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of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

STANDING COMMITTEE
on
PRIVILEGES
and
ELECTIONS

31-32 Elizabeth II

Chairman
Mr. A. Anstett
Constituency of Springfield



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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
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS

Monday, 26 September, 1983

TIME — 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION — Arborg, Manitoba

CHAIRMAN — Mr. Andy Anstett (Springfield)

ATTENDANCE — QUORUM - 6

Members of the Committee present:

Hon. Messrs. Bucklaschuk and, Uruski; Hon. Mrs. Smith

Messrs. Anstett, Brown, Enns, Graham, Kovnats, Malinowski, Ms. Phillips, Mr. Scott

WITNESSES: Mayor Ken Reid, Village of Arborg

Ms. Lesley Osland, Private citizen

Mr. Ray Sigurdson, on behalf of the R.M. of Gimli and as a Private Citizen

Mr. T. Hoffman, presented a brief on behalf of Mr. Karl Lange, Private citizen

Mr. Mike Taczynski, Private Citizen

Mr. Robert Dubois, Société franco-manitobaine

MATTERS UNDER DISCUSSION:

Proposed resolution to amend Section 23 of The Manitoba Act

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MR. CHAIRMAN: The committee will come to order please. Gentlemen, the Clerk advises she has received the resignation of Honourable Ms. Dolin and I understand Ms. Phillips is to be the replacement therefore. Is that agreed? (Agreed) Thank you.

Gentlemen, the Clerk has also been advised that two individuals, Lesley Osland and Ray Sigurdson, Nos. 24 and 25 on our list, would like to be heard this afternoon. I have some difficulty in accommodating a request without the committee's deliberation of that. We do have a long list, Mayor Reid who was absent at the beginning this morning is now here, the Mayor of Arborg. I would ask the committee's pleasure as to how we should proceed to accommodate requests for special consideration?

Mr. Graham.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, we were informed by Mr. Bucklaschuk this morning that Ms. Osland could not be here this afternoon so I would suggest that we proceed according to the list.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further discussion? I understand, ladies and gentlemen, that Mayor Reid arrived shortly after we started this morning.

Mr. Scott.

MR. D. SCOTT: I understand that Ms. Osland has a sickness in the family and she wanted to get away and get back to her child as soon as she possibly could, so I think it would be reasonable of the committee, and I think the public could certainly accept if someone who has a child that is ill to be able to get back to that child as fast as possible. So, I would suggest that we continue and go with the people that had indicated to be heard as soon as possible this morning and, because of lengthy proceedings this morning, we weren't able to deal with, at least we should be able to deal with them so they can leave right as soon as possible this afternoon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it suggested that we hear Lesley Osland then? What is your will and pleasure with regard to hearing Mr. Sigurdson? Would you also like to provide advancing on the list to Mr. Sigurdson, Mr. Uruski.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I think your suggestion earlier about possibly we could proceed with Mayor Reid who inadvertently missed this morning, and go with Ms. Osland and Mr. Sigurdson, and then go back to the list if that would be agreeable and let's continue on if they are here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that agreeable? (Agreed) Mayor Reid, please. Mayor Reid, could you wait one moment please until the Clerk has distributed the copies? Please proceed.

MR. K. REID: First of all, Mr. Chairman, I would like to apologize for not being here at 10 o'clock this morning, but I wasn't aware that I was going to be the first one on the program and that it would start at 10 o'clock this morning.

My name is Ken Reid, I'm the Mayor of Arborg, and I would like to start with my presentation. With the presentation of this brief, I wish to state that I have been a resident of Arborg for approximately 55 years with 26 of those years in public office. The views I express, I believe, are those of the majority in Arborg.

I would like to start with a personal story. Our family moved here when I was eight. Arborg then had a Ukrainian Hall and an Icelandic Hall, and all functions were ethnic. Those starting school spoke Icelandic or Ukrainian. There was constant feuding; in sports, it was fish eaters versus garlic eaters, gulla versus gooli. My brother and I often played on opposite sides to make the teams even. By the time we had completed school, we were intermarrying, racial prejudice was disappearing. In its place was love, respect and tolerance. All could speak a common language besides their own. The Second World War saw all ethnic groups serving their country. After the war, the old halls were torn down and this fine community centre we are in today was built.

The town is a growing service centre with a prosperous farming area, and in these tough economic

times we can claim, no one at present on town welfare; few can make that statement.

The census figures show 10 of French ancestry in a population of 1,000. It is obvious that French services are not needed here.

The French language is protected in the Constitution, and we do not oppose the use of French where it is needed. However, we feel it should not be entrenched in Manitoba's Constitution and left to the courts to interpret. To clarify this, let me explain. In 1870, with only a few thousand people in Manitoba, the languages may have been fairly even. In 1983, figures show approximately 6 percent of Manitobans are of French extraction. In another generation, it could be only 1 percent as a result of emigration and assimilation.

Our family's Scottish roots go back 1,000 years. Now all the family have married into other ethnic groups, and a new Canadian race is being formed. The Anglophone and the Francophone, as we have known them, will gradually disappear. If the French language is forced into all levels of government, it will give the taxpayers an increased financial burden. The costs could be doubled while very few would benefit.

In the job market, a minority would gain advantage over the majority. We have no objection to the use of the French language where it is required, but there must be one common language of communication; in Manitoba it should be English.

The Bilodeau case is a ploy. The government has over-reacted. While I believe Premier Pawley's Government has good intentions, I strongly feel that this case should have gone to the Supreme Court. We should not be rushing to make a deal on the assumption that the court would have ruled against the province. The government and the people could have decided Manitoba's future.

These hearings are a farce. The deal has been made and I am sure we could comply with the 1970 agreement at a cost of far less than establishing a bilingual service for the next 100 years to a diminishing minority. French could be established where needed, but let the future decide if we need entrenchment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mayor Reid. Questions for Mayor Reid from members of the committee. Mr. Uruski.

HON. B. URUSKI: Thank you, Your Worship. I appreciate the brief that you have presented here on behalf of the Village of Arborg and pointing out your rich involvement in our committee and heritage in Arborg.

