit its own needs or the needs of an economic partner. The higher interest rate policy and the inflated Canadian dollar virtually wiped out a quarter of a million manufacturing jobs in this country for reasons only evident to the Mulroney government. To those ends, I request that you consider a federal government commitment to legislation on increased political and economic literacy in this country. With this enhanced knowledge, workers will understand what is best for them and their families and realize what has to be done to retain or regain their working status. Workers will realize that other governments are committed to their work forces and so, too, should the Canadian government. German and Japanese companies have provided upwards of 200 working hours of training for each employee,

maintaining their competitive edge in their industries, and this should also be an aim of legislation in our Constitution. We give our workers approximately seven hours of on-the-job training in this country. Three hundred thousand jobs have been lost in Canada since the inception of free trade with the United States. These are jobs that will never return to this country. What is our government doing for the people? They're doing little.

What we need is a new direction. We need to create jobs, and our governments, both provincial and federal, are sticking their heads in the sand and are cutting research and development grants, the very means on which our future survival depends. I'm again asking for legislation to prevent this from happening at a time when Canadians need so desperately to take the lead in technology and environmental development.

I'm proud to be a Canadian, and we need a strong central government to maintain our commitment to a collective process. A renewed federalism must lead to a truly free and independent Canada where all Canadians are committed to each other whether you're French or any other nationality. In the workplace the Constitution should guarantee humane labour legislation in every province, including pay equity and protection from occupational and environmental hazards. Workers, both white-collar and blue-collar, should be guaranteed what Canadians have always been provided with: a social services net including quality health care, education, child care, parental leave, pensions, and social security. These requests are fundamental to our society and are what sets us apart from our neighbour to the south. I'm quite positive that most Canadians are committed to such programs.

What we need is leadership that will truly lead, giving Canadian workers full access to the political process, guarantees of freedom of speech, assembly and association, and thought along with the right to participate in the activities of a political party. Workers are suffering the wrath of a purported democracy. This is our country, and I am certain that the people will start demanding what should have been already taken for granted: an elected representative truly representing them. Canada must be truly democratic.

8:06

I want to thank this special committee for the opportunity to express a labourer's perspective. I'd just like to add to this that I'm a fighter; I don't back up. To accept something less than what we have simply because someone doesn't feel that we can match our country against another is just not in me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Conley.  
Questions? Pam Barrett.

MS BARRETT: Thanks. Is what you're advocating with respect to constitutional change essentially some sort of social charter, as exists within the European Economic Community?

MR. CONLEY: Yes, I am.

MS BARRETT: Thanks.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Yolande Gagnon.

MRS. GAGNON: Thank you. I'd just like to quote from your paper here.

Workers, both white collar and blue collar should be guaranteed what Canadians have always been provided with: a social services

net including quality health care, education, child care, parental leave, pensions and social security.

Are you suggesting that these would be from a federal level of government and that the money to pay for such things would come from the income tax collection? Who's going to pay for this guarantee?

MR. CONLEY: I am a federalist. I do think that the provinces and the federal government can work together much better than they are working together now. It's time that Canadians started pulling together. We can do this together, and to weaken the central government wouldn't help the situation.

MRS. GAGNON: Okay. Just a supplementary. Education is now a provincial right, at least K to 12 level. Are you suggesting that become a shared responsibility with the feds or that it become exclusively a federal jurisdiction?

MR. CONLEY: Well, as I said, I sit on the apprenticeship board of Alberta, and the goal and aims of the apprenticeship boards across Canada or from province to province – right now it's a provincial jurisdiction. What we're striving to do is make it a national program, because we have our work force traveling from one end of the country to the other. If need be, and it is more efficient to provide a national program for students to be educated, then so be it.

MRS. GAGNON: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Larry, since you're on the apprenticeship board and I used to be a minister with responsibilities for that, how does our apprenticeship program these days stack up against that in other provinces?

MR. CONLEY: Our apprenticeship program is undergoing a lot of changes right now. The CBAT program is the one change that is the most significant at this time. But as far as stacking up, we're still number one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm glad to hear you say that.

MR. CONLEY: I came from Ontario many years ago, and even across Canada, Alberta is recognized as being leaders. I'll be darned if I'll give up the right of any Canadian and take a backseat to anyone. We can do it. Just recently in the news we were declared – what? – the second country in the world for having the standard of living most appreciated by people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A United Nations study showed that, yes.

MR. CONLEY: That's right, and it should never change. It should never be any less. If anything, we should be striving for number one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Go for number one.  
Yes, Bob Hawkesworth.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering. The previous speaker, Mr. Visser, who sat there just before you came up, had a concern that with high debt and expensive universal social programs – somehow he felt that it might be undermining Canada's ability to sort of make it in the world economy and that if we go too far, we just won't have jobs and investment and the like.



MR. CONLEY: I'm not an advocate of a ludicrous spending spree, but I will agree maybe on one point of Mr. Visser's: that we can do things more efficiently. I think that tax money that's paid by Canadians is not being spent well. I think if we look long and hard at a number of programs like he suggested, that money is there. For people to think that we can't provide these programs or we no longer can provide these programs, I'm in total disagreement with that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Conley. I was encouraged to hear your comments about the apprenticeship program. I used to say that as minister a few years ago, so I'm glad to hear you say it tonight. Thank you very much.

Broyce Jacobs. Welcome.

MR. JACOBS: Thank you. I do not have copies for all members. I will leave my brief, and it can be copied if the committee so desires, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. I'll just make the point that when people like to leave – if you have one copy, that's fine, but we'd like to have copies left with us so we can share those with our colleagues on the other panel, and they will be doing the same with us.

MR. JACOBS: This brief has been prepared by myself as reeve on behalf of the MD of Cardston. Although time did not permit the council to conclude a lengthy debate on the subject of constitutional reform, nevertheless I believe the following represents the basic view of the council and many of the people within the MD. I would just like to interject at this point that a couple of days ago when I was questioning some people about some things that might be said at this opportunity, I was interested that several people expressed to me the thought that they used to be proud to be Canadians, but now because of what they feel or what they perceive as not being represented fairly, high debts, many other problems, many of them expressed the view that they wish we would move the U.S. border 200 or 300 miles north. I think some of the reasons people think that way will come out in my brief, Mr. Chairman.

