

7:07 p.m.

Thursday, September 26, 1991

[Acting Deputy Chairman: Mr. Rostad]

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. We'll reconvene. We welcome back those of you who were with us earlier this afternoon and welcome the new people here. For the sake of the new ones, we'll introduce the people at our table. Our total committee is 16. We're divided into two panels of eight. We did have eight here earlier this afternoon. Two of them, with prior commitments, have had to leave. Any presentations that are made tonight will be shared with our colleagues.

My name is Ken Rostad, MLA for Camrose, acting as chairman this evening. I'll ask my colleagues to introduce themselves.

Sheldon.

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

MS CALAHASEN: Pearl Calahasen, Lesser Slave Lake.

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

MR. DAY: Stockwell Day, Red Deer-North.

MR. SEVERTSON: Gary Severtson, MLA for Innisfail.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Our chairman, Jim Horsman, MLA for Medicine Hat, and our other panelist, Pam Barrett, MLA for Edmonton-Highlands, as I mentioned are away.

The gentleman to my left is Garry Pocock; he's secretary of our committee. When presenters do come up, there are mikes here. Don't be embarrassed or shy of them. Our team behind is from *Hansard*. Everything that's said tonight is recorded for posterity. Butch Fischer, your MLA, can get you a copy of *Hansard* anytime so that you can have some of your remarks.

So we'll start then. Our first presenter is Harvey Walter from the Wainwright Lions Club.

Welcome, Harvey.

MR. WALTER: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. First let me apologize because this won't be a very polished performance. The club itself was blindsided by the release of the government's proposed constitutional changes, called a blueprint for Canada. We all got together and tried to address the 10 main points together. I'd like just to start.

We would like to give our thoughts on the 10 published sections to the proposed changes to the Constitution, point one being the distinct society, which is Quebec's distinctiveness, to be entrenched in the Charter of Rights and the Canada clause to acknowledge that province's French-speaking majority, unique culture, and civil law. We feel that if one province is to be entrenched as a distinct society, all provinces should be accorded the same privilege. It seems to be axiomatic that in a democracy all are seen to be equal.

Two. The Canada clause, which outlines the fundamental characteristics of the country, includes recognition, preservation, and promotion of distinctive groups. It seems that if we have this Canada clause, why do we therefore need a distinct society clause? It would seem that the second clause would do the job of the first clause.

Three. The notwithstanding clause under the Constitution highlights that it will require approval from 60 percent of the members of the Legislature. We feel the notwithstanding clause should be deleted totally. If we are to have a Constitution, let's have a Constitution. The notwithstanding clause allows any provincial government to opt out whenever it suits them providing, of course, it gets 60 percent of the vote in the Legislature.

Four, property rights entrenchment in the Charter. We feel that property rights should be entrenched, as it seems to be a given that the citizens of this country can buy and own property.

Five, aboriginal rights. Entrenchment of the aboriginal right to self-government with a 10-year deadline and guaranteed aboriginal representation in a reformed Senate. This issue has been sidestepped again. The 10-year deadline is only a 10-year waiting period, which is really unacceptable, as a whole generation of Canadians will die as second-class citizens.

Six, the Senate. An elected Senate with more equitable regional representation and more power. We feel an elected Senate is a good idea; in fact, we must have an elected Senate. However, we feel that the number of Senators per province should be equal; for example, five Senators for Ontario and five for Manitoba. This equality would in itself give the Senate more regional control. We like the elected Senate, as the power to appoint Senators is taken away from the Prime Minister's office. This destroys some prime ministerial patronage, which in itself is laudable.

Seven, the division of powers. Recognition of explicit, exclusive provincial jurisdiction over manpower training, tourism, forestry, mining, recreation, housing, municipal and urban affairs. A fine idea. Why did it take so long?

Eight, a council of federation, which would be a provincial, territorial, and federal body to co-ordinate interprovincial policies. It was pointed out that this should not be a refuse heap for useless politicians, and this council should consist of nothing more than the intergovernmental affairs minister from each province and/or territory, chaired by the federal interior minister.

Nine, the Supreme Court, which would have a provincial and territorial role in nominations for appointments. Again, a provincial and territorial role in nominations for appointments to the Supreme Court is an excellent idea. Again it seems that we had to wait a long time for this.

Ten, economic union. A free flow of persons, goods, services, and capital among the provinces. We feel it is ludicrous for the federal government to sign free trade agreements with the U.S. or tout or suggest a free trade agreement with Mexico, et cetera, when Canada itself does not have a true economic union.

In closing, I'd like to thank the ladies and gentlemen for listening to me. We, the club, have the feeling that the government is not to be trusted to listen to the legitimate concerns of the people. We would also like to express our opinion that the majority of politicians seem to be trying to forget at times that they represent the electorate. Please start listening with an open mind to all concerns.

I thank you very much indeed.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Harvey. Questions? Gary.

MR. SEVERTSON: Just on your number 10 point. Do you feel free trade is bad, or is interprovincial trade the source of the problem?

MR. WALTER: I feel, personally, that the free trade agreement was bad for Canada. We haven't seen any increase in employment like we were supposed to. I think before we have free trade with other nations, we should at least try and get free trade with ourselves.

MR. SEVERTSON: Yeah, that's the point I was trying to get at. I agree with you that we should have free trade between the provinces, but I was wondering if that's what you felt, too, or that free trade, in particular, was bad.

MR. WALTER: No, free trade is an excellent idea. I'm sorry; I want to clarify that. Free trade is an excellent idea, but it should be achieved in Canada first before we go charging around the world trying to sign free trade agreements with other nations.

MR. SEVERTSON: Yeah, okay; that's what I thought.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Pearl.

MS CALAHASEN: Regarding the Senate, you said that an elected Senate is a good one, but you didn't comment on whether or not it should be the triple E senatorial selection.

MR. WALKER: I didn't comment because the club itself wasn't quite sure, when it was mentioned in the constitutional changes, whether it meant the triple E Senate or a different type of elected Senate.

7:17

MS CALAHASEN: It says on the third part that proposal is the - what do they call it?

MR. WALTER: Elected, equal, and . . .

MS CALAHASEN: Yeah, equal - equitable. An equitable Senate versus the equal Senate. But you're suggesting that should be an equal Senate?

MR. WALTER: An equal Senate, yeah.

MS CALAHASEN: Thanks.

MR. WALTER: Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Sheldon.
Sorry; go ahead, Harvey. I didn't mean to cut you off.

