

our nation, despite our party following and backgrounds. There is no partisanship on this committee. It has been a joy for me, as a new member, not only to get to know my country but to get to know members opposite. This is one of the greatest assets of committee work.

**Mr. Stanfield:** It has been a great thing for you fellows.

**Mr. Gibson:** It is good for us, I agree. I smile back in genuine agreement, because we do have a proper point of view after discussing problems with Conservatives and New Democrats. If they have constructive ideas, we try to adopt the best of them for our party so the front of Liberalism will be wider and stronger. A very valuable and helpful dialogue has been and will continue to be carried on in each area of Canada. In this way the government has developed a real policy of actual participatory democracy. The members of the committee not only hear from experts in law but also the ordinary citizens, young and old, from all walks of life who contribute their suggestions and criticisms of Canada's Constitution. Women, children, Indians, Métis, unemployed, wealthy, poor, young, middle-aged and all others with their diverse problems speak to us: they are not shy about it.

The chairmen of the committee wisely organized the committee hearings by giving public notice of the meetings so the local inhabitants, members of service clubs and people with special occupations could express the particular thoughts they had in mind. Everyone was given the opportunity to speak. This has played a very real part in participatory democracy in Canada. We visited the Yukon Territory and the province of Manitoba in September. We were all impressed with the vastness of the area we visited. I was moved by the difficulties those fine Canadians experience. We were all grateful to our northern and western hosts for the wonderful help they gave us. I hope that those who reside in the more heavily populated regions of Canada will forcefully and effectively improve the interests and protect the rights and other needs of those Canadians, the Indians, Eskimos and Métis. The Métis are partly Indian and partly French. Their unfortunate lot is that they do not have the advantages of being Indians who are protected by the Indian Act. They are in the terrible predicament of not being accepted by society.

In Thompson, Manitoba, I was conscious of the wonderful effort of the social workers in desperately trying to find a means of aiding and assisting the Indians and Métis not only to integrate into employment opportunities but to find a social position in the modern society of today. The people of Thompson, Manitoba, have been pioneers in attempting to help with this very important problem. As an Ontario member, I pledge to never forget the plight of the Indians, Métis and Eskimos. As long as I am a Member of Parliament their interests will be close to my heart. I hope some way can be found to make their lot more pleasant and happy.

I hope those who serve on this committee will speak on this subject in their ridings, so that all Canadians will appreciate the difficulties of these people and the difficul-

*The Address—Mr. Gibson*

ties of the people who live in the territories. The territories have small populations. They do not have provincial status. They desperately need human contact with Ottawa. I hope senior civil servants will realize that cold-blooded letters refusing demands are not sufficient. These people must visit the territories. They must keep in constant communication with these people so that they appreciate the issues which affect them.

The work of the committee has created a new consciousness of the magnitude and beauty of Canada, a genuine feeling of pride in the principles that unite us, and a fixed and deliberate determination to achieve national unity by constructive constitutional reform. We are strengthening the cause of national unity by gaining a warm understanding of all Canadians and by continuing to learn about our mutual problems in developing our own Canadian identity. Mr. Speaker, I agree with those who have advanced proposals to adopt a Canadian charter of human rights. I quote from the booklet "A Canadian Charter of Human Rights," page 15, as follows:

• (8:40 p.m.)

Existing human rights measures in Canada are limited in scope. The Canadian Bill of Rights passed in 1960, emphasizes political freedoms (speech, assembly, religion, etc.) and legal rights (freedom from arbitrary deprivation of life, liberty or property, and equality before the law).

Other federal legislation and most provincial legislation is confined to prohibitions against discrimination in employment, admission to trade unions or the provisions of accommodation.

It is now suggested that there be included in a constitutional bill those rights which have been legislatively protected in Canada, in addition to those linguistic rights which are recommended by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. In the charter of human rights it is proposed to include five categories of rights, all to be protected by the Canadian courts. The first category includes political rights such as freedom of expression, freedom of conscience and religion, and freedom of assembly and association.

The second category includes legal rights, subjects covered by the Canadian Bill of Rights of 1960 such as general security of life, liberty and property, equal protection under the law against discrimination, the right to protection from cruel punishment, the right to protection on arrest—covering such matters as bail, a speedy trial, habeas corpus, and so on—the right to counsel, the right to a fair hearing, the right to presumption of innocence and the right to an interpreter. The third category provides guarantees against government action which would tend to distinguish certain persons or groups of persons for unequal treatment on the basis of their race or national origin, for example in admission to professions, educational facilities, public accommodation or the acquiring of property, communication with government institutions and education generally.

The fourth and fifth categories deal with economic rights. It is not proposed to implement these at present because society has not developed in such a way as to enable it to be done. They are in the way of providing a right to work, and so on. But we are signatories to the United Nations Charter of Human Rights and we hope it