I notice that many of the so-called experts whose advice and input is being sought and quoted in the present debate on constitutional reform are what I call academics. I wish to point out that I consider myself a nonacademic. I am a producer of real wealth. I do not live off other people's taxes or government spending. My family's living depends entirely on what I am able to produce and sell off our ranch. I do not wish to imply that academics are not useful and necessary; however, I believe that we have too many people in this country who depend upon the government at some level for their living. Ultimately, this tax cost is placed upon the producers of real wealth.

Much has been said about constitutional reform. The present debate is no doubt very expensive. It seems to me that we are trying too hard to give special consideration and privileges to certain areas and groups. Do not misunderstand me. I believe we need to do all we can to guarantee basic human rights and freedoms, but if we are going to have a Canada and be Canadians, then why do any of us need special rights enshrined? As long as we all have the same basic human rights and freedoms, why do some need special consideration? If we are going to try to give special consideration to areas, then maybe we should have several countries. For example, although I have no bias against the French language and no objection to

someone speaking it if they desire, I resent forced bilingualism. I resent having to pay for the cost of this special consideration, and I do not believe this country needs or can afford two official languages. Also, if we are going to have two, why not three or four or five? There are many who speak languages other than French.

#### 8:16

To remain a unified country I do not believe we can continue to attempt to meet the special needs of all minorities. As I talk to the everyday common people, I sense they share my greatest frustration with this country today; that is, to put it bluntly, we do not feel we have representation in the government. We have too many examples of our elected representatives voting against the desires and views of the people both federally and provincially. If we could design a process that would require the politicians to represent the view of the people and not the party or its leaders, I think we could go a long way towards solving the problems of Canadians.

I do not believe that constitutional reform is the most pressing problem Canadians face today. The national debt, for example, may be of greater concern. The taxes Canadians have to pay are repressing initiative and production. The best way to lower the debt is not to increase taxes but to reduce government spending. The social programs that exist in Canada today are far more than we can afford. We must reinforce the work ethic and increase productivity and reduce our costs, or there will not be a country left to develop a new Constitution for.

In summary, constitutional reform to benefit Quebec or other minorities is not my number one concern. If they do not want to live in this country without special rights and privileges, perhaps they should leave. My greatest frustration is lack of representation and the national debt, both of which are interrelated. There has been much said about Senate reform. Obviously, the present system of appointing friends of the Prime Minister to the Senate is not acceptable. To be effective, the Senators should be elected. Also, in order to give equal representation to all provinces, there should be the same number from each province.

I sincerely hope that Canadians can work together to solve the problems we face. I also hope that governments will start listening to the people and have the courage to implement policies that will reduce government spending and give the people fair, honest, and equal representation.

Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Questions, comments?

Pam Barrett.

MS BARRETT: Thank you. Two questions. One, you said at the outset that some of your friends have said, gee, they'd rather live below the 49th parallel, and part of the reason had to do with the debt in Canada. I wonder if you or they are aware that while the United States has about 10 times the population of Canada, it also has about 10 times the national debt of Canada.

MR. JACOBS: I'm not sure that's correct, but I believe the people perceive the system south of the 49th parallel as being superior in some ways inasmuch as they think there are benefits to living there; namely, costs seem to be lower in many areas, taxes perhaps are not as high, also a perception that perhaps the people are heard.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, and that actually leads to my second question. It is true that prices are lower in the United States, but if you add in, for example, let's say the business costs of absorbing a health care system that is a national program and doesn't exclude anybody, statistics by OECD indicate that real prices – in other words, the bottom line, like what you take home – are about the same compared to the United States where there is no national medicare program and where about 35 million people have no medical coverage whatsoever. Would you be willing to trade our system, which results in somewhat higher prices at the checkout counter, for the American system, which has no medical program?

MR. JACOBS: There are many, many things in the American system I think we could adapt and use, but I'm not advocating that we would like to make a total trade-off. I'm simply advocating that some people are extremely frustrated by things that have happened in this country the last eight or 10 years. The national energy policy, GST, many other things have frustrated Canadians today. As far as some of the social programs that exist, and you mentioned national medicare, obviously probably politically most politicians would not risk giving up that one, but there are many, many inefficiencies in that system created by its universal nature. Surely we're reaching a point where we probably can't afford to continue to operate the system with its present inefficiencies.

MS BARRETT: But you do acknowledge that the percentage of the gross domestic product spent in Canada on the medicare system is still 2 percentage points less than that which is spent in the United States and which still results there in 35 million people being not covered?

MR. JACOBS: I was not aware of that.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, okay. Maybe I'll talk to you afterwards about that.

MR. JACOBS: All right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Gary Severtson.

MR. SEVERTSON: Yes, Mr. Chairman. You mentioned that you didn't think Canada could be a bilingual country. Do you mean . . .

MR. JACOBS: Excuse me, sir. I think I said I didn't believe in forced bilingualism. You know, if people want to learn different languages, I respect people for doing that, but what I suggested was that I didn't think it was fair for the majority of Canadians to have to learn a minority language or be forced to learn it.

MR. SEVERTSON: So you have no problem with, say, Quebec having French as their language or New Brunswick with their language . . .

MR. JACOBS: If Quebec wants to speak French in Quebec, that's great; that's fine.

MR. SEVERTSON: So in other words, you would say maybe leave it up to the individual province whether they be bilingual or single . . .

MR. JACOBS: As long as the taxpayers in Canada don't have to pay for that privilege for them to speak French. If they want to speak French and find that that's to their benefit, certainly I respect their rights to do so. You might recall that I mentioned that I believe it's important for a Constitution to enshrine basic human rights and privileges. That's extremely important. So I would have no objection to anybody speaking French or whatever language.

MR. SEVERTSON: Okay. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Jack Ady.

MR. ADY: Thanks. Broyce, you mentioned that you felt that governments were not responsive enough to the people, and you adequately outlined some of the areas that you had concerns, and they're certainly held valid by many people. But do you have a recommendation for some change in the system that might be enshrined in the Constitution that would cause them to be more responsive in a manner that would be acceptable?

