

3:21 p.m.

Wednesday, September 25, 1991

[Chairman: Mr. Horsman]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to call the session to order and thank the people of Hanna and district, this southeastern Alberta region, for coming forward to give us their views on the Constitution of Canada.

This select committee has been traveling across the province. We started back in May. In some of the centres there were a number of additional presenters who wanted to be heard, and requests were received from Hanna, Wainwright, Peace River, and Rocky Mountain House to move the panel discussions to those communities, which we did. Therefore, we're here in Hanna.

I'd like to introduce myself. Perhaps most of you know me. My name is Jim Horsman, and I'm the MLA for Medicine Hat. I'm the chairman of the select committee. There are 16 members on our select committee, and we divided ourselves into two panels so we could hear twice as many presentations. This is the last week of public hearings. We held one during the week of September 9 and then again this week. We'll conclude in Edmonton on Friday of this week. We've been hearing some very interesting and thought-provoking proposals and recommendations for us to consider as we formulate an Alberta position relative to the Constitution.

I'd like to call on my colleagues now to just briefly introduce themselves. I'll start on my left.

MR. CHUMIR: Sheldon Chumir, MLA for Calgary-Buffalo.

MS BARRETT: Pam Barrett from Edmonton-Highlands.

MR. ROSTAD: Ken Rostad, Camrose.

MR. McINNIS: John McInnis, Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. SEVERTSON: Gary Severtson, Innisfail.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Our other colleague, Stockwell Day, is attending a funeral in Red Deer, but he will be coming in later during the course of the afternoon, we expect.

I'd like to invite our colleague and Member of the Legislative Assembly for Chinook to welcome us to her constituency and to make a few brief remarks.

MRS. McCLELLAN: May I approach the bench?

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is not a courtroom. Informality has been the order of the day. We've never bitten anybody that's come to see us, although a few of them have looked as if they wanted to bite us.

MRS. McCLELLAN: Well, I hope I'm not the exception to that rule that you've had.

It's certainly my pleasure to welcome the members of the committee to Chinook constituency and to the town of Hanna. For some of you it isn't the first visit. I'm pleased that we found a nice fall day for you to come. Also, a welcome to the presenters who are from neighbouring communities, and there will be some here. We're really pleased that the committee was able to schedule the time to come out and hear the viewpoints from the citizens of this area. Our communities find this a very important topic and appreciate the opportunity to meet with you

today. However, it is harvest time, and I guess if we'd had a rainy day, we might have had more people able to come.

We are a rural community. Just to give you a little bit of background, this area in the Chinook constituency encompasses something like 8,493 miles, so when they call it the Big Country, they really aren't fooling. We do have a sparse population, and people do travel great distances, a number of whom have today to come before you.

Because of the immense distance and size of the constituency and the neighbouring area and because we knew it was possibly going to be harvest time when you did come, we sent out a questionnaire to every household in my constituency in August. I would like to take the opportunity today to present to you and share with the members of the committee the responses from that questionnaire. We had 319 people respond, and I think when you consider the busy time of the year and the nature of this constituency, it shows a great deal of interest in this topic that you are traveling around the province to hear viewpoints on. So with that, Mr. Chairman, if I could leave you the copies of the questionnaire, all of the questions are dealing with the Constitution, and I hope that it will assist your committee in some way in your deliberations. On behalf of my constituents I thank you for taking this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Shirley, for your welcome. We're very pleased to be here in your constituency of Chinook. I assume that you'll be sitting listening to the comments of your constituents today.

MRS. McCLELLAN: I will be here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Thank you.

I'd like to call now on Paul Schorak, if he'd come forward and join us at the table.

MR. SCHORAK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon.

MR. SCHORAK: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I'm Paul Schorak from Forestburg, Alberta, and I'm doing this presentation as a private citizen. If time permits, I can give some background after I've concluded about how I arrived at the presentation. I'll start with the presentation and the prognosis.

Unity in Canada has, in the opinion of the presenter, reached a crisis level during the last decade. The feeling that all regions of Canada belong to a strong and vibrant nation has disintegrated to its lowest level since Confederation, and the big question is: why? Paradoxically, Canada is still viewed in the world as being exactly a strong and vibrant nation wherein potential immigrants very keenly desire to resettle. Within Canada many citizens feel anger, frustration, and indifference towards national issues. This results in a very low level of self-esteem regarding Canadian citizenship. While these very undesirable feelings may be caused by various factors, the two main reasons seem obvious, and those reasons are (a) the attitudes of many Canadian citizens and (b) the attitudes of our leaders of government and business.

First of all, the attitudes of Canadian citizens. This is simply listening to what is being said and taking note of it. There seems to be an attitude of "I deserve more." Secondly, there's an attitude of "I'm paying too high a tax at all levels." Thirdly, "Other regions or provinces are getting more than their fair share." "I've lost faith in our government." Fifth, "There are too

many freeloaders milking our system." Sixth, "I'll look after number one, because if I don't, who will?" Now, with that kind of thinking, we certainly won't have enthusiastic, positive actions.

Some typical attitudes of business leaders and government – and I'll take the risk and say it in front of you people – are, "I have been chosen or elected by the people so I deserve top remuneration and benefits." Secondly, "I make decisions that will ensure re-election." Third, "Don't do anything that may be right but is very unpopular." Fourth, "The national debt is so large, who will notice another hundred billion?" Fifth, "When issues are very contentious, holding more public hearings, conducting more inquiries is a good way to show the people how wrong they are and how right we are." Sixth, "As business leaders we must be keen towards government grants, loan guarantees, and tax concessions so that we are able to cash in; if all else fails, use the creating-new-employment angle."

Such attitudes are the underlying influences towards creating public mistrust, anger, and frustration towards our present leaders. While the attitudes described in (a) and (b) are underlying influences towards disunity, what comes to the surface is (a) I am unhappy as a Canadian citizen. That is perplexing. Why can't we be as proud and patriotic about our Canada as the Americans are about the U.S.A.? After all, we are just as great a country if not better.

Then the other thing that seems to come to the surface: "There is no way Quebec should be treated as a distinct society." This disturbs me. I just have to say: "What is wrong with us? Don't we understand our own history? Don't we understand that there are differences between Francophone and Anglophone societies?" Our Fathers of Confederation recognized the distinctness at the time of Confederation and based Confederation upon the uniqueness of the two founding races, and the word is "races." I for one readily accept that the people of Quebec are indeed a distinct society. What I do not accept is politicians manipulating such a sensitive matter towards their advantage. As long as the definition of distinct society means allowing Quebec to promote and protect its language and culture, say to that: yes, Quebec is a distinct society.

I hope some of you have read the comic strip *Pogo*, because he was one of my favourites.

3:31

MR. CHAIRMAN: Me too. I'm a great fan.

MR. SCHORAK: He put it so wisely one time. He said: I have seen the enemy, and the enemy is us. I hope some of you read the good book, the Bible. There, in a more dramatic fashion, a very profound message is: "Jesus wept." Those of us who understand know that he wept because of the attitude of the people.

So what do we do? I am making four recommendations in all sincerity and humility as I do believe such actions will start to lead us in the right direction. Number one, regarding citizens' attitudes. All Canadians can benefit from knowing our country better than the present level of understanding. Therefore, government leaders, spend some money on your citizens by holding citizenship seminars all across the country. What's wrong with wining and dining Canadians a bit for such a cause? Why not have Senators act as resource people for such seminars? It will certainly create a better image for Canada than the example of senatorial conduct during the GST debate, which was witnessed by all Canadians. Please help us be proud of Canada.

