



Second Session — Thirty-Second Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

STANDING COMMITTEE
on
PRIVILEGES
and
ELECTIONS

31-32 Elizabeth II

Chairman
Mr. Peter Fox
Constituency of Concordia



MG-8048

VOL. XXXI No. 18 - 7:30 p.m., FRIDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER, 1983.

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Second Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

Name	Constituency	Party
ADAM, Hon. A.R. (Pete)	Ste. Rose	NDP
ANSTETT, Andy	Springfield	NDP
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BANMAN, Robert (Bob)	La Verendrye	PC
BLAKE, David R. (Dave)	Minnedosa	PC
BROWN, Arnold	Rhineland	PC
BUCKLASCHUK, Hon. John M.	Gimli	NDP
CARROLL, Q.C., Henry N.	Brandon West	IND
CORRIN, Brian	Ellice	NDP
COWAN, Hon. Jay	Churchill	NDP
DESJARDINS, Hon. Laurent	St. Boniface	NDP
DODICK, Doreen	Riel	NDP
DOERN, Russell	Elmwood	NDP
DOLIN, Hon. Mary Beth	Kildonan	NDP
DOWNEY, James E.	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert	Emerson	PC
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	PC
EVANS, Hon. Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
EYLER, Phil	River East	NDP
FILMON, Gary	Tuxedo	PC
FOX, Peter	Concordia	NDP
GOURLAY, D.M. (Doug)	Swan River	PC
GRAHAM, Harry	Virden	PC
HAMMOND, Gerrie	Kirkfield Park	PC
HARAPIAK, Harry M.	The Pas	NDP
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HEMPHILL, Hon. Maureen	Logan	NDP
HYDE, Lloyd	Portage la Prairie	PC
JOHNSTON, J. Frank	Sturgeon Creek	PC
KOSTYRA, Hon. Eugene	Seven Oaks	NDP
KOVNATS, Abe	Niakwa	PC
LECUYER, Gérard	Radisson	NDP
LYON, Q.C., Hon. Sterling	Charleswood	PC
MACKLING, Q.C., Hon. Al	St. James	NDP
MALINOWSKI, Donald M.	St. Johns	NDP
MANNES, Clayton	Morris	PC
McKENZIE, J. Wally	Roblin-Russell	PC
MERCIER, Q.C., G.W.J. (Gerry)	St. Norbert	PC
NORDMAN, Rurik (Ric)	Assiniboia	PC
OLESON, Charlotte	Gladstone	PC
ORCHARD, Donald	Pembina	PC
PAWLEY, Q.C., Hon. Howard R.	Selkirk	NDP
PARASIUK, Hon. Wilson	Transcona	NDP
PENNER, Q.C., Hon. Roland	Fort Rouge	NDP
PHILLIPS, Myrna A.	Wolseley	NDP
PLOHMAN, Hon. John	Dauphin	NDP
RANSOM, A. Brian	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Burrows	NDP
SCHROEDER, Hon. Vic	Rossmere	NDP
SCOTT, Don	Inkster	NDP
SHERMAN, L.R. (Bud)	Fort Garry	PC
SMITH, Hon. Muriel	Osborne	NDP
STEEN, Warren	River Heights	PC
STORIE, Hon. Jerry T.	Flin Flon	NDP
URUSKI, Hon. Bill	Interlake	NDP
USKIW, Hon. Samuel	Lac du Bonnet	NDP
WALDING, Hon. D. James	St. Vital	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS

Friday, 9 September, 1983

TIME — 7:30 p.m.

LOCATION — Winnipeg

CHAIRMAN — Mr. Peter Fox, Concordia

ATTENDANCE — QUORUM - 6

Members of the Committee present:

Hon. Ms. Hemphill, Hon. Messrs. Kostyra and Storie

Messrs. Brown, Fox, Graham, Lecuyer, Nordman, Scott, Sherman

APPEARING:

WITNESSES: Mr. Florent Arnaud, Danseurs de la rivière Rouge

Mr. Raymond Poirier, Fédération provinciale des comités des parents

Mr. Paul Fort, Educateurs franco-manitobains

Ms. Linda Asper, Educateurs franco-manitobains

Mr. Jean Taillefer, Private Citizen

MATTERS UNDER DISCUSSION:

Proposed resolution to amend Section 23 of The Manitoba Act.

* * * *

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee will come to order. We have a quorum. The first person this evening is Florent Arnaud.

MR. F. ARNAUD: Bon soir. J'aimerais faire ma présentation ce soir en français.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you proceed.

MR. F. ARNAUD: Merci M. le président. M. le président et membre du comité.

Ce soir, je me présente devant vous à titre de président des Danseurs de la Rivière Rouge. Certains d'entre vous, peut-être, connaissent déjà les Danseurs alors qu'il soit suffisant d'indiquer qu'il s'agit d'un organisme culturel d'expression française regroupant des adolescents et des jeunes adultes dans le but de promouvoir, par la danse, le chant, le riche héritage folklorique - transmis de génération en génération - à nos aïeux francophones.

Puisque nous avons à coeur l'aspect culturel de la vie francophone au Manitoba, nous favorisons naturellement toutes mesures qui permettent l'épanouissement de cette vie francophone et par conséquent son apport, on ose espérer, toujours plus grand à la culture.

Monsieur le président, personne de votre comité, ou du gouvernement manitobain, j'ose espérer, prendrait plaisir à voir la fierté nationale d'un citoyen canadien atrophiée par quelque mesure politique. Pourquoi alors est-ce que le Francophone manitobain, aussi citoyen canadien, ne lui serait-il par permis d'être fier de sa province et de voir sa langue, véhicule de sa culture, sur un pied d'égalité avec l'autre langue officielle du Manitoba. Remarquez bien, Monsieur le président, que nous n'enlevons pas et nous ne cherchons pas à enlever à personne quoi que ce soit. D'ailleurs, par une culture enrichie et officiellement reconnue, nous serons en mesure d'offrir davantage aux non francophones de la province. Dernièrement, Folklorama nous a permis de constater qu'en effet un nombre tout de même assez imposant de non francophones se sont rendus au pavillon canadien-français où ils se sont bien amusés. C'était avec plaisir que nous les accueillions et nous souhaitons qu'ils reviennent l'an prochain et au cours des années futures, voir un spectacle en français qui saura leur en dire beaucoup sur la vie et la culture francophones au Manitoba. Je souhaite aussi que ce spectacle reflète la joie et la fierté francophone et manitobaine.

En terminant, Monsieur le président, j'aimerais indiquer que les Danseurs de la Rivière Rouge appuient l'entente négociée par la Société franco-manitobaine et Monsieur Penner de la province. Nous appuyons l'entente car, à date, elle semble juste et équitable pour les citoyens de la province et permet aux francophones du Manitoba d'améliorer leur place perdue depuis 1890 au sein de notre province.

Merci.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Arnaud. Are there any questions? Thank you again for your presentation. Monsieur Lecuyer.

MR. G. LECUYER: Merci, Monsieur President. Monsieur Arnaud, quand vous dites que vous appuyez la position qui a été négociée entre la Société franco-manitobaine et le gouvernement de la Province, est-ce que vous faites référence à l'entente telle qu'elle est à ce point ici ou référence à l'entente telle qu'elle était convenue vers la mi-mai dernier.

MR. F. ARNAUD: La référence que je fais, c'est à l'entente négociée et en place le 17 mai 1983.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Lecuyer. Anyone else? Thank you, Mr. Arnaud.

MR. F. ARNAUD: Merci beaucoup.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Raymond Poirier.

MR. R. POIRIER: Monsieur le Président, je voudrais parler en français.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oui. Proceed, please.

MR. R. POIRIER: Membres de l'assemblée législative, Monsieur le président: La Fédération provinciale des comités de parents est un organisme qui regroupe quarante (40) comités de parents attachés aux écoles de langue française de la province. A titre de président de cette Fédération, je vous adresse la parole au nom de plusieurs centaines de parents qui ont des enfants qui reçoivent une éducation bilingue dans des écoles publiques de cette province.

Etant donné que notre organisme a joué un rôle important au niveau de la promotion de l'éducation française durant les sept dernières années, nous avons découvert que l'usage du français comme langue d'enseignement, l'accessibilité à l'école française, ainsi que les ressources éducatives adéquates ont été trop souvent accompagnés de problèmes, d'opposition et de défaites.

Ces problèmes sont dûs principalement à la nature permissive de la Loi 59 promulguée en 1967 par le gouvernement Roblin et la Loi 113 du gouvernement Schreyer de 1970.

A partir de la Section 79 de la Loi Scolaire, les Manitobains peuvent utiliser le français comme langue d'enseignement jusqu'à concurrence de 75% des heures de classe. Vous n'êtes pas sans savoir que l'utilisation du mot peuvent n'est rien de plus qu'une permission. Dans bien des cas, les divisions scolaires ont choisi de se traîner les pieds avant d'offrir une éducation en langue française, et ce, après maintes pressions et sessions de quémandage.

Le résultat est clair. Ceux qui désirent une éducation française pour leurs enfants sont placés dans une position difficile, qui est celle de quémander des divisions scolaires hésitantes ou tout simplement mal intentionnées.

Nous avons maintes exemples qui démontrent que les parents ont, par le passé, été obligés de se battre pour obtenir ce que la Loi 113 offre. Des conflits viciés et prolongés ont eu lieu à Taché, Précieux-Sang et Noël Ritchot. Une école régionale française dans la région ouest de la division scolaire Rivière Seine a été étudiée, accordée, refusée, reconsidérée, changée de site, encore refusée par les autorités provinciales et locales pendant une période de sept (7) ans. Plusieurs parents impliqués dans cette question au début sont maintenant des grand-parents. D'autres ont abandonné la cause tant ils étaient frustrés. Nos expériences nous ont clairement démontré que les lois qui ne sont pas enchâssées peuvent se faire piétiner à volonté selon les caprices des gouvernements à différents niveaux. Et les lois et les règlements qui sont tout au plus permissifs encouragent ceux dont les intentions sont rien d'autres que déshonorables, de mettre en évidence leurs interprétations fallacieuses du fair-play selon ce qu'ils considèrent comme étant le plus rentable au niveau politique.

Certains soi-disant politiciens s'opposent à l'enchâssement des droits des francophones sous prétexte que les gouvernements sont en mesure de protéger les droits des minorités. Non merci! Nous nous souvenons toujours de la protection offerte par les gouvernements en 1890, en 1896 et en 1916.

Par exemple, lorsqu'il était au pouvoir, Monsieur Sterling Lyon avait appuyé la construction de la fameuse

école d'Ile-des-Chênes. Monsieur Garry Filmon qui voudrait bien lui succéder, s'est opposé à ce projet publiquement et avec ferveur en plus.

Dans une province qui valorise l'éducation française de plus en plus, francophones et anglophones inclus, la logique exige que ces mêmes personnes puissent transiger en français avec leur propre gouvernement.

Nous appuyons donc sans réserve la position prise par les partis impliqués dans cet accord car nous le considérons comme un compromis; c'est ainsi que nous l'avons endossé. Si le gouvernement dilue le contenu de l'entente concernant l'article 23 tel que négocié avec la SFM et le gouvernement fédéral, nous n'hésiterons pas à faire le nécessaire afin de poursuivre le cas Bildeau en Cour suprême. Nous avons raison de croire que les juges de la Cour suprême du Canada connaissent mieux la nature de ce pays que certains politiciens au niveau provincial.

Nous vous encourageons donc à poursuivre cette lutte jusqu'à sa seule conclusion logique. Vous desservirez ainsi la justice et le fair-play tout en demeurant digne de la confiance que l'électorat vous témoigne.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Poirier.
Mr. Lecuyer.

MR. G. LECUYER: Merci, Monsieur Président. M. Poirier, peut-être j'ai seulement une ou deux questions à vous demander. Point départ, vous indiquez endosser la position négociée par les partis en cause. Certains nombre de ceux qui sont venus adresser la parole ici ont dit c'est amendements sont pas nécessaires. Nous sommes prêts à vivre et je pense, entre autres, à M. Prince qui a dit nous sommes Canadiens et nous sommes prêts à vivre avec ce que nous avons maintenant et nous sommes prêts à placer notre confiance dans les mains du gouvernement. Les services viendront; nous les avons attendus 93 ans. Nous sommes prêts à les attendre encore parce que nous avons confiance qu'ils viendront. Vous qui témoignez, par exemple ici, des difficultés rencontrées surtout dans l'implantation de la permissivité de la Loi 113 - comment répondez-vous à ce commentaire?

MR. R. POIRIER: Monsieur le Président, en ce qui concerne la rapidité, si M. Prince est prêt à attendre un autre 93 ans, je lui souhaite la chance - je sais que par exemple pour avoir une éducation secondaire pour mon enfant dans la Division Scolaire Seine, j'ai commencé à demander à la commission scolaire et à exiger une école française dans notre région lorsqu'elle était au grade 2 et cette année, elle entre en 10ème et on a du les loger dans une école temporaire parce que la construction de l'école dans notre région n'est pas encore commencée. Alors, si M. Prince est prêt à attendre 93 ans, je suis un peu plus impatient que lui et puis j'étais ici lorsque M. Prince a fait sa proposition et ce qui me passait par la tête, c'est que le parti Néo-démocrate de M. Doern est la communauté francophone de M. Prince.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Lecuyer.

MR. G. LECUYER: Merci, Monsieur le Président. D'autres ont dit qu'il n'était pas nécessaire d'enchâsser

les services et que finalement, ces services sont une extension de ce qui était dans l'Acte du Manitoba de 1870, et que cet Acte en réalité ne donnait pas ses droits, n'enchassait pas ses droits, parce que spécifiquement les termes spécifiques de l'Article 23, à ce moment-là ne parle pas de services et ne parle pas d'éducation parce que l'éducation, comme vous le savez, faisait partie d'une autre loi. Par contre, d'autres comme M. Bailey et M. Scott, tentent à maintenir la thèse que puisque les gouvernements de l'époque négociait avec une population quasi moitié moitié, francophone, anglophone, et que même si les services à obtenir d'un gouvernement à l'époque pouvaient être très minimes, ils étaient dans les deux langues sans être enchassés. Le problème est celui-ci - c'est qu'à partir de l'abrogation de 1890, naturellement, les services ont cessé. Donc, est-ce que c'est en parti, du à ce phénomène passé d'il y a plus de 93 ans qui, dans votre esprit, vous fait dire qu'aujourd'hui les services doivent être enchassés?

