

1 they are better off under the status quo than they would
2 be under any variation of sovereignty.

3 But we don't have the impression that the Federal
4 Government is doing very much to respond to the complaints--
5 to the grievances--of the Quebecois.

6 Is that impression correct?

7 MINISTER LALONDE: I think it is not correct.

8 First of all, when you say "we are doing a successful
9 job of defending the status quo", if you mean by this that
10 we are defending the Federal System versus independence, or
11 separation, I hope we are doing a successful job! But
12 we are not for the status quo in the sense that we believe
13 that the Federal arrangement in Canada is the end-all and
14 be-all; and that what was decided was needed in 1867
15 is more permanent than the Bible, itself.

16 We are ready to consider changes in the Constitu-
17 tion.

18 Now, answering the grievances of French Canadians:
19 it is a problem that takes time and, you know, we have been
20 actively pressing changes over the last 10 years at least--
21 but changes that answer grievances that go back to 100 years.

22 And, if it were not a Democratic system, we
23 might have been more successful; and it might have been
24 relatively easier. But, as long as you live in a democracy
25 and you have to carry the majority of people with yourself,