Secondly, regarding Canadian relations. I believe that Canadians everywhere in our country have the same goals and

ambitions; that is, to be given the opportunity to succeed to their best potential in a country that places individual freedom as the cornerstone of our Constitution. We will not accomplish that by indulging in regional dispute and alienation. Instead, help us to understand each other better. One way I can think of is vacation exchanges. I can say very definitely that my wife and I would be glad to entertain people from Quebec for two or three weeks in a year if we know that that's going to be reciprocated. I think that such exchanges would enhance regional understanding levels better than any other efforts. This could be carried on from year to year involving different people and regions. The example given I know is an oversimplification, as much preparation and detail are involved in such exchanges. I would recommend that the federal and provincial governments be responsible for administering the program.

The third recommendation is regarding the political system. It seems the public has lost faith, trust, and confidence in our political system. It seems to me that one of the underlying factors contributing toward such a loss is that we have the adversary system. That means the government of the day will do whatever to retain power and the opposition will do whatever to bring the government down. No wonder we are losing faith in our political system. The adversary system will work if both sides will accentuate the positive. Please don't sow seeds of dissension or make promises that belong in wonderland. Canadians want their political leaders to be responsible and accountable. The biggest dollars and benefits don't necessarily get the best leaders. We are not that naive. As recently as September 17 of this year I witnessed on national television a Member of Parliament call a fellow member a slut. That does not help me to be a proud Canadian. Political and business leaders, there are so many things that need attention. Please let's get started.

The fourth recommendation is ratifying the Constitution. How do we accomplish this enormous task when one considers all the existing regional relationship stress? The Meech Lake accord failed. Now the Hon. Joe Clark is working valiantly and diligently and facing much rejection. Could it be because our political system is adversarial and all efforts are doomed to fail? Regrettably, I think so. Therefore, I would recommend that a committee of five Canadian citizens of good repute be given the task of drawing up criteria for ratifying the Constitution. Since the political system will have to approve any final accord, let each major political party appoint one member for a total of three and let the Governor General of Canada appoint two cochairpersons from citizens free of political affiliations. The efforts of such a committee would have the best interest of Canada as a whole at heart and be relatively free of the confrontation that exists.

With the four recommendations given herein implemented, I am confident that the desired change of attitude would occur and we will again be known as proud Canadians.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Paul. You've given us an interesting proposal relative to how the Constitution might be dealt with.

I was going to respond, but are there other questions? Pam.

MS BARRETT: Yes. First of all, thanks for giving us written copy. Secondly, thanks for being so analytical. I think that's very, very useful.

I actually have a whole series of questions, but I'm going to try to stick to one issue, although there may be a couple of

questions in there, and that has to do with these citizens' seminars. Are you talking about seminars where people get together and find out or discuss what rights they have under the law and under the Constitution, or are you just talking about getting people together basically to be sounding boards for the politicians on whose behalf they are meant to act?

MR. SCHORAK: No. I'm thinking of seminars that will do many things but first start us to understanding our history real well, because I don't think we do. Secondly, to show what's happening presently, we have to catch up on our past history, and we also have to know what is happening presently. There are so many confused thoughts out there as to what's going on. There needs to be a better level of understanding, and I can't think of a better way than to have some seminars that help us to get in tune with what it's all about.

MS BARRETT: Well, you know, I can tell by your entire presentation that you are a person of extreme good will, and this is very clear from your recommendations as well. I'm really happy to see that. But I wonder: do you think people would attend them?

MR. SCHORAK: That's why I put the idea of wining and dining in there. If you do that, yes, they will attend.

MS BARRETT: Ah ha; come and talk about where we've been and where we're going, and we'll give you cheese and crackers and wine afterwards.

MR. SCHORAK: Really I'm saying that a little facetiously, but there is some truth in it too. Yes, the people I've talked to are very interested, and I would think that we would be very surprised at the participation level of such education seminars.

MS BARRETT: I just have one more question, if that's okay. What would you see these things evolving into? If you start off by talking about, say, the historical context of a Constitution and stuff like that and you want to keep people - I don't know - sort of active and participating in decision-making, which is a good goal and there are a lot of people that want it, what would you see it evolving into? Because they're not going to come back time and again. You're not going to hold a once-a-month meeting in Hanna and get people just talking about the history. Would you like to see things organized so that people are coming to talk about issues of the day once a month or once every two months?

3:41

MR. SCHORAK: I think, first of all, that people have to understand the levels of government, how they exist and how they work. It's surprising how many people don't understand this. I spent three years as a reeve of a county just recently here, and it's amazing the lack of understanding people have of the political system.

Then the other thing that needs to be done: what's wrong with showing off Canada a little bit? You would do that. You would give people some history that we can be proud of, some things that will make us feel good about ourselves. That's one of the main things.

MS BARRETT: I think you're right about not feeling good about ourselves. Thanks.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions or comments? Sheldon.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you very much. I'm also very appreciative of the presentation. You're obviously a proud Canadian. You feel we have accomplished far more in the positive sense than we have created problems, and I share that sentiment. Your recommendations seem to be directed towards the process of bringing Canadians together, and I agree with that, although right now we're at a very, very late stage on that. We've got some proposals on the table. I'm wondering, in terms of your sense of values as a Canadian, how important it is to you to keep our federal government strong. When I say keep it strong, there are some who say it isn't particularly strong in relation to other federations. How important is a strong central government? Looking at the constitutional proposals which were unveiled yesterday, as one looks at them, there's power after power after power that's gone from the federal government to the provinces or has just been simply eliminated from the federal sphere. How concerned are you about that?

MR. SCHORAK: I do believe this country has become one of the greatest countries in the world because we had a federal government that was going in the right direction. I would be very much in favour of keeping it strong, and that's not taking anything away from the provinces at all if you work together, not at all.

I might say that a lot of the opinions in here are not mine. I talked to many, many people in urban and rural Alberta in compiling this, and that feeling is pretty prevalent. Now, if I may say so, and pardon this blunt expression, there are red-necked Albertans around, but they're the ones we hear a lot. If you get out there and listen to the rest of the people, they feel pretty strongly about a strong Canada and a strong federal government.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, I'm pleased to hear that, because so do I.

Let me shift gears a bit here and just sound you out a bit on this distinct society, because you're very responsive to having Quebec recognized as a distinct society. I think there's almost universal agreement in the country that a symbolic recognition that they are different, as they obviously are, is okay. But there are some differences of opinion as to whether or not a recognition of this distinctness in a substantive sense - and in particular in yesterday's announcements, a special situation in relation to the Charter would result in, number one, certain legislation being able to be enacted by the Quebec government, potentially, that other provinces couldn't enact, and at the same time, as part of that, citizens in Quebec perhaps having fewer rights vis-à-vis the Charter. Now, is that the distinctness you would support, or are you supportive only of the first category, of the symbolic sense?

MR. SCHORAK: The distinctness is a little more than symbolic, but you do have to be very careful, sir, about extending extra powers, because that will divide. That won't unify; that'll divide. But as I understand the Quebec, the Francophone, feeling - and this is why I would benefit from one of those vacation exchanges, to understand it better. I have a sister-in-law and her husband and a nephew and his family that are in Montreal, and I get pretty good feedback. As I understand it, the Francophones' main concern is maintaining their language and their culture. And why not? That was what Confederation

was all about, and they recognize that. So to me distinct society emphasizes that. Any special powers could be scary stuff, and it would divide the country.