MR. R. POIRIER: Mais évidemment, c'est que on doit enchasser les services d'après mon estimation parce que lorsqu'on considère que même, par exemple en 1870, on avait enchassé la loi, en 90, on réussi à l'enlever. On a gardé les écoles jusqu'à 1916. En 1916, on nous a enlevé nos écoles. Et puis là, écoutez ce que M. Lyon surtout dit depuis trois jours, quatre jours qu'on l'écoute, c'est qu'il faudrait enchasser, par exemple, (lui, il parlait de partly pregnant), c'est un peu ça qu'il voudrait - il voudrait qu'on soit partly pregnant. Ensuite, les services - on pourrait se fier au gouvernement pour nous les, pour nous sauver. Puis, moi, je ne peu pas croire là-dedans. Par exemple, si c'est M. Filmon qui devient chef du parti Conservateur, est-ce que ça veut dire qu'il va continuer à travailler avec autant de ferveur contre les écoles françaises qu'il a fait lorsqu'on parlait de la régionale d'Ile-des-Chênes. Est-ce qu'il va continuer ça? S'il le fait et les services ne sont pas enchassés, est-ce que ça veut dire qu'on fera la même chose avec les services. Si c'est pas M. Filmon, ça sera un autre. Parcequ'on a parlé des francophones qui revendiquent des droits comme étant des . . . , des fanatiques et puis, si on en cherche des . . . et des fanatiques, il me semble que j'en ai eu pas mal plein le casque depuis deux, trois jours, en ce qui concerne les droits des francophones, tant des personnes assises en avant que les personnes assises dans la salle. Donc, est-ce qu'on peut se fier sur les personnes pour garantir les services - moi, je ne le crois pas. Je le crois pas. On nous a toujours dit qu'on avait droit à l'éducation française. Comment ça se fait que ça prend sept ans pour avoir une école. Quand c'est une école française, ça prend sept ans à l'avoir. Par contre, à St-Vital, les maisons sont pas finies de construire. Il y a déjà une école là. On attend du monde qui vont déménager dans le développement. On a déjà une école pour eux-autres. Par contre, les francophones, on a peur qu'on évapore. Et puis, on attend sept ans pour une école. Après ça, on demande à la communauté de faire foi à des personnes, c'est très difficile.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Lecuyer. Any other questions? Mr. Graham.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Through you to Mr. Poirier. Mr. Poirier, you have put forward an argument tonight that is certainly different than those that have been put forward by most of the presentations we have heard up to this time. It would appear to me that from the presentation you have that your No. 1 concern is about education, is that correct?

MR. R. POIRIER: The number one concern of our Federation is education, yes.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Poirier, there has been, I believe, ever since Manitoba became a province and, in fact, when Canada became a country it was spelled out fairly clearly in the Constitution of our country that those services which fell under the federal jurisdiction and those that fell under the provincial jurisdictions, correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe that education was one that was quite clearly specified as being under the provincial jurisdiction. Is that correct?

MR. R. POIRIER: Pardon me?

MR. R. GRAHAM: That education was one of the services that a Provincial Government must provide was quite clearly spelled out by the Constitution of Canada as being a service that fell within the provincial jurisdiction and not the federal jurisdiction. Is that correct? I notice that you've stopped short in your brief of suggesting any changes to that. I believe you would still like to see the field of education remain a provincial jurisdiction. Am I correct in that, or maybe I'm not correct on that?

MR. R. POIRIER: No, I did not even debate that question. Our organization has used the field of education, because education is a service, isn't it? So, this being a service, if we should trust what Mr. Lyon is saying, for instance, and what your party is saying, in fact, that people, the Legislature, can protect minorities in all services. What I'm saying is let us look at one service, education. How has the Francophone community been served with that service? Let's just expound from there and say that chances are that that is what would happen to other services.

For instance, Mr. Lyon has been saying that the Forest case is all that we need. How come that same Mr. Forest had to come here and ask for translation? Why was it not taken for granted that simultaneous translation would be granted to Francophones? Obviously, you could have thought that Francophones were going to address this; we had to ask. If we want a French school; we have to ask. And who are we asking? We're asking a majority all the time. It will be the same for all services is what we're saying, so let's not take a chance.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Well, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Poirier raised the case of the translation. Perhaps it's a little ironic, but it was the members of the opposition in the organizational meeting of this committee that raised the issue of translation and suggested it should be provided. In the end it was left up to the government, who had the majority on the committee anyway, and we realized that they could overrule us, it was left to

them to make the decision on whether or not translation services should be provided for this committee. I just give you that information as some of the background. Sometimes it may be helpful to know, it may have no bearing whatsoever on what we are dealing with at the present time.

MR. A. ANSTETT: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Anstett, your point of order.

MR. A. ANSTETT: Yes, Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The implication is being left for the witness that the committee at the organizational meetings came to a decision at the direction of the government with regard to services to be provided. I think Mr. Graham would not want that implication to be left on the record; I don't believe he would intend that. I think it should be known that a consensus agreed to by all members of the committee established the policy which, fortunately, in Mr. Poirier's terms was changed by the committee on Wednesday evening and, as a result of that, simultaneous translation is provided; but to suggest that that was done by the government majority or anything like that, certainly I don't think Mr. Graham wants that impression left on the record.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. R. POIRIER: If I could simply interject, I don't care whose responsibility it was. Frankly, I don't care, and I have seen Mr. Graham and Mr. Lyon try to take this issue, which is a very very important one for the Francophone community, and try to score political points with this, and point fingers. I've seen Mr. Lyon for three days now sit there and gloat and smile and laugh and treat people like . . . I feel that I have been invited to come and give my opinion here, and I think all the people that came here felt that way. But I've seen them come here and be insulted and ridiculed, and we have these lawyers arguing with us, and I felt sorry for these people coming here, they were being used as a political tool. I don't know, I think the issue is so important that you should be able to go over who decided what.

As far as I'm concerned it was a committee decision. If it was reached by consensus, it means everybody agreed, it means both sides are guilty as far as I'm concerned. However, the example stands, why can Francophones not take for granted these services? What you're saying, and what Mr. Lyon is saying is trust us; and what we're saying is like hell we will.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Graham.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, through you to Mr. Poirier, he is certainly entitled to his opinion. I would ask Mr. Poirier, has there been any attempt on my part to ridicule anything that you have said to this point in the . . .

Mr. Chairman - and I provide this purely for Mr. Poirier's benefit - this is a transcript of a committee hearing, and it was the Chairman of the committee that raised it as a point of order, and I refer to a remark that was made by the Member for Rhineland, Mr. Brown,

and it was dealing - after we had had a recess - with the issue of translation or simultaneous translation, and these are the actual words that are recorded on Page 58 of the transcript: "Mr. Chairman, I raise this, just as a point of discussion really because I knew that we were going to possibly be faced with some presentations being made in the French language. I think that we, on this side, are quite happy to let the government members on the committee deal with whatever they see fit and do it in whatever way they think is proper."

I leave that on the record, Mr. Chairman, because those were the actual words, regardless of what the member who was the Chairman tries to portray to you as being what occurred at that particular meeting.

Mr. Poirier, the implementation of language services in the province, and we all realize that there were many years in the province when the French language was not used as a language of instruction in the schools, there were many years when - and I was unfortunately a student at the time - when French language was an option in the schools and it wasn't compulsory and, indeed, I was privileged to go to a school where the French language was one of the options that was available. Since that time we have seen progress, rather slow, admittedly, much too slow for many of us, and I think you are one that would probably say that even today we are not moving near fast enough in that field; though we have moved now from a point where it was optional to a point where we now have total immersion. These things are done with a lot of probably local problems arising, but one of the basic problems that we have in this province is the whole question of education and whether or not the province can totally control the educational programs in the Province of Manitoba, and that problem has been argued at trustee association meetings and in educational circles for many years. There seems to be, in my opinion, and I believe the Minister of Education's opinion, too, a genuine desire on the part of local communities, through their local school boards, to retain their autonomy and their own control by paying a portion of the educational costs, but they seem to want to retain that. In your opinion, should that local control be removed and the total school program dictated from the Minister of Education's Office?

MR. R. POIRIER: I haven't thought of it for tonight in those terms because I didn't think we were here to debate the control of schools. However, the local autonomy I think is important but when your leadership - and by that, the political leadership, I mean you, ladies and gentlemen - is spreading the kind of paranoia and this - I don't know, I don't want to use the word "hate" but it's darn close to that - this scare of something that, I don't know, is very natural, it's normal. When our top leadership in the province is behaving in that way, how do you expect the people out in the community, the trustees, municipalities, to do otherwise, because I think it's fair to assume that most of the people who have run as a school trustee or as a councillor is probably wanting to go a step higher. Probably a lot of the people who have been elected have been trustees or councillors and they look at you for some kind of leadership; and when you see the kind of stuff that Mr. Doern is coming out with, that the Conservative Party

has been coming out with and the kind of weak-kneed leadership concerning this issue that we've seen in the last week-and-a-half that the government is doing by diluting this resolution some more, it's kind of scary, especially when you're a Francophone and you're waiting seven years for your school and your children are being assimilated and you guys are trying to score political points on this. Should we change the system, the local autonomy probably wouldn't change anything. We seem to be lacking a will to do something; we're just trying to score political points.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Poirier's certainly entitled to his own opinion. I happen to believe that what I have been doing in this Legislature has been done, not in the interest of scoring political points, but I happen to believe that what I am doing and continue to do is to improve things for the Province of Manitoba so that Manitoba will be a better place for all of us to live in; and if we can improve the proposal that is before us today, if we can improve it so it will be more workable, so that the people of this province can have more faith and more understanding of what it is that is being proposed, not for passage in this House, but for passage in the House of Commons, to be part of the Constitution of this country, then I think we are doing the job that we are elected to do and I would hope that we would have more support from the people and more understanding. You may possibly disagree; that's your right, but do you understand that the role of the opposition is to try and point out the weaknesses of the proposals of the government and to improve the legislation that is being put forward? Is that an understandable and a laudable position to be taken by members in opposition?

MR. R. POIRIER: It depends on what side you're on. You want to make it better for who?

MR. H. GRAHAM: For the people of Manitoba.

MR. R. POIRIER: For the people of Manitoba. Like, who's that? Is that me, also?

MR. H. GRAHAM: Yes, I hope so.

MR. R. POIRIER: Or simply the Anglophones?

MR. H. GRAHAM: No, for you, too.

MR. R. POIRIER: For all people. Okay, so if you want to make it better for the people of Manitoba, what the French community is saying is give us what we need and you will have a better Manitoba.

You were saying before that you were in a school system when the French language was not used. I was in it when it was forbidden. Why was it forbidden? For a better Manitoba? 1890 and 1916 - why did that come about? For a better Manitoba? Better for whom?

HON. S. LYON: That's what happens with a Liberal Government.

MR. R. POIRIER: See, here we go with partisan politics again. Mr. Lyon says that's what happens with a Liberal

Government. Who gives a damn? It happened.

A MEMBER: But you obviously do, because you are whining about it.

MR. R. POIRIER: I'm saying who cares which government did it; it was done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let me ask the members of the committee and those making presentations to address yourselves through the Chair, and then we won't get these cross-references and we won't get the interruptions which are not going to help this committee.

Are you finished, Mr. Poirier?

Mr. Graham.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Poirier, I go down to the latter part of your brief where you say, in the bottom of Page 3: "We, therefore, fully endorse the position taken by the parties involved in this agreement; agreement that we have accepted as a compromise. If the government proceeds with any watering down of the content of Article 23 as negotiated with the SFM and the Federal Government, we will not hesitate to urge the reactivation of the Bilodeau case before the Supreme Court. We have reason to believe that the judges of the Supreme Court of Canada are more attuned to the nature of this country than to some provincial politicians."

Mr. Poirier, was this particular section written before the latest amendments that the province has provided to this committee?

MR. R. POIRIER: Yes, it was. Since then, the Franco-Manitoban Society and people from our organization and, in fact, people from various groups in the community have discussed the new amendments. We really don't understand why they were brought about. I'm sure they pleased someone. They obviously don't please us. Why the government did that, we do not understand. From what we hear, they were not consulted. It was just brought about. Whether the Bilodeau court case will be pursued, I don't know. It will be discussed in the community and a proper reaction will be brought about.

However, if the government were to return to the original position, we in the community see this as a compromise already. When we accepted that compromise in May, we clearly saw it as a compromise. We would have wanted more - I think some people have said that already - however, we were ready to accept what we saw sort of as a compromise. Now, we want to compromise again, and we have to remember that the only people that compromise in this is the French community.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Poirier, has your organization asked for a meeting with the officials of the present government to deal with that very matter that you considered to be of real concern?

MR. R. POIRIER: No, sir, our organization considers as our spokespeople the SFM; and they, as far as I know, have communicated with the government, and we trust that they are doing the right thing. They are

consulting with different groups continually.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Scott.

MR. D. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, I'd like to clear up what I think might have been a misunderstanding earlier. When you were being questioned, Mr. Poirier, you mentioned and agreed with, I believe - at least you agreed - maybe you could clarify to me whether you did agree with Mr. Graham when he said that The BNA Act very clearly left the educational matters up to the provinces.

I've looked up here to see the comparison. I have a comparison between The BNA Act and The Manitoba Act. Maybe I'll read it to you first, and then maybe you could explain what your position was in responding to Mr. Graham's question.

Section 93 of the BNA Act reads: "In and for each province, the Legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to education, subject and according to the following provisions . . ."

The second of those provisions and the third of those provisions both refer to where there is already established separate school systems. For instance, subsection (3) says, "Where in any province a system or separate or dissent schools exist by law, or is thereafter established by the Legislature of the province, an appeal shall lodge to the Governor-General-in-Council from any act or decision of any provincial authority affecting the right or privilege of the Protestant or Roman Catholic minority of the Queen's subject in relation to education."

Now, just three years after this, in The Manitoba Act, it starts off by saying, in Section 22 of the act: "In and for the province, the said Legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to education, subject and according to the following provisions . . ." The first of those provisions specifically mentions the denomination of schools, and it reads, "Nothing in any such law shall prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to denomination of schools which any class of persons have, by law or practice, in the province at the union."

If you go back through, and I've been doing a lot of reading through newspapers, also the debates for the introduction of The Manitoba Act, and there is hardly any mention whatsoever in relation to Manitoba of language questions. The main reason for that is because language was not the concern that we see it as today. It was a concern then, but it was translated via religious, denominational differences more so than it is today. So, whereas they had an awful lot of discussions in relation to religion when they spoke in Manitoba of the Roman Catholic religion, at the same time, they were speaking of the French speaking populace, when they were speaking of Bishop Taché or other people who were there at the time.

Through that preamble, I guess, I would like for you to clarify your response to Mr. Graham in relation to the rights of provincial and of French education in Manitoba, and as related to The BNA Act, and also to The Manitoba Act.

MR. R. POIRIER: Mr. Graham's question, as far as I understood it, was did I believe that education was

under the jurisdiction of provinces or of the Canadian Government and did I want it to stay that way, or something to that effect. Frankly, I haven't thought of it any more than that. Should the Government of Canada control education, or the Government of Manitoba control education, probably the results would be the same. However, what you read there seems to protect the school system that existed. My question is: What happened in 1916 then?

MR. D. SCOTT: To the amendment itself and more specifically, in fact, to it; but I can certainly appreciate your concerns when Mr. Graham got on to the education issue, and it seems that you are representing an educational organization. I can certainly understand how you, in your capacity, feel threatened and feel that you are still being given French language education in the Francophone schools as still being a privilege. In your brief, you mentioned that French may be taught up to 75 percent of the time. I can certainly understand your anxieties, and particularly with the waffling that goes on between parties over time, be it the opposition or be it our own party.

I would like to just get a little clearer on your statement in regard to the proposed amendments to the amendment. You mention in your text - and Mr. Graham read it, so I will not read it again - that rather than have it watered down, you would prefer to go the route of the Supreme Court. Is that still your intention? With these supposed amendments, would you prefer to go the court route, or would you be more satisfied with the amendments as proposed?

MR. R. POIRIER: We had accepted the first agreement, the May 17th - I think it's called - amendment as a compromise. The government for some reason that I do not understand, because they will please no one anyway. I mean you are dealing with a lot of fanatics and zealots. They probably will not understand anyway. Why did you have to water it down, I do not understand. You're not going to please anyone more; you're not going to score any more political points. It's not going to give you anything except to weaken something that could have helped the French community. To please who? I really don't understand. I don't think the French community understands. Frankly, I don't think anyone understands.

MR. D. SCOTT: Are you, or were you of the opinion, when you first saw the original proposed amendments, that the original amendments were in any way, shape or form a watering-down of rights of Franco-Manitobans?

