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1 development of new Constitutional proposals, and making
2 proposals to the Cabinet in the general area of National
3 Unity, which, obviously, will go--and should go--further
4 than strictly Constitutional aspects.

5 These, I suppose, Mr. Chairman, would be the
6 introductory comments which I would like to make--in terms
7 of what my role is. I used to be, as you said, Minister
8 of Health and Welfare with about 30% of the budget and
9 something like 12,000 employees -- which is quite a lot for
10 Canada. Now, I have no staff and no budget!

11 [Laughter]

12 I am what we call "a Minister of State". I have
13 no Department as such. My officials are working in
14 what is called the Privy Council's Office--which is really
15 the Department of the Prime Minister. As such, they
16 are responsible to the Prime Minister, still; but I try
17 and help along in the whole operation.

18 So, with those introductory comments, I
19 think I will leave it to you to raise the first few questions,
20 and we can elaborate as we go on.

21 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Mr. Lalonde, maybe I could
22 ask a kind of general background question covering the
23 last ten years.

24 When Mr. Trudeau took office as Prime Minister,
25 certainly Mr. Pearson and many others felt that he was