

for a variety of reasons. One was the unilateral nature of the proposals by Mr. Trudeau at the time.

Perhaps essentially I felt uncomfortable because I thought we had in this country something that was very appropriate. To be sure we had to go to Westminster and the Parliament in England if we wanted any constitutional change, but really I was not losing much sleep about that fact. It would have been nice to bring it back home, to have some amendments occur back in Canada, but the notion of a written constitution was what disturbed me and it still disturbs me.

In a country as wide and as different as Canada, with all of its different regions and its different peoples, to try to define it in legalistic terms or to put it into little boxes is a recipe for disaster.

I prefer a common law type of British constitution that is organic, that changes, that allows elements and degrees and shades of grey and is not sharply defined. The former Prime Minister, perhaps because of his legalistic and Jesuit background, wanted things more precise, more defined. Many of the problems we face today are as a result of that.

Now we are trying to define reality. Well reality in this country is something that has to be loose. Living in the 21st century, the century where change is the constant, we want something that is loose, something that is organic, something that can grow in an organic way, rather than something that has to be defined and everything put in pigeon-holes.

Down the road, we go through the process of trying to define. We run into these problems all the time.

As I understand it, Quebec wants recognition in the Constitution in written form, that it is a distinct society. Well that now has to be defined and once it is then others are going to ask: "Well, what about us? Are we not also distinct?" By not mentioning others does that not single out one group? Yes, it is one of the founding fathers, or one of the founding nations of our country. To make them distinct does that mean that the aboriginal people are less distinct, or other groups are less distinct?

You get into this debate that goes on and on and on. It is like a debate on how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. To many people it begins to become unreal

to them while their own lives, which are very real, are unravelling.

They look at us as a bunch of fools here on Parliament Hill talking about things that have no effect on their lives as their lives and their communities go under. I must say that I am in deep sympathy with many of my constituents on that.

In 10 minutes I will not attempt to go through all the proposals of the distinct society, of the economic proposals, of the proposals to change some of the powers in terms of the federal and the provincial governments.

In the end, it is a question that the people of Quebec really have to decide. I believe and my party believes they have the right to self-determination on this.

They must in the end decide whether to remain as part of the Canadian Confederation. In doing this they will look at various options and all we can do in English-speaking Canada is to attempt to work things out so that the aspirations of the people of Quebec can be fulfilled within the larger Confederation.

The process in the end might not be entirely rational either. There is a deep desire within the people of Quebec because there is a feeling that they are part of this union, part of this marriage and that it was a forced marriage. This is psychological; it is not logical at all.

Then at some stage this might be expressed in the form of a referendum where the majority of the people of Quebec will vote for something that changes the basic relationship between Canada's nine other provinces and the province of Quebec. I hope that does not happen. I hope that logic will prevail.

Let me put it this way. I have heard Mr. Parizeau and Mr. Bourassa and others in Quebec talk about the European Community as a model. I think it is a good model because we are living in an age of economic globalization and internationalization.

Certainly the demographics, the geography, the history, and the economics necessitate an ongoing close relationship between the province of Quebec and the other nine provinces and the territories.

• (2030)

Let us look at the European model. The European model is a case of where nations that used to be at war with each other in our lifetimes are now joining into a