MR. JACOBS: Well, it might. Not specifically, Jack, but you know, it seems to me that especially federal politicians have to pay too much attention to the caucus and the party and vote the way the party wants them to vote or the leader wants them to vote; otherwise, they can no longer be a member of the party. I would prefer to see them have the right to represent their people and the majority view of their people. Maybe what we need to do is make some vehicle in the Constitution that a party wouldn't necessarily fall because all its members didn't vote for it on every motion.

MR. ADY: A fixed term.

MR. JACOBS: Possibly, possibly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. Yolande Gagnon.

MRS. GAGNON: You said that you think language education – let's just stick to that area of language – should be up to the provinces. Are you saying that if Quebec wanted to abandon the English minority there, 1 million people, that they should be able to do that? That those 1 million people should not have the right to English for their children?

MR. JACOBS: Well, I think that should be allowed to sort of solve itself within the province. Surely if those 1 million people want to speak a different language, they should have the right to lobby their provincial government, and if a way can be found to pay for the system to operate within the province and it is the desire of a third of the people or 40 percent of the people or whatever, surely the political system will allow that to happen without enshrining that in the federal Constitution.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We've been hearing a variety of views on the subject of education, and since it is one of the key issues in the Constitution which is solely the responsibility of the provincial governments now, would you see any role for the federal government in terms of setting national standards for education?

MR. JACOBS: I believe that the closer we can make political decisions to the people, the more effective and more beneficial those decisions will be to the people. So I'm happy to leave

education with the provincial governments and to let them continue to do that as long as they do the best they can to maintain academic standards and to meet the needs of their people. I don't see a need or a reason for any educational needs to be placed with the federal government.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Yet there is a concern about the mobility of Canadians to be able to travel across this country and to take their kids from one school jurisdiction to another in another province. We've heard that expressed many times, and I have as an MLA. How do you achieve that? There is the Canada Council of Ministers of Education which represents all the ministers. Do you think they should be encouraged to try and strengthen the transferability options for Canadians?

**MR. JACOBS:** I think I understand your question, and perhaps I'm being naive. Perhaps there is some room for some general guidelines, but I'll come back to the premise I made before. Surely provincial educators and provincial governments are interested in the highest possible standard of education for their people as possible. Surely we're all seeking the same thing. Surely we want to educate our children in those areas that we feel they will need to be educated in to be able to be competitive in the future not only on a national basis but on a world-wide basis. Therefore, I believe that people basically – parents of children and their schoolteachers and the principals and those provincial politicians, et cetera – will surely be on somewhat of a similar standard. Why would one provincial government want to have a lower standard than another one? It seems to me we would all try to do the best we can. I'm just not convinced totally that we need that federal standard.

&26

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Okay. Well, thank you very much for your presentation and to your colleagues on the municipal district of Cardston who have given thought to your presentation this evening.

**MR. JACOBS:** Thank you very much.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you.  
Rob Morrison.

**MR. MORRISON:** Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak here to all three parties. I will hand a copy of my presentation in later this evening.

I'm going to start with a very specific list of suggestions for constitutional changes and then end with a question and hopefully a good amount of time for discussion. I would see some of the changes that would be useful would be listening to aboriginal groups, what they propose for constitutional change, and be willing to go very far in the direction they ask to recognize a considerable amount and perhaps almost total sovereignty of these groups and still make large financial and other support transfers to these groups. If we don't do that, we've got a ticking bomb going on in many of our major cities on the prairies, which is going to give us serious trouble.

I think we should strengthen and protect the French language and culture in Quebec and ensure that that's very clearly stated in the Constitution. I also think we should strengthen native languages, and we also should strengthen language services for immigrants, both training in English or French and also being able to communicate in their own language when they need to seek medical care and can't speak the language here very well.

I think we should also have more language training for business-people because that's how we communicate to the world.

I'm firmly opposed to a triple E Senate. I would just rather do away with the Senate. I think our principal problems in this country are because our parliamentary system is not democratic enough, and that's where we should be focusing our efforts for change: to increase the level of democracy within and in support of that institution.

If we still want a second House, then perhaps we should consider some sort of permanent constituent assembly that has representatives partially elected and partially appointed from representative groups in the community: labour groups, business groups, consumer groups, aboriginals. Some of the representatives should come from provincial Legislatures, but I really only see it being relevant if it really reflects the population, and it should be at least 50 percent women. I'd like to see the head of that permanent constituent assembly being an elected Governor General, and I'd like to see the powers available to that constituent assembly only the powers to examine parliamentary legislation, to review it, to comment on it, and also to propose legislation to go through the parliamentary system but no power to pass or veto legislation.

I would like to see a parliamentary review of all public appointments, in particular for appointments to the Supreme Court. I'd like to see a system of proportional representation. I think that would be far more democratic than what we have now. I would like to eliminate corporate donations, as they have in Quebec, in the political system. I'd like to see a social equity clause in the Constitution, some of this social charter idea that has been talked about. I would like to see us decentralize more of the administration of this country, and not really so much decentralize regionally as decentralize to the policyholders, in essence, so you decentralize Indian affairs to aboriginal groups; you decentralize unemployment insurance to people who draw or expect that they might draw on unemployment insurance. I would like to see us maintain a strong central government. I still think that in our democratic system the most important principle is one person, one vote, and the person we elect should be held accountable; that is, we can recall them after a fixed period if we're not satisfied with their policies.

That finally leads me to my question and the thing I've had the most difficulty with in terms of constitutional change. It revolves around Quebec. I recognize that we have to strengthen Quebecers' security around French language and culture, but what has been asked for is a whole number of powers to be seceded to Quebec in really what amounts to an asymmetrical federalism. We may see a proposal where Quebecers would gain all these powers and then would still be in Parliament but would not vote on certain issues or would not be allowed to be ministers of certain portfolios because that power had been seceded to Quebec. I'm really very uncomfortable with that.

What puzzles me most is that this debate or discussion has been occurring for quite a long time now, and the solution, to me, should have been evident by now. There should have been enough proposals put forward by the different parties and horse trading publicly and refining of proposals and starting to put forward specific suggestions that can come back to us here at the committee to react to, and we don't see any of those really specific suggestions. I'm wondering if that isn't a reflection that there's something really deeply wrong with our democratic system that it's not putting forth the proposals. We have, I think, largely a politically illiterate population in Quebec and outside of Quebec. These issues are really being discussed very well, so there seems to be something lacking in our system where

our energy is going into grandstanding and creating a sense of crisis when there really isn't a crisis, when some of these are quite reasonable issues that can be solved by reasonable discussion. I'm wondering if you can help me out there. What is the flaw in our system that we can't move fast enough on clarifying these issues and coming to resolutions?