I wanted to ascertain from you; on the one hand, we hear and in your brief you say that we should allow the Bilodeau case to go to court; and yet, on the other hand, you've said that we should, as elected representatives, settle this whole issue. If we allow, as you state, the Bilodeau case should go to court, what is your belief would happen?

MR. K. REID: Well, I don't feel that the Supreme Court is foolish. I cannot see them saying that all the laws of Manitoba are null and void. I would think that the Supreme Court, if they decided that we should have everything bilingual, would give a time to establish that

and I would think by allowing this time it would allow the government and the people to decide on the future of the two languages.

HON. B. URUSKI: Having been made aware - and I'm sure you have through the media and the like - of the proposed agreement that was agreed to between the Manitoba Government, the Federal Government and the Franco-Manitoban Society about the extent of how far we would go to translating our statutes, the numbers of which, and the length of time to translate them, do you feel that this agreement, in terms of the specific numbers of it and the length of time, would be greater than what the courts might interpret in the Bilodeau case?

MR. K. REID: No, I don't think it would be more and I state in my brief that I think Premier Pawley and the NDP Government - and most of them I know personally - are trying their best to find the best possible deal for Manitoba. The only thing that I am concerned about here is that a deal was struck with the Franco-Manitoban Society and the Federal Government without going to the people first; this is my concern.

I would like further to say, too, that in this town there are 10 people that can trace their ancestry back to French. Now even those 10 people, I don't think, are French in the full sense of the word. But I don't think that it would affect, regardless of what legislation is brought in, this community very much.

HON. B. URUSKI: I agree. Mr. Chairman, and Your Worship, you are, no doubt, aware that municipalities and school divisions would be exempted by the agreement. I concur with your statements about the allowing of the matter to proceed and possibly not involving the public in a better forum, but be that as it may . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question, please.

HON. B. URUSKI: I'm sorry. In your brief, you indicated that the hearings are a farce. The hearings have not . . .

MR. K. REID: I feel that they are coming after the fact, instead of before. I state in my brief that I think the government perhaps over-reacted by moving too quickly on this. I guess, maybe I could be considered to be a politician, too, we sometimes react quicker than we should maybe from different pressures.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Uruski. Further questions? Mr. Doern.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Mayor, I wonder if you could just comment on this fact. I gather from reading your brief that you believe that Manitobans have been living in some harmony to this point in time; is that your view?

MR. K. REID: Yes. Having moved into a community like Arborg which had mainly two ethnic groups, Icelandic and Ukrainian, in which every kid started school speaking his own language, I think we have come a long way in being able to communicate with each other.

If you go back to our parents they married in their own ethnic group; when it came to our group, part of them married outside their ethnic group. If you come to the present generation, they're not listening to nobody, they're marrying who they please. You are going to find that the ethnic mix is becoming more pronounced than ever. I think that the French are going to have an extremely tough time to retain their language because of it.

I am thinking of an article to the paper, in one of the French newspapers here in Manitoba, in which this woman states that she brought her family up with French in the home. They went to school and learned their French, but now the trouble is arising, the two girls are going with two Ukrainian boys from across the river, and guess what language is taking over? This is the concern with the French. It's happening to all ethnic groups, and I know that there is a concern among the ethnic groups in this community that they are gradually losing their . . . but I don't think it's anything we can stop.

Therefore, because we can't stop it, I think that we should not be entrenching it, because we don't know what - well I feel sure that in the next generation or two that we're going to have a distinctive Manitoba community. I think that the Anglophone and the Francophone, as we knew them, are disappearing.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Mayor, since the legislation has been introduced, have you noticed any problems in terms of speech or thought? Would you say, for example, that the introduction of the legislation has caused some hard feelings in the community?

MR. K. REID: I think that everybody in this community is aware of this, and I have yet to find anybody who really is supporting bringing additional French into the community, but that's understandable because there just is no French community here. I think it has stirred up, to a certain extent, but it will not really affect the people in this community because we are almost 100 percent outside of it. If we had half the population French, I would imagine then the war would be on.

MR. R. DOERN: You say that the hearings are a farce. But, would it not be the case that they would be a farce if the government refused to listen, that it's by the actions of the government that we can tell whether the hearings have been worthwhile or not?

MR. K. REID: Well, the reason I say it's a farce, I don't think that these hearings are going to change anything. I think the deal has already been made and I don't think that these hearings are going to - other than an exercise of exerting our voice - have very much change in what's going to happen.

MR. R. DOERN: However, I think you would agree, even if that is the case, you still have the opportunity of giving your views and making a negative statement about the hearings. That, in itself, must be worthwhile?

MR. K. REID: Well, I appreciate the fact of being able to be here and express my views. I think I am expressing the views of the average person in this community that

we shouldn't be entrenching because we are intermarrying and we are changing.

MR. R. DOERN: Are you holding a public referendum or plebiscite on this question?

MR. K. REID: No, not unless there is pressure from the public to do so. Council has not decided to hold a referendum and we would not hold a referendum unless there was public pressure to do so.

MR. R. DOERN: My final question, Mr. Mayor, is this. Would you contend that a constitutional amendment, which is a pretty significant step, it's not an ordinary piece of legislation, this is a significant historical move on the part of the Provincial Government that a constitutional amendment should only proceed if, and only if, there is widespread public support or, on the other hand, should not proceed if there is widespread public opposition?

MR. K. REID: Well, I think that I would agree that we should have the feeling of the public before we start to make too many changes. This has been my criticism that we're having the hearings after, instead of before. I would say that I know most of the people in the government and I know that they are sincere; I don't agree that we should be having hearings after a deal has been made.