MR. R. POIRIER: The first proposal?

MR. D. SCOTT: Yes.

MR. R. POIRIER: Well, see the way I look at it is when the French were in a majority in 1870, they respected the minority, as far as I can see, because you don't hear of anti-English laws at that time. When they became a minority, they lost everything. Within 20-30 years, they had lost everything, and not only the French, the other - I was listening to the Ukrainian community

saying they lost 118 schools, or something, in one crack. We lost all our schools.

I speak French because I was taught by my parents mostly, and I went to the schools where the nuns would teach us French in everybody's back. When the inspector came, we hid our books and all this stuff. I don't understand how come. I don't know. What could the French have done when they were a majority? Prevent English from entering the province? They passed a law saying that the French should be respected and we should have our schools and when we became a minority we lost them. I'm no historian; I don't know. You read these texts. I have friends that could probably argue with you or debate with you all night on that but, you know, that's not my bag.

MR. D. SCOTT: You mentioned that the original - several times - was a compromise. I'm somewhat sympathetic with that, that it was a compromise and that worked out. I guess it's kind of evident that it took so long to work out an agreement, but there's obviously compromise on both sides.

My final question is dealing with the future of the French language in Manitoba, and I'm wondering how you feel this - the original proposal - what is it going to do towards the preservation, or the enhancement and, therefore, the preservation of the French language as a fact of life in Manitoba?

MR. R. POIRIER: The first proposal?

MR. D. SCOTT: Yes.

MR. R. POIRIER: Well, there you have an explicit recognition of the French having some place in Manitoba. You have a guarantee of services. Now, if we can't make it with that, then the heck with it. Right now, we have to make it and we have to be fighting a lot to get what we want. If we could get this kind of a guarantee, I believe, and I think many people in the community believe, that it would make it easier for us. It should give us easier access, for instance, to schools. I know schools are not included in this thing; I understand that.

You would have a change in attitude, for instance, and then maybe we wouldn't find as much resistance when we want a French school. I mean we have to be holier than the Pope to get a French school in this province. We have to plead and we have to face bigots. Not all the time; some people are very easy to work with, but others are just plain bigots and they figure they'll get this school over my dead body. They work hard to prevent us from getting schools. That's why we have to work between 7 and 10 years to get a French school in Manitoba.

I'm saying it's not normal. What people are saying here is let's do the same thing for all services, trust us. I'm saying I'd rather take my chances if you entrench it. We'll trust you, but entrench it. If it doesn't change anything, why don't you entrench it? People are saying, well, isn't it the same if we don't entrench it, doesn't it guarantee? We say yes. Well, if it is the same, entrench it. What the hell!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Lyon.

HON. S. LYON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Poirier, I understand that before I arrived at the meeting, you had some comments to pass about questions that I have been asking of witnesses. Now that I'm here, would you mind telling me what you had to say?

MR. R. POIRIER: What questions? No, I did not say anything about the questions. I said about your attitude.

HON. S. LYON: Oh, would you mind telling me. I'm here; I'd love to hear it.

MR. R. POIRIER: I would love to tell you.

HON. S. LYON: Fine.

MR. R. POIRIER: You have been sitting like that for three or four days looking at the people out there, winking and talking - well, she's not there tonight, but this afternoon she was, Arlene Billinkoff - enjoying yourself, it seems. You are enjoying yourself. You people come here not as witnesses; they come here as accused when you get after them.

Frankly, this afternoon, when I thought I would have to face you, it scared me because I don't know what you're going to go after because you're enjoying yourself. I'm here to try to give some input concerning French rights in Manitoba, and you're here to try to score political points. So it scares me a little bit, like we're not here for the same reasons. You're used to this and it shows. You're good at it, too; although I don't agree. I wish you were on our side. It's the attitude that I don't like, the kinds of things that are being said. They don't help anyone. They don't help anyone except maybe Mr. Doern with his - he gets another thousand or whatever little coupons from the Free Press; I think that's all they help. They don't help the situation at all, in fact, they hurt. People don't know really what the issues are. I've been studying this, we've been working on this, we've been looking at this in committee and half of it I don't understand, and I don't consider myself an idiot, although some people do.

I have trouble understanding it, how can this guy who works as a mechanic and listens to, I don't know, Peter Warren and the news and hears these outpourings that come from people like Mr. Doern, and yourself, and other members on your committee, how can they understand what's going on and make a judgment. People are talking of a referendum now and, to me, after what's been said on this issue, it's like going into a barn and asking the turkeys if we should have Thanksgiving next year. The vote would be, no. Why even go bother with a referendum, we know the majority will say, no, why bother with it?

It's this kind of stuff that I was referring to as being out of order, as far as I'm concerned, and if your party is trying to score political points, if they're trying to save whatever they can save, who's going to get anything out of this? No one, certainly not the people of Manitoba as Mr. Graham was saying, nobody's going to get anything of it, and that is what I was saying.

HON. S. LYON: Well, Mr. Chairman, may I, first of all, to mollify and to assure Mr. Poirier that he need have no fear in questions that I will ask him. May I thank

him, first of all, for his forthrightness, and tell him, through you, Mr. Chairman, that's the kind of frankness that the committee appreciates.

I can also tell him, Mr. Chairman, that certainly speaking for myself, I can't go beyond myself, I'm not at this committee to set up a love affair with the people of Manitoba or with any of the witnesses. I'm at this committee to elucidate, as best I can and know how, information that is factual, that is historically correct insofar as I'm aware of that history, and that has some legal rectitude to it in accordance with how I understand the law of the province to be.

Now, Mr. Poirier may not always agree with the point of view that is being expressed by me, by Mr. Georges Forest last evening, by Mr. Sidney Green, by Mr. Prince who was here, by some of the people who don't adopt his view, but I say with respect, Mr. Chairman, to Mr. Poirier that's what life and democracy is all about. There's nothing wrong with people having a differing point of view. The fact that everybody doesn't agree with you Mr. Poirier doesn't mean either that you're wrong or that we're right; that's life. So, take it easy, settle back and you're going to emerge in one piece I'm sure, I can give you that assurance right now.

Let me ask you a couple of questions just to give you some assurance. I wouldn't want you to leave the podium tonight thinking that I'd overlooked you after all those nice remarks. Should I get my cup?

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Poirier is here, as I see it from the brief, representing the Committee of Federation of Provincial Committees of Parents representing, I presume, Francophone parents who - I don't like the word - with children in the school system in Manitoba. If the question has been asked I apologize and you can tell me if it's already on the record, I'll look it up in Hansard. How many people are there in the organization, first of all?

MR. R. POIRIER: The first paragraph in the brief states that we have 40 parents committees. Most of them have executive bodies of between 8 and 10 people, and each one is elected yearly by the people attending whatever school they're in.

HON. S. LYON: So, a ball-park figure would be roughly 400 parents.

MR. R. POIRIER: On executive committees, yes, but they represent, in some cases, 100 parents or 200 parents, depending on the number of parents or children in each school.

HON. S. LYON: Could I ask, Mr. Poirier, Mr. Chairman, through you, was this brief drawn and presented to a general meeting of your federation, or was it drawn and presented to the executive, or was it drawn by an executive committee and then brought to this meeting.

MR. R. POIRIER: We were mandated to prepare a brief by our executive, and we have prepared it in committee.

HON. S. LYON: The committee would consist of how many members?

MR. R. POIRIER: We were, I think, three or four with a mandate, meaning that we knew what we had to put

in there, it was just a matter of putting it in words.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Poirier, I'm asking the question for information, I accept what you say, I'm not doubting your word.

MR. R. POIRIER: I accept your questions, I'm not going to run away.

HON. S. LYON: You mentioned in the course of questioning on more than one occasion, we did not agree to this compromise in the royal sense of the use of "we," and I presume from that, when you said "we," you were referring to the SFM, Societe Franco-Manitobaine?

MR. R. POIRIER: Are you referring to the second?

HON. S. LYON: No, I'm referring to questions that were asked of you, Mr. Poirier.

MR. R. POIRIER: Yes, but are you referring to being consulted or agreeing to the second, oh no — (Interjection) —

HON. S. LYON: No, I'm sorry, so as not to confuse you, I'm moving on now to the point where you said that we accepted a compromise - it's in here somewhere.

MR. R. POIRIER: We, was the French community being the Société Franco-Manitobaine with the government and the Federal Government originally, the original position.

HON. S. LYON: So, the inclusive "we" means, not only your federation, but you regard the SFM as speaking on behalf of the federation?

MR. R. POIRIER: Our federation supports the SFM's position which was negotiated with the government.

HON. S. LYON: Is your federation linked in any other way with the SFM? Are you a subsidiary group of the SFM? Do you share any of the funding that the SFM received from the Secretary of State or from the Quebec Department of Intergovernmental Affairs, or from the Province of Manitoba, do you share any of that funding, or do you get . . . ?

MR. R. POIRIER: The Fédération provinciale des comités des parents is an independent body completely from all other bodies meaning like the Société Franco-Manitobaine and the other French organizations.

HON. S. LYON: And your funding, if any, arises in what way?

MR. R. POIRIER: We get some funding from the Federal Government, the Secretary of State from them, yes. I've heard that question asked of most of the French groups, are you insinuating that we are bought off when you ask that question?

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Poirier, I'm merely asking the questions, I'm not insinuating anything.

MR. R. POIRIER: Because you see the amount of money that we get from the Federal Government is about \$1 a head per Francophone, and I don't consider that very much for having been, as far as I'm concerned, screwed for over 90 years.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Poirier is entirely entitled to his opinion. I'm merely asking a mechanical question as to where the funding for this organization derives from, and Mr. Poirier seems to have some sensitivity about that, that's his problem. If he receives funding from the Secretary of State for Canada, I thank him again for his forthrightness in admitting it. It seems that a number of the groups before us have received funding from the Secretary of State for Canada.

MR. R. POIRIER: That's the insinuation.

HON. S. LYON: Well, no, that's a fact, it's not a insinuation, it's a fact, Mr. Poirier, a fact well-known to the people of Manitoba.

Now, what is the purpose of your federation?

MR. R. POIRIER: The federation was put together some 10 years ago because parents were wanting French education in Manitoba. The law permitted French education, so you would think that we had access to French education, that was not true. Whenever we wanted French education we had to fight for it, and individual parents tried it, it didn't work. You undoubtedly remember the Taché School problem.

HON. S. LYON: I've heard of it, yes.

MR. R. POIRIER: The parents wanted a French school; there were huge problems attached to that. At that same time, parents throughout the province wanted access to French education and they were having problems, so parents' committee started regrouping until, at one time, the problem became so complex that we approached the province to get some funding to help us get together and try to make sense out of this because we thought education belonged to the province. We were refused at that time so we approached the Federal Government who gave us some money and at that time I think our first budget was something like \$8,000, and we used the money to sort of get going and form a federation because all parents, all over the province, were having having problems having French education. That was 10 years ago, we're still having the same problems now. That is the purpose of the Federation, parents helping each other.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Lyon.

HON. S. LYON: So, Mr. Poirier, your group, your Federation is about 10 years old; it started in '73. This would be even after . . .

MR. R. POIRIER: I think it's eight years.

HON. S. LYON: Eight years, '75? Bill 59, as you mention on Page 2 of your brief was passed in 1967; that was a breakthrough. Bill 113 was passed by the Schreyer Government in 1970 and your group was formed in

1975 in order to obtain, I take it from what you've said, a better utilization of those laws that were available for French education.

You've told us that, in a general sense, you've had to fight like the dickens for the establishment of schools. You mentioned in your brief, on Page 2, the Tache experience which I remember reading about, the Precious Blood, Noel-Ritchot and others and then you go on to talk, on Page 3, when you get into the question of the permissive nature of the legislation, the French Language Regional High School in Iles de Chenes and you attempt to leave the impression that, while your words are, "For example, when in power, Mr. Lyon, had supported the construction of a French Language Regional High School in Ile de Chênes and Mr. Filmon, who is now in interested in succeeding him, has vehemently and publicly opposed that project."

Just a few minutes ago you were accusing me, from time-to-time, of making political statements. How would you categorize that statement? Is that a political statement or is that just a neutral statement?

MR. R. POIRIER: It's a fact.

HON. S. LYON: It's a fact according to life as you see it, eh?

MR. R. POIRIER: Did your government not support that school in Ile des Chênes. We got a go ahead when you were Premier, so that's a fact.

HON. S. LYON: Yes, our government supported a school on the basis of certain figures of enrolment which subsequently were proven not to be accurate, as Mr. Filmon, I believe . . .

MR. R. POIRIER: How come Francophones disappear? How come they evaporate?

HON. S. LYON: As Mr. Filmon, I believe, explained in the House, but the Minister of Education is here and she knows the up-to-date figures and I think subsequently there's been some approval for the school to go ahead.

The point being, Mr. Poirier, I think that perhaps if one is to be critical of other people and criticize them for making political comments, and is to be quick off the mark in ad hominem criticisms of other people, then one who lives in a glass house should not be making statements of that character and expecting them to be believed.

MR. R. POIRIER: Mr. Chairman, when I said that you said that these were facts. My question is, you did accept it; Mr. Filmon did talk against it, they are two facts; they are not political statements no more than yours were.

HON. S. LYON: I'm interested that that would be the example that is used where there was a difference of fact, obviously, in the information that was given to our government, as opposed, say, to the information given to the present Minister of Education, because it's not a question of principle that's involved so much, it's a question of how much money can be spent per capita

for students, the number of which seems to vary according to the report that one sees. But I think the point, Mr. Poirier, is this, that if you are to have acceptance from this committee for criticisms that you're quite free to make of any member of this committee for making allegedly partisan remarks and so on, then the person who makes that criticism must be equally certain that he or she knows his facts, and equally certain that he or she is prepared to be also dubbed as a partisan when he or she appears before the committee. Do we understand one another?

MR. R. POIRIER: I understand but I do not agree.

HON. S. LYON: I don't ask you to agree, as long as you understand.

MR. R. POIRIER: The example was used to point out that if you do not entrench services, for instance, the same problem that we have in education . . . in other words, we are depending on personalities or persons to guarantee our rights and we cannot trust them, because Mr. Filmon, for instance, was suggesting on the Ile des Chênes issue that the parents from St. Norbert, Ile des Chênes, Lorette and St. Adolphe bus their kids to empty schools in St. Boniface but, at the same time, he was saying absolutely nothing about a school that was being built for the English in St. Vital. He was not suggesting that they should bus to the empty schools in St. Boniface and that is what I'm saying is difficult to understand.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Poirier, the example, if I may say so, is perhaps an ill-chosen one, even if the facts were right. How are you going to entrench the building of schools, pray tell? The Member for Radisson, Mr. Chairman, says he uses that as an example and that's why I said, it's not a cogent example because how does one entrench the right to build a school? Either a school is needed or it isn't needed. Are we going to build schools that we have no people in, just because it's entrenched? Is that a good example? I think not.

MR. R. POIRIER: Mr. Chairman, I think the example stands as much as very many of the examples that I've heard in the last four days in here. It stands as well as a lot of other examples that we've heard.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Chairman, the NDP, when in opposition, said that, if elected, they would turn the economy around. Do you wish that we had entrenched that promise? Because they did turn the economy around, there are 30,000 more unemployed than when they came into office. Do you want that kind of a thing in French?

MR. R. POIRIER: Mr. Chairman, I'll let the opposition answer.