I'm going to stop there and invite comments and questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Well, to answer your question, I think perhaps because things change so much more quickly now than they used to. Perhaps the parliamentary system on which we've operated and which has evolved over a period of several hundred years was not designed to respond as quickly to some of the emerging issues as the way they are emerging today. That may be a partial answer to your question. It strikes me that what a lot of people are thinking these days is that the politicians just can't respond as quickly as people want them to on a given issue at a given time.

MR. MORRISON: For instance, I read the *Globe and Mail* every day – it arrives at my door – yet I don't even see the discussion in the *Globe and Mail*. Usually the public is ahead of the politicians, yet in this case, where the public should be expressing some of its ideas in the *Globe and Mail*, I don't see those options being put forward. There's some discussion, but it's really pretty primitive.

8:36

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Yolande Gagnon.

MRS. GAGNON: I agree with Jim that we've had a lot of rapid change, and that creates a lot of unease. It threatens a lot of people.

I think one of the reasons for our crisis, since you asked us – I guess it's the first time somebody has really asked us a question – is people seeking power, and in order to get power, they have to feed off the fears of people and create a sense of being alienated. I could name two people in this country whom I think are doing that. So I think there's that aspect too. It's a way to gain power. You want to get somewhere and things aren't that bad, so the only thing you can do is create crises in the minds of people. That's one of my theories anyway.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Well, other questions or comments?  
Bob Hawkesworth.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps it's just the difficult process that we've gone through with the Meech Lake accord: Quebec putting forward their conditions for signing the Constitution, which they considered minimal conditions, and then having that defeated by the rest of Canada. So a sense of rejection, and now they don't want to go through the process again and be rejected a second time. For the rest of us: burned once, twice shy. Perhaps we're a bit cautious of leading the pack and to some extent maybe looking to the public to give some ideas of where the public really are for the next round of negotiations. As you've been here today, I'm sure you can see that there's no clear consensus emerging. There's a wide diversity of opinions just here in this community and the same across the province. I don't mean to take your question and turn it back on you, because you've come forward with some specific suggestions for yourself about maybe some of the content of negotiations.

In terms of the process, how would you think we should proceed next? Do you think we should develop a list as a committee of what might be a proposed Alberta negotiating stance for the next round? Maybe every MLA on the committee can put forward their individual recommendations, we'll throw it all in a big pot, and come back again to Lethbridge with all of our recommendations for feedback. Do we set up a constituent assembly and let them take the process under their wings and leave us the freedom not to worry about it? I don't know. Where do you see the process going from here, given our recent history in this country of constitutional decision-making?

MR. MORRISON: I don't want to be presented with a seamless web and then be asked to vote yes or no. I would like to be presented with a half-formed proposal. Then the public can help to flesh that out, shift it a bit, bring in some areas that are being neglected, and for sure address more of a range of issues.

As far as process, I initially was intrigued by the idea of a constituent assembly as part of a temporary process that would lead up to some kind of concrete proposal, but I fear that if we don't respect the Parliament that we have at present as being democratic, how can it possibly set up a fair process, appoint people fairly? I mean, we have to go back to the original body. Parliament and the provincial Legislatures are the body, and we have to demand that they represent us fairly. That's what we elect them to do, and that's what they should do. I don't believe in shifting this off to another body that is not accountable, that I can't come back to in two years and say: we're going to elect you out of power now because you didn't represent our interests fully. I'm not really happy with that process.

I'd rather see the process put forward by the representative organizations we have now and not go through a referendum, because I see a referendum only coming forth if we really are clear that we can succeed with it. If it's going to split the country, no federal leader is going to put forth a referendum. If Quebec is not going to go with it, it's just not going to work. The same problem with the constituent assembly. If Quebec will not participate, then it's a useless process.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Interesting thoughts, Mr. Morrison. Just on the subject of referenda. They haven't been used very often in Canada, and when they have been, drawing the question up often consumed as much time as anything, getting something you could say yes or no to. I'll just take you through a little exercise. I'll bet you that if there'd been a referendum after the first ministers came out of Meech Lake, a week or 10 days or two months even after that – do you approve or not of Meech Lake? – people would have approved. There was a euphoria; everybody was happy; everybody was praising it, et cetera. But then when Mr. Bourassa used the notwithstanding clause on the sign language law, there wouldn't have been a hope in Hades of it passing a national referendum. Do you sort of agree with me on that? It's a guessing game obviously now because Meech Lake is a dead horse. Would you sort of agree with that theory?

MR. MORRISON: Yeah. I think timing is everything and what the forces of society are willing to marshal.

What I see happening in California is that the people with the money seem to have the most influence on the referenda, and that's what I worry about most.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There was a very lengthy study on that initiatives process in California, which is very worthwhile reading,

because it's now costing more money to conduct one initiative than to elect the entire Legislature in terms of the advertising, et cetera, et cetera, that goes on. It's become quite a business, and firms are set up now. I won't go into it in too much length, but businesses are set up just to collect the signatures, and they're doing very, very well to start the initiatives. People are making a lot of money out of just going out and collecting the signatures that are necessary to put an initiative on the ballot. There are big, big bucks in it. Isn't that an interesting development in democracy?

MS BARRETT: Yeah, it is. I didn't know that. That's interesting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'll share an article with you that I got from an excellent, very left-wing professor at the University of Southern California, whose views I regard very highly in terms of his understanding of that initiatives - recall, et cetera - process.

Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Morrison.

Now, we have one more presenter before we take a stretch break, coffee break, or whatever: Mel Cottle from the town of Cardston.

MR. COTTLE: Mr. Chairman, my name is Mel Cottle. I'm the deputy mayor of the town of Cardston. I found myself agreeing with at least one point in almost every presentation tonight. Before I start my presentation, I would like to say that I've come much more than ever to understand the complex and difficult task that each of you face, because it's not a single easy issue to solve. I can see that more all the time.

The town of Cardston appreciates the opportunity to present its views on future constitutional reform proceedings and the position Alberta should take on several of the more important issues likely to be on the table at that time. I will be brief and to the point.