MR. CHUMIR: What about the proposal with respect to putting the distinct society provision in the Charter so that that impacts the interpretation of the Charter and perhaps results in a different interpretation of rights in Quebec as opposed to the rest of the country?

MR. SCHORAK: I don't find that threatening personally, but I realize what you're saying. I haven't studied that too closely. If it's recognized in the Charter, I can't see it being a threat.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

Paul, your suggestion that five good Canadians be given the responsibility of drafting a Constitution that the rest of us would accept may be a nice ideal, but one of the problems we faced in the Meech Lake process was that the perception was that 11 people tried to draft a Constitution and that was not satisfactory, and the public then demanded more participation in the process. It would seem to me that your proposal is running contrary to what we've been hearing in the last year and a half since Meech Lake failed.

MR. SCHORAK: Yes, but the 11 at Meech Lake were Premiers, politicians. It grieves me to say it, but the public has lost their trust. I think for them to buy in, it'll have to be done by somebody that's removed from the political field. Correct me if I'm wrong, but it seems to me the Constitution of the United States of America was done by one person that was not a politician.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, I don't think that is quite accurate. It was drafted and went through a lengthy process of discussion in state Legislatures and so on and by politicians, I might add. It's an interesting proposal, but I wonder where we're going to find these five saints that you're looking for.

MR. SCHORAK: Well, for three of them I'm saying that the Conservatives, the Liberals, and the NDs appoint them. The other ones, the coleaders, if you think about that a little bit, will really have the balance of power. If you let the Governor General do that, if you want to throw some names around that I know the public would accept: people such as Roy Bonisteel, that used to run *Man Alive*, or Peter Gzowski. That's just to think of a few.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. It's an interesting proposal. I appreciate your sincerity and your obvious concern for Canada. I must tell you that we had an interesting proposal yesterday. I'm not endorsing it, but relative to getting Canadians to know each other better, a lady came forward yesterday and recommended a national unity tax credit, which would permit you to have a tax credit for the amount of money you spent on travel within Canada, encouraging a cross-cultural process.

MR. SCHORAK: That's interesting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't know how much it would cost, and I'm sure the Minister of National Revenue would wince at it, but the notion is there, and it's the same theme: that we've got to get to know each other better. Your theme has carried through

today in the same light, and I appreciate that. Thank you very much.

MR. SCHORAK: Thank you.

MR. ROSTAD: I was just going to ask Paul before you got on to that one whether your plan envisioned the governments financing these or just setting up the mechanism for trade-offs.

MR. SCHORAK: Administering is the most awesome task, because this is on a national basis. Let's say a private person wouldn't have much of a chance of coping with the administering of vacation exchanges, and administering would be the main responsibility, which has financial implications.

MR. ROSTAD: But you'd be responsible for your own airfare or train or however you wanted to decide?

MR. SCHORAK: Yes.

MR. ROSTAD: Okay.

3:57

MR. McINNIS: Well, I was just confused on one point. I understood the four-member or five-member committee was to develop a system to ratify the Constitution, not that they would write the whole thing themselves, right? They would develop a system for ratification.

MR. SCHORAK: Yes.

MR. McINNIS: Okay. Thanks.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, I see, okay. I'm sorry; I misread the . . .

Well, thank you very much, Paul, for your presentation.

The next presenter will be Harry Gordon, and then Eugene Kush. There were two available time slots, so we'll ask Harry to come forward, please.

MR. GORDON: Good afternoon, panel. I'm Harry Gordon, as it says here, and I live 28 miles southeast of here, near the Sheerness power plant on 36. I registered to appear before this panel a long time ago; it seems like a long time ago anyway. You'll be hearing tonight - I think it's 7 o'clock or thereabouts - from Lloyd Hutton. You haven't got his presentation, but I have. I'm not going to comment on it. There are five names on the back, and I was going to say I'm one of the saintly five or the famous five, or whatever you want to designate us as after Lloyd gets through with you after supper tonight. So I really am not going to pre-empt that at all, and I'm not going to comment on what we've said as the five of us, because we've covered the whole gamut from one end to the other. I've had this Alberta in a New Canada, which you have copies of out here, and I went through that a long, long time ago. I've got a few notes, and I would just like to make a few comments on that, and I'll leave the formal presentation to Lloyd.

There are a few things. I really appreciated all the quotes in this little pamphlet. I thought that was excellent; I really did. I'm not going to take time to go into a lot of them, but there are a few little things I'm concerned about. The trade-offs that might happen between satisfying Quebec's wants and needs or desires as against the western provinces - and I'm referring particularly to the triple E Senate. After what happened

yesterday, it looks like there are going to be some things wanting here and there, and I'm a little worried about that. If I had any recommendation, I would think that the west had better hang tough there, because if you only elect a Senate, it's a long way from my understanding of what we should have anyway to straighten things out and get some balance in our system.

I often wonder about what more does Quebec want at arm's length from here. They keep getting some of the things that they want. As you people are all aware, they got control of their immigration here not very long ago, and I don't think we do in Alberta. Quebec collects its own income taxes and does quite a lot of other things.

I'll make a comment regarding our Charter of Rights and Freedoms: I don't think a distinct society should be taken care of in that manner. I don't think it should be entrenched in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. I've got some problems with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. That was supposed to do a lot of things for us, but as I see things, it seems like Canada's now being governed by the courts. We've got all these challenges to the Charter and the courts have to make a decision. This goes on all the time, and I haven't any answer for that, but I'm somewhat disturbed about it because that's not my idea of what it could be, that the government should be, anyway.

I'm going to close with just a couple of things. Well, I covered them: the distinct society was one of them, and the Senate. I don't think a partial triple E is good enough. I'll leave you with that, and all the things that are in our formal presentation Lloyd Hutton will be covering this evening.

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

Any questions? Yes, Sheldon.

MR. CHUMIR: Would you be prepared to trade the triple E for distinct society? If we were to get that, would it would be reasonable for us to concede on distinct society?

MR. GORDON: Yes, I would.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, that's very clear. Any other questions or comments?

I take it, Harry, that you're not known for beating around the bush.

MR. CHUMIR: Nobody's ever had cause to give you Windy as a nickname.

MR. McINNIS: I've got a question for Harry. You mentioned several powers or areas of jurisdiction that are going to Quebec. You mentioned that they control their own immigration, and there might have been one other you mentioned as well.

MR. GORDON: Income tax.

MR. McINNIS: Oh, the income tax. As I understand what the federal government proposes, any province could have the same agreement on immigration, and I think it's probably the case that any province could set up its own income tax system if it was willing to pay the cost of having it. Is it your feeling that those powers would be okay to transfer as long as every province got them, or do you think it's better that income tax and immigration remain with the federal government?

MR. GORDON: Well, if any province thought it was to their benefit to have it, I would have no quarrel. I guess I'm an

Albertan before I'm a Canadian. I don't know why. Maybe it's not the place to say it, but I guess I am. I can't do much now to change that anyway. But if that's what we need and provinces want it – and you're right, you know – I have a feeling that Alberta will profit as a province out of this confrontation we're having.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Well, thank you very much. There are a couple of comments I'd just like to make. The transfer of immigration powers to Quebec actually occurred many years ago in an agreement between the then Trudeau government and the government of the day in what was known as the Cullen-Couture agreement, in which Quebec was allowed to set up its own immigration offices in different parts of the world. What was recently done was to enhance that particular agreement. So Quebec has in fact had a special agreement on immigration in effect in Canada for about 20 years, I think, and that has been a source of some concern to other provinces. It's not just recently that Quebec had that transferred to them. That's just a matter of information for you. In addition, the Constitution of today says that immigration is a concurrent responsibility. Agriculture and immigration are specifically set out as being joint responsibilities of the federal and provincial governments. Most provinces have let the immigration thing lapse by non-usage, but Quebec has been very, very firm about asserting its rights in that respect.

