

Kirby expounds on constitution, Atlantic Insight yawns

by Margaret Little

With moment-to-moment Iraqi attacks on Iran and the federal clerks storming the streets, what better way to spend a Monday evening than listening to a federal public servant expound on the infamous Canadian constitution.

"The Atlantic Provinces could once again hold the key to the constitutional problem," Dr. Michael Kirby, senior federal public servant for Canadian constitutional talks, told the grey-suited Canadian Club members after a Faculty Club dinner, September 29.

Although CBC and ATV television glared their lights into Kirby's face, and a Halifax Herald reporter wrote furiously, an Atlantic Insight journalist settled back in her chair, apparently finding little to write about.

Kirby failed to stimulate the said reporter with his questions of, "Why the sense of urgency to change the consti-

tution now? and "What ARE the fundamental questions anyway?"

After spending months sitting in on the hottest issue around—the constitutional debates—Dr. Kirby dropped his prescribed speech of "The Changing Role of the Canadian Government in the '80's" for the good old B.N.A. Act.

Kirby preached that NOW was the time for constitutional reform and the Atlantic Provinces hold the key.

"The constitution must be reconciled to adequately reflect today's society. By changing the constitution, we will renew the vitality of Canada," he said enthusiastically.

Singing to the tune of Trudeau, Dr. Kirby agreed that the Atlantic Provinces need "a degree of flexibility in its programs to relieve the unique regional concerns" but—and it is the but that is important—"in the final act, the federal

government must be the lead player."

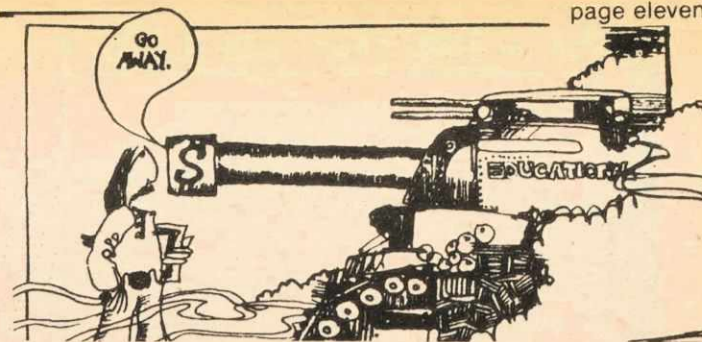
Kirby took the usual federal position, denouncing the provinces as "playing a power-grab game" during the Sussex Drive debates.

"Although the constitutional talks were reasonably predictable, I was quite surprised how bad they turned out," he said.

Following the attack on the provinces, Kirby smiled at the journalists present and said "the media grossly played up the personality clashes" in the constitutional debates.

Despite the bad media coverage and the bickering provinces, Kirby confirmed that he is an optimist.

"However," added Kirby, "I'm like the optimist who leapt off the Empire State Building. When asked how he felt as he passed the 47th floor, he said, 'I'm alright—SO FAR.'"



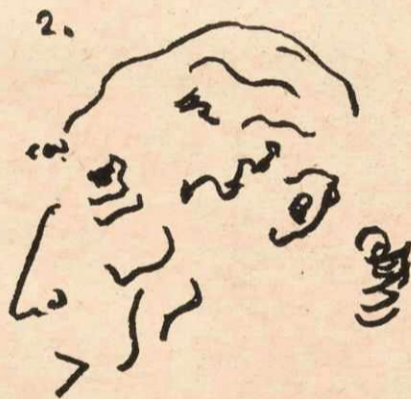
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1.
THE PROVINCES HAVE HAD
THEIR CHANCE!



2.
BUT THEY BLEW IT
BY BEING SO INTRACTABLE!



3.
SO NOW I'M GOING TO
WRITE THE CONSTITUTION!



4.
... ARTICLE ONE ... NO
PROVINCES!

T.OZERE

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