First of all, we believe in the old adage: if it ain't broke, don't fix it. While there may be some changes needed in Canada's present Constitution, please be careful not to lose those parts that are presently working just for the sake of change or compromise. We hope to see Alberta as a voice of reason when it comes to this matter and to stay the course when necessary.

Second, all provinces should remain equal under the Constitution. No one province should have "special privileges" or status that all other provinces do not enjoy. For example, if Quebec has the right to define language rights within its borders, then all provinces should have that same right. Special concessions to one jurisdiction just lead to trouble for all at some future date.

Third, provinces should retain the right to define - and to pay for, I might add - the educational programs within that province. This is not an area for federal government involvement.

Fourth, within broad federal guidelines each province should be free to administer the health care package delivered to the citizens within that province.

Fifth, we believe it is essential for orderly growth and long-range stability that each province retain control of its natural resources and their related environmental issues. This places the administration of those resources closest to the people most affected and allows for more input at the local level.

Sixth, included in any reform package must be a provision for an effective Senate. Recent events have demonstrated that the time has long past when we can have a responsive federal system and still maintain our present Senate structure. We are not

positive exactly what form this new Senate should take, but we are positive that substantial changes do need to be made.

In conclusion, we believe that wherever possible the government of Canada should be one of decentralization as opposed to centralization, one that provides more opportunities for local level decision-making rather than less, and defines Canada around strong, equal provinces, not a Canada made up of special interest groups and a series of notwithstanding clauses.

Thank you.

8:46

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Cottle.  
Fred Bradley.

MR. BRADLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the views you've expressed. I had two questions. One was with regard to the Senate. You said we should have an effective Senate, and that's one part of the proposal known as triple E, which is effective, equal, and elected. Do you have any ideas whether the Senate should be elected and whether or not they should be on an equal basis representing provinces?

MR. COTTLE: I believe my answer is yes to both those questions. I do believe they should be elected, and I believe there should be equal representation from each province.

MR. BRADLEY: So you would be a supporter of the triple E concept?

MR. COTTLE: Yes.

MR. BRADLEY: The second question I had. We've had other representatives from municipalities make suggestions to us that the role of a municipality should be constitutionalized, put in the Constitution. Is that something that your council has thought about, or do you have a view on it?

MR. COTTLE: Actually, I don't. We have not discussed it per se. I don't think I'd be prepared to answer for the council.

MR. BRADLEY: Okay. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That was your question too? Okay.  
Pam Barrett.

MS BARRETT: Thanks. This is a tough one. Let's pretend that you're telling us or the negotiators who go with the other provinces and the federal representatives with Quebec. You say all provinces should be equal and no one should get special privileges. Quebec says: "We have a culture to protect. We're drowning in a sea of English. We want a special privilege with respect to immigration." Now, let's say it's a yes or a no - and this is not the first time I've asked this question - what do you tell them?

MR. COTTLE: I think I'd stay with my statement that all provinces should be equal.

MS BARRETT: So kiss it goodbye then. Okay. Thanks.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Or give every province the same right.

MS BARRETT: Yes, I understand. But I posed it differently, Jim, and deliberately. I was asking that if it comes to Quebec

saying we want X that is different and you're the negotiator and you say . . . I'm testing for, you know, how solid the principle is.

MR. COTTLE: No, I think that I would stay with my statement, and the reason is in the other part of the statement. I believe if we continue to make the special interest groups and the special concessions, we just ask for trouble in the future, and we'll be right in the same position that we are presently.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Bob.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Cottle, for your presentation this evening. Some people have come forward to us at our hearings with suggestions about which of these various jurisdictions or powers should go to the province, or maybe areas of shared jurisdiction that should become exclusively provincial, and others where they didn't want to see the federal government lose a role to play. Of course, the Quebec Liberal Party has adopted the Allaire report, which contemplates a very dramatic shift of powers to the provincial level. I take from your presentation that you have some sympathy for decentralizing federal powers to the provincial level. I'm just wondering if you've given any particular thought to which ones might become more the exclusive jurisdiction of the provinces, which ones the federal government might remove itself from totally, and if you have any suggestions you could make to us tonight about which areas we could look to?

MR. COTTLE: Of course. I believe I mentioned the resources. Resource development and education I believe are two of the prime ones that should remain in the provincial camp. I think our federal government has more of a responsibility to represent us in the world and to make for a strong Canada in the world community, and areas that would involve that I believe are the responsibility of the federal government.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: If as a result of the negotiations we saw a fairly significant shift of provincial presence in these areas and a decreasing role for the federal government in things like, say, advanced education or health care or housing, some of the areas they've been involved in in the past because of their spending power, would you see quite the same urgency for the need to reform the Senate if there was an increase in the powers that would go to the provincial level?

MR. COTTLE: Just off the top of my head I would say under any condition, unless the Senate is reformed, then I think it should be done away with. I don't see any future for the Senate in its present form.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could I ask you a question, and I hope that I'm not putting you too much on the spot here. You neighbour a very large Indian reservation, and we've been hearing a great deal as we've gone across the province and in the past few years about the issue of aboriginal rights and the proposals for native self-government. Certainly there's a pretty broad consensus that native land claims should be settled as soon as possible, but then the issue of how one defines native self-government is one of considerable uncertainty, I think it's fair to say, and I don't think my colleagues would argue with that. How would you see enhancing the self-government opportunities for the native peoples, in view of your neighbouring relationship?

MR. COTTLE: I might say that the town of Cardston does work with the Blood reserve on several projects, including a shared sewer treatment plant and water facilities, so there is a lot of co-operation between those two entities at the present time. I certainly wouldn't profess to have an answer at all for the self-government, but I believe an earlier speaker – and I don't recall his name. I believe it would almost make the native contingent stronger if they became more like the rest of Canada, with the same rights, the same privileges, and the same responsibilities as the rest of Canada. I think that almost makes them more self-governing than they are now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you envision the type of government, though, to be more in the nature of a municipal government as opposed to a sovereign province or sovereign nation type that's been suggested?

MR. COTTLE: Yes, I'd envision it more on a municipal level.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further questions or comments?  
Yes, Yolande Gagnon.