HON. S. LYON: I'm merely indicating to you the kind of entrenchment cannot be applied, Mr. Poirier, to material things. Entrenchment may be applied, and should be applied, in my opinion, sparingly to a few things because we live in a Canadian parliamentary system. We do not live in a European republican system

where entrenchment and other matters that are really alien to our system are commonplace; and entrenchment has been, if I may say so, a very rarely used device in the system that we have in Canada. I don't call it the British parliamentary system because it isn't, it's now the Canadian parliamentary system. We inherited it from the British but it's now the Canadian system, and entrenchment, whether you agree or not, is a very rarely used device in the Canadian parliamentary system and yet, here you are, apparently supporting a government that is prepared to entrench page after page after page of amendments to Section 23. Section 23 takes up about that much space in the Constitution of Canada, and the amendments of the government - I have them, as a matter of fact, pasted up on a piece of paper downstairs - take up 10 or 12 times the space.

So here they are moving in a way that is really alien to our system, and you are saying, yes, but there should be more entrenchment. Some of us really like to preserve the system, because the parliamentary system doesn't really live, breathe and flex itself too well under the entrenched system.

MR. R. POIRIER: Mr. Chairman, if I were Mr. Lyon, I would also try very hard to keep exactly what we've got now, because, see, when you're on top, it's very difficult to accept that you're going to become equal. That is very difficult. I can sympathize with Mr. Lyon. If I were in his shoes, I would fight as much as he does to leave it like it is because it's nice and cozy.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Chairman, I'm truly sorry that Mr. Poirier looks at life, having to look over his shoulder around what appears to be rather a large chip.

It's not a question of being on top or being on bottom. It's a question of knowing what the system is and knowing what the system can deliver. You, Mr. Poirier, are asking that there be a tremendously new number of things entrenched in the Constitution because that's what you want. But there are a number of us, I would daresay, that across the country we found, in the time when Mr. Trudeau was trying to destroy federalism in Canada and entrench a whole new Constitution, there were 8 out of the 10 provinces who found that we could stop him because we said we are not going to let you destroy our system, and we did stop him.

A somewhat similar principle - somewhat similar, it's not the same - is involved here vis-à-vis the concept and the principle of entrenchment. Mr. Green was here yesterday. I don't know if you heard him or not, but he said, in effect - I would like your comment; this is a question - what kind of arrogance is it for a group of politicians on this side of the House, or on that side of the House, to presume that they have all of the collected wisdom of the ages and that the words that they write on a piece of paper should then become enshrined and entrenched forever!

My question, though, Mr. Poirier is this: Does that not bespeak to you of a kind of intellectual arrogance that is really unbecoming any of God's creatures, including you and me?

MR. R. POIRIER: I think Mr. Lyon is making the same mistake as the French made in 1870. He believes that

entrenchment is forever. The French believed that; they entrenched in 1870. Twenty years after, they got screwed because forever was until you become a minority.

HON. S. LYON: Well, Mr. Chairman, if Mr. Poirier is so disenchanted with entrenchment, then why does he come before this committee advocating that whole reams of new laws be entrenched if he is so turned off with what happened to Section 23, which none of us around this table, so far as I am aware, supports?

MR. R. POIRIER: I am not turning . . .

HON. S. LYON: A government in 1890 passed a law that the Supreme Court in 1979 said was ultra vires, was beyond the powers of the province. I haven't heard anybody around this table supporting what the Liberal Government of 1890 did. At the same time, I have seen a lot of sensitivity, acknowledged and understandable sensitivity to that; but you must understand that there are many thousands of people in Manitoba - and I must say I am one of them - who wear no hair shirt about that.

I didn't pass that law. I didn't have anything to do with that. Why am I being regarded by you as the modern successor of those who passed the law in 1890 that I don't happen to agree with? Yet, that is the cast of mind with which you come to this podium. Anybody who is opposed to what you want is a bigot, a racist, and is lacking in understanding, is not gentlemanly, shouldn't be asking questions; but if they agree with you, I suppose everything's fine. Is that your point of view?

MR. R. POIRIER: You have been making a fuss about "entrenchment is forever." You used the word this afternoon when entrenchment comes, that's the guillotine will fall. It's entrenched forever; it's carved in stone. How come, when it was in our favour, it was carved in stone for 20 years? The guillotine broke after 20 years. Everything changed after 20 years, but if it is going to favour us, it's forever and then everybody gets scared because forever is for a long time.

HON. S. LYON: But, Mr. Poirier, why would you ask anyone in 1983 to adorn himself or herself with a particular hair shirt that is causing you so much trouble about what happened in 1890? In 1890, the Legislature of Manitoba, unwisely, I think, but in its wisdom at the time passed a law which, I presume, its law officers at the time told them was within the competence of the Legislature to pass. I can only presume that; I don't know that for a fact at all.

That law was subject to attack, was subject to being questioned in the Supreme Court from that moment forward; but the historical fact of life, Mr. Poirier, which you know and I know, is that that wasn't the main question. The Manitoba schools' question was the main question and that was the field of battle and nobody paid much attention to Section 23 at all. The energy and the vitality of the Franco-Manitobans of that day and of others who supported their cause with respect to the public school question, let me remind you, that R.P. Roblin was a Liberal in 1889 and he left the Liberal Party because of their policy toward French education,

the French school question, and became a Conservative in 1890 because the Conservatives were supporting the Francophone community in 1890. Do I take credit for that because I'm a modern day Conservative? No, but that's a historic fact of life, too, that I think is worth mentioning in the context of your argument.

It was open to anyone after 1890 to take a reference on the law of 1890 to the Supreme Court as George Forest did in 1976. I don't accept any blame personally, nor do my colleagues, for the fact that it wasn't tested in court before that. That's not my fault. Don't lay it on me, as an English-speaking Canadian, that because somebody else didn't test the law, that somehow or other we must carry the cross for that particular kind of deprivation, as you would describe it, of rights that were taken from you under a law passed by a Legislature in Manitoba.

Mr. Poirier, I don't ask you, as I say, to agree with me. Perhaps, if you can understand that there is a different point of view from this one that we have been pushed down, we have been kept down, and only if it's entrenched can we be guaranteed, because, by implication, you are saying we can't trust you who are in the majority. You're entitled to that opinion; but please, Mr. Poirier, have a little bit more respect for your fellow citizens who speak English rather than to come before a committee like this and say, hey, I'm here, I want entrenchment because I can't trust you, because that's what you are saying.

Some of us around this table don't particularly like that, because some of us around this table, over a period of 30 years, have been working pretty hard against pretty tough public opinion at times in order to bring back some of the rights, as you would describe them, with respect to French education, with respect to independent schools in Manitoba, which wasn't an easy one - let me tell you that one - with respect the extension of French Language Services within the public service of Manitoba. Some of us who have been working pretty hard in that vineyard over a quarter of a century don't particularly like to have somebody like yourself come before a committee and say, hey, we don't trust you and unless you entrench it, we know what you, the majority, are going to do.

I don't accept that Mr. Poirier. I understand you, but I don't accept it. Are we even now?

MR. R. POIRIER: I didn't realize that it was such a touchy subject, you seem to have a chip on your shoulder.

HON. S. LYON: Not touchy with me.

MR. R. POIRIER: Now, we're even.

HON. S. LYON: Not touchy with me. I agree that there are two points of view to every question, and that when you stand here and say we've got to have it French because we know by implication what you Anglos are going to do . . .

MR. R. POIRIER: Mr. Lyon, you seem to take that very personally, I don't understand why, because my statement was a very general one. I said that Monday is the official opening of the school in Ile des Chênes,

or they're starting construction. That's not in ancient times, I mean we've been fighting that lately. The parents in Seine River are in court against their school board for changing wards. I mean, that's today. Don't look at it as a personal attack or laying all the blame on your shoulders, but somebody's got to be blamed for this.

HON. S. LYON: That's life.

MR. R. POIRIER: Yes, well - the chip on my shoulder comes from having to fight for the past 10 years for French education for my children, that's life, too.

HON. S. LYON: But, Mr. Poirier, since you came before this committee, as I understand it, you've been fighting all of the battles since 1874, and I just say don't lay all of those particular crosses on the shoulders of everybody around this table, because we don't happen to be responsible for them.

MR. R. POIRIER: We both scored on that one already.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Lyon, just one moment please. I wonder if we could get back to questioning instead of trying to create a debate with the witness. I think that is your purpose. We'd like to get some of this constructively done and if we would stick to questions, then maybe we could make this committee more efficient.

Mr. Lyon.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Chairman, in the course of his response to a question, Mr. Poirier said - and I'm paraphrasing - when the French were in the majority - he was referring to 1870 with his penchant to go back in history - they respected the minority of English. There was certainly a change in attitudes, said he, when the English came into majority. Now, if that isn't chip-on-shoulder business, what is it? Tell me more about this. When the French were in the majority, what are you talking about? When there were 5,000 French-speaking and Métis citizens in Manitoba and there were 3,000 English-speaking citizens and there were a handful of voyageurs and so on, is that what you're talking about when the French were in the majority, when Colonel Wolseley came out, Louis Riel had left the fort with the gates open and so on. Colonel Wolseley came out to restore peace and order to the territory, as the histories described it. You would have another description, I'm sure. But when the French were in the majority - what are we talking about? Let's relate this to fact. What do you mean by that?

MR. R. POIRIER: I'm starting to be sorry I made that statement, or I should go and get my historian friend. Simply, what I mean is you are making such a fuss — (Interjection) — over entrenchment - you never do anything - I am saying that in 1870 there was entrenchment, in 1890 it left, it was gone, there was nothing left in 1916. It was illegal for us to even learn French in our schools. I'm saying there is no miracle about that; these things happen. What the Francophone community needs now is the best guarantees possible, and that is what we want.

We are saying that our chances are better if you entrench the first agreement that the Société Franco-Manitobaine and the government, both levels of government, had agreed to. We are saying that is our best chance. I don't know, to me it's not that complicated.

However, when you interpret it, it becomes a mountain and it becomes dangerous and it becomes horrible, and it seems like the whole system's going to fall apart. That's, I think, your chip on your shoulder, because the system is going to fall apart because the French have access to French services. I don't think it's that horrible. If you refer to federal bilingualism, I agree, there were huge mistakes made there. In fact, there were stupid things that were done; I agree with that. There are more intelligent ways of giving access to services to the French community. We say our chances are best with the first deal that we had. That's all we're saying. We're not asking for the moon. We're not asking for any more than that, just simply access to French services like our forefathers had in 1870. That's all we're asking for.

HON. S. LYON: Well, now, just at the end there you got yourself into a bit of trouble, Mr. Poirier, I've got to warn you. You want the French services that your forefathers had in 1870, you've got them under Section 23. Period. Paragraph.

MR. R. POIRIER: Says who?

HON. S. LYON: You've got them.

MR. R. POIRIER: We have the right to be a criminal in French.

HON. S. LYON: The Supreme Court said so in 1979, we passed the law, the Legislature in Manitoba passed a law in 1980 which restored Section 23. What is being contemplated, for the umpteenth time, in these amendments is an extension and a further entrenchment of French Language Services that was never contemplated in Section 23 or in 1870. So, as long as we understand the ground rules that we're playing around with here, and what you're asking to be entrenched.

Now, let me ask you this question, and I don't think it's an unfair question, and you can tell me whether you care or don't care. Would it not be in the best interests of all Manitobans - and you're entitled, I think quite properly, to say, well, I put me first, meaning yourself - if the extension of French Language Services in the Public Service were accomplished with the support and the goodwill of the people of Manitoba? Isn't that worth doing to you, or do you want it at any price?

MR. R. POIRIER: First of all - I'll come back to that after - Mr. Lyon was saying he will not accept all the blame because he wasn't around in 1890 and 1870, and now for some reason or other he seems to know what the people in 1870 were thinking, and that I find trouble understanding.

I believe if there would have been goodwill on both sides of the House right from the start, that this first agreement could have been entrenched, passed,

finished, and the people of Manitoba would have been happy to do it because I do not believe, as you seem to imply, that the majority dislikes the French. That's not true, I do not believe that.

I believe that the majority in Manitoba would like to please the French community, in fact. It is a minority that does not want to. Because you are always after fact, the fact that makes me say that is the rush by the English majority - and I say English majority, by that I include all ethnic groups who speak English - are rushing to French immersion classes, so I cannot believe that all these people detest the French so they learn the language so they can yell at them or something in French.

I believe that the majority of Manitobans want the French to have what is rightfully theirs, but when people start spreading paranoia and they start talking of guillotine, and they start talking of carved in stone, and they start having private little referendums to pick up some bucks to make some more little referendums, that's when people get scared and they will back away from it because they're afraid they're getting into something bad. I will say it, again, if our leaders had not tried to score political points with this issue, and would have tried to get some kind of a compromise whereby we can give the French what is rightfully theirs - it's not anything new that we're getting, we're just getting back what was taken away - then — (Interjection) — I know, we disagree on that . . .

HON. S. LYON: Sure do.

MR. R. POIRIER: . . . and if there had been good will on both sides of the House I am sure the population in Manitoba would have been pleased to give us what we want.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Chairman, let me capsulize it this way. Let me first of all take you back to the point I was attempting to make. In your answer you strayed a bit, as I from time-to-time stray in the questions. Let me take your mind back to 1980 when the Government of the Day announced, as a matter of policy, a new extension of French Language Services in Manitoba. A few months later a French Secretariat was announced as being established in Manitoba.

After some consultation with the SFM to find out from them the areas of priority that they thought first, you know, where should the bilingual civil servants be put? We didn't go and ask them to tell us where to put them but we said, we'd like to have your opinion.

In 1980 - and these are recent in time, Mr. Poirier - was there any upset from the people of Manitoba when the terrible Lyon Government announced that it was going to extend French Language Services in the public service in Manitoba? Did we have committee meetings like this? Did we have ads in the paper? Did we have scandalous cartoons in *La Liberté* against political figures in Manitoba - no.

MR. R. POIRIER: I am sure that if Mr. Doern had been as active in the opposition as he is now, you would have.

HON. S. LYON: The fact remains, Mr. Poirier, do you remember that there was any social upheaval in

Manitoba when we announced that we were doing exactly what you want done?

MR. R. POIRIER: No, because Mr. Doern said, okay, and Mr. Lyon said, okay, and the other side said, okay, so there was no upheaval. You are saying exactly what I took five minutes to say, and obviously did not say very intelligently, but if our leadership had gotten together and just said, that's the way it's going to be, there would have been no upheaval, the same as in 1980. That's all I'm saying.

HON. S. LYON: Let me take you forward then to March of 1982. You're an active, I presume, paid-up member of the SFM; you go to the annual meetings.

MR. R. POIRIER: Yes, I am.

HON. S. LYON: Were you at the annual meeting in March of 1982?

MR. R. POIRIER: I missed Mr. Joyal's speech.

HON. S. LYON: No, no, in '82.

MR. R. POIRIER: Oh, in '82. Yes, I was there.

HON. S. LYON: The new Premier of Manitoba, Mr. Pawley, was there and made an announcement that, as a matter of policy, his government was endorsing what the previous government had done and, furthermore, they were going to extend French Language Services in Manitoba as a matter of government policy.

Think about this carefully before you answer. Did your current *bête noire*, myself, moi-même did I stand up in the House the next day and say, you can't do that because that's an offense against the public interest in Manitoba? Was there any objection from the opposition in Manitoba when Mr. Pawley announced, as a matter of policy, that he was going to, not only adopt our policy of French Language Services, but extend it? Was there any social upheaval in Manitoba? Did we, as the opposition, object to that announcement of policy? What's your recollection, Mr. Poirier?

MR. R. POIRIER: I don't recollect any upheaval . . .

HON. S. LYON: That's right, because there wasn't any.