MR. WALTER: No, no.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you. In respect of the distinct society clause, you gave your opinion that all provinces should be equal. There is a view that the way it's characterized at the present time in the Charter of Rights puts individuals in Quebec at risk of having fewer rights than other Canadians, and would give Quebec additional powers or powers above what other provinces would have for that reason. Assuming that is the case with this distinct power provision and that at the same time you're in favour, I gather, of the triple E Senate, would you be prepared to trade off? Would you think it'd be a reasonable deal for Alberta to trade off the triple E Senate for that distinct society provision?

MR. WALTER: Can I ask you to rephrase the question? Do you mean by that - are you are suggesting that Quebec gets the distinct society and then we get the triple E Senate? Is that what you're asking?

MR. CHUMIR: That's right. Are you ready to compromise on that basis?

MR. WALTER: I believe so, yeah.

MR. CHUMIR: Okay. You also approved the transfer that the federal government's proposals would entail of a number of powers from the federal government to the provinces - manpower, some culture, a whole range of things - and thought that was long overdue. I'm wondering to what extent you feel a federal government should have powers. To what degree do we need a strong central government, if at all?

MR. WALTER: Well, one would assume the federal government would keep control of the mint, foreign affairs, defence, methods of raising federal taxation, transfer payments.

MR. CHUMIR: Just those limited things. You would, then, be very, very favourably inclined to something along the lines of the Allaire report in Quebec, which the Quebec government was supporting.

MR. WALTER: There's nothing desperately wrong with that report, although it seems to be that if . . . I'm trying to point out that if one province has X number of clauses, all the provinces should have the same thing. In fact, they word it - because then you would have a loose federation.

MR. CHUMIR: You're not concerned about overly weakening the nation by transferring most powers to the provinces?

MR. WALTER: Actually, provinces at the present want to have quite a few powers anyway.

MR. CHUMIR: That's why one asks why there's a need there, or whether we're well served by transferring more. What's left?

MR. WALTER: Well, as long as the federal government, as I said, keeps those four or five items that I pointed out, I can't see why we shouldn't transfer them, because it saves duplication.

MR. CHUMIR: Sure.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
Stock.

MR. DAY: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Harvey, I wonder if you can help me, maybe even help us as politicians. That's such an ugly word, the "p" word, or we're being told it is. There's a phenomenon that I've noticed in the meetings as we've gone around the province. The phenomenon is people commenting on the fact that, by and large, politicians don't listen. I don't argue with that. That's what we're hearing everywhere. Actually, there was a report of a survey in the United States, and that was the single biggest concern on the minds of legislators across the United States: the public perception that politicians aren't listening, a high degree of cynicism. But the phenomenon that I've noticed in each place where we've gone: at least one

or two people who make the comment usually except their local MLA, whether it's government or, when we were in Calgary, even Sheldon here from the opposition. Someone came up and made some negative remarks, which were heartfelt, about politicians, but in almost each case their local one – and we hear it here in Wainwright with Mr. Fischer – is attentive, does listen, and it seemed to be whether we were in an opposition riding or wherever.

So in your perception, to help me and to help us, where then is the ball being dropped? If there's a sense from people generally that their local MLA is listening, fairly attentive, gets things done, what can we as elected people do to do better or to help the perception or the reality that's out there? I'm asking for free advice here.

MR. WALTER: I think the perception itself is that people don't know because they're not politicians. I don't know. I couldn't answer the question; I'm not a politician. I think the farther away the level of government appears, the greater the level of distrust. I think you can probably understand that, perhaps, more with . . . People think that Brian Mulroney, Joe Clark, Jean Chrétien, or whoever are so far removed from their local sphere of influence or whatever that they tend to have a greater level of distrust than they do for the local provincial MLAs, and of course the local provincial MLAs are not in as close contact as, say, the mayor or the local aldermen kind of thing. I don't know.

MR. DAY: Okay. That's a fair response. I appreciate that. Thanks.

MR. WALTER: But as I say, I just can't answer that question. I would probably do things differently if I were a politician, but I'm not.

MR. DAY: Thanks, Harvey.

MR. WALTER: Thank you.

MR. McINNIS: I was interested in your comment on property rights in the Constitution. Most people would take that phrase to mean the right not to be deprived of your property, but I think it has quite a different meaning in law. The question is: what can you do with your property? The classic case is if somebody decides to put an abattoir in the middle of a residential neighbourhood. Most people who live around there wouldn't like that, but the owner of the property might say, "That's an interference with my property right, to say I can't build an abattoir next door to a nursing home," let's say. Are you comfortable with the idea of having the courts make a whole new set of rules in regard to property rights? Or do you feel that perhaps that shouldn't be in the Constitution?

MR. WALTER: Well, I think your example is a little extreme to begin with. I very much doubt you would get planning permission to build an abattoir right next to a hospital. Anyway, I'm quite happy with it. I believe that it should be entrenched. And if it has to come down to the Supreme Court making all the different rules, then let it be.

MR. McINNIS: I think that is very much what the issue is in terms of whether property rights go in the Constitution, whether zoning control decides that, or whether ultimately . . . I mean, I suppose we might end up where we are if we put a clause like

that in the Constitution, but it also might take 10 years and a lot of litigation too.

MR. WALTER: So let it take 10 years and a lot of litigation.

MR. McINNIS: What's the problem that you see that would be remedied through putting a clause like that in the Constitution?

MR. WALTER: There's no problem. I just believe it's a given that people can buy property. I think the right to own property should be enshrined. That's my opinion; that's my belief. I can imagine there'd be a lot of problems with people who want to build abattoirs, however, but I'm sure they'll get them sorted out in the end.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?

Well, thank you very much, Harvey. On behalf of us, thank the club as well for your civic duty and letting us know what happens with the Constitution. Thank you.

MR. WALTER: Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Our next presenter is Buck Kallen, if I didn't ruin the name. Was I close on the pronunciation?

MR. KALLEN: Close enough, sir.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Just go ahead whenever you're ready.

MR. KALLEN: I really didn't expect to be able to address this group. However, for years I've criticized from the armchair, and now I see an opportunity to come and suggest a couple of plays to the coach.

First of all, I'm honoured to be permitted to address this body. I've been looking forward to saying something about what is happening to my beloved Canada. I indeed love this country. For the present I claim no province as home and no province can claim me, with the exception, of course, of tax time. I can explain this.

I know Canada well. It has been my good fortune to have either lived or worked for at least six months in B.C., Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. I have family and many friends in Ontario and Quebec, and I know far more Newfoundlanders than any one Canadian has a right to know. At the risk of being risqué, I've had intimate relations on le citadel in Quebec City. I've partied in the old section of that town and in Montreal as well. I have many Anglo and Franco friends.