MRS. GAGNON: Just quickly, please. If we had this decentralization, how would we maintain a national economy? Would we not have to have some shared projects and so on to make sure that the economy on the national scale is maintained?

MR. COTTLE: I think I mentioned that I would prefer to see decentralization as opposed to centralization wherever possible. I do appreciate the fact that we have to maintain a federal government, a federal presence, and there would need to be some shared. But if there's ever a choice, I would prefer to see it go the other way.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could I just supplement that question? Part of the problem, is it not, Yolande, is the issue of inter-provincial trade barriers being an impediment to a strong national economy. Would you agree that we should try and eliminate interprovincial trade barriers within Canada?

MR. COTTLE: I don't think I'd have any problem with that. I think that would be a step forward actually.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, thank you very much for your participation and thank the people of Cardston. I'm sure your MLA is taking careful note of your representation.

We'll call a stretch, coffee, juice, or tea break or whatever for 15 minutes.

[The committee adjourned from 8:56 p.m. to 9:06 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, we'd like to get under way. I'd like to explain to these folks who have not requested a reservation that we'd like them to be as brief as possible, and the questioning may be brief, because we have a plane to catch.

Derek Rogusky. Welcome, Derek.

MR. ROGUSKY: Thank you. I'd like to start by thanking the committee for listening to both my views and those of other concerned citizens.

Just a few issues that may or may not have been touched on by others before me. When we isolate our politicians and our civil servants in a central location, I believe often they tend to lose touch with the people they are responsible to serve. Thus

I feel people are best served when government is as close to the people as possible. Obviously this leads to a decentralized federal system of government. It is important to match the responsibilities of raising revenues, spending, and program-providing as closely as possible. There should be no overlap, and thus no blame can be passed on to various levels of government. Where national standards are deemed necessary, this could be done through negotiations among all the provinces and the federal government. Provinces or groups of provinces could negotiate with the federal government to be responsible for a matter that is under provincial jurisdiction.

A second area we might look at changing would be the national institutions of our government. Obviously the triple E Senate is the one that has been talked about the most, but I feel this is just one area of our national institutions that needs to be reformed. Other areas are those such as the standing committees of Parliament. I feel that people within provinces would be best represented if membership on standing committees was predetermined on a regional basis. Thus no matter what party a region elects, the region will be represented fairly within Parliament. Also I feel Members of Parliament would be better able to speak the wishes of their constituents and not necessarily the party line.

As well, all national regulatory bodies such as the Bank of Canada, various other boards, should have regional representation. This could be either in the form of one member from each province or on a rotational basis.

Another area: national governing bodies should be placed closest to the area they are designed to serve. We're beginning to see this with the energy board being placed in Calgary. We could see various agriculture department offices placed in the prairies and less so in Ottawa. Fisheries, for instance, could be placed in Atlantic Canada.

One other area I'd like to address is how constitutional changes may be made both this time and also possibly in the future. I feel at this point in time it's important, because changes likely will be large and wide sweeping, that an elected national constitutional assembly be supplemented with a group of selected experts such as the task force that sought out opinions as well. This would then be ratified by the provincial governments along with the federal government in the same method as the seven out of 10 with the 50 percent majority. After that, because these are such important changes, I think this should be ratified by a national referendum. After these sweeping changes, I would think any future changes could easily resort back to a 7 out of 10 provinces and 50 percent majority supplemented by a national referendum.

Those are the only three or so areas I wanted to address. Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Could I just ask you a quick question? We'll keep our questions brief.

You mentioned national institutions. You didn't mention the Supreme Court of Canada. Do you have any views on that institution?

**MR. ROGUSKY:** Actually, that's the one institution that I think may not necessarily have to be divided on a regional basis. I think our law is such an important thing that whoever is best qualified in that area should be placed there. However, I would like to say that the present way of appointing members to the Supreme Court, that being through the Prime Minister basically - maybe we should look at a system where it must be ratified either by the Senate or by the House of Commons.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** That's the process that has been raised before as a concern, so thank you for answering that.

Yes, Yolande, quickly.

**MRS. GAGNON:** We weren't going to ask additional presenters too many questions, but I do have one for you just very quickly. Looking at national regulatory bodies, would you see a body dealing with the environment, for instance, which has no borders, as having to be national and not regional? Like something dealing with environmental concerns, laws, regulations.

**MR. ROGUSKY:** So you mean such a body would be under federal jurisdiction?

**MRS. GAGNON:** Yes.

**MR. ROGUSKY:** I see the environment as being a jurisdiction that would be most appropriately shared by the federal government and the provinces. We can see presently the bickering going on between Ottawa and Regina because one claims they have jurisdiction and the other claims they have jurisdiction. I think if there was a mechanism in place whereby national standards could be set up and monitored by a body approved by both the provincial government and the federal government, that would be best, because we know how environment and economic development go hand in hand. I think the last thing we want is someone in Ottawa telling us how to do our economic development and that.

**MRS. GAGNON:** Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thanks very much for your thoughtful comments, Derek, and for coming forward.

**MR. ROGUSKY:** Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Ernie Patterson.

**MR. PATTERSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I hadn't intended to come here. I wasn't sure I could be here. I appreciate you getting me on, and I'll try to be very quick and very brief.

I want to thank you very much for taking the time to do this. I only wish this process had taken place instead of the Meech Lake fiasco we went through. That leads me to the first thing that I think I want to say.

We have made our constitutional debate so complicated and so - what shall we say? - put on a time line that we're losing sight of what we should be doing. I think there's a very simple solution to what we need to do in Canada. First of all, let's get government out in the open again. Let's do away with government secrecy. There's too much of it, federal and provincial. Even as a member of a municipal government, I try to practise open government. We need open government. If somebody gets a government loan, it's public knowledge. If you don't want it as public knowledge, don't ask for it.

The second thing is: no more caucus. Everything should be debated in the open, as it is in the municipal council. No more Whips and no more dogmatic leadership either at the federal level or at the provincial level. Every MLA has the right to stand up and say what he or she wants to say and vote that way. Every federal Member of Parliament should do exactly the same thing. It works in the United States. I saw the United States

Senate. I watched it on television. I was fascinated with a vote on whether they should declare war on Iraq. A Democrat voted one way, a Republican voted another. Unfortunately in Canada, because of the costs of getting elected, we need to have party systems to help people get elected, but we should not have the signature of the leader on the candidate's paper saying he's okay to be a candidate. If the nominating convention either provincially or federally nominates that person to run for that party, then they run and it's not up to the leader.