MR. R. POIRIER: . . . so chances are you did not start jumping. I'm sorry, that's bad English. Did not get excited or whatever - that's bad English, too.

HON. S. LYON: And when Mr. Penner announced in May of this year that he was going to take that policy, which we had previously approved and the people of Manitoba accepted, and he was going to entrench that policy into the Constitution, isn't that when you started to get the upheaval? Let's name the devil that we're after here, let's stop naming Lyon and the Anglos and everything else, let's lay the devil to rest where it is. It's the entrenchment that has caused the problem, isn't it Mr. Poirier, not the individuals?

Are you going to say, for instance, are you trying to say what my honourable friends say from time-to-time, oh, if the opposition had just kept their mouths shut there wouldn't be any trouble in Manitoba today? Do you really believe that? Do you think the Union of Municipalities wouldn't have had 120 resolutions? Do you think that the MGEA wouldn't have been here just as they were here today objecting to portions of the agreement? You bet your shirt they'd have been here. So, Mr. Poirier, do you really think it's fair to adopt this kind of simplistic and easy nonsense that the NDP and the socialists spout, and say it's all the opposition's fault.

We brought the plan in, say they; we brought it in, but it's the opposition's fault because there's objection to it. Do you really believe that?

MR. R. POIRIER: You seem to be nailing them so I suggest you ask them.

HON. S. LYON: Isn't that your thesis?

MR. R. POIRIER: Partly, yes.

HON. S. LYON: Yes. Do you still believe it?

MR. R. POIRIER: What?

HON. S. LYON: Your thesis that it's the opposition's fault because these people are all here and because Manitoba is disrupted because of what this government's done?

MR. R. POIRIER: Not only the opposition, you have Mr. Doern out there who wasn't, at that time, considered the opposition; but there is opposition to what they are doing and I want to correct you when you say that I have been blaming the English; I have not. You may have said that I was, but I have not.

HON. S. LYON: I ask you whether you're casted line, just for the record.

Mr. Poirier, if I said to you, and I know you're too young a man to remember this period, if I said to you that the start of the World War II in 1939 was the fault of Neville Chamberlain because he declared war on Hitler, would you believe that?

MR. R. POIRIER: I would have to . . .

HON. S. LYON: Was it Neville Chamberlain who invaded Poland or was it Hitler?

MR. R. POIRIER: I would have to look you in the eyes to see if you smiled before swallowing it.

HON. S. LYON: But who started the war? Was it Hitler or Neville Chamberlain?

MR. R. POIRIER: I think it was my grandmother. What are we talking about, I don't understand?

HON. S. LYON: What we're talking about, Mr. Chairman — (Interjection) —

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Lyon, I'm sure you know better. Let us be relevant to the question.

MR. R. POIRIER: Are you implying that entrenchment will start a war?

HON. S. LYON: What we're talking about, if a government brings in a bad measure and the opposition objects to it, why would anybody say it's the opposition's fault if other people in the community object to it? Isn't that a very transparently false argument that you tend to rely on and my honourable friends - well, I don't expect any more from them, but they tend to rely on it, too - and aren't we both mature enough to abandon that kind of a silly argument and get down to cases and discuss the merits of what's before us and why, and accept the fact that there are people of good will and of integrity who are not racist, who are not bigots, who are not anti-French, who will not accept this whole series of entrenchments that this government is trying to shove down the throats of the people of Manitoba because they know it's wrong. Now isn't that an argument that you could accept, in good will, as being an honest argument? You may not agree with it, but isn't that an honest argument that you could intellectually accept?

MR. R. POIRIER: The last time I heard those words, "shoved down the throat," was with the French on the corn flakes boxes, and I mean if we're still at that, I'm sorry, I'm at the wrong committee, because all I have tried to say tonight is that our organization would like the entrenchment of the first deal that was struck between the government and the Société Franco-Manitobaine because we think it would be simply giving us what we should have had all along. That's all I've been saying.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Chairman, lest Mr. Poirier has forgotten, I accept, with full grace, the fact that he believes that and I fully accept his right to believe that, as I would hope he would accept my right and the right of other people to disagree with it, without either of us being branded as racist, without either of us being branded as anti-Anglo or anti-French, and realizing that this is a sound, intellectual argument that people of good will can hold without the kind of bitterness that you first came to this podium with.

MR. R. POIRIER: The words "zealots" and "fanatics" I picked up from you during the committee hearings when you were always saying that whatever we do, you will have some zealot or some fanatic challenging things in court.

HON. S. LYON: That's right, you can.

MR. R. POIRIER: I doubt very much that it would be an Anglophone. I had to assume that it would be a French zealot or a French fanatic that would do this.

HON. S. LYON: Oh, well, Mr. Poirier, I'm a touch older than you. Let me tell you that I know zealots and I know fanatics and they come from every ethnic group in Manitoba. You really have an absorptive nature if

you think I was trying to lay all of that. I know litigious English-speaking people who would just love to litigate some of the stuff in here, either for or on the other side. So there's no limit. The fact that the name may be applied from time to time to somebody who is a Francophone or somebody who is of some other race is not meant by anybody to . . .

MR. R. POIRIER: The person that I've heard labelled a zealot and a fanatic for going to court was Mr. Forest, and I don't like that.

HON. S. LYON: You didn't hear that from me.

MR. R. POIRIER: Because he's about the only one that's taken language laws to court.

HON. S. LYON: You certainly didn't hear that from me.

MR. R. POIRIER: No, no, but you have to, sort of, you know. I don't know anyone else who did go to court.

HON. S. LYON: At the end of your brief, or near the end of your brief, you say, "We have reason to believe that the judges of the Supreme Court of Canada are more attuned to the nature of this country than some provincial politicians." Who are "some provincial politicians" that you are referring to?

MR. R. POIRIER: They are the ones who, first of all, are trying to make political points on the French community.

HON. S. LYON: Who are they? Give us some names.

MR. R. POIRIER: Well, Mr. Doern for one. I am sure that's what he is trying to do.

HON. S. LYON: What about me? Am I trying to make political points in the French community?

MR. R. POIRIER: No, I think you really believe what you're doing.

HON. S. LYON: Won't you give Mr. Green the same benefit of the doubt? Do you really believe he believes what he says?

MR. R. POIRIER: Mr. Green?

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Sid Green, the leader of the Progressive Party who spoke here yesterday?

MR. R. POIRIER: I'm not sure.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Maurice Prince, who spoke here, wouldn't you give him the benefit of the doubt and say that he really believes what he said?

MR. R. POIRIER: Is he a politician?

HON. S. LYON: No, he's not a politician. He's a human being, though.

MR. R. POIRIER: Because you said which politicians.

HON. S. LYON: You said the politicians, but you're talking as though anyone who is opposed to this is apparently trying to make political points. When Mr. Forest stood before this committee yesterday and said humbly, and said honestly, I think the government should drop these proposals because I think it can be accomplished better if the people of Manitoba support it. I don't, for a moment, think that Mr. Forest was doing anything but telling the truth as he saw it.

MR. R. POIRIER: And as you saw it.

HON. S. LYON: Well, I may have to agree with part of what he said. I didn't know what he was going to say.

MR. R. POIRIER: I agree with Mr. Forest that it would be very nice if all the people of Manitoba could join hands, have some kind of love-in and say let's do this, and we could live happily ever after; but, like you say, this is life. I know that's not what's going to happen.

Our experience has shown it with Mr. Pawley coming to the annual meeting of La Société Franco-Manitobaine and saying that they were going to extend services and so on. We're still fighting for French schools. That's life. There is a lot of good will, and I am saying in that paragraph, or we are saying in that paragraph, that we believe that the judges from the Supreme Court of Canada are going to have probably a different outlook than those who consider their real vision is looking about as far as Kenora - that's what I am saying - and that are playing partisan politics, and we've heard that during the two days at the hearing. I have checked with the people in my constituency. They do not agree. That's partisan politics as far as I'm concerned.

HON. S. LYON: That's realism.

MR. R. POIRIER: Because the guy wants to get re-elected, and I'm being realistic.

HON. S. LYON: That's why they call it realism.

MR. R. POIRIER: Yes, I'm being realistic. The guy wants to be re-elected. If his people don't want it and he goes for it, he's lost the next election. That's life. I am saying that when politicians look at an issue as important as this to our community in those eyes, then we're in trouble. I'd rather take my chances with the court, the Supreme Court, because the judges don't have to look at their constituents. They're entrenched.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Chairman, there are nine judges, as I recall, on the Supreme Court of Canada at the present time, one of whom happens to be a distinguished judge who is a Manitoban, Mr. Justice Dickson; the other eight of whom - I can't quickly name them - are other distinguished jurists from other parts of Canada.

Do you really want this committee to believe that you would sooner have, for all time, rights with respect to French Language Services, French language education - I'm throwing that in because it's not entrenched but you are a big advocate of entrenchment - all of the matters that relate to the French-speaking community in Manitoba decided by the courts rather

than by the politicians whom you elect? Is that what you're saying?

MR. R. POIRIER: Well, if I have to go on what I've heard in the last four days, I would have to say yes, because we're talking referendum. What do you think will come out of a referendum? We are going to come out of it with nothing. I'd rather take my chances with the court, and I say that without that much reflection. However, I would trust the judges more than I would trust some politicians.

HON. S. LYON: Just on the referendum point, Mr. Chairman, I'd like Mr. Poirier to tell me from his observations here - he's obviously been a keen observer of these proceedings - which man or woman, which member of this Legislative Assembly has advocated the holding of a referendum?

MR. R. POIRIER: Isn't that what Mr. Doern delivered to Mr. Norrie, I read in the paper today? Yes, Mr. Doern did that.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Doern. Anybody else?

MR. R. POIRIER: Honestly, I don't know.

HON. S. LYON: Honestly, I don't know either. I have not heard anyone other than Mr. Doern advocate a referendum.

Now . . .

MR. R. POIRIER: Yes, but three or four days ago, Mr. Norrie was saying that he was hoping he didn't see the need for referendum. All of a sudden, Mr. Doern visits him with a little bag of little papers that he clipped out of the Free Press; and Mr. Norrie says it seems like we are going to have a referendum, and Mr. Doern has been elected - he's one of our leaders. — (Interjection) — Yes, I know, but it's this kind of stuff that it's very difficult for us to trust.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Chairman, with respect to Mr. Poirier, please, then, don't lay on everybody around this committee the sins, as you conceive them to be sins, that you are trying to say as a result of talk about referenda, I don't trust the politicians; I want the Supreme Court to make all these decisions.

MR. R. POIRIER: Mr. Chairman, on Page 4 there is the word "some provincial politicians." I did not say all the members of the committee, because some of you people I would trust.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Pawley and Mr. Penner and their colleagues have now seen fit on Tuesday to announce some amendments to Section 23. Are you now saying that they can't be trusted because they have seen fit to make some amendments? Do you feel that they are people that you wouldn't trust any more, that you would place your trust now on the Supreme Court rather than Mr. Pawley or Mr. Penner?

MR. R. POIRIER: Let us just say that I would be very careful, and what is being said in the French community

now could not be interpreted very easily as over trust. It causes problems, very obvious problems, and I think everyone that came forward and spoke for the entrenchment has said exactly this, except Mr. Doer who thinks it's a good deal.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Mr. Poirier for giving us the benefit of his views. I hope I haven't disappointed him. I hope I haven't been too hard on him, I haven't intended to be.

The parliamentary system if I may say so, Mr. Poirier, through you, Mr. Chairman, is one in which the adversarial clash of opinion is useful and beneficial ultimately to the public interest, and do you know why? Because no one of us has a monopoly on what's right, or on doing everything that's in the public interest. I have to wake up every morning and look in the mirror and say, you know, you're not perfect - and, boy, is that true! There never has been a more true statement made. I look at the members of the opposition, and I know when I look at them that they're not perfect.

I know I think that these good people in Manitoba and people beyond Manitoba may from time to time benefit because I have to listen to them, and even though they don't like it, by God, they have to listen to me. Out of that distillation of adversarial opinion and that exchange of views - and it's not always a tea party - but out of that you get an amalgam, you may get a new idea. I learned a thing or two from you tonight. I hope you learned a thing or two from me, but don't condemn the system and don't say that's bad. That's good, that's what makes the whole work; that's what freedom is all about. I hope you can leave the podium rejoicing in the fact that you, as a free citizen of a free country, have a right that very few people on the face of this earth have, to come before a committee of elected representatives and say, hey, Lyon, I don't like the way you're doing your job. I rejoice in the fact that you enjoy that right in Canada, and you should rejoice in the fact that I can come back and say, hey, Poirier, I think you should look at it another way. Isn't that a lesson we've both learned tonight, isn't that worthwhile - notwithstanding the issue?

MR. R. POIRIER: Mr. Chairman, I will not answer because we'll be going at it for another two hours, and I'm getting tired.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Mr. Doern.

MR. R. DOERN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I want to reassure Mr. Poirier that although Mr. Lyon has been chipping away at your chip, it's still intact.

I want to — (Interjection) —

MR. R. POIRIER: Am I supposed to be ashamed of that?

MR. R. DOERN: I want to ask you, first of all, about a remark that was made prior to my arrival here, and that was apparently you made a complaint about the translation services available to the committee, could you repeat that?

MR. R. POIRIER: If I put it in proper context, I think I had been told or that in Mr. Forest's case had fixed

everything. What I said is if everything was fixed, how come Mr. Forest had to ask for simultaneous translation? It wasn't a complaint, it was a statement of fact.

MR. R. DOERN: Right. I assume that you read *La Liberté*?

MR. R. POIRIER: Yes.

MR. R. DOERN: And you also know that Mr. Lecuyer made a big point in the issue of August 26th advising all the Francophone delegations to speak in French at the committee hearings, and he said that if they speak in English, they will miss the boat, one will be playing into the hands of those who say that the Francophones have no need of services in French since they speak in English. In spite of that statement and in spite of the fact that the government arranged the hearings, they did not make a provision for those services. I wonder whether you would maybe have a word with Mr. Lecuyer later who made the recommendation and encouraged people to speak in French, and yet forgot to make that recommendation to the government.

MR. R. POIRIER: Is that a question?

MR. R. DOERN: No, that's a statement, that I think if you have a complaint you might also complain to the government directly as opposed to the committee, since it's their responsibility, I think, to provide translation services especially since one of their members was encouraging people to address the committee in French, and that obviously would make a requirement of having the services available from the very beginning and yet failed to do so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Lecuyer on a point of order.

MR. G. LECUYER: I think what Mr. Doern says really goes to serve the point. I don't think that he's translated exactly what the article says, but I definitely did invite Francophones - not every one of them - but anyone that would like to, and not every one as he would say. I didn't mention that you must . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a difference of opinion between two members does not constitute a point of order. I would like to get the co-operation of committee members. Order please. This is a question period, we are trying to get to have the witness inform us of his opinions and get explanations on what he has presented.

Mr. Doern, you're a veteran in this House, you should know that you should ask questions and not make statements at the question time.

MR. R. DOERN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm asking Mr. Poirier whether he recognizes that Mr. Lecuyer did make this statement, and perhaps should have made the recommendation to the government having made that recommendation to the Francophone groups.

MR. R. POIRIER: I have not read it, however, I heard you quote that yesterday, I think, or the day before

yesterday to someone. I would agree with Mr. Lecuyer that anyone who would come here and present his brief in English would be sort of missing the boat. However, I think Mr. Lecuyer was wise in saying that, because Francophones take it for granted that they would have to speak in English in order to be heard. People would not even think of asking for simultaneous translation. They will take for granted that they would speak in English. Having spoken with a lot of people who have prepared briefs to present here, the first question was, are you going to present it in French or English? Well, I don't know, if I present in French, nobody's going to understand, and that's when people who don't understand have time to go to the washroom and stuff. I think M. Lecuyer was wise in suggesting that in the newspaper, because Francophones would take it for granted that they have to speak in English. It took Mr. Forest to ask for a translation.