MR. R. DOERN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions for Mayor Reid from members of the committee? Mr. Enns.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Reid, . . . and I don't take the statement lightly when you say to us assembled members of the Legislature, and call our proceedings a farce. I'm not saying that in a challenging way, I tend to agree with you, but I would like to solicit from you, if I could, to use as an example, for instance, in the important area of repatriating and redrawing our Canadian Constitution that we have just gone through in this country, a whole host, two-and-a-half years of Premiers' conferences preceded that event; special interest groups had an opportunity to make their views known, such as, women's organizations, Native organizations, etc., all made presentations to the Government of the Day in Ottawa having to do with the fundamental creation of our Constitution. Then, and only then, with the concurrent and the agreement of the Conservative leader, the New Democratic Party Leader - Mr. Broadbent, Mr. Clark at that time - did the Government of the Day, the Federal Government, present the resolution pertaining to our Constitution onto the floor of the House of Commons.

I take it that when you call this meeting a farce you are objecting to the fact, or at least you feel, that the deal has been struck in secret with one group of Manitoba's society, the Society of Franco-Manitobans and that you are not getting the impression from the government that they are prepared to change that deal in a significant way; is that why you call this meeting a farce?

MR. K. REID: I feel that the government made a mistake in not asking the opinion of the people before entering

into an agreement. Now, the other argument can be made that we elect people to make decisions, but I kind of feel that this being a constitutional change that there should have been some sort of communication with the people to see what we had. At the same time, I'm not going to condemn the government for trying, but I don't think it's the right way.

MR. H. ENNS: Thank you, Mr. Reid.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions? Ms. Smith.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, through you to Your Worship. Are you aware of what the options were in front of the government, in terms of the Bilodeau case?

MR. K. REID: I may not have been as aware as the government, but I would think that the assumption is made that if they went to the Supreme Court that our laws in Manitoba would be null and void. Now if you look back to Section 23 of the 1870 Act and reading it, it could be in both languages. It does not say that it has to be, and because of the law passed in 1890, I would think that the Supreme Court would give a lot of consideration before they would go to work and condemn the government or the Province of Manitoba for not having it in both languages.

HON. M. SMITH: Are you aware that there were two other Supreme Court decisions which influenced the possibility of an outcome? One the decision in 1979 on the Forest case that led to the previous administration recognizing English and French as official languages for the Legislature and the courts, that was put in place in 1980 in Manitoba; there was also a Supreme Court decision on a minority rights case in Quebec where the Supreme Court, in support of minority rights, required the Provincial Government of Quebec to pay back something like \$500 million in past wages to teachers and other groups because the law had been passed in one language only, and that the principle of minority rights, therefore, is a very strong concern to the Supreme Court, therefore, it had some influence on one of the outcomes, no question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, order please. We're going on with a very long preamble and providing a lot of information which is not contained in the brief. As we discussed this morning, questions should be for clarification only of material in the brief. I thought there was a question flowing in there somewhere, so maybe you could make it short and snappy?

HON. M. SMITH: My apologies, Mr. Chairman. I guess what I'm trying to draw out is what leads you to think that the choice of letting the case go to the Supreme Court was the wisest move when there were some probabilities of one decision of course that might be, the other one of course being in favour of Bilodeau, if the case was found in favour of Mr. Bilodeau we may have been required to put much more extensive services in place in Manitoba.

MR. K. REID: Well I appreciate the fact that the government was trying to save money by not translating

all these statutes. I don't think there's anybody here that has any objections to the French language being used in the Legislature and in the courts. I think where the concern is, that it go beyond those levels and to a considerable expense - if you're going to extend it to all boards, commissions. Of course, they say they're not going to take it to the municipal level, but what's to stop another Bilodeau or another Forest to take the case and challenge the municipal people? You know, we've had two cases now and I don't think there's anything to stop somebody else, and I state in my brief that I think that the Bilodeau case was a ploy and I don't think he did this on his own exactly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions? Mr. Graham.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you to Mayor Reid. Mayor Reid, in answer to questions from Mrs. Smith, you indicated that you may or may not have been aware of the position the Provincial Government was placed in in the Bilodeau case. Can I ask you, if you had any communication between your Municipal Government and the Provincial Government, prior to these hearings, at which time the province made you aware of any of those problems that they were facing?

MR. K. REID: Well I'm not really aware of any communication, other than what we get through the different media. I don't think there was any communication. If it did come, it would come to the secretary-treasurer and I don't think we discussed any communication along those lines.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Mayor, did the province, at any time in the last six months, seek the advice of your municipal council on an issue, such as, a constitutional change that is very significant to all of us?

MR. K. REID: I would say the communication was that we had the federal member of Parliament come down to our meeting and we had quite a lengthy discussion on many topics there, one of them was we expressed our views on the bilingual problem. But I don't think that we had any communication with the government other than the usual releases.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I can understand some of the concerns of the municipality or the village. I believe it is something that has happened at numerous of these hearings, where various municipal corporations have lamented the fact that the province has not consulted with them at any time on this thing. I would like to ask the mayor if he feels that it should be important for the Provincial Government to consult and communicate with the local level of government which is closest to the people, before they make any significant moves, such as, a constitutional amendment?

MR. K. REID: Well I've tried to express it in my presentation that I felt with the changing of our Constitution that there should be a lot of consultation with the people in the province.

MR. H. GRAHAM: No further questions, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bucklaschuk.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, to Mayor Reid. Not on your brief, but in response to the answer you gave to Mr. Graham. I'm wondering if you would check with your secretary-treasurer to see whether there was any communication from the Premier and the Attorney-General. I recall at the Brandon hearings that such evidence was produced and I presume your secretary-treasurer hasn't made you aware of that correspondence.

MR. K. REID: Yes, there may have been correspondence come through, I don't want to say that there hasn't been. At each meeting we probably have 15, 20 different pieces of correspondence and sometimes, you know, I don't particularly remember any particular one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions by members? Mr. Scott.

MR. D. SCOTT: Thank you. Mayor Reid, on top of Page 2 you state, on behalf of the Village of Arborg, that the French language is protected in the Constitution and we do not oppose the use of French where it is needed. I guess I'd like a little explanation of who determines where it is needed? You say where it's needed - is that you determining it or is it the French people who have the right to receive those services determining it?