The other thing that you made a point about was the courts governing the country. That, of course, was one of the main concerns expressed by many provincial leaders in 1981 when the Constitution was patriated and the Charter of Rights introduced into the Constitution. It's because of that concern that the notwithstanding clause was put into the Constitution so that Legislatures could overrule the courts if they felt it was necessary to do so. Alberta has never used the notwithstanding clause, but when Quebec used it, it wasn't very popular in western Canada. I think that a lot of people think the notwithstanding clause was in Meech Lake, but it wasn't; it was in the '81 Constitution. I'm just telling you this for a little information.

4:01

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much. I never got into the notwithstanding clause, and if you're refreshing my memory, there's probably a reason that I forget. I noticed, going through my mail today, that I got a little brochure from the Alzheimer Society of Canada, so maybe there's a valid reason that I forget some things.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, thank you very much, Harry.
Eugene Kush.

MR. KUSH: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Gene Kush. I live here in Hanna, and have lived here for some 30 or 35 years. Originally, when my wife and I moved to this area, we were only going to stay two or three years, make our fortune, and go back to the High River area. But this area has proven to be not as lucrative as I thought it was.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You just made your fortune and stayed here, Gene, that's all.

MR. KUSH: Oh, thank you. But no, not quite.

Thank you for letting me speak to you. I know I've written to some of you and told you how to run the country for many,

many years, and it's indeed a pleasure to be able to face you head-on and tell you what I think.

I'm an average Albertan. I'm no better and no worse than any other person living in any province in Canada, and I think the biggest worry that I've ever had in my life is not the Constitution but how to earn my daily bread. Economics is, I think, the real problem behind this constitutional problem that we have here today. The Prime Minister let us have a skeleton of where he wants to hang various items, and the submissions that I'm making here – I don't want to change them any. I still feel that he's missed the real point. The real point is that if the average Canadian is well fed, has got clothes on his back, somebody's looking after him, nobody's beating him up, his house fires are put out before they start, he's going to be a happy Canadian. Where you find discord as in Quebec is when they don't have the same economic opportunities and they don't have the same economic advancement that we have here out west. I'm making a reasonable living, paying my bills, remaining in good health, and am protected from crime, foreign invasion, and oppressive government. Now, when I speak of government here this afternoon, I don't want to pick on you people. I'll say present company excepted, of course, at all times.

The question of how the Constitution is worded is, I think, of idle interest to me. The point of whether Quebec is a distinct society or not a distinct society: let them be what they want. I pride myself that when I go to a foreign country and one of those beach vendors comes along and tries to sell me something, I speak to him in French. That usually drives them away. I've tried that in Moscow; I've tried that in a lot of places in the world. I look upon it with a lot of pride that we do have Quebec and that Quebec is different from the rest of us. I think that's marvelous. It's nothing that I want to knock down or worry about. I think if Quebec had reasonable opportunity to advance themselves, they'd be the same as we are here, maintaining a strong, united Canada.

I originally thought that the British North America Act and the Constitution that it set up was good enough and that it was Pierre Trudeau who brought in an unnecessary protrusion into peace, order, and good government by trying to perpetuate a myth that everybody is going to be equal when the fact is that some of us are more equal than others. We're not all equal. Equality is a recipe for common laziness. If you look at the breakdown of the Communist system in Russia and in eastern Europe, there everybody was as good as everybody else except the people at the very top; they were better than anybody else. They've shown their laziness. There's no productivity; there's no initiative to get ahead. If we as Canadians try to get across that everybody is as good as everybody else, it just won't work. It's the ability to be able to try and reach ahead and get something that's beyond your grasp. I'm not too sure, but I think it was Alfred, Lord Tennyson who said, "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?"

Alex Smith taught constitutional law, and in the classes that I took from him at the university, he predicted anarchy if Canada should ever abandon the North America Act. I agree with him. I see madmen and killers have more protection than their victims, especially if they're under 18 years of age. This business of equality for equality's sake has been stretched far beyond its logical limit. There is some point for equality, but I think we've now had the pendulum swing far, far too far in that direction.

Now, I care for that government that cares for me only as long as it gives me the opportunity to speak up on how the business of the country should be run. I don't really become alarmed

when the government ignores me. I do become alarmed when they become secretive, when they shut off their fax machine, when they do not answer letters, when they become arrogant, when they appear almost to be drunk with power. Those are matters that should be addressed in the Constitution as well, in that the government has got to be responsive. If they're responsive to the average Joe, the average Joe takes affection to them. This affection applies not only to my country, Canada, but to Alberta and even to the town of Hanna. I write to the town of Hanna every week, and they file all my letters in the garbage and ignore me. I don't mind that at all, but if they wouldn't even pick up the mail there, I would start to take offence.

Mr. Harry Gordon here complained about judicial legislation, and I agree with him. Recent decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada resemble orders in council, and they've got to never forget the fact that they are judicial appointments. They're not elective appointments and, therefore, should never legislate or publicly announce crusades against one evil or another. As we've seen lately, if a particular group of people does not agree with a judge or he says something that he shouldn't say about some lady that he's picketed already and then the government reacts to the pickets, what we're getting is we're not getting true judicial decisions; we're getting judges that are afraid that if they say something somebody's going to picket them. That should be provided for in the Constitution: the exact limit of what judges are there for, so that they don't start to legislate as we saw one in British Columbia legislate over the Election Act and the distribution of votes.

There should be equality between the regions. We need the encouragement of a Canadian identity, not a French identity or an Asian or a European identity but a good old homemade Canadian identity. Let's leave our ancestral troubles in France or in India or Russia or China. Let's make this a decent, caring, free land that attracts our first and our strongest loyalty to the point where we would lay down our lives to protect our way of life. Now, how are we going to do that?

Well, first we've got to change the class of politicians that we have, present company excepted. We have to have politicians who are not power hungry empire-builders who have plagued us for the past 50 years. In my view, government in all its forms has become an old boys' club. The theoretical democratic ideas behind it just don't exist any more. You've got your backroom meetings and the king-makers. I've been to several Ottawa-type elections for leader, and that is not my idea of true democracy. I think probably the way to get around that is to do this: get rid of professional politicians. Let's go for: elected positions should never extend to more than two terms. You've been there two terms, out. You might then become eligible to be voted into the Senate, but you should not run for elective position anywhere for more than two terms. The President of the United States – it's stolen from that amendment to their Constitution. They don't allow their President to have more than two terms. There's a good reason for it, and I think the same reason applies here. Two terms and out they go.

4:11

The best government I think you're going to find is government by amateurs. I recall when Peter Lougheed got elected and his Deputy Premier was Hugh Horner. He was a goer; he was a doer. You look back at governments. They're very enthusiastic during the first two terms of their session, but after that it becomes self-perpetuating. They drift away from listening to the people, and they listen to their experts, their professional

deputy ministers and other experts. Leave a politician in office too long and he rapidly becomes dependent upon these experts and forgets how difficult it is to earn a living in private industry. Right here in this town, this community, we are suffering. We've had some good help from the provincial government, but the real problem is that the price for our products is very, very low. You can go from here to Calgary and you'll see it; there's poverty there. I have it in my office every Monday morning. There are one or two people that are so depressed the father is even planning suicide at times, and he quite frankly admits it.