7:27

This August I returned from a six-year stay in Germany. During that time I visited many countries on the continent: Italy, France, Holland, Britain, Denmark, and my favourite, Switzerland. If you haven't guessed already, I'm one of your service members. I'm Sgt. Kallen. I'm with the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, based in Shiloh, Manitoba, right now.

With all my heart I beg my leaders to leave no stone unturned, no point undiscussed, no decent idea uninvestigated or unconsidered on the path to unity for this country. This is the most unique and beautiful country on the face of the earth. I

say that with the utmost sincerity; I've seen quite a few of them. Do not waste it. We are on the way to becoming a truly cosmopolitan nation unlike any other on earth. Do not pervert and halt the progress of this model to the world. Of all the G-7 nations, this is the only one that was not brought about by either civil war, revolution, or the imposition of a system by war victors.

Our country was born from compromise and co-operation. That is our strength and our national heritage, or at least it was before we started thinking and voting with our pocketbooks. I certainly understand that time and situations have changed since the Charlottetown conference so long ago. This nation has prospered during the most dynamic century in history. Let's continue this together. The collapse of the Soviet Union comes with an explanation. Most of us are excited and happy about it. As a soldier, I am particularly thrilled. The collapse of Canada, however, would be nothing more than pitifully embarrassing.

I read in the newspaper that this was called Alberta's place in a new Canada. To Alberta I have this message: you've proved in the past that you were a leader, particularly in the western region of this country; help lead us, but lead us well. As an instructor of leadership hopefuls, I remind you, as I remind them, that a leader looks beyond the self to the good of the group. You do not sacrifice yourself, mind you, for pointless games, but you most certainly do abandon selfishness to achieve the best solution to the problem.

Now that you've got that heartfelt part, I'm going to address a few points, particularly about shaping Canada's future together. While I've not had an opportunity to go through the document and study each point, I do have and have had for quite a while some particular points about national powers. The Allaire report, that was mentioned earlier, claims that immigration devolve to the provinces. No. Not at all. Around the world Canada is the new promised land. It's no longer the States. Most of the cities of the United States have turned into hopeless ghettos; the educational standards have dropped. The chance of getting good work where you can advance generation to generation has declined miserably. However, in the eyes of many Canada still provides this. I do not want Yugoslavs, Spaniards to come to the Canadian consulate and see: "Come to B.C., come to Alberta, come to Saskatchewan, move to Manitoba, come to Quebec." It's "Come to Canada." As I said, we have our own cosmopolitanism here that I hope we can all share.

Also, immigrants should be free to choose where they live, not quotaed into certain parts of the province. If an immigrant wishes to move to Quebec, they should understand that that province favours French and, by choosing to move to Quebec, they undertake to learn the French language. It should not be legislated that you will move to Quebec, you will learn French, and you will survive under those situations. I also understand the economic realities. We don't want 100,000 people all moving to Quebec City or moving to Edmonton, because the superstructure just cannot support them. In those cases, which I hope would be few and far between, a responsible government would be able to step in and help us out.

Second, the Allaire report also claims that the environment should devolve to a provincial responsibility. Once again, no. How can we establish on a provincial level environmental standards that vary from province to province when environmental provinces are not bound by borders? Effluent flows out. My particular experience is on the west coast. It's fine for B.C. to make environmental rules, but they will almost constantly be in conflict with the American's. Can you see four provinces trying

to come up with acid rain agreements with the United States? I do not believe Washington would deal with a provincial government as freely and adequately as they would with a national government. Again, particular to this part of the country, coal-burning problems in Alberta may affect the grain growing in Saskatchewan; however, two environmental policies will meet head to head.

Third: this has never been a question, but definitely defence and foreign affairs are strictly the purview of the federal government. I've done United Nations duty in Cyprus, and I'm going again next year. As I said, I've just come back from six years of NATO duty in Germany. If one thing builds Canada's reputation around the world, without trying to seem conceited, it's the professionalism of our soldiers and the way we are perceived around the world. The most beer-swilling, down and dirty, partying soldier that I have ever seen puts on a uniform, marches out into the public in Holland and in Germany, and the shoulders go back, the head goes up, and he behaves himself. Nobody told him to do it. He's wearing the uniform. People see this. Although it's not the only example of why people respect Canada around the world, it's the one I'm most familiar with.

National standards. There is no ministry of national standards obviously. However, medicare, pensions, et cetera, should definitely have some federal standards. There must be equity across the country from coast to coast. I also suggest that while provincial monitoring of the education system has served me quite well – I've educated myself in three separate provinces with no great problems transferring from one to another – growing global competition and the need for technical expertise require that Canada as a nation establish some national standard of education, particularly where federal dollars are going to be spent. I realize this is not the reality but the perception: that if a man's tax money is going to be collected in Ontario and paid out to the University of British Columbia, there be some ability for a man who has trained himself in British Columbia to also train himself in Ontario to the same level, to the same standards. I read in the *Edmonton Journal* today – I'll try to be a little quicker – that the Canada Council is 34 years old but some people don't think it's going to make 40. Well, that's pathetic as well. Due to the elephant and mouse syndrome of Canada with the United States, the Canada Council is, at least for the time being, necessary.

Now the tough three. The distinct society. I have no problem with the distinct society. I know many Quebecers. Unfortunately, we're arguing over words when we don't really know intentions. I believe most western Canadians would accept the distinct society. Whether or not they'd trade it off for a triple E, I have no idea. All we want to hear from Premier Bourassa is perhaps a resolution from the National Assembly – nothing binding; just get them to make a statement that while they are encouraged to promote and preserve the French identity, they're not going to take that as *carte blanche* to discourage other minorities. That's not stated anywhere. You know, we'll give it to them. Yes, they are a distinct society.

The biggest misunderstanding between the English and the French is that the French heritage comes from the imperialist system while the English heritage comes from English common law, two completely different ways of government, and like a racist father raising a bigoted son, it's passed down. Whether it's intentional or not, the French are used to a very tight, very sovereign – if I may use the word – system. They're not used to co-operating as much as English common law, as we understand it, has encouraged us to. So, Premier Bourassa, tell us that

you're not going to abuse the English minorities and all the other minorities flocking to Quebec. That's all we want to hear. Yes, you do have a distinct society. We understand that.

7:37

The triple E Senate. Triple E came out in this report elected, effective, and equitable as opposed to equal. The only worry we have here in outer Canada, if I may use Mr. Kilgour's term, is that central Canada dominates without true interest. It seems illogical that for a fisheries problem British Columbia and the four maritime provinces should be able to carry the vote in the Senate. In Ontario they do fish, but it's not a root of their industry as it is in the five provinces I mentioned, B.C. and the maritimes. Alberta and B.C. have always been good buddies. We have six provinces in the Senate; we carry the day. People do not perceive that this will be able to happen. They see a certain greed in Ontario and Quebec that they want to maintain power. Well, they've already got it in the House of Commons. The most irritating thing for my father and myself as I was growing up was to turn on the TV and find that the election was already over before Winnipeg got counted.