MR. K. REID: I would think if there is enough sufficient population, or if there's people that want to use the French language, to use it. Now I understand that down in the southern part of Manitoba there are communities in which the French is used quite a bit and, if it's needed there, I have no quarrel with it. I have no quarrel with anybody whether they speak Icelandic, Ukrainian, or German or whatnot, but I feel strongly that there has to be one language of communication within the province and I think if we're going to try and make two languages, and half the people understand one, and half the other, I don't think that would work out.

MR. D. SCOTT: What this is dealing with, sir, is the right of someone whose language is French to deal with the government in French, not dealing between themselves and other individuals in society. It's an obligation or right of an individual to receive a service from their government in their mother tongue, which is protected under the Constitution. I take it from what you're saying, where it is needed, then you are accepting a criterion of significant demand, that where there is sufficient demand for those services that those services should be provided to those individuals who request it?

MR. K. REID: To probably answer your question, one of the civil servants who is hired as bilingual - I believe in your government - was asked how many times did he use the bilingual services in the past year, and he said maybe once or twice. I don't think there's any quarrel that the services of the government should not be available, but I don't think it's necessary to go to

work and have bilingual services if they're not going to be used. There would be no use you putting bilingual services into this community where you couldn't find five people to speak it, but in the government in the main departments - I would think that they would have it there - I don't know what else I can say on that.

MR. D. SCOTT: So then you are saying that in offices of the government, where there is significant demand, that services should be provided in French to those people?

MR. K. REID: If there is need to have interpretive services in these departments, I would think that we'd have to accept that and I think that they're entitled to it. But I don't think we should just insist that there be bilingual service throughout the whole province when it's not needed, like for instance in this community or in our offices here.

MR. D. SCOTT: Yes, that's understood, sir, thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions? Seeing none, Mayor Reid, thank you for making your presentation and thanks to your council for providing for you to make that brief. Thank you very much.

Lesley Osland, please.

MS. L. OSLAND: First of all, thank you for putting me in here. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, the brief I am presenting before the Standing Committee is related to the question of French language in Manitoba school systems as a whole.

Where are the priorities? In 1870 Manitoba entered Confederation as a bilingual province and we still, as Manitobans, cannot educate our children in two languages in the rural municipalities. Premier Howard Pawley has assured us that the municipalities and school boards will not be affected by entrenchment of French Language Services in the Manitoba Constitution. He has commented that school boards and municipalities will only be asked to implement French Language Services on a voluntary basis. When, in fact, I believe this - the school is where the French issue should be enforced, if anywhere at all. I don't believe that our government should have the right to dictate what language an individual should or should not speak, just as I don't think it's right they should be able to legislate the seat belt, helmet regulations, but however they have, despite the hundreds protesting it.

The bottom line is that once any one issue is passed through the Legislature, we, the citizens, have to abide, right? So what my point is, if this is the case, and it is only obvious that it is, why don't we, the concerned adults, parents, at least have our children prepared for it? I feel that once a student graduates into Grade 10 and has a choice, most drop out of their French class for the simple reason that they feel it is more important to exert their attention to the subjects they're falling back in and the reason they make French the inferior subject is because it's drilled into our heads that this is not required or necessary for any job which they may apply for.

For example, in the event a competition is posted in an unemployment office, for a government job or

other, it is illegal discrimination to stipulate French-English required, but you have noticed that it can be stated bilingual preferred. So tell me what does this indicate? It says, between the lines, that if two people apply and both have exactly the same qualifications in every aspect, with the exception that one is bilingual and the other is not, then it is obvious whom would be the probable candidate.

Instead of fearing the French Language Services, why don't we work with it and use it to our advantage? Right now, as it stands, the majority of Canadian English schools have their curriculum outlined and the French class is taught for the duration required, just as other subjects are by individual schools, and that is as far as it goes. Is it enough? I'm not here to put down the school systems, but can't you see that it is time something more is offered to the communities, as far as the French services are concerned? Why not have an alternative for the parent to choose from when their child is enrolled in grade school? Do you think that it is vital? I do. I feel it is important to give your children an opportunity to learn two languages right from the beginning of their education, as that seems to be necessary for their future and when could be a better time than when they are going through their education and eager to learn?

I'm not French. I cannot speak it and I only wished now in my life that I could. I really think that most parents would like to give their child the chance at least. They may thank us for it, it certainly can't hurt. The problem today is most rural communities do not have a French Immersion school, so even if you wanted to put your son or daughter through a French Immersion school, you couldn't. Can the government not give us this choice? Do you really feel that there isn't a need for French Immersion schools in the rural communities, at least in the central communities as a start?

I mentioned I'm not here to put down the school systems, as a matter of fact, I feel my proposal will strengthen the schools in the rural areas. I realize that in smaller communities, like villages, it would be quite an expenditure to construct a new school for immersion, and to convert the one and only in each community would start quite a conflict, and once again, this is not giving the people freedom of choice. So why not, as a start, begin the program in the larger, rural municipalities? For example, Selkirk. There are enough schools in Selkirk that surely just one could be converted to a French Immersion, and in Gimli it has a large enough population that I think it could offer a French Immersion school. What are our chances if we were to apply, as we don't have a substantial number of Francophones in our communities?

I might add that I am confident I am speaking for the majority of the parents and children in the rural towns. On behalf of my three sons, I'd like to thank you for your attention and consideration of this brief.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions from Ms. Osland from members of the committee?

Mr. Scott.

MR. D. SCOTT: Ms. Osland, I appreciate you coming out, especially with a child who has measles and I understand you're keen to get back to him. I also

appreciate the fact that, as a young parent, coming out to address concerns in the education system and regarding the French Language Services in that system, and although our hearings today are not dealing specifically with that, if I could, as it pertains to your brief, ask you if you feel that the services would be a better match if French language training was offered in the schools as a regular subject starting right in at kindergarten throughout the school system?

MS. L. OSLAND: You're asking me if I think that's where it should start?

MR. D. SCOTT: Yes.

MS. L. OSLAND: Yes.

MR. D. SCOTT: So that's not necessarily going with an immersion program, but where at least a child gets half an hour of instruction a day, starting at a young age?