If you have some say in your Constitution, make your economics the most important thing. There are a lot of hungry people in the world. Why can't I sell my wheat and my grain to some of these people that are hungry and get a dollar? That's where we should be concentrating our efforts, in finding markets and in doing things that are different. What we've done is let the politicians perpetuate themselves in power in the same way that a turtle protects himself with a shell. They bought our vote with our own money, and they've created a monstrous deficit in all levels of government, present company excepted, of course.

We have to encourage small business to help the individual. Now, that's very, very important. There should be something in the Constitution to limit the size of business, because Canada can be just as easily destroyed by large corporations and large business that don't have a soul as it can by what besets it at the moment. We should allow people to have the hope, the ability to be able to get ahead and make a few bucks other than just by buying Lotto 6/49.

Good people should be encouraged and paid handsomely to take part in government. When I say paid handsomely, I mean paid well during the time that they're serving and give them a good pension as well, because if they're worth having and they're worth governing us and worth running our country, they're worth something to us in the way of dollars. I know of one ex-MLA here. He's lost close to half a million dollars by being an MLA, and he finally smartened up and quit. He's now got his farm and ranch back up to where it should have been. I see these idiots running around selling memberships to cut off someone's pension, cut off Horner's pension because he's making too much, or somebody else's pension. I think that's nonsense. If you want to have good government, you first of all get good people, not because they win a popularity contest but because they have talent that this country needs.

We cannot lose sight of the fact that all wisdom is not concentrated in Ottawa or Edmonton. When I was the mayor in Hanna here, if we wanted to do something, it would be just our own little group; we couldn't go outside our group to get any wisdom. We thought all wisdom was concentrated right in there in the town chambers. Well, it isn't. Election to public office does not create talent where none exists. That's a very important rule. Somehow we electors elect people that may be handsome with good, smiley teeth and a good, stiff jaw and all that, but so far as being talented and capable of using the old noggin, it just isn't there.

I may be an idealist. You look at the common man throughout the world. He's breaking up his big country from strong federal authority. Why? What's happening in Russia? What's happening in Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and thereabouts? It's even starting to happen in the United States. They resent strong federal authority. You know why? Because the government that's the closest to me is the kindest to me. My town is usually nicer to me than Ottawa will ever be, because I can go down there and I can give Walter Smigg a good shot verbally or write

a mean letter to him or do something, but I have an awful time getting down to Ottawa. You're finding that the public as a whole is disenchanted because there's no communication with those people. Nobody listens. As my son-in-law says, the lights are on, but there's nobody home.

I submit that your constitutional reform group should, number one, try to do a good job. Do it once and for all, because this business of having one Constitution on Friday and another one on Saturday and another one two years later or three years later just doesn't make good sense in trying to set long-term financial objectives. Do it not on political expediency; do it for good, common horse sense. Don't just protect the politician; heed the electorate. That should be the rule, what's good for the country, not what's good for me as a Prime Minister or a member that seeks re-election. Now that you've seen my aspirations for the Constitution, you draw what you need to carry out those objectives throughout Canada from coast to coast.

Quebec's being unique? Yes, they are unique; they always have been. And thank God that they're unique, the same way that the people in New Brunswick are unique and the hillbillies here from the Hand Hills, where I spend some of my time, are unique and a little dippy. That's unique. There's nothing wrong with being unique. I pride myself on that. Now we say, "Well, those provinces are going to break away; they're going to destroy the country." Well, if they don't have basic primitive objectives to look after their citizens so that their citizens first have good economics and they're happy, they can go and look for their fortune elsewhere. Where can Quebec go? They'll be back. They can't change geography. The first time the Americans decide to have a war and conscript everybody, all of them will come back into Canada as draft evaders anyway. They're not going to join the United States.

These breakaway regions are leaving the central authority because of economic oppression by federal authorities who have had too much power for far too long. I do think that the federal government is far too strong. The only thing they should be able to do is control the army, the navy, that one submarine that they're going to buy, the air force, take care of international trade, and be responsible for the money. Now, so far as a strong province, yes, make the province strong. After all, they're the ones that are closest to me. They're the ones that I see the results of good things that they do quicker than I ever see the results of something good that's come from, for example, the Bank of Canada and the idiot that runs that. I've written to him many, many times and suggested that he go and commit suicide, but he doesn't want to do it.

Canada is too strong a country to be destroyed by the loss of one or two unhappy regions. If we do lose them, it's only going to be temporary. They will be apart from us only long enough for them to learn the truth that the green grass across the road isn't as green as they thought it was. Well, my cow learned that lesson a long time ago. It's come back; it no longer wants to go across the road. Then when they do come back with their request to kiss and make up, we should kiss and make up with them, when they see how well Canada is being run by the new Constitution that I've suggested to you in my submissions, all of which I respectfully submit to you. I don't want to have you feel angry at me. I'm a bit of a redneck; I've always been known to be that. It's all submitted to you without delusions of grandeur.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Gene. You're plainspoken as ever. It's been a while since we met in the courtroom, but . . .

MR. KUSH: I lost that go-round, and I'll never forgive you for that one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It was a good case to win. Anyway, that's another topic.

Questions or comments? Yes, John.

MR. McINNIS: Gene, without necessarily agreeing with your remedy, I certainly agree with you about the policies of the Bank of Canada. We've followed a policy of having interest rates that much higher than the United States for quite a few years on the grounds that that would somehow bring our economy back into sync, and I don't really think it's worked. I noticed in the new federal proposals that they want to change the role and mandate of the Bank of Canada and put in the Constitution that the role of the Bank of Canada is to fight inflation, which I think is what they figure they've been doing up to now. I would take it that you wouldn't be very enthusiastic about entrenching in the Constitution that specific role for the Bank of Canada.

MR. KUSH: The government of Canada at this time, and no government of Canada that I've ever seen, ever knows how to fight inflation. You can't fight inflation by printing more money, and you can't fight inflation by putting some person in the Bank of Canada who hasn't got the brains God gave geese. Any economics professor at the university of Edmonton will tell you that you don't do it that way. What he's trying to do is keep up with the United States. We're our own individual little country. True, we've got to pay some attention to that, but if that's in the constitutional suggestion by the government, I think that should be fought bitterly. The economics should be such that we in Alberta control our economy as much as we possibly can so we cover our own regions. For example, we've got drought here; we should be able to figure out a plant that grows in drought or a cow that never drinks water or a fish that doesn't need water or something; you know, control our own destiny as much as we can. We'll do it better than some agriculturalist in Ottawa will ever do or some Bank of Canada man or whatever you want to do. We don't need those people.

4:21

MR. McINNIS: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

That was an interesting proposal that John brought up, that they would entrench a purpose for the Bank of Canada in the Constitution.

MR. CHUMIR: They obviously have long memories, back to Germany of the early '20s.

I must say, Eugene, that I have some problems with your interpretation of the federations throughout the world breaking up. I think there are some, but I would argue that these are unique circumstances of a Communist empire disintegrating and ethnic difficulties and ambitions coming to the fore rather than any dominant force in history. Indeed, when you look at the other federations - the U.S., Australia, Germany - they're all very strong. Probably the most significant trend of any group of nations in this world is the European Economic Community moving to come together.

