

ued to flourish without the use of constitutional protection.

However, 14 out of the 22 people who spoke on the issue were in favour of the recognition of Quebec's distinctiveness. Several cited history to prove that Quebec's distinctive language, culture and civil code have always been a fact in Canada. One observer said that we should walk a mile in a Quebecer's shoes and realize that if the situation were reversed, we would also fight for the preservation of English culture and language if we were surrounded by a population of 250 million French.

It was even said that the rest of Canada should learn from the pride that the people of Quebec have in their heritage and culture. Over all, people on this side of the issue said that they could not imagine Canada without a distinct Quebec.

On the matter of aboriginal self-government, again the opinions were divided. Some felt that it was a positive step and called for a shortening of the ten-year timeframe. Others however said that we should all just be Canadians and not further subdivide into groups. These individuals questioned the effects on the environment and on our nation's resources. Others were unclear as to how self-government would affect the Indian land claims process.

As far as the House of Commons and more free votes was concerned, it was unanimous that if not all House votes could be free, then at least there should be more of them.

Several people called for a change in the rules governing votes of non-confidence to free up the control of caucus. They emphasized that the member's primary responsibility was to represent the will of his constituents and that must come before the role of the party.

The matter of Senate reform is also a hotly debated item. Many called for the abolition of the Senate; others called for the Triple-E Senate. On the matter of election, all but one individual agreed that it must be elected. There were various views on the timing of these elections. It should be effective.

Some argued that the Senate should have the same powers of the House on all issues and not merely a suspensive veto on important issues. Others claimed that

this was just a duplication of the House and would be futile.

As far as equality was concerned, most people felt that it should be fully equal, that is that P.E.I. should have the same number of senators as Ontario and that this would be no more odd than the present situation where we have gross misrepresentation in the country. There was no consensus of the numbers of senators needed.

• (2150)

As far as the economic union was concerned, the majority of speakers were in favour of the economic union proposal and social benefits to all regions of Canada. However, they did raise concern over the opting out clause and complained that it lacked clarity and was going to be a point of real contention down the road.

One gentlemen also pointed to the language of a common market as being too divisive and making Canada sound like a collection of separate states. For the Council of Federation, nearly everybody felt that it was just one more level of government and we did not require it.

I see that my time is just about gone, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the remainder of my speech so that it can be on the record. It deals with the general themes.

I would like to conclude by saying that although there was a diversity of opinions and a diversity of thought that was represented in the meetings, there was a consensus that we wanted to hold Canada together, that we needed to have meaningful dialogue between the various factions. There was a general sense of good will and a desire to understand those with different and opposing viewpoints.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I will accept all those documents from the hon. member.

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say thank you to my hon. colleague from Delta for the remarks he has given. Surely we have been listening to many of the same people in our constituencies over the recess at Christmas time.

Before I begin to express the feelings and ideas that the constituents of Beaver River have impressed upon me, I would like to first of all thank all the members of this House for allowing this debate to take place. It is a