MS. L. OSLAND: At least that. I think, especially in the larger communities, I'm sure that they would have more than 10 percent, if that is the requirement for each community to have a French Immersion school. I can't see why parents wouldn't want to put their children through it.

MR. D. SCOTT: Okay. Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions for Ms. Osland from members?

Mr. Doern.

MR. R. DOERN: I want to ask you a very general question and ask you why you have selected French in opposition to, say, German or Spanish as one, or Ukrainian, or as one person said recently, Japanese is the language of the future?

MS. L. OSLAND: In Manitoba, any job that I've applied for or any one job I've seen, they certainly don't have a requirement to speak Ukrainian or any other. The only other subject that I've seen that they want is French.

MR. R. DOERN: You seem to suggest in your presentation, or you seem to argue that jobs should be created or more jobs should be created that are bilingual to encourage the study of French. Did you say that?

MS. L. OSLAND: I wouldn't say that they should be created, but they're going to be. Right now I think it's 3 percent in the Civil Service that require French and if that's the way it is right now, if French goes any further, it's sure going to be a lot more than 3 percent, and our kids aren't going to be ready for it. I mean they don't say it's 3 percent for Ukrainian right now in Manitoba or for German.

MR. R. DOERN: And you said you had three children in school?

MS. L. OSLAND: I have one in school and one that'll be starting school next year and the one later.

MR. R. DOERN: If you were perfectly fluent in French, or your sons were perfectly fluent in French when they grew up, where would they speak it and to whom would they speak?

MS. L. OSLAND: They would speak it in their jobs that require French conversations and at home probably and English.

MR. R. DOERN: Are you from the greater Arborg area?

MS. L. OSLAND: No I'm from Gimli-Selkirk area.

MR. R. DOERN: I see. Do you think there's a need to speak French or be bilingual in those communities - a practical need?

MS. L. OSLAND: If they're not in the community it doesn't necessarily mean - if they go to school there, that doesn't mean that's going to be where they stay. Those kids may end up in the city and we haven't prepared them. If there's no French offered at all - the only French that's offered is 40-minute classes and I know my 10-year-old boy can hardly speak French. It's mostly their art class to him and that's nothing against the teacher, but that's the way it is, it just isn't made a priority in the school.

MR. R. DOERN: Are you assuming that there's a need or a value in speaking French if you live in the City of Winnipeg?

MS. L. OSLAND: I assume that, in jobs.

MR. R. DOERN: Do you have friends in Winnipeg who are bilingual?

MS. L. OSLAND: I hardly have any friends in Winnipeg.

MR. R. DOERN: We can arrange that.

The final question, Mr. Chairman, is: if you, for example, were bilingual, my concern is this, that unless you live in an area where there is a practical demonstrated need to speak French, how will you retain your ability to speak French? For instance, many of us are graduates of the school system. I have seven years of French. I don't find too many instances in which that need or that skill or that educational background is called upon. So I simply say to you that, in general, in your own community or in most places in Manitoba, if you were perfectly bilingual, don't you think you would tend to lose that skill rather than continue it or build it?

MS. L. OSLAND: I don't think that you would if you went through 12 years of education with French Immersion. I know that I went to Grade 12 and I took French up until Grade 10 and I think I know maybe five words, but a person that would take it fluently like that, even two years, a child that's 10 to 12 years old, takes French, I can't see that they would lose it all that much. If they finally need it in their jobs, they can always go to the French classes at night.

MR. R. DOERN: Have you ever met people who were perfectly bilingual in various languages as children, and

then over the years have lost that ability to communicate?

MS. L. OSLAND: No. I know one that is bilingual and he's got four languages, one's Russian, and they just stay with him and he even says that once you know a second language, it's almost easier to learn any other languages. This is from someone that's done it, I couldn't say that that's how it is.

MR. R. DOERN: Have you ever studied any languages yourself at a school or other?

MS. L. OSLAND: No, I tried to take Russian, but I gave up.

MR. R. DOERN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions for Ms. Osland? Mr. Graham.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, two or three questions to Ms. Osland. Ms. Osland, you feel it's very important that the use of French and the learning of French should be done in the school. Is that right?

MS. L. OSLAND: Yes.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Do you think that we can accomplish bilingualism by legislation?

MS. L. OSLAND: By legislation - in the school system you mean?

MR. H. GRAHAM: No, just by passing a bill that says that Manitoba shall be officially bilingual. Would that accomplish bilingualism?

MS. L. OSLAND: I don't think it would entirely. I don't even think seat belts will, even though it's \$25 every seat belt that isn't done up.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Do you think it would help in making Manitoba bilingual - just the passage of the constitutional amendment?

MS. L. OSLAND: It will probably make more jobs needing French, so it would probably make more people learning it, so in the long run it might help, but I don't imagine immediately it's going to make much of a change.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Do you think in making more jobs available for those who are bilingual in French and English, would it make fewer jobs available for those that are fluent only in one language?

MS. L. OSLAND: No, I don't.

MR. H. GRAHAM: So you would think it would just make more jobs than in the government service?

MS. L. OSLAND: No. I just think that a lot of other jobs will be changed to French and English required.

MR. H. GRAHAM: And in the changing of those requirements, would that mean that a person that was unilingual then lose their job?

MS. L. OSLAND: No. I don't know how to answer that. I don't think it would.

MR. H. GRAHAM: I'm just trying to find out how you would envisage this happening. If you figure there would be more jobs available to those that were bilingual, would you advocate then a growth in the Civil Service to accommodate them?

MS. L. OSLAND: I hope so, I don't really know. You can't judge what's going to happen when the government passes something.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Ms. Osland, I tend to agree with you on that last statement, so I won't ask any further questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ms. Phillips.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Osland, as a parent, I'm also very interested in the comments that you had to make about the best ways that school divisions could be looking at teaching both languages in the school, however, that's not something that's dealt with in this particular amendment, to turn everyone in the province into bilingual people, in terms of being able to fluently speak both official languages. Although, I think you raise a point where, in The Public School Act, there is a provision to offer the French language in elementary schools or French Immersion that perhaps, even though there's not many French-speaking people in your community, you still have the vehicle, as a citizen of that school division, to organize with other parents to have those services provided. What we're talking about here is services from the Provincial Government where required by individuals.