9:16

Actually, we have a dictatorship in Canada. We saw Margaret Thatcher thrown out in Great Britain. That wouldn't happen in Canada. It wouldn't happen provincially either, because we're so subjected to the caucus system. You can tell me that it isn't so. It is so. Even some of the questions asked in the Legislature are planned ahead; it's not open and free debate. So that's the first thing: to restore trust, to get openness and do away with the caucus system. If we did that right now and you people in the provincial Legislature could set an example for Canada, that would be the greatest constitutional revision that could take place. It would restore faith in elected people, and it would bring the whole issue out into the open. It would get away from 10 ministers and the Prime Minister sitting behind closed doors and making decisions for us. They have no right to do that. I am glad of one thing: that the people in Canada stood up and gave a message to you people in the Legislature and the federal Parliament and to every Premier in Canada that we're not going to tolerate that sort of thing in Canada anymore. So that's the first thing I would ask for, just that simple thing.

The second thing is: please stop putting our Constitution on a time line. We set a time line with Meech Lake; then Quebec comes and sets a time line. We don't need time lines. Our Constitution will work if we can get responsible government.

The Senate is not going to be the answer. It probably never will be reformed fully. But if we could get every Member of Parliament to be responsible to their constituents and to be accountable and vote the way the people want them to vote, all it would have taken is 22 Members of Parliament from Alberta standing up and saying no to the GST and it would have been defeated. That's all it would have taken. The Senate didn't work; it got stacked. So it's just that simple question.

The other thing I want to say is that I believe strongly in the Charter of Rights. I've been appalled when people sitting here say we should do away with the Charter of Rights. It's fine to say that until it affects you or me. Not many people realize that until the Charter of Rights came in, you didn't even have the right to call for a lawyer when you were arrested. It was in the States, but it wasn't here. That brings me to the Supreme Court appointments. Maybe they can be nominated by the Prime Minister, but it should be endorsed by Parliament the same as provincial judges appointed by the provincial Premier should be endorsed by the Legislature.

The last thing I want to say is that I want to disown myself as a Canadian from all the racial implications that I heard here earlier today. It's appalling. I thought we'd done a lot of work on tolerance and understanding. We as Canadians have always had the impression — and I hope the majority are of this type — that we are tolerant, understanding, respectful of other people's religions and beliefs, and concerned about people's welfare and economic conditions. I didn't hear some of that today. Of course, I'm not quoting from the *Alberta Report*, Mr. Chairman.

Just those few simple things, no more secrecy and individual members being able to think for themselves and not kowtowing

to leaders, and we would go a long way towards reforming our whole government process. Members could then ask and truly find out what the civil service is doing, who got loans, who got grants.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Questions or comments? Yes, just very quickly.

MR. SEVERTSON: I just want to mention the time lines in reference to Meech Lake. Under the '82 Constitution, which we were bound by, the time line of three years after signing was in the Constitution. That's how the time line was set.

MR. PATTERSON: Yes, I recognize that, but we got ourselves down to the last three weeks and almost destroyed our country because we insisted that something had to be decided. Well, nothing was decided. Canada still exists. In fact, the greatest thing that ever happened is that one Premier and one member of the Manitoba Legislature had the courage to be individuals. I didn't see that happen in the Alberta Legislature. Sorry.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, it was passed unanimously in the Alberta Legislature.

MR. PATTERSON: Yes, unfortunately.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, you know, Ernie, we could get into a very interesting discussion here, but as I said earlier, I'll bet you if it had been put to a plebiscite or a referendum before the use of the notwithstanding clause on the Quebec sign language law, Meech Lake would have passed in a referendum in Canada.

MR. PATTERSON: Here's one person here, Mr. Chairman. I was against Meech Lake even before that happened, because I'm against anything that's decided behind closed doors without public knowledge, without public input by elected people. Who gives the right in Canada for 11 people to set themselves up and say, "We are the decision-makers."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The public opinion polls, though, showed very strong support for it right afterwards.

MR. PATTERSON: Maybe, but that's another thing that's gone wrong. We don't lead anymore; we find out by public opinion polls, and that changes with the wind.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And they do change, don't they?

MR. PATTERSON: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. We are moving along. We've probably gone into a little dialogue, and I'm partly responsible for that.

Quickly, Bob.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Okay. I'm going to play the devil's advocate with you, Mr. Patterson, because I've also had experience at the municipal level. I'm going to put it to you, again as a bit of a devil's advocate, that in order to ensure that a council says yes this day and no next week and yes three months later, that roll was filled by the administration to impose some sort of overall, consistent policy. I'm not always convinced that elected people at the municipal level — at least my experience



with the city of Calgary is that unless you have some kind of overall, consistent policy and the discipline to pursue it and push it and keep it, that role often is played by appointed nonelected bureaucrats. Now, I don't know whether that's quite the same experience in your community, but I want you to know that somehow we don't throw out the baby with the bathwater by sort of asking our elected people that the party discipline be totally abandoned.

MR. PATTERSON: Just a very quick reply. Municipal people have a three-year fixed term. It would solve a lot of our problems if we had that in the provincial Legislature and the federal legislature. We have bylaws. We have policies. You have Acts in the Legislature. Those are your ongoing policies, and I think it would be a shame if I as a municipal politician, as mayor of my community, were to say that the policies of my community depend on the administration. I think that's what's gone wrong with our government: we are so weak as elected officials that we don't take the time or effort or haven't got the courage to stand up and say what's on our minds.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: As I say, I was being a bit of a devil's advocate. You understand that, eh?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.  
Bill Sauv .

MR. SAUVE: I really appreciate the time you've given us, ladies and gentlemen. I'd like to confine my discussion tonight simply to our Senate in Ottawa.

I think our Senate should be revised to have 115 members: 10 members from each province, five members each from the territories, and five aboriginal peoples. The term should be five years. Each year two new members are appointed or get put on the Senate. In other words, two drop off; two more come on. So two people have an opportunity to have a one-year orientation and then four years of reasonable contribution as a Senator.