MR. R. DOERN: I think you would also recognize that when people are, of course, speaking in French that the people who don't speak French, who are not bilingual, they too would like the ability or the capacity to understand, and would like to also have the services available to them.

MR. R. POIRIER: That's what the little green machines are for.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I'm not totally familiar with your group, and I gather that you said that there was funding from the Secretary of State.

MR. R. POIRIER: Yes, I did.

MR. R. DOERN: Could you indicate to me how much funding there is on an annual basis?

MR. R. POIRIER: \$1.50 a head.

MR. R. DOERN: I see.

MR. R. POIRIER: \$93,000 actually.

MR. R. DOERN: I don't understand what the head is, that's based on what population?

MR. R. POIRIER: It's because I'm tired. We are getting about \$1.50 per Franco-Manitoban, and it's no recipe, it's my statement. We get \$93,000, I believe, from the Secretary of State.

MR. R. DOERN: And that's based on a count of some 60,000.

MR. R. POIRIER: It's not based on any count; it's based on services that we offer.

MR. R. DOERN: I see, it's unrelated to the population.

MR. R. POIRIER: No, well, yes and no, I imagine. You'd have to ask the Secretary of State how they arrived to that formula.

MR. R. DOERN: In other words, you're not providing a population figure and they have a formula.

MR. R. POIRIER: Yes.

MR. R. DOERN: Is yours a full-time position?

MR. R. POIRIER: I am not paid. I do not work for the Fédération; I am the president; it's an unpaid job. We have co-ordinators that help different parents' committees.

MR. R. DOERN: When we talk about French Language Services in Manitoba, do you think it would be a strong position to argue that if there were more Francophones in Manitoba, they should have more services or if there were fewer Francophones over a decade or a generation that there should be fewer services?

MR. R. POIRIER: Reminds me of Mr. Lyon's comment, I think, that you can be a little pregnant. I mean I don't see the relation. If you're going to give French services, what do you do when they die off, you cut some out? I don't understand really. I don't understand the point that you're trying to make.

MR. R. DOERN: Supposing that the population of Franco-Manitobans doubled in the next 20 years due to immigration, or whatever, and that, instead of being the fourth largest group, they became the second largest group in Manitoba. Would you think that, therefore, you could make the argument that more services should be provided?

MR. R. POIRIER: You don't have more services provided, you just have more people utilizing the services that are provided. I don't understand.

MR. R. DOERN: So how would you . . .

MR. R. POIRIER: I mean, if you go back to chickens, because you have more chickens do you use more kinds of feed? You just use more of it, that's all.

MR. R. DOERN: The point is this, how would you arrive at the provision of services? I mean, you just pick something out of the air and it doesn't matter whether people decline in population, or increase in population, you just have some kind of an absolute formula that you draw on?

MR. R. POIRIER: That's exactly the same reasoning that we had for seven years for the school in Ile des Chênes. Every two months some expert comes out with a decrease in population, so we don't have it. Then, all of a sudden, the French reappear; it's approved. Then they disappear, again, so we lose it, and that's exactly the same reasoning. It's the same thing as I was telling Mr. Lyon before, you make it sound as if it's entrenched it's forever, and it's not true, we both know that. We all know that, it's not true. I don't know what case you're trying to build, it's really really a weak case and it's got to be pushed forward with a lot of paranoia, otherwise, it wouldn't get anywhere.

MR. R. DOERN: Would you go to a school board if there was one French family living in an area and demand that a high school be built?

MR. R. POIRIER: Are you serious?

MR. R. DOERN: Yes, of course. You seem to say that these population figures are irrelevant. I'm saying, would you go with that theory to a school board on the basis of a couple of people and ask for a school to be built, just because of some sort of vague principle that you hold?

MR. R. POIRIER: So we're supposing now. Let's just be realistic instead of supposing. I can give you an example of a one pupil. I have one daughter in Grade 4; our school does not provide Français classes. We did not ask for the school board to build a school for my girl, instead we checked around, there was a Français school seven miles away. We asked our school board to put her on a bus that was going to St. Norbert anyway, to see if she could go to Noel-Ritchot; they said, yes, the problem was solved. We didn't build a school for her. I'm sure the government wouldn't build a school for one English either. I don't understand.

MR. R. DOERN: My point is this, Mr. Chairman, and that is that if you are asking for services for schools, for positions in the government, for whatever, it surely must be, to some extent, related to demand or need and that must be related to the number of people in the area, in the case of geography; or the number of people that come into a government office, in the case of a demand for a service. Surely you recognize that.

MR. R. POIRIER: You are skipping one, a right; not only a demand, a need, but also a right. It is a right; the courts have said it. Now, in terms of demand and need, these things can be negotiated

MR. R. DOERN: If you would have a general principle, if we agree on a general principle and then we apply it to a specific situation, then it would seem to me that you would elicit a particular result. In other words, if we were going to provide teachers and you had 100 students, you might say, hire five teachers; and if you had double the number of students you might double the number of teachers.

MR. R. POIRIER: Not necessarily.

MR. R. DOERN: Well would you cut the number of teachers?

MR. R. POIRIER: If you have five grades with 10 pupils in each, and it doubles to 20 pupils each, you don't hire five extra teachers, you just put more people in the same class.

MR. R. DOERN: Are you a teacher yourself?

MR. R. POIRIER: No, sir.

MR. R. DOERN: Do you, or do you not, recognize that the number of people, or the demand by people, is a factor in the provision of services?

MR. R. POIRIER: The question is do I believe that?

MR. R. DOERN: Yes.

MR. R. POIRIER: If it's a factor, of course it's a factor. Who's ever said it wasn't?

MR. R. DOERN: Fine, thank you. The other thing I wanted to ask you is whether or not you think that conditions now are any different than they were in 1870, in relation to the Francophone community, or do you think that there has been any change in the makeup of Manitoba in the past 113 years? For example, if we go back to 1870, at that time about half the population was English speaking, and about half the population was French speaking, whereas now, I guess, about 8 percent of the population is French speaking and some 92 percent isn't. Do you think that is a factor or not at all?

MR. R. POIRIER: Mr. Doern, in 1870, when it was about 50 percent were French and 50 percent were English, a deal was struck, and they said that they would respect each other, and they did that for 20 years. Then the English were a majority and they said, sorry guys; then they waited another 20 years and they said, close your schools; and now we are debating whether or not we're going to give us back all our candies. That's what we're debating; not whether or not we will give them back. We've agreed, or the courts have said, give them back and this government has decided to give them back. The question is, how much? And are they the same candies?

It's not a question of giving them back; that's agreed upon. Of course the society has changed since 1870, of course there are more services, but then in 1870 the population could speak to their government in French; they took it for granted then.

MR. R. DOERN: I wonder if you could explain something for me. There has been a great deal of talk and suggestion, and this is something that I would like to have your candid views on and maybe an illustration or two. It has been said over and over and over again in these committee hearings that Franco-Manitobans have suffered in the past 90 years, in Manitoba. Now I'm not a Franco-Manitoban, but I grew up in North Winnipeg and I'm quite familiar with the Ukrainian and Polish and German communities. My family came here in 1891 and I know that it isn't easy being a Ukrainian-Canadian; and I know that people who come from that background have had to suffer slights of name-calling; they have listened to jokes made at their expense, in various cycles they seem to come up; they have had to change their names to get employment; they have suffered job discrimination; they have felt that they were second-class citizens. The same applies to Polish Canadians; the same applies to German Canadians. I am more familiar with some of the suffering and some of the problems faced by people of German descent; go to a theatre, look at your TV - all the time. I know what some people went through in World War I and World War II, who were of German descent. I know of people who fought in the war and in spite of that were called Nazis and so on, very common word used in reference to people of German descent.

I know how people from various ethnic groups have suffered, and I want you to tell me how French

Canadians have suffered, whether there's anything that distinguishes their suffering from the suffering of any other group. If we pick any religion, any ethnic group, any cultural group, based on color, or creed, religion, the accident of birth because, by accident, you are born in one community and, by accident, I am born in another. I want to know what special burden you feel that you carry that is different than the burden that everybody else carries.

MR. R. POIRIER: Knowing all that you know, Mr. Doern, I don't understand why you take the position that you do. Knowing of all that suffering and knowing of all these denials and knowing of all these things, why are you not ready to recognize that maybe we should do something to fix things up? The difference between all the ethnic groups and the French community is simply, and that's a fact of history, an accident of birth - call it whatever you want - the French at one time in Manitoba had rights. These rights were taken from them. They are now maybe somewhat being given back, and knowing everything that you know, I'm really surprised that you cannot support that as wholeheartedly as you are fighting it.

MR. R. DOERN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I believe that I am supporting the re-institution of The Manitoba Act of 1870.

MR. R. POIRIER: Could have fooled me.

MR. R. DOERN: Sure, because you haven't heard what I've been saying. You've heard what La Liberté says, but you don't know what I say.

MR. R. POIRIER: I also read English.

MR. R. DOERN: Good. Have you read my speeches?

MR. R. POIRIER: Some of them, yes, but then I stopped.

MR. R. DOERN: Right. I haven't read any of yours, but I have said repeatedly that I am for the restoration of the 1870 Manitoba Act, which guaranteed the rights to speak French in the courts and the Legislature and the translation of statutes. I have said that. I am for the provision of services in French where a sufficient need or demand can be ensured, but I am not for entrenching hundreds of positions in the Constitution of Canada. Does that strike you as a reasonable position, or a terrible position?

MR. R. POIRIER: I didn't listen to everything you were saying, I'm a little tired, I've been at this for awhile.

You are ready to entrench selectively, you have decided what the services were in 1870, and that's what you're ready to entrench; you have decided that.

MR. R. DOERN: I decide for myself. Who decides for you?

MR. R. POIRIER: You are giving me the right to talk here as long as Mr. Forest comes first in French and you're giving me the right to be a criminal in French. I can go to court in French, yippee!

MR. R. DOERN: You can also get elected and come and serve in the Legislature and make your case there.

MR. R. POIRIER: And then what would you call me, or what would other members call me?

MR. R. DOERN: Another MLA.

MR. R. POIRIER: I've heard other terms being used on Francophone members.

MR. R. DOERN: Are you familiar with Larry Desjardins, who has been a member of this Assembly for over 20 years and has repeatedly and insistently and never tiringly made the case for Franco-Manitobans? Have you heard of him, or do you know him?

MR. R. POIRIER: I've heard of him.

MR. R. DOERN: Do you respect him?

MR. R. POIRIER: Yes, I do.

MR. R. DOERN: Do you think he is a champion of French Canadians?

MR. R. POIRIER: My gosh, he's pretty big, I had better say yes. I mean you're asking me for value judgments. Who is on trial here?

MR. R. DOERN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I asked you a question which I'm not sure you can answer, but I have asked it and I ask you how - you haven't given me an illustration - you've simply said that certain things were guaranteed in 1870 and that was that. I'm just asking you whether you feel that - I mean, we continually hear references and have heard references to the suffering of the Franco-Manitoban since the 1890s and I'm simply trying to ask you if you can shed any light on that statement. I say that all ethnic groups suffer and maybe Anglo-Saxons suffer as well. Anglo-Saxons are the ones that get most of the shots in our society because they appear to be on top, but how do you feel that there has been suffering and injustice committed upon the Franco-Manitobans which would distinguish them from any other group in our society?

MR. R. POIRIER: I have listened to these different ethnic groups come before the committee. I've not heard one of them ask for entrenchment. The reason they are not asking is because they did not have 1870, 1890 and 1916. However, what they are saying is, we understand what the French community is going through, because they have gone through and are going through the same thing as we are. For those who have not chosen assimilation, as I think I would deduct, you have, Mr. Doern.

If people choose assimilation, then there is no problem, but for those who have not chosen complete assimilation, there is a problem. I think the ethnic groups can understand that and that's why they are coming forward and supporting our position. I don't understand why you don't understand it.

MR. R. DOERN: The largest German-Canadian Association in Manitoba is the German Society, Flora

and Charles; they have a large membership.

MR. R. POIRIER: Are they federally funded?

MR. R. DOERN: No, they are not; that's my point.

MR. R. POIRIER: I'm just joking.

MR. R. DOERN: They have 1,000 families that belong to their association, that's probably about 4,000 people. They don't get a penny from the feds, other than their language program, I think they get \$3,500.00. They don't get operating costs; they don't get capital costs. In one particular instance they get \$3,000.00. The Franco-Manitoban Society gets \$650,000 a year. There are many Francophone groups in Manitoba that get extensive federal funding and get provincial funding.

I'm simply saying to you. If the Francophone community is going to be vibrant and vital and survive it seems to me that, to a large extent, they have to be self-sufficient. All these federal grants and so on, in one sense helps, but in another way is very harmful because there's a very heavy reliance on federal money. This reliance is not found in any other group. I'm simply saying to you, if you were going to rally your people, wouldn't you better off doing it internally, rather than going to Ottawa, or going to the Provincial Government for assistance?

MR. R. POIRIER: How much money do you believe the Federal Government has given Shell Canada for exploration?

MR. R. DOERN: God knows, millions and millions, I couldn't guess.

MR. R. POIRIER: Isn't this awful, they're giving \$600,000 to a community in Manitoba; how awful?

MR. R. DOERN: Well, are they giving that to the Polish community?

The other question I wanted to ask you is you seem to fear a referendum.

MR. R. POIRIER: I don't fear it, I know the result.

MR. R. DOERN: What is the result?

MR. R. POIRIER: It's negative.

MR. R. DOERN: Negative, and what about Mr. Penner's poll. Mr. Penner has a poll in his pocket that . . .

MR. R. POIRIER: Good for him.

MR. R. DOERN: . . . that shows 70 percent favour the government proposals.

MR. R. POIRIER: You have done a really really good job of scaring off, I would say, a whole bunch of that 70 percent, if there was 70 percent, but not with reasoning. You didn't scare them off with reasoning.

MR. R. DOERN: What is your estimate of public support for the government proposals, either now or when they

were originally put?

MR. R. POIRIER: If you give me a grant I will ask Goldfarb to take a poll; I mean, I don't know.

MR. R. DOERN: Don't you feel that it is your responsibility, as is the responsibility of anyone else who supports your view, to try to make your case to the public as well as to the government?

MR. R. POIRIER: I think the Franco-Manitoban Society has been ready to meet with anyone who wanted to discuss intelligently on this issue. I would be ready to discuss this issue with anyone who wants to discuss it intelligently, but anyone who wants to use the community for other purposes and to really hit the Free Press quite often, then I'm really less interested.

MR. R. DOERN: Do you think you have a good case?

MR. R. POIRIER: Actually I think I have absolutely no case, that's why I came here. Of course, I think I have a good case.

MR. R. DOERN: What is your case? Essentially what is your case that you make to the public?

MR. R. POIRIER: Put this in the newspaper. Tell them about 1870, 1890, 1916 and, I think, reasonable people would understand it. People who would spend too much time listening to you I doubt would understand it because then you start talking guillotine, again, and entrenchment forever, and the big stone, and stuff like that, and then they will not understand.

MR. R. DOERN: Well, Mr. Poirier I will avoid the temptation of striking back. I will just listen to what you say, but I simply say to you . . .

MR. R. POIRIER: Mr. Doern, I am striking back; you started this.