My question is, in terms of your brief and the future in terms of jobs, it's been suggested that out of the 16,000 Civil Service jobs in Manitoba, provincial civil servants, where the services in this amendment will have to be provided by, that it will probably entail about 400 positions.

I think you were commenting that it would be better if all children were prepared to fill those positions by having both languages. Do you think, from the facts that have been given, that I just repeated throughout this debate, that 400 jobs out of 16,000 would be turning the province into a bilingual province, where everyone has to have both official languages?

MS. L. OSLAND: No I don't think it would, but my point actually is to give us the choice. It's not to change every child - I mean there's probably going to be, for all we know, 50 percent, 75 percent that are going to be against putting their child into a French Immersion School, but what about the people that want to and if you live in the city you can, but for anybody that doesn't live there, we can't just commute. I want to be able to offer it to my kids and I can't, unless they go through a French class, which I can already tell with one of my sons that it's not doing a bit of good. He'll probably quit too, just like everyone else.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: That's all, thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions by members of the committee? Seeing none, Ms. Osland, thank you very much for your presentation here today.

MS. L. OSLAND: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next on our list, Ray Sigurdson please.

MR. R. SIGURDSON: Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I want to thank you very much for the opportunity of speaking to you today. I want to thank the government for making this opportunity available. I think that it's certainly going to help. I don't know whether it's going to change the direction you take from now on, but I think at least we will have had our say, and I certainly hope that you take careful consideration of what is being said in these hearings.

I'm going to make my remarks quite brief. I would say that it appears to me that the vast majority of the people in the Interlake area are not in favour of the entrenchment of increased rights and services in the French language. At our June district meeting of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities for the Interlake area, a resolution to that effect was carried, either unanimously or the next thing to it.

I perhaps should have started by giving my name, Ray Sigurdson. I was born in the Gimli district, have farmed there all of my life. I'm also the Reeve of the Rural Municipality of Gimli and at the present time am a member of the Executive of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities.

The remarks I'm making today are what I've been hearing in the last six months from the people I talk to, both municipal people and people on the street. I suppose that we have no choice at this time but to honour Section 23 of The Manitoba Act of 1870, which states that either English or French may be used in the Legislature and in the courts of law. Many believe that going any further than that will only create more problems than it solves.

In 1879, the Manitoba Legislature passed The Official Languages Act which made English the official language. What was not done at that time was to apply to have our Constitution changed, which would have been the proper way to go about it. I think the Manitoba Government, at this point, would be serving the vast majority of the citizens better if they were now asking for the necessary amendments to make English or whatever we call it - I don't really know whether it's English anymore, it was referred to the other day as Canadian and I tend to go along with that. I think that we have a tremendous infusion of words from all other groups that make up Manitoba at this time, words like holupchi and vinarterta, and all those become a part of the English language, so really we have a language of our own. I think the average citizen on the streets of London would hardly understand us and I know that to be true because I've tried it.

I think the effort now to turn back the clocks by almost 100 years will be a complete failure. I think there must be provision for the Federal Government to make those changes in our Constitution at the request of the

Manitoba Government, because there is that overwhelming support to make English the official language of Manitoba. In 1879, although they didn't go about it the right way, there must have at that time been an overwhelming need for that and you can imagine how much more so that need is now than what it was at that time.

If the Manitoba Government goes ahead with the entrenchment of French language rights as is proposed, we will be creating a small but very privileged class, and those are the people who are fluent in French as well as in English, as compared to all the other ethnic groups, some of which are larger than the French group in Manitoba.

I think the Manitoba Government has only two acceptable choices. One is to abide by Section 23 of The Manitoba Act, as it was applied in 1870. I understand there would still possibly be a problem with translating a certain number of the old statutes that were in English only, however, I think it would be very foolish for anybody to suggest that they all needed to be translated. Only those that were fairly current and were not already redundant, and also the records of the Legislature from this point forward, as is being done at the present time. The other choice is to have the Constitution changed to make English the official language.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you Mr. Sigurdson. Questions for Mr. Sigurdson from members of the committee? Mr. Bucklaschuk.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Sigurdson, are you speaking as the reeve or as a private citizen?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: I am making most of my remarks as a private citizen, however I am reflecting the opinions that I have gathered in the last six months in talking to not only municipal people, but my neighbours and people on the street.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Well, I want to make it very clear though. Are you speaking at the direction of the Council of the R.M. of Gimli, or are you speaking as an individual?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: The subject was discussed at our council meeting and we certainly encouraged any member of our council to attend here and make briefs if they felt the wish to do so, and I took that as permission for me to speak as a member of our council, also as a citizen of this area.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: You're saying that there was a resolution . . .

MR. R. SIGURDSON: I'm not saying it's the official policy of either the Union of Manitoba Municipalities or our municipality, but I'm taking their feelings into consideration when I was making my statements.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: What I'm trying to clarify is the capacity in which you are making this brief to

this committee. You know at times I could speak as an individual, I can also speak as an MLA, and you can speak as an individual or as the Reeve of the R.M. of Gimli. I just want to make it very clear that you speaking as an individual and not as a result of some resolution which empowered you to speak on behalf of the council and the people in the R.M. of Gimli.

MR. R. SIGURDSON: Okay, in that case, I'm speaking as an individual.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Thank you, that's what I wanted to know. I have some further questions. The impression I received from your brief is that you would agree that one of the positions, or the position of the Government of Manitoba could have taken was to let the Bilodeau case go to the Supreme Court?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: I believe so. I really feel that in discussions between the Manitoba Government and the other groups, the Franco-Manitoban Society and the Federal Government, that we would have been sort of better to allow that case to go forward because I believe that they wouldn't have brought down a judgment that was impossible to live with.