I also have some problems with your thesis that the federal government is far too strong and it should be restricted to having jurisdiction over defence, currency, and international trade. It sounds to me that you're prepared to outdo the Allaire

report. Might I ask: if that is all that we're interested in in a country, would you subscribe to Alberta joining the United States, because we'd probably do better?

MR. KUSH: No, never, although I must admit that at one time I did write to the Department of Agriculture in the United States to find out how we could get some relief grants for being dried out for the past eight or 10 years. But I would never want to join the United States. I'm proud of Canada. We're the best country in the whole world.

I disagree with you when you say they're not falling apart. The United States is falling apart. Every winter I try to go down to the southern regions and talk to the farmers there. They're not happy. The only way one of their children can ever own a farm is to be rich, inherit it, marry into a farm, or get educated through the army, the navy, or the air force. When you've got Colonel Sanders putting up 200,000 chickens and all the guy does is work for wages, that isn't agriculture. They are unhappy. They haven't got to the point where Quebec is, but the United States has the same problem: the trade channels are north and south, not east and west. There's no love lost between Florida and California, you know.

Australia isn't that solid. They've got some problems. They're screaming over economics at this particular point in time as badly as we are.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, as Nick Taylor would say, to note that there are unhappy people in strong countries is like being surprised that banks charge interest. There's unhappiness all over, but I don't see them breaking up.

You say you're proud of Canada. What is it, then, beyond defence, currency, and international trade that makes you proud? Surely these are not indices of pride. What is it about this country? Surely some of the institutions and the things we do collectively have to have some impact in that regard.

MR. KUSH: The thing I'm the proudest of is that I can sit here today and argue with you over how the country should be run. That's the best thing about this country. From there on you can get into the other institutions we have. But basically the federal government is too powerful, has been too powerful, and they've got to have their wings clipped. Quebec is on the right path when they want to take more power away from the federal government. I think we in Alberta should be following Quebec in the same way.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, some think that we have for some years. Thank you.

MR. KUSH: Thank you, Sheldon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thanks very much, Eugene.

MR. KUSH: Thank you, gentlemen.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Our next presenter is Lloyd Archibald, but I don't believe he has appeared yet. He was scheduled at 4:30. Perhaps we'll just take a little break.

Thank you very much.

[The committee adjourned from 4:25 p.m. to 4:41 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to reconvene and apologize for not introducing the secretary of the commit-

tee, Garry Pockock, when I had our colleagues introduce themselves.

Our next presenter has arrived. We'll call on Lloyd Archibald to make his presentation.

MR. ARCHIBALD: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Archibald would like to stand because of his bad back. Go ahead.

MR. ARCHIBALD: There is a chap in Vancouver, B.C., who has an open-line radio show – is it CKO? – and he had information on a spy here in the western provinces that's spouting hatred, bigotry, everything else. He bragged about being supported by France and by Premier Bourassa over the open-line radio show. Pat Burns has hour-long TV there, if you wanted to check on it. As far as I'm concerned, the guy should be run out of the country.

I'm looking at this from a straight dollar point of view. Everybody's saying we've got to save Canada. Canada is broke. With official bilingualism, under the equalization payments, it's costing us \$6 billion per year, \$180 billion in 30 years; \$2 billion or \$3 billion, maybe, for official bilingualism per year. In another 10 or 20 years you're getting up to over \$200 billion. Multiculturalism, another \$2 billion, so we're up to \$300 billion. We have a \$400 billion debt. We'll have over a \$30 billion yearly debt by the federal government.

Now, there's no chance at all of ever getting out. Alberta's been coughing up \$10 billion a year to the federal government, and what do we get in return? One billion dollars. What is B.C. on this equalization program? Two? Ontario is one more than we are. I have nothing against Bob Rae. I think he's a decent guy – I should mention that I don't belong to any political party – but if they have a \$9 billion or \$10 billion provincial debt this year for four years, plus the debt they have from ex-Premier Peterson, are we going to carry the whole load? There's no way we can carry that load of debt. It's all very well to say, "Oh, we don't want anybody to separate; give everything to Quebec and let them go on with equalization." This business, this constitutional program: I can't see where Alberta is going to get anything out of it. We're absolutely in the red.

There are a lot of other issues involved here. There should be no French outside Ottawa or Quebec. It costs a hundred million to translate from English to French on those new frigates, and they're not built to be of any use whatsoever. The first big iceberg will destroy them. There's an overrun there of \$263 million. They underbid to get the job. At Collingwood they destroyed one of the best shipbuilding companies we had in Canada so they could give those jobs to Quebec, and that shipyard at Collingwood never turned out a poor ship. It was up to qualifications, specifications. It worked the way it should, while these don't. They run up and down the St. Lawrence deciding who's going to get a share of the taxpayers' dollars. I think they're going to have the same thing there as the big O, and it's going to collapse one of these days. I spent five and a half years in the army and 11 months in a tank.

I can't see for the life of me why we should be supporting Quebec to the extent we do. I say stop this equalization business completely. If you can't stand on your own flat feet, you'd better find out how from someone who can, otherwise they're going to drag all of us down. We can't stand a \$400 billion debt. It's all very well to print money, but someday it's got to be paid.

I don't know how true this is, but this came from U.S. customs. Those French labels that no one has ever given us a cost on are supposed to cost 25 percent of the finished product at the selling price, which doesn't help us at all in the U.S. market or anywhere. There's a partial boycott now on a lot of Quebec products. They're subsidized like out of this world. A Quebec farmer can come out here and buy beef. He takes it back there, keeps it 61 days; he gets 15 cents a pound more than he paid for it out here, subsidized by the provincial government, the federal government, and all this jazz, over and above what Alberta farmers get.

The Parti Québécois, or whatever they call themselves, talks about leaving Quebec. Well, if they do, they should go back to 1867. Between the Cree and the Inuit they're going to have a big, fat chance of keeping Quebec with the territory they have now.

Now, I threw some stuff in here; you'll probably jump up and down and have a cardiac arrest. There are people today high up on the business echelon who are going bankrupt and the next day they're starting up. We have a \$10 billion debt, if I understand it correctly, in Alberta. Is that correct?

MS BARRETT: It's more than that.

MR. ARCHIBALD: I just rounded it out. Well, let's say we went bankrupt. Others are doing it at the top, guys bigger than Black. There's one chap in the States. Mulroney was down there this past spring. I don't know his name, but it's in a book, Mulroney's Death Wish. I think that's what it's in. Because of the cheap labour and everything else, he's going to make a killing, and there was a tax Bill passed to help him out. But as I was going to say, supposing we went bankrupt. It's way out in left field. Say you're paying 10 cents on the dollar. We're clear of nearly all our debt. The next thing I suggest: instead of handing everything over to the federal government, have a third-party appraisal on all the federal lands in Alberta, fair price. They ripped us off with the NEP for \$90 billion, and that's without interest. Say "Okay, you took us for \$90 billion; we'll assess these, have a third-party appraisal, and call the deal square and take over all the federal properties and land." Now, that sounds farfetched, but are you going to be stuck all the time? Is the taxpayer going to be stuck all the time for Ottawa?

The other option on this \$10 billion we owe is: that \$10 billion is kept here in Alberta, and the next time they scream for equalization payments say, "No, we can't afford it any longer." If you have some drunken slob in the family and each week you're donating enough money to live on, groceries and so on, and he comes back every Friday night or Saturday morning and says, "I had a tough week; I had a hard time spending that, but I need some more" – this is what's going on under this equalization program. Let every province stand on its own two flat feet, and if they can't straighten out their finances, get somebody in there who can.

