

tant. The economy is important and success in our deliberations now is crucial.

I believe, and I sense that my constituents share this view, that the Dobbie-Beaudoin committee is developing a good track record. There have been many comments of support from my riding. We are beginning to see the fruit of their labours. Any who have watched this committee at work across the country in their direct hearings and in their participation in the many conferences will admire and respect this dedicated team of members of Parliament.

Just a short time ago I was a participant at the special constitutional conference in Montreal. Again in this dramatic and challenging way we are struggling to find the best method to resolve our differences. Our consultations with electors in Lachine—Lac-Saint-Louis included a questionnaire, a survey in one of my householders, and I received hundreds of replies and comments. They were not all complimentary, but most were. People are accepting the process. They feel they are now being listened to.

Finally I held two public opinion forums, open meetings in the riding: one just this last week and the other in November. They were all well attended. The debate and discussion was informed and the process is working. Our concerns from the west island of Montreal are first and foremost for a united and prosperous Canada. We must have a special sensitivity to all our neighbours, all our fellow Canadians, new and old.

Bill 178 in the province of Quebec is disliked by many, very evidently. At our open meetings this was the very first thing many of our participants would raise. Senator David was our guest in November at the public forum, and he said not everyone is in love with this bill. A young law student from my riding, Tasha Kerriddhin, a panellist at the discussion, said although the bill is not ideal it is a reality, and we must work together as English and French to eliminate the need for such a bill.

Dr. Goldbloom, a highly respected and broadly experienced member of the English speaking minority in Quebec, and now Canada's Commissioner of Official Languages, reflected the mood and sensitivities of our minority, the English speaking minority at the west end of Montreal and in other corners of the province, when

he made a presentation to the special joint committee for a renewed Canada. He said: "In recognition of the distinct character of Quebec and of linguistic duality, we welcome the government's proposal of a Canada clause to entrench in section 2 of the Constitution Act of 1867 such factors as recognition of the responsibility of governments—governments, all of them—to preserve Canada's two linguistic majorities and minorities, as well as the special responsibility borne by Quebec to preserve and promote its distinct society".

Dr. Goldbloom went on, saying: "We find the non-limiting, yet well-defined description of the distinct society to be felicitous, and likely to allay the misgivings expressed in the past. While we acknowledge that the commitment to ensure preservation"—

[*Translation*]

—that means protection—

[*English*]

—of the existence of our official language minorities is a large step forward, we do not consider this wording the best possible safeguard or the most dynamic. We therefore advocate more positive wording that would foster promotion of Canada's English speaking and French speaking minorities and would support their development in keeping with the very objectives of the Official Languages Act".

I sense, as do my colleagues, that the goodwill and tolerance and moderation of all Canadians is expressing itself, and it will result in a solution to our current constitutional debates.

Time is a precious commodity, both in the over-all process and even here tonight, as I watch my time wind down. But ultimately my electors and I have confidence in this process and its eventual outcome. It will be positive for my riding, Lachine—Lac-Saint-Louis; my province, Quebec; my country, Canada.

[*Translation*]

I think I represent faithfully and honestly my constituents' feelings when I say that we should consider this country with our hearts. Let our vision be far-reaching like that of generations of Quebecers and Canadians before us. We will then be able to see this great country as our ancestors and Fathers of Confederation foresaw