Another thing that makes me wonder is whether we bargained with really a full knowledge of all the implications. The fact that we were ready to make a deal that the other people were ready to accept would almost indicate that perhaps they had gotten the better of the deal. I feel that this is probably true. I really feel that we've kind of got our foot in a bear trap, and we don't know how to get it out without getting our head in it. I think that's the position we're in right now.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Mr. Sigurdson, you are relating to us your understanding of what the Bilodeau case is about?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: Yes. I think I understand it fairly well.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Would you mind conveying your thoughts on that to the committee?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: The question before the Supreme Court was whether all the laws of Manitoba were valid since 1879 because the Constitution had not been changed, and the Constitution read that either English or French may be used in the Legislature or the courts. I also would like to add that I do believe the Bilodeau case was planted in Manitoba to further the ambitions of the Federal Government in this manner.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: In fact, the Bilodeau case involves only two acts. It involves The Summary Conviction Act and The Highway Traffic Act, but the outcome of the decision on that would have a bearing on the other 4,500 acts and statutes that we have.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question, please.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: If the Supreme Court were to rule that The Summary Conviction Act and The Highway Traffic Act were invalid because they had not

been translated, what would you propose be done with the other 4,498 acts and statutes that could go through the same challenge?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: Well I think that Mr. Reid had the answer for that today when he said that the Supreme Court judges are not fools, and there is no way they could bring down that kind of a judgment because there is no possible way it could be done within, say, 10 or 15 years at the minimum. So I think we would have been every bit as well off to wait for the Supreme Court judges to bring down their decision, rather than strike up a deal that we're not absolutely sure or the majority of the citizens of Manitoba are not sure that it's favourable to us.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Was not the same type of opinion thrown about in 1979 when the people of Manitoba agreed - numbers said, the Supreme Court would not dare throw out The Official Languages Act. It's been around for 89 years. The Supreme Court did throw it out, didn't it?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: A parallel to that would be a municipality passing a resolution to change one of their by-laws without going back and actually changing the by-law. It still would not be legal without changing the original by-law. This is what I think has happened there. The Manitoba Government, in their wisdom when they changed The Official Languages Act or brought in The Official Languages Act, should have gone further and had the Constitution changed at the same time or before they actually enforced it. I admit that was a mistake.

I know it's a very touchy situation, and I sympathize with people in the government for the situation they're in, but I think that we have gone too far in making this deal.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: You would agree then that certain rights were provided to the French people in The Manitoba Act of 1870?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: Would you repeat the question again?

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: You would agree that certain rights were provided to the French people by the Constitution of Manitoba, The Manitoba Act of 1870?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: Yes.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Do you feel that those same rights should still be respected today?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: I would be in favour of the same rights be in effect, until such time as the Constitution is changed. I don't think there's any choice in that matter. That isn't too hard to live with.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: I gather, your resolution to the problem that is facing us at the present time would be to amend the act of 1870 to deny the rights that were given to the French people at that time.

MR. R. SIGURDSON: I didn't quite catch the last part of that one. You'll have to excuse me. I have been driving too many noisy tractors, and my hearing's shot.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Too many John Deeres. My question was then, your resolution to the problem that is confronting us then would be to have the act of 1870 amended to . . .

MR. R. SIGURDSON: I think that would be a practical solution.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: . . . deny the rights of the French that they had at that time?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: If I understand you correctly, I think that would be the correct solution at this point in time, because I certainly feel that the need is not there to entrench French language rights in the Province of Manitoba. I know that any skill you have that you don't use, you soon lose.

On our farm, we have had trainees from many different countries, and I'll just give you one instance. This boy came from Switzerland, and when he came here he felt he was fluent in English, German and French. He was with us for a few months, and we happened to have a fellow come into our yard. He wasn't from our district, but he spoke French. So I thought that this would be the ideal time for this fellow to communicate with this man. They started trying to speak, and he says, oh my goodness. He couldn't figure out what had happened. He said, he had almost forgotten how to use the French language in those eight months. He said, he was having real difficulty. I believe that. If we don't get the opportunity to use it, we'll soon lose it, and I don't think the opportunity is here in Manitoba to make it worthwhile to go to the expense.

Right now, as reeve of the municipality, I must receive a stack of mail from the Provincial Government that high. Up 'till now, it's been mostly in English. You can imagine the waste for us to have that all in two languages, and it's completely unnecessary in our region. I don't speak for all of Manitoba. I sympathize with areas that have the need. Why, there it's a different situation, but today I'm mainly speaking with our Interlake Region.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: One final question and it's getting back to your suggestion that the act of 1870 should be amended. Can you think of any progressive, democratic country where the Constitution has been changed to restrict rights, or do they, in fact, expand or guarantee rights in those countries?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: Are you trying to say that there should not be a way of changing the Constitution if the need is no longer there to keep it as it is?

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Normally, members of committees don't answer questions, and I won't. I am just making a statement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Consider it a rhetorical question.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: I guess my statement was, and I really wanted that information, are you aware of any progressive, democratic country where existing rights are being withdrawn or rescinded, or are they not in fact being entrenched and guaranteed?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: Yes, I think I am. When the Icelandic settlers, for instance, settled on the shores of Lake Winnipeg and established the Republic of New Iceland, there were many rights and privileges that they had at that time that had been withdrawn in the course of the last 90 years. I just mention one of them that comes to mind and that is the right to fish in the lake whenever they chose.

MR. H. ENNS: Now, the Provincial Government tells them.

MR. R. SIGURDSON: But that's just one point that comes to my mind, there no doubt are others.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions?
Ms. Phillips.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I'm very interested, Sir, in your presentation in terms of we should be allowing this to proceed to the Supreme Court and your contention that they would probably rule to some degree less than what is proposed in this amendment.