9:26

Instead of elections - I'll draw your attention to the fact that I believe it cost Stan Waters over \$100,000 to become elected to Canada's Senate. I know at least four people who would make admirable Senators who would be not interested at all in going out and soliciting \$100,000 campaign funds but who are very passionate Canadians. I suggest that the Senators be appointed by a lottery. It would cost you \$250 for a ticket, nonrefundable, and there are two winners in Alberta, two in Saskatchewan, et cetera, each year. Considering the operation of Mr. Allan MacEachen last year, I don't think they could do any worse than what Mr. MacEachen did. This certainly assures us that there is no political affiliation, and I would hope that they would have a little more objective approach to the problems that are facing Canada.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Just like jury duty.

MR. SAUVE: Well, why not? One of the persons I have in mind is in his 30s, and he's a PhD student in Calgary right now, and I think he would be a fantastic Senator. I think with five years under his belt as a Senator he would be a great gift to industry in Canada or any legal firm. For the life of me, I can't think of anything wrong with this idea except its implementation

and the fact that politicians would like to reward their own rather than putting the good of the country foremost.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, Bill, that's a very innovative idea, but like any new idea, it may take a little while to sink in.

MR. SAUVE: Well, you have it now, Jim. I hope you would discuss it in your considerations and come up with something along those lines.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Just one clarification: would it be for one five-year term and then out?

MR. SAUVE: One five-year term and then out. If you want to have a second five-year term, it costs you 250 bucks, and you're in the roll of the dice, as Brian Mulroney . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: You're back in the hat again.

MR. SAUVE: You're back in the hat.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you very much, Bill.

Well, we're going to go to the other Hat 110 miles down the road very soon, but we have one more lady who would like to make a presentation: Rose Foder.

MS FODER: Yes. Thank you very much. My approach is somewhat different from the other speakers'. With respect to the booklet, Alberta in a New Canada - I was to go to the Spicer commission, but I was too busy - this came my way, and on the back page it says that if you have any comments, fill it in and send it in. So indeed I did do that on May 1. I just want to share this. It's not very long, but it really comes from my heart. I may be run out of this building. However, it's from my own life's experience, and I think we all have a right to be heard, and I appreciate you giving me this time at the end of a very long day. So here are my comments.

I believe that Canada should remain one country, our country. I've lived in Switzerland for a year back in 1967-68 and then spent two months in Vienna studying German. While living in Switzerland, I became very aware of how proud the Swiss were if they could speak three or four languages. They were fluent in French, German often, English, and Italian. Often the Genevois spoke four languages well. They seemed also very respectful of those parts of their country that spoke their native language. In the northern part of Switzerland they speak German, in the south, Italian, in the west and midregion it's French, and then there's a very unique canton where they speak the Romansh language. In Vienna people spoke German and often another language, either English, French, or an eastern European language.

I believe that we are a role model country at the moment, the envy, a prize on this globe. However, if we fail to acknowledge the unique culture and language of the French Canadians and to accept them willingly and without undue bias and prejudice, then our developed, multiculturally recognized Canadian milieu will be interpreted as a double standard. It could even be seen as hypocritical. On the one hand, we accept Chinese, Japanese, Sikhs, Indians, eastern Europeans, et cetera, but we're unable to tolerate the very substance of our historical origins. My observation throughout life has been that the English want the world to speak English.

It appears to me to be a matter of the maturity of this country. Our country is young. The pioneer spirit still exists,

especially in our province of Alberta. We are, as I said, a prized country. However, we are naive with regard to the global community, the importance of our global history, who we are, where we've come from, and where we are going. We are also too introspective as a country and not really seeing the world for what's going on in it. I believe with respect to Alberta that we're very close to the whole scene. We lack only the maritime uniqueness here. There are many different origins in Alberta, beginning with the Indians, the French explorers, and many settlers from eastern Europe and Europe as a whole, who settled our province. I think we can show the way for Canada, and I think we can be the role model that we all want to be.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for heartfelt thoughts. I very much appreciate you coming forward and giving us your views. It may not surprise you to learn – and I should tell you now – that as of the end of this day our panel has heard 138 presentations from Albertans, 23 here in Lethbridge today. We've heard about the Swiss experience from other presenters, and that's a useful addition to our dialogue, since while Switzerland is a very small country, it is a federation.

MS FODER: Indeed it is.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Some very small cantons and some half cantons are members of that federation. Quite recently the Swiss ambassador was in Edmonton, and we visited with each other over lunch. I talked to him about federalism. He said, "You know, we look at your federation in Canada, and we think: what a wonderful, clear division of powers and responsibilities you have in Canada. Why can't we make it work that well for us in Switzerland?" I thought, well, there's something wrong here. It is a matter of learning from each other, and your reference to that was very helpful.

MS FODER: Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you kindly, and just before you . . .

MR. HAWKESWORTH: I'm just glad you made the effort and were able to come and give us that presentation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We all thank you very much and all the presenters today. I hope that those of you who have been with us throughout the day and listened to the various points of view recognize that there was a very real divergence of opinion expressed between different people. We would encourage those of you who have not already done so to take our discussion paper, which is a discussion paper that poses questions for your consideration, and, as Rose has done, fill out the last page and send it in to us. We will review that. We have the toll-free number listed in it, and we've received now something approaching 3,000 phone calls with expressions of views and several hundred written submissions and presentations. Now, as I have indicated, we've had 138 presentations before this panel, and I think our colleagues on the other panel will have heard an equal number, and we're not finished yet.

I'll give you this comment as well: when we conclude on Saturday evening, this panel in Calgary and the other panel in Edmonton, we then will meet on June 6, the 16 members of the select committee together for the first time since we commenced our public hearings, and we will then determine whether it is necessary to have further public hearings, to see whether or not

there are more requests from across the province to come and meet with people in their communities. We've already had two requests, one from Wainwright and the other from Peace River. We'll see then how much more extensive consultation we'll undertake with Albertans. All of us on the committee, regardless of party, believe that it's very important that we make sure that Albertans know their views are important. While diverse, we will struggle through the process of trying to come to a consensus so that we can represent the broad middle ground and the majority views of Albertans.

Thank you all very much for your participation. It's always good to be back in Lethbridge, but we're now going to Medicine Hat. To me that's a very nice city; I happen to live there. Thank you very much.

[The committee adjourned at 9:37 p.m.]