

The Constitution

would suggest to you, and it is borne out by the report, that the majority of people were in favour of Senate reform. They clearly wanted an elected Senate, they clearly wanted an effective Senate.

• (1840)

I would say on this point that there is no unanimity among my constituents. Other parts of Canada may think that equal means exactly that, but in my part of Canada and certainly in Ontario riding this issue of equality is something that needs further explanation, if I can be polite in explaining it that way. For example, it is very clear that Ontario riding today has one MP, as do all the other 294 ridings, but Ontario riding has 170,000 people. The average riding in Canada is 80,000 people. If we are suggesting that we want equality in the Senate, then some of my constituents suggested that Ontario ought to have equality in the House of Commons. That either means another 15 or 20 seats for Ontario in the House of Commons or maybe 20 less seats for all the other provinces.

They are not opposed to equality but suggest that we should not lose sight of the inequality that exists in this Chamber at this particular time. Perhaps we could have a debate on that point.

The other interesting point was the questionnaire that was distributed. I have a copy of it which I will table as well. The results of the questionnaire were somewhat different from the information received from the people who participated in the public process. We mailed out 57,000 questionnaires. There were 28 questions and you had five options on each of the 28 proposals. I think you will find in this report that it summarizes very nicely the responses.

I would suggest to you in a very brief comment that of the 28 proposals, 27 were endorsed wholeheartedly. The 28th, which is the distinct society clause, did not go down to defeat wholeheartedly, in fact it was 41 per cent in favour and 51 per cent opposed, which I think is a fairly close comment. However, all the numbers are in the report and I look forward to the committee and to all members of Parliament reading what my constituents had to say on the proposal.

I thank the government and all members of this House for providing this opportunity for me to present, on

behalf of Ontario riding, the views of my constituents on this subject.

[Translation]

Ms. Shirley Maheu (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville): Madam Speaker, *Shaping Canada's Future Together*, this is, in principle, the *raison d'être* of all these three rounds of consultations across the country. We held consultations after consultations, at the Canadian citizens' expense, citizens who have had it with all those words and papers, and who are desperately waiting for us to finally make a decision and go on to something else.

[English]

Even if many have doubts about the weight their input might have on where this country might go, groups from all segments of society have taken the time to bring forward their concerns and their hopes.

I would like to share with you some of the opinions held by my constituents, expressed to me at different meetings and convey their attitudes as measured by a small survey I conducted in my riding.

[Translation]

When asked what kind of government would best handle certain matters, most people gave answers which shed new light on what Canadians expect from their government.

Of all respondents to a survey conducted in my constituency, 59 per cent answered that education should be controlled by the provinces; 40 per cent answered that health care should be controlled by the provinces; 65 per cent answered that housing should be controlled by the provinces; 40 per cent answered that labour force training should be controlled by the provinces. However, 37 per cent of these respondents were in favour of sharing powers in the areas of labour force training and health care.

[English]

As for communications, it was very interesting to note that 61 per cent wish the federal government to keep control of this dossier. In other words, Canadians want the provincial governments to handle most provincial affairs, there being a possibility of sharing in certain areas. The federal government would keep control of communications to assure a Canadian vision of this country.