Finally, the first peoples. I am upset that they view the 10-year deadline as a delay or an extension. I say please be patient; I believe the goodwill is there. I agree with native self-government. I've never ever disputed, since I understood the concept, native self-government. Yes, we did impose ourselves upon this continent centuries ago. However - and again this is an impression I get from people I know - a lot of the grass roots are worried, particularly in this decade. Canadians of this generation have been punished or taken to task for the errors of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers. People want to know how much this is going to cost. How much is Canada going to spend to assist in the establishment of native self-government? We're not opposed to the concept. Yes, please help yourselves. Grow as you wish in the country that is yours as well as ours. But for the 10-year period: if we're going to do it, if we're going to establish native self-government, let's not rush it. Let's not say now, now, now; we want it now. Take the 10 years. Let's do it right the first time.

Finally, for politicians: you'll be happy to know that by my oath I cannot comment on them. However, if you ask questions, I'll do the best I can. As the last gentlemen said about property rights . . . What was my point? I didn't quite get the note down before I got called up, so I'll conclude there.

Thank you very much.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Buck, for a sensuous, heartfelt, and very articulate presentation. Questions? Stock.

MR. DAY: Thanks, Buck. You raised a lot of items. I wish we had an hour or two to talk about some of your perspectives. As someone in the armed forces, certainly you've got a national perspective, which is appreciated, and a historical one too. It's along that line that I want to pose a question to you, because from a military perspective history is very important. I understand even Schwarzkopf was studying and using some of the strategies of Hannibal from Carthage in Roman times in his Desert Storm campaign, so history in fact is very important because lives depend on it. You mentioned your faith - I guess I can say that - in a strong federal government as opposed to provincial. Is that correct?

MR. KALLEN: I understand there are several areas where the provinces do indeed have a right. Although I say I claim no province as home, I am a British Columbian by birth. Particularly on the front of natural resources, that province relies on its three major industries of lumber, mining, and fisheries, so certainly I don't believe Charlottetown should have any influence over Victoria when it comes to the well-being of the people there. However, this whole search for national identity will not come to a good end if we have 10 small provinces joined by a single currency. There does have to be strength at the centre - the points I mentioned, foreign policy and defence aside: environment, which does ignore borders, and education - but not direct control. However, they should be able to establish standards where federal money is going to be spent. I understand there's a big argument over who gets what, but the things the central government does have are the ones that concern, you know, more than one or two or three provinces, that in fact have a continental spending effect.

MR. DAY: When we say standards, do you think it's possible for the provinces, the ministers of education or whoever, to get together and agree on levels so there can be some standards? Like you, I moved around the country a lot in my educational years, and it was very frustrating: you're in grade 5 over here; you might be in grade 9 over there or in grade 4 back over here. That has nothing to do with my academic performance, just for some of my colleagues here. Do you think it's possible for the provinces to work together on a set of standards, let's say educational standards, and agree on those and maybe have the federal government as a referee, or are you saying the federal government comes in and lays out the standards for all the provinces?

MR. KALLEN: I wouldn't say it lays out the standards. I'd say that the federal government is in a much better position to impartially investigate the systems nationwide, to investigate how we fall short or how we exceed our neighbours and trading partners, what's required for the next 20 or 50 years. If the education ministers of the provinces are truly interested in education and the well-being and success of our children, then yes, they will find the results.

MR. DAY: Just a final question, Mr. Chairman, and again it's along the line . . . I ask you this honestly and sincerely. Help me to understand from a point of view of history and a point of view of fact and past performance. Let's take education; let's take social programming and caring for people, which you've mentioned, Buck. The native situation, which the federal government has responsibility for, has been a disaster. It's recognized it's been a disaster. Education, social programming, the negotiations have been a disaster. The federal debt is a disaster, and obviously there are provincial debts also. The official policy on bilingualism. The way multiculturalism has been advanced millions and millions of dollars: people are really reacting negatively to it now.

You mentioned the environment. If we were to allow federal environmental standards in Alberta, it would be a disaster, because those standards allow for pulp mills in Ontario, for instance, that would never be permitted here in Alberta because the provincial standard is so much higher. So to help me understand, where do we get the . . . If I'm going to give more power to the federal government or suggest that in the Legislature on behalf of Albertans, what track record am I drawing

from? What historical perspective can I offer to my fellow Albertans and say, "Trust me; we should give more of this power to the feds," when we have this other historical record to look at which hasn't been that shiny. I'm not being partisan. I'm not saying the federal Conservatives, the federal Liberals. I'm saying it has not been a shining one.

7:47

MR. KALLEN: I admit that most of my comments tonight have come from – I don't know – maybe a wish book, whatever. I never ever said that the present federal standards for the environment are acceptable or desirable, and I assume that if the provinces were to cede control of the environment or environmental standards to the government, the standards would have to be agreed upon in advance: "What are your intentions? What do you intend to do? This is what we want to see; this is what we want to see." As the most wasteful people on Earth, this is very difficult to say, especially being a public servant, and I understand there's a lot of people out there trying to keep their businesses on their feet, large and small.

We should take this opportunity – we're already in trouble – to establish some of the most stringent environmental standards on Earth, conforming with those from the area of preventing acid rain, scrubbing pulp mill effluvia, and smoke, et cetera. In my mind those are technology-building exercises as well, although, sure, in the short term it's going to cost more. Some people are not going to like this; some people are not going to like that. Unfortunately, we've been blinded, only looking five years down the road both on the federal and the provincial level, looking to get elected the next time around. I understand that as well, but what I don't understand is why the governments have not been able to look far enough ahead to say that if we invest in cleaning up the environment – okay, you say the deficit; it's so easy to suggest without having to actually take action – if we set the standards, encourage the technology to achieve those standards, produce the students who can achieve the technical ability, it's going to roller coaster.

In 50 years this country is going to be geographically and physically changed if we do not start taking action now. I understand there's a whole bunch of arguments. I understand that the standards are not correct, but it's something that we have to pay more attention to. If you want higher pulp mill standards, tell the government that. Insist on it before you agree to pass the environment over to them. You may find that you have common allies in Quebec.

MR. DAY: Thanks. Can I just close by saying that I really appreciate the job you're doing as a Canadian ambassador. We're proud of what you're doing, individually and in the services. Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Also, as chairman I'm going to have to ask the questioners as well as the respondents to keep it brief. We are under time constraints, and we've had three people who have asked to present tonight – four, including yourself – that weren't on the list. We certainly want to hear from everybody, but we'll have to keep them to brief questions and answers, please.