MR. R. DOERN: Yes. If you have a strong case, and if you think you have a strong case, you have to make that case to the public.

MR. R. POIRIER: I don't agree.

MR. R. DOERN: I beg your pardon?

MR. R. POIRIER: I don't agree.

MR. R. DOERN: You don't agree. You think your going to make that case in private to the government and ask them to make certain provisions and get it in so that no one can get it out, and there can't be public discussion or public debate on that issue. Do you think that's a good way to proceed?

MR. R. POIRIER: Mr. Doern, I am a person who makes my living; I work on different organizations. I come before this committee, I'm not paid to do it, no matter what you think. Nobody has bought me; I own my own pants. I've told you what I thought and now you are asking me to go out and convince the public at large

when you are paid what? \$40,000, \$50,000 a year.

MR. R. DOERN: No, \$30,000.00.

MR. R. POIRIER: \$30,000 a year full time, plus with a couple of ads in the paper you can pick up thousands and thousands of dollars, and you want me to compete with you. I have a living to make Mr. Doern, you're obviously enjoying making yours, but I'm paying for it.

MR. R. DOERN: You seem to have a problem.

MR. R. POIRIER: Yes I do.

MR. R. DOERN: You have a problem with the fact that somebody can have a campaign and ask people to support it and ask people to contribute. You have a problem with that, you don't have a problem going to the government for a grant, but you have a problem with voluntary contributions do you?

MR. R. POIRIER: I have a problem with the way the money is collected. It's not collected in a manner which I believe is honest. It's collected on paranoia, that's what I don't agree with. If you want to state the facts and, in a sympathetic way, and collect \$20,000 go ahead and do it.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I . . .

MR. R. POIRIER: I'm speaking of the community looking after itself. Have you ever heard of an organization called Francophone?

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I simply say to Mr. Poirier, in conclusion.

MR. R. POIRIER: I guess he hasn't.

MR. R. DOERN: I simply say to you, in conclusion, that if you think you have a strong case it is your responsibility to persuade the government and the public of the merits of your case. That is your responsibility, no one's going to do it for you. I believe the government has made a bad agreement; I believe that that has been badly handled; I believe that that will do harm to our province; I believe that that will not help the Francophone community, the original agreement or the present agreement; I believe this is not helpful, but is harmful and that is my position. I hold it honestly, whether you believe it or not doesn't concern me. That is the position that I hold, and that is the position that I have made, and that is the position that I will make. So I'm simply saying to you that I am not looking through anyone to sell my position; I'm not going to anybody for a government grant; I'm not asking for sympathy. I believe in what I am doing and I intend to fight for my position. You have to fight for your position and the people who support you have to fight for your position and the public will decide.

Ultimately history will decide, but the public will decide which is the right position. You have the responsibility to defend your position to the best of your ability, which is what I am doing.

MR. R. POIRIER: I would understand why you would not go to the government - you are the government

- and you have a privileged position in which to sell your ideas. You are a public figure, and you abuse your position. You've abused your position in order to sell your ideas. I can understand it; I can disagree with it. I can ask myself why you're doing it, and that is my right also, but you have a privileged position in which to do it. Don't talk to me about grants when I'm paying you to do yours.

MR. R. DOERN: Well, you know, you have Mr. Lecuyer on your side, and other people . . .

MR. R. POIRIER: I'm paying him to be there, too.

MR. R. DOERN: That's right, they are your champions and they are making the case to the best of their ability.

MR. R. POIRIER: Who is they?

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Lecuyer and others who share your identical position. You are not without friends.

MR. R. POIRIER: I know I am not; otherwise, I wouldn't be here.

MR. R. DOERN: I thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Doern.
Mr. Scott.

MR. D. SCOTT: I think this gentleman has been here long enough tonight. I am going to . . .

MR. R. POIRIER: If it's a shortie, go ahead.

MR. D. SCOTT: . . . thank him very, very much for coming. If it's a shortie, okay. En français, connais-tu de aucun pay dans le monde où il y a des langues qui sont les langues de la législature et les langues de les cours qui ne sont pas les langues officielles.

MR. R. POIRIER: Je ne pourrais pas répondre ça. Vraiment je ne suis pas un expert dans ce domaine-là. Et puis si je m'aventurais là dedans, et puis j'étais prouvé faux, je serais obligé d'avalier mes mots pour le restant de mes jours. Ça fait que j'aime autant pas trop m'aventurer dans ce domaine-là.

MR. D. SCOTT: Pour ton information, M. Poirier, il y aucun pays dans le monde dans l'ouest, Western world, où il y a une langue qui est une langue de la législature et des cours où cette langue ne sont pas aussi officielle.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Speak into the microphone.

MR. D. SCOTT: . . . the microphone.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Poirier.

MR. R. POIRIER: Thank you for hearing me and I will go home and rest my chip. Goodnight.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Very well put.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Our next presentation: George Marshall; next one, Mrs. B. MacKenzie; Mrs. Friesen;

next, Pat Maltman; Mrs. B. Holst; Mr. W.D. Jervis.
Paul Fort.

Please proceed, Mr. Fort.

MR. P. FORT: Merci. Je m'appelle Paul Fort. Je suis président des Éducateurs Franco-Manitobains et à ce temps-ci, j'aimerais vous présenter Linda Asper qui est présidente de la Manitoba Teachers' Society du Manitoba.

Les Éducateurs Franco-Manitobains est une association, une affiliation à la Manitoba Teachers' Society.

Les Éducateurs Franco-Manitobains, agence affiliée à la Manitoba Teachers' Society, apprécie l'occasion de faire présentation, au nom de cette association, au comité législatif sur la proposition d'amendement à l'article 23 de la constitution canadienne.

Cette présentation portera sur les aspects suivants:

- (1) les Éducateurs Franco-Manitobains: l'agence et son rôle
- (2) l'éducation française au Manitoba: un aperçu historique
- (3) l'article 23: la position des Éducateurs Franco-Manitobains.

EDUCATEURS FRANCO-MANITOBAINS: L'ASSOCIATION ET SON RÔLE

Les Éducateurs Franco-Manitobains regroupent les enseignants et les enseignantes dont la langue d'enseignement est le français. Ces professeurs oeuvrent dans les écoles françaises et les écoles d'immersion de la province. En plus d'offrir aux professeurs des services professionnels en français, les Éducateurs doivent prévoir l'accès aux services en français dans les institutions ou organismes reliés à l'éducation. Les Éducateurs offrent aussi un terrain d'échange entre les professeurs et la population franco-manitobaine en travaillant avec les organismes politiques, éducatifs et culturels. C'est donc dans le but d'atteindre les objectifs de leur association que les Éducateurs Franco-Manitobains viennent appuyer la proposition d'amendements à l'article 23 selon l'entente convenue entre le gouvernement fédéral, le gouvernement provincial et la Société Franco-Manitobaine.

L'ÉDUCATION FRANÇAISE AU MANITOBA

UN APERÇU HISTORIQUE:

De 1870 à 1890 il existait, au Manitoba, un système d'écoles publiques confessionnelles. L'enseignement dans la grande majorité des écoles catholiques se faisait en français. En 1890, lorsque l'anglais devint la seule langue officielle du Manitoba, le gouvernement adopta un projet de loi créant un système d'écoles publiques. L'abolition du financement publique aux écoles confessionnelles eut pour effet de réduire considérablement l'usage du français comme langue d'enseignement. De 1896 à 1916, un règlement permettait de nouveau l'enseignement bilingue, même dans les écoles publiques, là où dix élèves ou plus parlaient une autre langue que l'anglais. En 1916, la loi Thornton désignait l'anglais la seule langue officielle d'enseignement dans les écoles publiques au Manitoba.

En 1967, l'adoption du projet de loi 59 permettait l'utilisation du français comme langue d'enseignement

jusqu'à 50% du temps. C'est en 1970, avec l'adoption du projet de loi 113, que le français et l'anglais ont de nouveau été reconnus comme langues officielles d'enseignement au Manitoba.

SITUATION ACTUELLE:

Bien que cette loi 113 a permis aux francophones d'avoir accès à des classes françaises, il reste que durant plus d'un demi-siècle, l'absence d'une éducation publique en français a fortement contribué à l'assimilation rapide chez les francophones. Les professeurs oeuvrant en école française en 1983 font partie d'un système encore débutant, à l'intérieur duquel il est nécessaire de contrecarrer les effets de cette assimilation. De plus, ces professeurs exercent leur métier sans avoir accès à tous les services de base en français.

Nous reconnaissons que le projet de loi 113 a tenté d'enrayer les injustices envers les francophones dans le secteur de l'éducation. Il reste toutefois que bon nombre de francophones au Manitoba n'ont pas encore accès à l'école française, de la maternelle à la douzième année, même "là où le nombre le justifie" (l'article 23(1) de la constitution canadienne). Nous déplorons que les Franco-Manitobains, l'accès à l'école française a été et demeure toujours au coeur des luttes.

POLITIQUES EN EDUCATION FRANCAISE

La Manitoba Teachers' Society, association qui regroupe les 12,000 enseignants de la province, dont les Educateurs Franco-Manitobains sont une agence, a adopté en 1976 un énoncé de politique sur l'éducation française:

(E6.08) "L'école française est celle qui atteint le mieux l'objectif de préserver et de faire épanouir la langue et la culture des élèves francophones."

De plus, la M.T.S. favorise l'établissement d'écoles françaises administrées par les commissions scolaires du Manitoba. Ces écoles utilisent le français comme langue d'enseignement, de communication et d'administration. Elles créent une ambiance favorable au développement de la langue et de la culture françaises. Elles offrent un cours d'anglais, selon les dispositions de la loi scolaire, afin d'assurer que les élèves acquièrent un bilinguisme fonctionnel.

En 1969, la Manitoba Teachers' Society a adopté une politique (B4.04) reconnaissant le droit des parents de faire instruire leurs enfants dans la langue officielle de leur choix. Selon cette politique, la Manitoba Teachers' Society reconnaît les besoins de la communauté francophone en matière d'éducation et fait valoir auprès des groupes appropriés la nécessité d'avoir les services en français pour cette clientèle. De plus, durant les débats constitutionnels en 1981, l'association a endossé le principe général que les droits des citoyens doivent être assurés par la constitution plutôt que par législation. Ce même principe s'applique à toute la question de l'amendement de l'article 23. Afin de faciliter la survivance culturelle de la communauté franco-manitobaine, les droits de cette dernière doivent être enchassés constitutionnellement.

L'AMENDEMENT DE L'ARTICLE 23: POSITION DES EDUCATEURS FRANCO-MANITOBAINS

Les Educateurs Franco-Manitobains appuient en principe, la proposition initiale pour l'amendement à l'article 23 de la constitution canadienne. Nous

reconnaissons que les étapes nécessaires à la consultation de la communauté francophone ont été franchies. Il est évident que les besoins et les droits des Manitobains ont été judicieusement considérés.

Nous portons votre attention aux raisons pour lesquelles nous favorisons la proposition initiale d'amendement. Selon l'article 23 de la Loi du Manitoba (1870), le Manitoba est entré en confédération en ayant un statut bilingue. Depuis l'adoption de la Loi sur les langues officielles (1890), l'anglais est devenu la seule langue officielle de cette province. Par retombée, les francophones ont été entièrement lésés dans leurs droits pendant un siècle. En 1970, la Cour Suprême du Canada a déclaré inconstitutionnel cette loi manitobaine sur les langues officielles et elle a soutenu la loi du Manitoba (1870). Suite à l'adoption de la constitution canadienne en 1981, le gouvernement manitobain a dû établir des mécanismes permettant la mise en vigueur de l'article 23. Toutefois, nous avons raison de croire que l'article 23 n'est pas respecté dans son ensemble. Le fait même qu'il existe une situation telle que celle du cas Bilodeau démontre clairement que les intentions de l'article 23 ne sont pas respectées. Il est essentiel que les amendements à l'article 23 tels que présentés dans la proposition initiale soient enchassés constitutionnellement afin de reconnaître aux francophones leurs justes droits et d'apporter les précisions nécessaires afin d'éviter le chaos juridique qui s'impose.

Nous sommes aussi en faveur des éléments de la proposition initiale qui ont trait à la traduction des documents. Selon l'article 23, maintenant en vigueur, tout projet de loi doit être proclamé dans les deux langues officielles. Les statuts adoptés avant 1979 doivent aussi être traduits. La résolution initiale est très généreuse en permettant des échéances des plus raisonnables et en limitant le nombre de statuts à être traduits. De par cette proposition, les gouvernements seront en mesure de respecter leurs responsabilités sociales, juridiques et législatives tout en évitant des procès ardu et coûteux.

Suite à la présentation de la proposition initiale pour l'amendement à l'article 23, le gouvernement a annoncé son intention de déposer des amendements additionnels. Nous déplorons le fait que ces amendements soient présentés en dépit de l'entente qui forme la base de la proposition initiale. Il n'y a aucun doute que ces modifications auraient des effets très néfastes. La proposition initiale accorde un statut égal au français comme à l'anglais et précise la mise en application de l'article 23 quant aux services et à la traduction des statuts. Les amendements additionnels auraient l'effet de supprimer le statut officiel du français et de réduire les services tel que stipulés dans la proposition initiale. Nous demandons au gouvernement de s'en tenir à sa proposition initiale et de retirer les nouveaux amendements qui remettent en question le statut du français et de l'anglais, langues officielles du Manitoba.

CONCLUSION

Comme il a été indiqué dans cette présentation, nous croyons fermement que les droits des francophones doivent être enchassés dans la constitution plutôt que d'être déterminés par les assemblées législatives ou par les cours. Nous croyons que nos élèves

francophones doivent pouvoir être à l'aise dans une société qui reconnaît, à part égale, leur langue et culture et qui accepte le statut officiel de leur langue dans le domaine public. Les professeurs francophones et les élèves qui se prévalent d'une éducation dans leur langue maternelle voudront certainement faire appel aux services publics disponibles en français.

Nous appuyons entièrement l'amendement tel qu'il a été proposé par l'entente négociée. Nous nous opposons à tout changement qui risquerait de modifier, de quelle façon que ce soit, l'intention initiale de l'article 23 (Loi du Manitoba 1870). La première proposition est tout à fait juste et raisonnable. Tous les Manitobains et Canadiens sauraient bénéficier d'une société qui reconnaît les droits de ses peuples fondateurs et qui encourage l'unité parmi ses citoyens.

Nous vous remercions de nous avoir accordé l'occasion de faire cette présentation. Nous encourageons les partis impliqués à mener les débats à bonne fin. Merci.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Fort. Are there any questions? Thank you again, Mr. Fort, for the presentation on behalf of your society.

Maryse Birolini Bryan is our next presentation. Maryse Birolini Bryan. Merle Hartlin. Merle Hartlin. Vic Savino, Vic Savino. Clarence Morris, Clarence Morris. Linda Archer, Linda Archer. Fred Cameron, Fred Cameron.

Mr. Lecuyer.

MR. G. LECUYER: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if you would ask if there's anyone from the list who is here tonight that would come up for presentation? It may be that you will be calling the whole list, because we're not getting this fairly far down, and some of the people may not have expected their turn to come up tonight. So, maybe you should simply proceed by asking if anyone . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: My problem is, Mr. Lecuyer, if I ask for volunteers, I'm liable to get half a dozen, then how do I pick the first one?

MR. G. LECUYER: We'll pick the first one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, is there anyone in the audience prepared to make a presentation? Come forward, please. Your name, please.

MR. J. TAILLEFER: Jean-Marie Taillefer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you on the list?

MR. J. TAILLEFER: Yes, 37th.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Mr. Taillefer, do you wish to present it in English or in French?

