definite word. Yet in the Meech Lake Accord, my friend from Kamloops—Shuswap and others take their generalities and try to hide their inner selves with naivety, to put it kindly, or for other political reasons.

• (1620)

They can pretend that in the justified afterglow of Meech Lake, there was a miracle. There was a mild miracle, and I give full credit to the Prime Minister for bringing together 11 First Ministers and coming up with a unanimous agreement on principle. However, they are getting away from the principles of Meech Lake.

Yes, groundwork had been done and had been done well by Senator Murray, Senator Tremblay and officials who went across Canada talking to Premier Bourassa and other premiers. The groundwork was done and perhaps that is why there were not the expectations for the Meech Lake Agreement.

There was agreement on principles and that is a mild miracle. I am prepared to call it that because there is not usually unanimous agreement. How contradictory are we, though? If we think it is a mild miracle to have 11 agree at Meech Lake when there had been years of preparation, how can we stumble into the strait-jacket of a rule of unanimity that will affect federal institutions and sterilize them?

Oh, yes, provinces are equal because they all have a vote. Without trying to cast any aspersions on the Chair, Madam Speaker, eunuchs in a harem are equal too but they really cannot produce very well. I suggest that there will be the same sterility in any meaningful constitutional amendments under the rule of unanimity.

Any premier worth his political salt who thinks there will be meaningful Senate reform under a rule of unanimity is whistling Dixie and had better get on his horse and head for the Rockies. There will be no such reform.

I know that my time is limited. I have so much to say and there is so little time in which to say it. I would like to point out to the House, though, that we are not talking about a law or a statute that can be changed by Parliament. Three of my friends from the committee spoke to me during the hearings as though we were discussing a labour contract. They said that they knew it was not perfect now but that they could change it next year. They meant that. I told them that this is not a labour contract or a statute and that we cannot change it that easily.

I have a fundamental problem with the Accord. I have mentioned the problems with aboriginal rights and with new Canadians who have made this country the way it is, thank God, but I suppose there is one fundamental aspect of the Accord over which I go the other way from my Party and my leader. It is not about protecting the distinct society or preserving the distinct society. I am all for that and have voted in this House for Bills that do that. However, what I cannot do and am not prepared to do because I think it inadvertently sows the seeds of separatism is to promote a distinct society.

As far as I can see, aside from what professors, academics, Senators and Members have said, one never knows what the Accord will do. In Philadelphia, 55 founding fathers met for over three months, not for 20 hours in the Langevin Block in the locker-room camaraderie of that intense, incestuous atmosphere. They were not exhausted and did not come up with decisions they thought and believed would be good for the country but perhaps did not quite have the crystal light of purity, fresh air and time to digest what they had done in principle.

How many Members appreciate that the words "We the people," the first three words in the United States Constitution, took three weeks to debate? Before Hon. Members vote on this Accord, I would ask all Hon. Members to read the book written by Catherine Drinker Bowen entitled *Miracle at Philadelphia*, a narrative history of what the founders wrestled with.

I have heard in committee and in debate well-intentioned academics speak. Professor Bill Lederman taught me constitutional law many years ago. I got 98 per cent in it. It was the best course I ever took. He is still teaching constitutional law because in some ways Constitutions do not change.

Bill Lederman has never been on the Supreme Court. Would he have thought that the founders of the American Constitution would have had the Supreme Court of the United States interpret the commerce clause which has fundamentally changed the American economy? Would he have thought in terms of rights of people and women, that the right of privacy of papers would be extended to the right of the privacy of the body so there could be qualified or restricted abortions? Would he or any other professor, academic, Senator or lawyer have thought that what the American founders said 200 years ago about due process is the fundamental tenet for the gender-equality rights that are slowly coming in the United States?

I have the highest of respect for Eric Kierans who appeared before the committee, but the mythology he put before the committee really bothered me. We all know of the great clause in the American Constitution, "all men are created equal". However, for over 100 years, there was legal segregation in the United States. People were equal but were separate. We all know that. That is sad history, but do not blame the United States.

Mr. Kierans has said that Meech Lake puts things back the way they are supposed to be. Only one columnist is following this debate, Mr. Johnson of *The Gazette*. He has analysed this in a most logical way. He has analysed the comments of Eric Kierans. I read them earlier and could not believe it.

This has nothing to do with the original concept of the BNA Act. I am not saying that there should not be changes to the BNA Act. We do live in a different world today, but do not let reputable people come before the committee and buffalo the