Sheldon.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, in that event, maybe what I'll do is just restrict myself to saying, as Chief Dan George used to say, my heart soared like a hawk to hear your comments, because that's my Canada that I heard, and I think that most Canadians and

certainly most Albertans that I run into share that sensitivity for our nation. We've got a lot of work ahead of us to preserve it in light of what's going on.

I had some questions, but I think basically I understand the direction you're going in. In the interests of time I'll leave it at that, so thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I appreciate that.

Pearl, did you have anything?

MS CALAHASEN: That's fine.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I don't want to stymie discussion, but that's why, when we originally started out, we asked for presenters to inform us by the end of July that they wished to present, so that we could set out an agenda. We also have to return sometime tonight to Edmonton because we start there first thing in the morning for an all-day and a night session there as well.

At that, John, you go ahead.

MR. McINNIS: I thought we got a little bit sidetracked on the environment question. I mean, it's not the case that Ontario pulp mills are under federal jurisdiction and Alberta pulp mills are under provincial jurisdiction. They're both under provincial jurisdiction, so if you have a complaint about the way pulp mills operate, generally speaking it's the provinces that you have to turn to, which may explain why British Columbia and Saskatchewan or the state of Oregon are building pulp mills that put zero effluent in the water, whereas ours, the new ones, put tonnes in. What I thought I heard you say is that as Canadians you wanted to see us dedicate ourselves to having the cleanest environment of any country on Earth. If I heard you correctly, would you like to see us put that forward as a committee as a national purpose for our country?

MR. KALLEN: That's very well said, and I think that's an excellent idea. I've heard it so many times over the last year that we are the most wasteful people per capita. I believe that has to do with the garbage and packaging side of the house. As for having a clean environment, I think because of our size and relatively sparse population that we're a few steps ahead of, say, what the United States would have to do were they to make the same goal. But yes, definitely, a national effort towards being the cleanest environment in the world: I can't see anything bad about that.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you.

MR. SEVERTSON: I have one brief question, Mr. Chairman. Buck, you mentioned that you understood what self-government meant to the natives. We met earlier this week with a member from the First Nations who said that they are going back to their people to define what self-government means, that they themselves don't know what self-government means. I was wondering what your interpretation of self-government is for the aboriginals.

MR. KALLEN: I understand that the aboriginals, Canada's first people, have an historic attachment to the land, where we have been brought up as or are historically exploiters of the land as opposed to cohabitants. The use of the land involved in the land claims: I cannot detail from one side of the country to the other what their intentions are. They want the freedom to hunt,

to maintain their culture and hunting; to control the lands that by treaty were given to them, if not particularly effectively administered, by Canadians in the past; the freedom to live there; the freedom to regulate how they hunt, when they hunt. Again, I have vast general knowledge but nothing specific.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That's in fairness, because at the last First Ministers' Conference on aboriginal rights one of the largest problems and stumbling blocks was to try and determine what exactly self-government or self-determination by the natives meant, and they themselves could not articulate that very well, so it's understandable.

At that I'll bring it to a close. Thank you very much, Buck.

MR. KALLEN: Thank you kindly, sir.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Bill Veitch.

MR. VEITCH: Good evening, panel. I really don't know what I'm going to say. I have a lot of views, but a lot of it's been talked about. Just generally I'd like to touch on a few things mainly that I would have liked to have seen in my Constitution.

I believe the Constitution should be for the people of the country, and in that light I would have liked to have seen the people have more input. In fact, I probably would have liked to have seen a constituent assembly of a cross section of people across Canada, including the odd politician perhaps, to draft a Constitution and then have it put to us by referendum to vote on, because I think the Constitution should be for the people, not for the government, and I don't like it to be imposed upon us by government.

The omissions that basically I see - we had a citizens' forum in Wainwright, and we had some 13 tables with 10 to 12 in number at each table. There was great unanimity in the fact that everybody was concerned with our economic plight of Canada. It's well and all to say what we want to have in this country. It's a desperate thing to watch our country being plunged into massive debt, and I don't know what right governments have had to mortgage the future of our children and leave a legacy of debt to them. I think it's gross mismanagement. In that light, if I could have made a Constitution, I would have had a clause entrenched in there that governments cannot deficit finance, period. When we talk about the debt, the governments will come back to us with, "Well, we'll cut your medicare system," or we'll do this or that, or, "You demanded too many social programs from us."

7:57

I'm not sure that I demanded anything. I think it was offered to me on a platter at election time, one party vying with another. I would like to see it spelled out when I have my three seconds of democratic action in this country. That's the time it takes me to make my X. I'm getting a little bit more of it now; I'm getting heard here. But I would like to be able to control the government some way in their spending, and I'd liken it probably to the 28 states in the United States that have some measure of control on spending, whereby I think some of them have to put 1 to 3 percent away for an emergency. Some of them are limited to \$100,000 to \$300,000. I would like to leave this country better than I found it. I'm only here a little spit in time. I've raised five children, lost one of them, but I have four, and I would like to leave it a nice place for them, and I'd hate to leave a bunch of debt. I would like to have seen our Canada pension plan put in a growth fund, and I give credit to Quebec

for opting out of the Canada pension plan and putting it in their Quebec fund where it's a growth fund, as I understand. So economics is a big part of it.

The Senate. I'd just touch briefly on the Senate. I do believe in a triple E Senate. I believe in the equality of provinces, and if we cannot have that and if we want to have democratic control, some control, over our government spending, then there are other options.

I perhaps would have liked to have had entrenched in our Constitution the right of the people to initiate legislation. I can give an example of Proposition 13 in California, where the people formed legislation for the government to cut spending 15 percent. Along with that, why cannot we vote by referendum on some major issues at election time? Can we not have 10 or 15 or 20 things spelled out there? "This is what they're going to cost you. This is what's going to happen to your taxes. Do you want user fees, or do you want to increase taxation to build more hospitals?" Why cannot we have those rights? I think it would be quite simple. We need to be educated, but there would have to be advance education done on the facts put before us, and honest facts. I think the people are getting very mistrustful of governments because of this debt, and we don't think we're having a say. We don't think we're having representation from our MLA or MP. We don't think they represent the majority views of our constituencies because they're voting on party lines, and we'd like more free votes. I would. I would like more free votes. Vote on the merit of the issue, and let's keep Canada a great country.

I was going to say when I started that I was born in Saskatchewan in 1928. When I was two, I saw the advantages of Alberta, so I moved my family back to Alberta. I've lived here since, and I'm really proud to be an Albertan. I do root for the Saskatchewan Roughriders once in a while, though, too.