MR. J. TAILLEFER: Both languages.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, start and proceed.

MR. J. TAILLEFER: Mesdames et messieurs, ladies and gentlemen. Let me quote probably the greatest writer in the English language, William Shakespeare in

the Merchant of Venice: "The quality of mercy is not strained. It droppeth as a gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed. It blesseth him that gives and him that takes."

Mercy is defined in Webster's Dictionary as "compassion and forbearance shown to one subject to one's power." These lines should guide the deliberations on the proposed amendments to the Constitution, because they apply so pertinently to the results of its adoption. Everyone would gain by such a change, while making amends for some of the injustices perpetrated in the past.

If one returns to the founding of our Federation, we find that the concept of the new country seemed quite clear in the mind of most of the founding fathers, particularly John A. Macdonald, its first and probably one of its most successful Prime Ministers and his French-Canadian acolyte, Georges-Etienne Cartier, who stated:

"The whole difficulty will be in the manner of the rendering of justice to the minorities. In Upper Canada, the Roman Catholics will be in the minority, in Lower Canada it will be the Protestants, whilst in the Maritime provinces the two communions will equalize each other.

"Is it possible then to suppose that the general government or the Provincial Governments can become guilty of arbitrary acts? What would be the result even supposing that one of the Provincial Governments should attempt it? Measures of such a character would undoubtedly be repudiated by the mass of the people. There is no reason to fear then that a minority will ever be deprived of its rights."

The notion of a bilingual country, although severely repudiated a few years later in New Brunswick, was strengthened by the passing of The Manitoba Act of 1870 which made English and French the official languages of Manitoba. It is interesting to note that The Manitoba Act passed in the Canadian Parliament with a majority of 120 votes to 11.

Par la suite, la population manitobaine de 1871, qui était composée d'un nombre à peu près égal de personnes de langue française et de personnes de langue anglaise, reçut un système confessionnel d'éducation. Ce système appuyait les intentions premières des Pères de la Confédération. Toutefois, suite aux changements démographiques qui furent occasionnés par l'arrivée massive d'immigrants anglophones de l'Ontario, la population de langue française devint une minorité dans la province qu'elle avait découverte et qu'elle avait aidée à peupler. Durant la décennie de 1880 à 1890, plusieurs événements envenimèrent les relations franco-anglaises au niveau national: les événements dans le nord-ouest et la rébellion de 1885 qui se termina avec la pendaison de Louis Riel, la question des terres des Jésuites et la création du "Equal Rights Association" dont le porte-parole le plus acharné était Dalton McCarthy.

Ce dernier se rend au Manitoba en 1889 pour mener une campagne contre le catholicisme et le Canadien français. W. L. Morton écrit, en parlant de la question scolaire au Manitoba:

"The question was not to be debated quietly, however, for on August 5, 1889, Dalton McCarthy made a fiery anti-Catholic speech at Portage la

Prairie. The Honourable Joseph Martin was on the platform and responding to the excitement of the meeting, pledged himself and by implication, the government, to the abolition not only of the dual system of schools, but of the official use of the French language in Manitoba."

Ainsi, le plan Martin se réalise au début de l'année 1890. À l'exception de quelques Anglophones qui appuyèrent la position des Francophones, dont un était Rodmond Roblin, qui allait devenir plus tard premier ministre du Manitoba, le vote sur les lois qui abolissait le français au Manitoba et qui mettait fin au système confessionnel en éducation divisa l'Assemblée législative sur des lignes "raciales".

La clémence, qui aurait profité à tous, faisait place à l'intolérance. La majorité s'était affirmée de façon rigide. Morton décrit très bien la situation:

The school question is concluded to the satisfaction of the British and Protestant majority in Manitoba."

Il semblerait, toutefois, que cette démonstration de force allait satisfaire les exigences les plus primitives de l'intolérance et qu'en 1897, le compromis Laurier-Greenway ouvrait la porte à une rectification des injustices de 1890. Il permettait:

When ten of the pupils in any school speak the French language or any language other than English as the native language, the teaching of such pupils shall be conducted in French or any other language and English upon the bilingual system."

Although Laurier's "sunny way" did not totally rectify the injustices of 1890, it did permit the use of French, as well as any other language, as a language of instruction. This was mostly to accommodate the Mennonites who were promised religious freedom and church schools by Order-in-Council of the Federal Government in 1873. The new agreement permitted a flourishing of bilingual schools. This situation was to exist until 1916, although the winds of intolerance were already blowing the Free Press as early as 1912. Ramsay Cook describes the campaign in "The Politics of John Dafeo":

In the hope of driving a wedge into the political façade of the local government, Dafeo attacked on every count and with particular vigour. Of particular interest was the school system. With no further fear of embarrassing Laurier, the Free Press began a concerted attack to end multilingual schools in the province. These schools were not limited to the French-Canadian minority; every national group were permitted to use its own language as well as being required to learn English".

With the election of the Norris Government in 1915, the campaign heightened. In 1916, a special report on bilingual schools was compiled by the school inspectors. Its purpose was to justify the abolition of the bilingual school system. It is interesting to read, in this report, that out of a total enrolment of 100,963 in Manitoba schools in June 1915; 7,393 children were attending French bilingual schools; 2,814 pupils were in German bilingual schools and 6,513 pupils were enrolled in Ruthenian and Polish bilingual schools for a total of 16,720 pupils in all bilingual schools.

During the inspection described in the report, only the competence in the English language was tested

and this seemed to have been conducted in a very haphazard way. Here are some of the comments written into the report by some of the inspectors.

Ste. Agathe, No. 974. 51 French, 13 English, a graded school. "Weak as might be expected in lower grades; fair in higher grades." Lang.

Clover Leaf No. 1638. 10 Poles, 13 English. "The smaller ones are learning rapidly and the larger ones speak fluently." It seems that bilingualism is linked to size by the comments of this inspector.

Portage la Prairie. 39 Ruthenians, 5 Austrians, 3 Germans, 5 Poles, 2 French half-breeds and 3 Canadians. "The 57 children in this room are all in Grade 1. Those who have attended regularly from Easter can now form sentences correctly and readily. The others can name objects and can form some simple sentences correctly."

He goes on. In Miss Muriel Ireland's room in the same school there are 23 English-speaking children, 11 Ruthenians and 1 French pupil. The Ruthenian pupils head the class each month. This is Grade 6.

St. Jean Baptiste North No. 939. 25 French. "None of the children in this school can converse at all." Lang. The death of the bilingual schools was justified, in great part, on the findings of this incomplete and biased report.

The Act was passed in early 1916. R.S. Thornton, Minister of Education responsible for this piece of legislation declared in the Legislature: "The first essential to an individual's progress in any land is to know the language of the country. In an English-speaking country, a knowledge of English is more necessary than the knowledge of mathematics."

Le vote se fit sur des bases linguistiques, sauf pour T.D. Ferley (Gimli) et F.Y. Newton (Roblin) qui s'opposèrent aussi à la loi.

Il faut, cependant, situer la période dans un contexte historique. C'est pendant la première Grande Guerre que le "gingoisme" anglais est à son plus fort et la question du service militaire divise le pays.

Les résultats immédiats furent désastreux pour les Mennonites qui ne se plièrent pas à cette nouvelle loi et mirent sur pied des écoles libres. Le gouvernement riposta en déclarant ces écoles inadéquates et nomma des syndicats officiels qui s'affairèrent à réintégrer ces écoles au système public. Plusieurs Mennonites s'opposèrent à cette formule et ils durent payer des amendes et, dans certains cas, furent même emprisonnés. En 1921, 2,300 Mennonites quittèrent le Manitoba pour le Mexique et durant la période de 1926 à 1930, 1,770 se sont établis au Paraguay.

Pour les Franco-Manitobains, c'est une période d'adaptation. En 1916, l'Association d'éducation des Canadiens français du Manitoba est fondée. Malgré les interdictions légales, cet organisme devient l'équivalent français du Ministère de l'Éducation. Toutefois, tout le travail accompli par cette association était bénévole.

Plusieurs incidents malheureux marquèrent les relations entre les responsables des écoles publiques dans les milieux français et les représentants du gouvernement, les inspecteurs. Il fallait cacher les livres de français lors de leur arrivée. Dans mon village natal de La Broquerie, un des inspecteurs demanda à une religieuse de descendre le crucifix accroché au mur de la classe. Elle refusa et fit venir un des commissaires qui chasse l'inspecteur de l'école. Ces incidents

envenimèrent les relations entre ces deux groupes linguistiques et religieux.

Cependant, il faudrait ajouter qu'une certaine sympathie existait de la part de certains fonctionnaires au Ministère de l'Éducation face à l'éducation dans les régions françaises était grandement appréciée par ces derniers. Le Sous-ministre de l'éducation durant la majeure partie de cette période, Robert Fletcher, déclarait publiquement:

"Personally, I am much in favour of the children of French parents being taught to read and write the French language."

Mgr. Béliveau dans une lettre à Henri Lacerte, vers les années 1920, stipulera de façon prophétique:

"Certains faits semblent nous justifier de croire que l'opinion s'élargit au sujet des droits des Canadiens français à n'être pas rangés au nombre des Étrangers; il s'agit de vivre assez longtemps pour recueillir les fruits de la résistance organisée, quand le temps sera venu."

Ainsi, plusieurs situations pratiques semblaient aller clairement à la rencontre de la loi scolaire vers la fin des années 1940 et au début des années 1950, l'enseignement du français fut permis à certains niveaux.

La création des grandes unités scolaires en 1958 et la nomination du Juge Alfred Monnin, par le Premier Ministre Duff Roblin, pour présider à la Commission des frontières démontrait une ouverture d'esprit de sa part et de la part de son gouvernement face à la question scolaire. Son gouvernement allait élargir les cadres de l'enseignement en français en 1967 par l'entremise de la loi 59, qui fut accepté à l'unanimité en Chambre manitobaine, à la Législature manitobaine. Le voile de l'intolérance officielle commençait à se lever. Dans le Winnipeg Free Press du 21 octobre 1965, on résumait ainsi un discours présenté à Trois-Rivières par Duff Roblin:

"Premier Duff Roblin of Manitoba said here Wednesday night that in the long run both French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians faced the same fate if they can't get on together - absorption by the United States. Mr. Roblin" - and here I want to certainly emphasize the next few sentences. "Mr. Roblin said Canada must have a new Constitution, not just a patch-up, which would recognize not only individual rights, but also national rights. By national rights, he explained outside the meeting, he meant French and English rights, such as bilingualism in government services and the use of either official language, English or French, as the principle language of instruction in schools."

Dans le secteur éducatif, le gouvernement Schreyer vint compléter le travail commencé par Roblin en 1970 par le passage de la loi 113 qui permettait l'instruction en français tout au long de la journée scolaire, sauf pour les cours d'anglais qui étaient obligatoires à partir de la quatrième année. Cette loi permettait aussi l'enseignement dans d'autres langues acceptées par le Ministère jusqu'à un maximum de 50% de la journée scolaire. La clémence remplaçait l'intolérance. L'honorable Schreyer, lors d'une allocution prononcée au congrès de la Société franco-manitobaine le 6 décembre 1969, déclarait:

"Le Manitoba à notre avis a tout avantage à se donner à se donner un caractère bilingue autant par la parole

que par son visage. Votre gouvernement à cet effet adoptera des politiques favorables au développement bilingue, particulièrement dans les régions à majorité francophone sans négliger pour autant l'aspect culturel pluraliste de notre province. Concrètement, je suis heureux de pouvoir vous annoncer ce soir la création d'un centre culturel à Saint-Boniface pour répondre tout spécialement aux besoins de la communauté francophone du Manitoba. Ce centre culturel sera financé par des octrois du fédéral et du provincial et par le support financier et moral des membres de la Société franco-manitobaine."

MR. CHAIRMAN: I wonder if I can ask the witness how much more he has.

MR. J. TAILLEFER: I have two pages to go.

MR. CHAIRMAN: An extension from the committee? (Agreed). Very well, proceed.

MR. J. TAILLEFER: Mais la question du français comme langue officielle au Manitoba n'était toujours pas réglée. Suite aux démarches entreprises par Georges Forest, la Cour suprême du Canada déclarait la loi de 1890 ultra vires et ce fut le retour à la loi de 1870. Par la suite, Maître Bilodeau entreprit de nouvelles démarches juridiques pour clarifier la portée de l'article 23 de l'Acte du Manitoba. Ceci nous amène à l'entente entre le gouvernement provincial, le gouvernement canadien et la communauté franco-manitobaine de mai 1983. Cette entente résulte en un projet de loi qui me semble tout à fait équitable. Il est maintenant essentiel d'enclôser les droits de la minorité officielle du Manitoba, reconnus dans ce projet de loi, dans la Constitution canadienne si on considère les réalités historiques suivantes. Premièrement, l'histoire du Manitoba telle que nous l'avons vue, démontre qu'il ne faut pas toujours se fier à la bonne volonté des gouvernements pour protéger les droits des minorités. Deuxièmement, si l'entente du mois de mai entre les divers partis (gouvernement provincial et fédéral et la Société franco-manitobaine) est juste, comme semble l'indiquer la plupart des politiciens des deux partis, pourquoi ne pas enclôser les droits inscrits dans le projet de loi qui en découle dans la Constitution canadienne où ils seront à l'abri des débats inspirés par la politique partisane?

As for the opposition to the proposed legislation, I can understand Mr. Doern's "grandstanding," having read his book. I will put my own advice in practice and be merciful.

When it comes to the Opposition Party and especially their leader, the Honourable Sterling Lyon, I have a hard time understanding their position. As I recall, during the constitutional debates at the federal level, Mr. Lyon always supported a legislative approach rather than a judicial one. He insisted that the courts had too much power and this led to American-style republicanism.

On the other hand, the position taken by the Conservative Party during the last Session, the constant obstruction, seemed planned to have the whole matter decided by the Supreme Court of Canada. It is also difficult to understand the stand of this party, opposing the entrenchment of the Franco-Manitobans' rights in

Friday, 9 September, 1983

the Constitution when one remembers that it was Duff Roblin, a Conservative Premier, who began to redress the injustices of 1890 and 1916.

This matter should go beyond party politics and the good will present in the minds of a majority of Manitobans should win the day. I am critical of the government for not having informed the population earlier and more thoroughly. On the other hand, I want to congratulate it for the courage and determination it has exhibited in trying to redress an historical wrong. This was before it introduced the diluting amendments. I wanted to commend them on their recognition of the plurality of the Manitoban society and their efforts to sustain it. The acquiring of an additional language, the contact with another culture, the participation by a Manitoba citizen in a bilingual province can only add truth to the Shakespearean passage quoted earlier, that is: "The quality of mercy is not strained . . . It blesseth him that gives and him that takes."

Thank you very much for listening.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Brown.

MR. A. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When this appears in Hansard, I suppose it's going to be translated. Is this portion going to be translated when

it appears in Hansard?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. A. BROWN: The reason I'm asking is that there were some interesting facts and figures presented in this presentation which I would like to have, and obviously Mr. Taillefer has done a lot of research into some of the material that he was presenting and I thank him for it. I would like to have those facts and figures so if this is going to be translated when we receive Hansard, then this is fine, then we don't have to ask him for his speech. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?

Thank you, Mr. Taillefer.

MR. J. TAILLEFER: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would like to make the announcement that on September 28th, 29th and 30th, there will be further meetings here in Winnipeg of this committee - and possibly more.

Committee is now adjourned and stands adjourned until Monday, 10:00 a.m. in Thompson.

(Translation will appear in Appendix at end of all committee hearings.)