Incidentally – and this is for the Alberta government – I can't see for the life of me why you should have a \$3 billion debt as far as the civil servants are concerned. That money should never have gone into general revenue, if that's where it went. It would have saved the province money if they had got some stooped old senior that still knows business and accounting and put him in there and said, "Look, we want an accounting for every buck," kept it separate and everything else. I can't understand that at all. It should be kept separate. There's no excuse for a debt.

4:51

These are just a few of the things. I had problems getting here. I had car trouble, and I didn't know whether I was going to make it at 4:30, and then I got the wrong directions for here, and you people maybe think I should have . . .

Now, as far as Quebec and separation, there's a lady there – and I think there's a copy there someplace going around. There are several copies about people that have been in Quebec. I've worked there; I know what goes on. Her mother was in the hospital there. They wouldn't even talk to her in English. They wouldn't give her doctors, nurses, anyone. She had to move her mother out here. They all moved out of Quebec, the whole family, to Alberta. You go through northern Ontario and you have fire regulations all in French, courtesy of ex-Premier Peterson. He was moving into Queen's Park a duplicate department in French. Now, this is why he was kicked out, but nobody's saying anything about it. I made 14 trips to Ontario over this French business. To set up a duplicate department to equal the English-speaking department so Bourassa and him could take over the two provinces and tell the rest of them they could go you know where: that's why he was kicked out. That's why you had unilingual English only over half of Ontario. I think Hastings county at the far eastern end is all unilingual.

You have a lot of towns and villages and this sort of thing – and I was in a motel with the fire regulations all in French. I was half asleep when I got up; I'd driven about 700 or 800 miles the last day. This was four or five years ago. I saw this on the wall and went over and looked at it. It was fire regulations all in French. I guess they expect the English, if a fire starts, to, you know, get the H out, to have enough brains; they didn't need to print anything in English. I tore it off the wall, and I sent a quarter of it to you, Mr. Horsman, I believe, signed by the Solicitor General of Ontario, with no name. I looked around Nipigon, I believe it was – yes – and I couldn't find one Frenchman, but I counted over a hundred English-speaking Canadians.

You can very well get run off the road there. I had a couple of punks try to do that to me with one-ton cubes, one in front and one behind, at 60 miles an hour. I found a cop, and a lady – the poor lady. She was a senior, and it had happened to her the day before, and she was still shaking. I was just angry, but I spent enough time in the army. I saw one of the guys; I'm going back down to Ontario again. The cop says to me, "Did you get the licence number?" I said, "How am I getting the licence number with a truck five feet in front of me and one five feet behind me and we're doing 60 miles an hour and I'm trying to get out?" I gave him the name of the company on the trucks. I said, "I'll take care of it myself."

But this is the stuff that's going on. You're sworn at, you're cursed at, everything under the sun. Now, whether you want to believe it or not, there's enough evidence there, people who have written in, and it's a disgrace. There's no way we should have to put up with that. I'm saying this on behalf of the . . . Incidentally, there were 5,000 French who died in World War II, and there were 38,000 English-speaking Canadians. I listened to a Frenchman get up in the question period and scream his head off about 5,000 French dying, and I waited and waited and waited for somebody to get up and say, "Hey, we're sorry about this, but 38,000 English-speaking Canadians died." Not one lousy politician. I wrote to George Hees – he used to be Minister of Veterans Affairs – and he wouldn't even say beans. He didn't give a solitary damn about any veteran. I wrote to Allan Lawrence; I asked him to make an apology just so it could be recorded in the House of Commons when it was in session.

Nothing. That's how much they care about English-speaking Canadians or veterans.

I had more here to say, but I got so goofed up in coming up here that I'll probably close and wish . . .

On the Legion business, that was an absolute disgrace. The Legion set up one separate spot – incidentally, I've worked with Sikhs. They call us pigs, for your information, gentlemen. That was stated to English-speaking Canadians on the floor in Calgary. There happened to be an English chap there from India. He just walked over, and if it hadn't been for the manager, that guy would have got tuned in the proper way. But that's what they think of us, the Sikhs.

This minority business and all this crap. We didn't have any trouble until they got into this minority and human rights and everything. Every day now the media's grabbing something, and scream, scream, scream. But do you hear Ukrainians, Chinese, Japanese, dozens of other races? Do you hear of them screaming, "I want, want, want"?

On that Bill C-72, which I'll end up with and then let somebody else have a chance to go at you – I think there's Bill C-72 there someplace. The amended version, if you read it, takes away all the rights of English-speaking Canadians. We haven't any. Even in the C-72 that I have – I wasn't able to get the amended version – we have none at all. If Fortier had had his way, we could have been charged with anything under the sun; no judge, jury, or anything. Just read the Bill that's in there; there's one of them around someplace. Sorry; I know I had a bunch here together.

I sent a letter to ex-Premier Peter Lougheed. There it is, and you should have one or two of those. Way back then, in '80, I assumed that people were honest. The way my grandparents brought us up, you were supposed to trust people and believe them. Do you want to know something? The worst thing I ever did in my life was trust people. Every time I turned around, I got hammered, and I've sure got a bone to pick with my grandparents when I see them upstairs.

Anyway, to sum up on this Bill C-72. There's a whole raft of it here, and the amended version is very little different. The Commissioner of Official Languages becomes the investigator, policeman, prosecutor, witness, and judge as and when he chooses. He's above the law, and he's immune from prosecution. He can be guilty of libel and slander and a citizen has no recourse against him. Court actions can be instituted for breaches of the Act. The punitive powers of the federal court on complaints under the Official Languages Act are unrestricted; the penalty could be imprisonment. Billions of dollars will be required for bilingual computer software and hardware and data processing systems. Francophones are the only ethnic group singled out under the Act for special treatment. The Meech Lake accord plus the Official Languages Act will lead to the francization of Canada. Well, Meech Lake didn't go through, thank God. I've got nothing against anyone, but I don't like people taking advantage of those that are unable to fight back or any one race. I say if Quebec's a distinct society, so are the rest of us. There's no way on God's green earth they should have any more privileges than we do or we should have any more than they do.

This two and a half triple E: Alberta should withhold all taxes, and this \$10 billion that's being handed over every year under equalization, you're tapped for that and you cough that up. And B.C. – what is it? Two? Ontario pays in one more than we do, but because of the debt they've got, courtesy of ex-Premier Peterson . . . I don't know what their debt is for sure, but I think it's around \$40 billion. Now, you add on another \$40

billion. Can you imagine the taxes that are going to go on down there? My family wanted me to go back down. I went down and was going to get insurance. In Markdale, six miles from where I went to school, I phoned about it, and the gal says, "Where did you come from?" I said, "Alberta." She says, "Why don't you go back?" and she was English-speaking. This is what's going on, you see, because Ontario and Quebec . . .

So, ladies and gentlemen, I'm sorry; that's it. I won't bore you anymore. Maybe I've left a thought or two with you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Archibald.

Are there any questions or comments that anybody would like to direct to Mr. Archibald?

MR. ARCHIBALD: Sure. I'd be glad to answer anything you care to throw at me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Well, thank you very much for coming this distance and letting us know your views.

MR. ARCHIBALD: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I understand Mr. McGregor would like to make some comments. Joyce Westerlund is not going to be able to attend because of a funeral in the family.