I think I'll stop with that.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Bill. So do I root for the Roughriders. That's good.

Questions? Pearl.

MS CALAHASEN: Just one, Mr. Chairman. You were talking about putting a vote to a referendum. One of the problems with putting anything in terms of a referendum is who would write the questions that would be brought forward in a referendum. That's always been a perennial question relative to that kind of an idea. What would your suggestion be for that?

MR. VEITCH: That would be the triple E Senate that's representing it.

MS CALAHASEN: That's not on party line, right?

MR. VEITCH: Yes, I see. But supposing it was the parties that are running in an election, and they did it at that time. They could put forward their platform or some major issues in it, four or five. I wouldn't like to see every little infinite detail. You've got to have some freedom as times change. They need some flexibility. Could they not put their major points out as a vote, and if they're elected, then follow that for four years? I would like the preset elections too. I like that idea so that everybody has an equal chance at the advertising.

MS CALAHASEN: So you're saying, then, that kind of a referendum should occur during the election platform time?

MR. VEITCH: That would be the most economical time to do that, yeah.

MS CALAHASEN: Because it would be quite expensive if you were to do a referendum on major issues and try to get that out into the public and voting. When you're talking about voting, it seems like there's only a certain amount of people who come out to vote. What then happens? Do you go according to the ones that vote and forget about the ones that don't come out and vote? Then you get dissatisfaction from those who don't vote. How would we then be able to look at that?

MR. VEITCH: Do like Australia and fine them if they don't come out and vote. They get 98 percent, I believe.

MS CALAHASEN: Okay. Thanks.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Further questions?
Thank you very much, Bill.
Lewis Spilde. I hope I didn't ruin your name as well.

MR. SPILDE: No. Most people do. You're unusual. The only place they pronounced it correctly was Iran. The "e" on the end means that you're from that location or of the family or something like that. But everybody else drops the "e."

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: So, proceed.

MR. SPILDE: There isn't enough to go around, but a lot of this has been submitted already.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. SPILDE: I'm a farmer from Provost, a professional engineer, and I took my public schooling in Cadogan and Provost. I have a BS, Oregon State, and I've got a couple of terms of American political science. I've worked in many locations in Alberta, and I've also worked in Iran. I've traveled a fair bit, from Japan to Iran, east and west, then Chile to Norway, going south and north.

The first thing that I hear from the politicians on occasion is that they sometimes view people as being kind of schizophrenic malcontents. Here they want to elect an appointed body, the Senate, as a check on the House of Commons, and then they want another appointed body to be able to check the Legislative Assemblies. I tend to think that what ends up is that people want more checks and balances in the system, and the judicial system is not a panacea for rights. All we have to do is to compare the results of the persons case in 1928, when the Supreme Court decided that women were not persons eligible to be represented in the Senate. If you compare that with the little brochure from 1910 from Provost that I handed around, you'll look and see that there's an article on the mock parliament that was held at that time. They voted for women's suffrage, which is seven years before it became reality in the province. Provost at that time, 1910, had just got the railway there, so that's the first edition of the paper.

8:07

There are problems with equitable representation. The one way to look at it is that each constituent should have equal weight. The problem is that each MLA and MP represents more than one constituency: there's the individual, and there are cities and then federal, and there are provinces. John

Roberts, in a program on Access Network on the responsibilities and accountability of cabinet ministers, indicated that in reality a cabinet minister did not have that much control over the department, and he said that when the House of Commons was sitting, he was supposed to be there daily. One day was a meeting for the Toronto MPs, another day they had a meeting for the Ontario MPs within caucus, and the third day they had a Liberal caucus meeting. The thing I found amusing about that: he said that he didn't have one day for his constituents. So he represented Toronto and Ontario better than what he did the individuals.

Along the same lines, on the provincial basis, is that Jan Reimer rejected an MLA representing part of the city and an area outside the city. There are already, I think, 17 MLAs that look after the city of Edmonton's problems. Butch Fischer looks after six villages, two towns, 3 MDs or counties or maybe more. He's got two whole MDs and partial counties. One of his problems: if he gets something coming out to his area, he's got to spend time explaining why it goes in place X instead of place Y, because it affects their tax revenues. The 17 MLAs in Edmonton - it doesn't matter if it goes in their constituency. If it goes into the city of Edmonton, it helps their tax bases. It's a problem.

My experience in industry has been with an oil company. We had 237 joint ventures. These all worked on the principle of one vote for a share or a percentage interest in that joint venture and another vote for each company that was in that joint venture. In that way the big companies could not put in provisions that would be harmful to the small companies, and then the small companies could not impose going the other way. It's a system of checks and balances on size, and it's very difficult to do on a provincial basis with just the one House.

Another comment I've got is with regard to establishing Senators on the basis of region, the way that we are told it is being set up. I disagree with it, but that's a later point. There's no such thing as a region in government jurisdictions. We don't have a regional government in the west, say, of B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. There's no sitting there. They're actually four identities and not one.

My other comment is that when you start grouping provinces together, whether the criteria is a region - or there are other ways of doing it too. My comment is if somebody wants to say that a grouping is acceptable, I say let me make the grouping. We could say that the six largest provinces get the same number of Senators and the four smallest provinces plus the Northwest Territories and Yukon get the same number. That way it would be very good for western Canada in that the four western provinces would have the same number as Ontario and Quebec, and Yukon and Northwest Territories would have the same number as New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. It's a problem that comes up with grouping.

Another thing is that we don't need to put in the ability to be able to elect the Senate. It already exists in the Constitution, if we were to read it correctly or more precisely. I've got another memo here that I sent in before. If you read the English version of your voting rights, it indicates that you have the right to elect a representative to the House of Commons and a Legislature. If you read the French version - and I have to paraphrase it; my phonics are terrible in French - it indicates that you have the right to elect representatives to the federal and provincial Legislative Assemblies. In the English version they didn't specify provincial Legislatures; they just specified Legislatures. Parliament is a Legislative Assembly, and Parliament consists of the House of Commons and the Senate and the

Governor General. So by right, particularly in the French version – and both hold equal weight – we already have the right to elect a Senator and the Governor General. This is one of our rights that is in the Charter that we haven't been given as a people. The Senate distribution in the Charter of Rights fails to meet the conditions of the Charter of Rights, and the Charter of Rights supersedes the rest of the Constitution. I've got some more details on that.