5:01

MR. MCGREGOR: You notice I hadn't intended to say anything tonight. When it comes to myself against Shirley, I'm afraid I've become a member of the weaker sex. Also, because of the fact that, as you'll no doubt realize, I've still got a very strong Scots accent, I've been classed as a member of an indistinct society.

What I really have here is just more or less in the form of questions. Some of them, of course, obviously you've been hearing already. The first one I haven't seen yet. What exactly is meant by the phrase "distinct society," and why does it appear to be so all-important? Secondly, why has the emphasis been placed on the rest of Canada to conform and apparently defer to Quebec when it is Quebec that has been doing the threatening to separate, not the rest of Canada? Thirdly, if this goes through as it stands, will the Quebec language laws and their police who enforce it be allowed to continue? If so, why? Why should it be allowed there while it's a fault anywhere else? Number four is that I've been fairly concerned with the fact that the likes of the Constitution and the Charter of Rights re race relations are being used in manners in which they were never intended, in my view, to be used. They are being used as excuses for this, that, or whatever comes up against us, as defences. I don't think they were ever intended to be used as that.

Next, I always wondered why the government – and it's not just related to Canada – tends to almost from the beginning get into the idea of "we know what is best for you," without listening to what the people say. They sometimes don't listen to what the people say. The government knows what's best for the public, whether that is in fact the case or not, because the majority of the people in the country want something else.

Lastly, more or less in conclusion, originally back home I was a police officer. I attended a course for senior police officers there, and one of the things that we had to do in our group was to make a presentation. Each group had a different presentation, and ours happened to be: does the future of world peace rest with Canada? While I'm not going to go on to that side of

things, what I did find – I was very fortunate in getting the *Times* supplement then, which had an economic section going, and I got a little bit of information from it. It seems to me that today the concerns are exactly the same concerns as they were in 1959. The business concerns are exactly the same. They've never solved that problem. I wonder why.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. McGregor. You've posed a number of questions to us. You're sort of reversing the field on us, because we're here to ask you questions about what you think Canada should be, but perhaps I could give you a couple of comments.

First of all, the distinct society which is proposed in the paper that came out yesterday from Ottawa is an attempt, I think, to define what was meant by that term, which fell into disrepute during the Meech Lake process. I'm not here to endorse the federal paper or to speak on its behalf, but what they're trying to say is that in terms of Quebec's French language, French culture, and the Civil Code, which has been in place in Quebec since before Confederation and since then, of course, those are the definitions as to what is to be meant by "distinct society." That's an effort that was not made in the Meech Lake process. You've heard, if you've been here, some people saying: "Yes, Quebec is distinct. It's different, and it should be permitted to protect its distinctiveness." Now we'll see whether or not that's what works out in this process.

You make the point that governments don't listen to what people say. Well, we're here. We represent all the parties in the Legislature, and we've been approaching this process in quite a nonpartisan way as we've gone across the province. But I can tell you that we've heard today in this very room the point of view that "Yes, Quebec is a distinct society and should be recognized as such," and "No, Quebec should not be recognized as a distinct society," that "Yes, we need a country called Canada," and, with respect to our last presenter, "No, we don't need a country called Canada." We heard yesterday – and there was reference to the federal paper which came out yesterday – a presenter tell us, "Under no circumstances are you to agree to Quebec as a distinct society in the Constitution." The second presenter after that individual told us, "Absolutely; you must recognize Quebec as a distinct society, and not only recognize Quebec as a distinct society but give it special powers that other provinces don't have."

Okay. I'm just saying that in trying to listen to what the people say, the people do not speak with one voice, and all of us are seriously trying to ferret out what we might characterize as a middle ground which will be supported by the broadest possible majority of the population. It isn't easy. I can't answer some of the questions that you've posed because perhaps there aren't any answers. I certainly recognize the frustration that's inherent in your comments about politicians and our political system, as to whether or not it will reflect the needs, desires, and ambitions of its citizens, but it's a challenge that's facing governments all over the world.

I'll just relate something to you which my colleagues on the panel are tired of hearing. In June I attended a conference in the United States as the only Canadian with a group of American state legislators. It was a course put on by Boston University School of Management. One of the techniques they had was to have us all write down at the beginning of the day what we considered to be the most pressing political concern facing American state legislators and me, as the only Canadian – not "issue" but "concern." There's a difference, obviously,

between a political concern and an issue. At the end of the day the professor came back, and he said the most pressing political concern facing American state legislators is public cynicism towards politicians. The second most pressing concern was the failure of the American political system to serve the needs of its citizens, and the third was the role that the news media plays between the people and the elected politicians. As a Canadian I couldn't agree more that those are the concerns that people express to us, but it's true across the border just as strongly as it is here in Canada. I'm just relating that to you to demonstrate how difficult it is to overcome the gap between the people and the politicians that is inherent in the questions that you posed to us today.

MR. MCGREGOR: In referring to that, what I was thinking about mostly was the fact – and we can only go by Gallup polls from the ordinary person's point of view – that in many instances the people's poll is so very high, but the government has gone in the opposite direction.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You see, that's another factor that I think has come into play in the last 20 years or the last decade even, the amount of polling that is done. Of course, what is in the response depends to a large measure on how the question is asked and posed as well. I've asked through polls the people in my constituency: what do you want? They want more medicare; they want good medicare; they want better education. They want, you know, you name it. Then the question: do you want to pay more taxes? No. The answer is overwhelmingly, "No, I don't want to pay more taxes, but I want to have all these services."

I'm just chatting here, because it's a dilemma that we face, and I just want you to understand that we are very concerned, all of us, no matter what party we're in, about how government is going to serve the people. That is quite opposite to what a lot of people think; that is, that we are more concerned about telling you what's good for you. It's a dilemma. So we appreciate your views, and we appreciate the opportunity this gives us to have this type of dialogue as well.

Stock.

5:11

MR. DAY: A question to Mr. McGregor, Mr. Chairman. Sir, you talked about some concerns about the Charter, and it wasn't specific. Could you be a little more specific? You talked about the Charter used as a defence, and then I didn't catch what for. Can you be a little more specific on that?

MR. MCGREGOR: I seem to recall that on several occasions the Charter and the Constitution have been used in manners in which they were not intended to be used, as an argument against, and caused a ruling that one feels wasn't right because of that. From the judiciary, I'm talking about.

MR. DAY: So it would be a case of the judiciary overruling the legislative, using the Charter: that's what you're referring to?

MR. MCGREGOR: It could be. Yes.

MR. DAY: Okay, thanks.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, thank you, Mr. McGregor.

MR. MCGREGOR: Thank you, sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And it's a pleasure hearing your accent, I can tell you. I grew up as a Presbyterian, and every minister in my younger days had an accent just like yours, so I appreciate it very much.

MR. MCGREGOR: May I say in conclusion that while I certainly agreed with the previous speaker when he said that there should be more patriotism in Canada, it should include all of Canada. Quite frankly, I would hesitate to use the States as a role model.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

Well, we've reached the end of our presenters for this afternoon, and at 7 o'clock we'll reconvene. I understand that we're going to dine somewhere in Hanna this evening. [interjections] At the Canada Grey inn? Okay. So we'll be back at 7.

Are Lloyd Hutton and Claire Grover presenting jointly? Yes? Okay. Well, we'll start with you, then, at 7 o'clock.

Thank you very much. We stand adjourned for now.

[The committee adjourned at 5:13 p.m.]