8:17

One of the things you'll notice in the history of the distribution of Senators is that up until about 1915 Senators' allocations changed almost as frequently as the House of Commons. It worked on a geometric progression, which meant that the number of Senators was not established by proportional representation, nor was it fixed; it was somewhere in between. Mathematically I've worked it out; it varied as to the square root of the population. It meant that a larger province got more Senators than a smaller province, and you didn't have B.C. and Alberta, which have populations larger than the total maritimes, having fewer Senators than individual provinces of another region.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Garry will hand those out.

MR. SPILDE: Basically, the only section of the Charter of Rights that one can opt out of is the language. The other one is with regard to social programs. Multiculturalism is included, and you can't opt out of that, but the federal government only has a policy of supporting language claims based on the English and French minority clauses. I view that language is part of the culture, and as such the government may not be required to provide a service in that language, but I see no reason why they should ban it. I think that does not follow the principle of multiculturalism.

These are just some miscellaneous comments from previous talks.

Provincial governments set the standards for pollution, but the federal government has guidelines which the provinces can use to follow. In the case of sulphur plant emissions, the Alberta government superseded the federal standards by quite a bit.

There are some other memos here that I could probably pass around.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yeah. Garry can take them from you, Lewis.

Okay; do you have any questions? Sheldon?

MR. DAY: No questions, Mr. Chairman. Just thanks for bringing this. It's interesting to see here that 81 years ago we had an advertisement from a store, and it's saying right in the middle of their ad: equal rights to all; special privileges to none. We're hearing a lot of that, so thanks very much. I appreciate this piece of history.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: By coincidence, too, our first speaker today when we arrived in Wainwright was the current editor of the *Provost* paper.

MR. SPILDE: It's changed names. It's now the *Provost News*. It was the *Provost Star*.

Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Well, thank you very much, Lewis. We do have your previous presentations that you've sent in as well, so we'll co-ordinate the two. Appreciate that.

Our last presenter for this evening is Roger Holmes. Hello.

MR. ROGER HOLMES: Mr. Chairman, my name is Roger Holmes. I am the editor of the *Wainwright Star-Chronicle*. My little brother Richard is the editor of the *Provost News*. I welcome you to Wainwright, because I am also the president of the Wainwright and District Chamber of Commerce. So if you haven't already been welcomed, before you leave, welcome to Wainwright.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you. In fact, your mayor, Roger, was a presenter this afternoon, and he brought greetings from the community as well. It's our pleasure to be here.

MR. ROGER HOLMES: Thank you. What I want to give you here is not a lot more of the analysis that we're currently going through. I want to give you some vision, because when I was going through the Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future in February with my working group of about 15 people and I asked the group to think about what their vision for Canada was, I kept coming up with the fact that I didn't have a particular vision for Canada myself. So I sat down and wrote what my vision for the future of Canada is. I wrote it from a slightly different perspective, because hindsight is often much sharper than foresight. I took the perspective of the fact that it is now the year 2091, so come with me for a moment to the year 2091.

Canada has emerged as a leader in the world. Her economy is one of the strongest, and her people are one of the most productive. She has 100 million people. She is entering her finest century. One hundred years ago this nation was paralysed with problems and seemed incapable of dealing with the situation that threatened to consume her. At that time, the people seemed to be lost, wandering in a sea of self-pity and self-doubt. Her three levels of government, a system of ineffective relics from her colonial past, were killing the country. That was before the revolution.

The great revolution came to Canada in the year 2001. It was the first truly bloodless revolution the world has ever seen. That was the year that Canada threw out her past system of government and replaced it with the present system. You see, before the great revolution the people of this country were governed by several layers of government, and the country was divided into artificial regions called provinces. Provinces under the old system were arbitrarily drawn up and given power over the land and the people. They were all different governments and enacted different laws in 12 different regions of the country. Each one had elected officials who seemed to spend most of their time dreaming up ways to place new rules on people and to put new taxes in place to pay for a system of government. They relied on the false notion that governments can and should create wealth and jobs for the people.

8:27

I know it seems strange now to think there was a time in our history when we felt the country owed us a living, but that very much was the feeling of our people before the great enlightenment of the revolution. Before that, people had been fooled by the politicians into thinking government could give us more than

it was taking from us. It took a long time for us to figure out that this simply was not possible. It took even longer to figure out that we did not want a government based upon the concept that they would take wealth from somebody else and give it to us. The revolution of 2001 found its roots in a relatively insignificant action by what was then called the federal government. One Brian Mulroney unwittingly became the father of the revolution in 1991 when Canada was at its lowest point. The government had lost touch with the people to such a degree that even they realized it. They decided it was time to ask the people what should be done.

A thing called the Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future was created. It spawned the 2001 revolution by going straight to the people to find out what kind of country they wanted. The report they produced was spurned by the government of the day. "Too radical," said the Conservatives. "Not the Canadian way," said the Democrats. "It will never work," said the civil servants. "Trust us," said the Liberals. At this point the people rebelled, and the result was the great bloodless revolution of 2001.

What the 2001 revolution gave us was a country that was not divided into artificial regions. The new Constitution that was drawn up by the founding citizens totally eliminated all provincial governments. It forbade any government to borrow any money. It abolished all forms of taxation except for the constitutionally established 10 percent tax on the gross national product. The dominion government was given one-half of this revenue and local government the other half. By the power of the Constitution, no government had the power to raise taxes. If the people produced more, the government received 10 percent of it and nothing more.

The dominion government at the time was given responsibility for education, protection of the environment, communications, transportation, national defence, national health care, and our relationships with the rest of the world through the United Nations.

Prior to the time of the revolution Canada had two official languages, French and English. This policy had the effect of dividing the country. The revolution brought the official use of our current language, Esperanto, into the Constitution as the only language of the government. Canada was the first country in history to adopt what we now know as the world language of Esperanto. By the UN Halifax convention of 2074, all governments in the world have adopted it as the official working language of the world. By constitutional amendment, immigration to Canada was opened to anyone who could make a positive contribution to the gross national product. People from all over the world poured into Canada as a result and went to work building the nation we know and love today.

In the area of communications the new government realized that Canada had a unique challenge, because of geography, to communicate effectively with itself and enacted what is now the world standard in communications policy: a telephone, computer, and interactive television policy that gave each Canadian the ability to communicate with any person in the country just as easily and at the same cost as talking to the person across the street. It seems like such a simple concept today, but at the time it was considered very strange.

The other major task underwritten by the government at the time was the new national dream. Using the latest in Canadian technology, the transportation department built the most efficient system of transportation the world has ever seen. To this day it is considered a marvel of engineering. It is still paying vast dividends to the country and has contributed a great deal to keeping this nation together. It has made it possible for

this country to compete and prosper in world markets. This, of course, is what has come to be known as the national conveyor system. Built over 20 years by a nation committed to the concept, it has brought a continuous supply of reliable, economical transportation to this country. It has made us a world leader in materials movement technology. For the first time in history the movement of goods and people across land is cheaper than moving goods across water by ship. It is built as a continually moving, high-speed conveyor belt going in both directions on the old railway rights-of-way. It uses the 2020 CANDU clean reactor to power it at high speed. It has the ability in its container design to take passengers and cars much like the old ferry service, all manner of raw goods, raw materials, et cetera, up and down the country at rates of efficiency only dreamed of by our ancestors.

The great revolution was also the time when governments got out of business. It was realized that people hold the key to economic well-being and that governments only cause problems when they interfere in the free market system. However, environmental standards were raised at the time to sustainable levels and were enforced mercilessly. Looking back over the past 100 years, it is hard to imagine what it was like for our grandfathers to struggle under the system they were burdened with. It was the only system they had. The fact that they did not let their past stand in the way is what has given us the fine country we now enjoy.

In the past hundred years the United States has risen and fallen much like Great Britain in the previous century. China has emerged as a great nation, India is now a world power, and the nations of Africa and South America are just starting to become major players in world markets. We have seen the Soviet Union divide into 20 smaller countries and join the European community. Australia is just beginning to take her place in the world. We have come a great way in a hundred years, but there is still much to do. Canada will go forward because it is the will of the people that drives this country, a people proud and free from sea to sea.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Questions?

MR. McINNIS: Can I ask a question? Presumably you just took a clean slate and sort of decided to dream a little and see the way you might like things to be. Can you explain for me why you felt that vision would include doing away with all the provinces?

MR. ROGER HOLMES: Basically, I sat down and said: why have we got provinces? I mean, we just assume we have provinces and therefore we must keep them. I looked and said: what can a province deliver to me that cannot be delivered by a strong central government and a strong municipal system? What good are these provinces doing to me, and could we dispense with them? Could we bring provincial aspects closer to home so we have only municipal government and a federal government? The more I thought about them, the more I convinced myself that provincial governments do nothing for us other than keep us apart and make us distinct from each other. They do nothing to really help us that can't be done at a federal or a municipal level. So I dispensed with them.

MR. McINNIS: I presume the reason our forebears created provinces – partly it had to do with the pattern of settlement – was that there were differences or they felt there were differen-

ces between the regions. What's curious to me is why you would go that way, for a unitary, national country, as opposed to doing it with a national government and keeping the provinces. What is there that would draw you to the nation Canada as opposed to the province Alberta if you're thinking we've got too much government?

MR. ROGER HOLMES: I don't understand the question.

MR. McINNIS: Well, it seems to me that if you take the argument that there's nothing that extra level of government adds, why would you say it should be one country, Canada, as opposed to one province, Alberta?

MR. ROGER HOLMES: You could take that view. I just don't share that view.

MR. McINNIS: Yeah. I was just curious why you thought it should be that way.

MR. ROGER HOLMES: Simply because I think we have a marvelous country, and I just don't want to see it come apart. The question you're asking is: let Quebec go; let B.C. go; let the maritimes go their own way. That's one view, and that is a possibility. This country is certainly large enough, especially by European standards, to support a lot of different countries. But it was just my view that the country Canada has an emotional hold on a lot of us that I would like to see us maintain, although I don't see the provinces contributing a lot of positiveness to the cohesiveness of the country and I felt they could very well be expendable.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Any other questions? Stock.

MR. DAY: Just briefly, succinctly, the same question I asked Buck. What gives you the faith, with nothing historically in place, from my perspective at least, to substantiate that a federal government can be eminently wiser than local, regional governments?

MR. ROGER HOLMES: Primarily, Stock, because most of the really crucial decisions are going to be made closer to home at the municipal level. Most of the power is going to come right down to the guy that lives three doors down and across the back alley from me. I'm going to walk down the street and look him in the eyeball. That's how it's going to happen. That's the concept.

MR. DAY: So in fact the decision-making would be largely local.

MR. ROGER HOLMES: Largely local, yeah. Also - it's not in here, but it's in my mind - the local guy . . . You see, I only elect one guy. I don't elect a federal politician. I elect the guy down the street from me, and he's the guy I hold accountable for federal decisions as well as provincial ones. I only have one politician, and I only look one politician in the eye. I don't have a councillor, I don't have an MLA, and I don't have an MP. I have one guy that I elected. He's it for me, and he's responsible for whatever goes on in the country. He's close to me and I can get hold of him because he's also running my town council.

MR. DAY: Since the decision would be local, you wouldn't have him sitting in Ottawa all year. There wouldn't be any big, long session.

&37

MR. ROGER HOLMES: No, he's not going to be in Ottawa. He's going to live down the street. We've got an interactive television system; he is zapped in everywhere. We connect all our minds together. Bill's referendum concept: you just push the TV on and, boy, you've got instant votes and you can tally that up, zappo, you know, so you know where we're at.

MR. DAY: It's just my luck I'd get the wrong number.

MR. ROGER HOLMES: Right.
Anything else, Mr. Rostad?

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It sounds innovative. Can you zap me to Edmonton?

MR. ROGER HOLMES: Right.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Well, Roger, thank you very much. That's a very innovative way of making a presentation too. Thank you.

MR. ROGER HOLMES: Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Obviously a publisher and editor.

Well, that's our last presenter for our appearance in Wainwright. As I mentioned, your mayor, Roger, was here earlier today and made his presentation and also, on behalf of the citizens, welcomed us. As well, your MLA, Butch Fischer, gave us a warm welcome. Indeed, it has been.

I think we've had some sensuous, very articulate, and innovative presentations today. As I mentioned, all of it is in *Hansard*, which is a public document. I'm sure Butch would be delighted to obtain a copy for everyone to know exactly what your fellow citizens have said, and there may be people who weren't at the meeting who'd be interested in knowing what they said. We will be taking that and sharing it with our other panel. We meet tomorrow in Edmonton, with presentations from early morning till late at night, and then the public presentation part of our job will be complete.

We'll then be meeting sometime down the road with the federal committee that was just struck two days ago to discuss the proposals they've put. We have already met with the Ontario provincial panel and, of course, with Mr. Parizeau from Quebec, but we'll also be meeting with other panels and then sitting down and trying to formulate Albertans' view of where Alberta should be in the new Canada, and it's definitely a new Canada. I hope that geographically it's the same Canada, but I'm sure it will be different internally, as we've heard today and have heard in every other place.

We thank you for your participation and thank Wainwright for the great hospitality. We can recommend The Honey Pot anytime. That's no slur against somebody else that may own another eating establishment in town, but it was delightful.

Thank you very much.

[The committee adjourned at 8:40 p.m.]