We had a brief this morning - were you attending this morning? - Mr. Renooy presented a brief on behalf of the South Interlake Planning District. Is your municipality part of that district?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: No, it is not.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: He was contending that this decision should be made by the Legislature of Manitoba and not be allowed up to the decision of the courts. Am I correct in assuming that you're saying it should be the other way around?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: The reason I say that is because we were already in court. Now, normally, it should be the people in the Legislature that decide our direction. However, once you are in court I think you are in a different situation altogether. You see, that's the wrong way to do it, I'll agree with that.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: I'll just mention that that case was in court before this government came into office. So what I see this as in layperson's language, as an out-of-court settlement to prevent what seems to me from my information a situation where the court could rule very harshly. Perhaps I think you were suggesting that they would be reasonable in terms of time limits.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question please.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: My question is, I do want to know whether you think we should just drop this in the Legislature, let it go to the Supreme Court and then the people of Manitoba live with whatever decision the court comes down with, imposes on us?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: I think in this case we should. The worst that I really can see happening - and it's just a guess - that would be that we would have to abide by The Manitoba Act of 1870, which we are at the present time pretty well doing, translating all the statutes and proceedings of the court.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairperson, my question then comes to the content of this amendment, which is the provision of services from the Legislature and the courts that are outlined in The Manitoba Act, the provision of services, and how those should be delivered from the Provincial Government throughout the Province of Manitoba. You're suggesting that in your area there is not much demand, so there is no need to provide the services from the Provincial Government. I see in this amendment a section dealing with provision from certain head offices and in areas where there is significant demand. Do you not find that to be a reasonable solution to your problem of having not a significant demand in your municipality or the need for provision of services in your municipality? Would that not be fair and reasonable to you?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: I know that in our municipality there would be really, I can say no demand whatsoever for those services to be in French. I feel that the cost of providing that in two languages far outweighs the need. The actual need I doubt would be for more than 2 percent of the citizens, if that, that now would not fully understand all documents in English. They could certainly get that help very quickly if there was a problem.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: So what you're saying is that there wouldn't be a need in your area. What I'm suggesting, where there isn't a need in an area like yours, it is not necessary to provide it and go into that great expense that you are concerned about. If we left this to the court and the court said all the services must be provided in all the Provincial Government offices throughout the province, then you would be in the situation, would you not, of having to provide the services in your area, or we would, as government, have to provide the services in your area and hire bilingual people or whatever, regardless of whether there was a need or not? Would we not be avoiding that by adopting this amendment, rather than let it go to court?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: You are guessing at the judgment the court would bring and actually what you are proposing they might rule is actually what you want to go ahead and do voluntarily. I'd say we don't have to take that chance. We can see whether they rule that. If they rule that all government information must go out in French and English, why, we'll have to live with that up until such time as we have amendments made to the act of 1870 to change that, so that's not necessary. So why should we do it before we have to do it, before we're required to do it? Why should we offer to do it without being compelled to?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. I would draw the attention of members, the questions are to be for clarification. The last few questions have bordered on engaging in debate with the position taken by the witness. I would ask the honourable member to phrase her questions as questions for clarification and not to engage in debate, please.

Ms. Phillips.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, I'm trying very hard. I guess one question I must ask, if

we are guessing by saying this amendment is more restrictive, is more limited and less expensive than what we assume the court will rule, are you not then guessing that the court will rule in a way that is more favourable or less expensive than what we're suggesting in the amendment?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: That's what I'm saying, I think they will.

MR. H. ENNS: Reeve Sigurdson, just to make you feel better, you said, no, that you are in reasonably good legal company insofar as that the Queen's Bench, the court of Manitoba has turned down the Bilodeau case; the Appeal Court of Manitoba with learned Justices on it have turned down the Bilodeau case; and the suggestion that is being made all the time that the Bilodeau case is automatically going to be won, the Supreme court case, I would ask you, I know that you're not of legal background, but you ought to be comforted in knowing that some very excellent legal minds don't share the view that's being expressed by government members that the Bilodeau case is automatically going to be won at that level.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question, please.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Sigurdson, I wanted to ask you one particular question, a question that Mr. Bucklaschuk has asked or was very concerned about, just who you were speaking for, either as reeve, or as representative of the rural municipalities organization which you are an executive member of, or as an individual person? Perhaps I could ask it in a different way, Reeve Sigurdson. I take it that you are standing or letting your name stand for re-election as reeve of the R.M. of Gimli this coming October.

MR. R. SIGURDSON: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
Mr. Enns.

MR. H. ENNS: Is there anything that you have said to this committee today that makes you nervous about your chances of re-election?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: I didn't have that in mind at all. I am speaking my own mind, and not what I think will bring me votes or votes against me.

MR. H. ENNS: Thank you.

MR. D. SCOTT: Mr. Sigurdson, just to clarify a few points if I could in your presentation, first I believe - and correct me if I'm wrong, please, sir - you stated that it was in your opinion okay to go ahead with the translation of the statutes, and also to provide services in French in some areas. You said, like in the Interlake, it's obviously not needed, but in other areas of the province, south of Winnipeg for instance, it would be needed.

Then you went on to say that you would prefer to see Section 23 changed to delete any reference to French in that section. I am wondering which side of

the fence, whatever you're going to come out on. If you were a Member of the Legislature or a federal Member of Parliament, would you be lobbying for the deletion of the French language reference in Section 23 of The French Language Act, or would you be trying to maintain the services and the translation of the statutes as are presently required?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: That's a fairly hard question. I think that I would be in favour of leaving the Section 23 as it was in 1870, but only to have it the right for a person to use either French or English in the Legislature and the courts. I wouldn't go further than that. I wouldn't say we had to make all our government agencies and boards provide all their material in both languages.

MR. D. SCOTT: Reeve Sigurdson, within the British system of common law, law is set basically by precedent in similar jurisdictions. We have had references come down to language acts, particularly in Quebec where their official language act, Bill 101 I believe is what it was numbered, has been substantially reduced in its effect. One of the courts even ruled that the reference to official languages isn't really even applicable.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, order please. We're getting into the presentation of extraneous information again. Although the information may deal with the subject matter, it wasn't the subject of the brief. Could the member come to his question please, without introducing references to other legislation or other provinces?

MR. D. SCOTT: Mr. Chairman, Reeve Sigurdson has referred to limiting the French language only to the Legislature and the courts. The reason I was giving that slight preamble there was because the courts have traditionally interpreted that in an expansive sense, in that it does not refer, at least as far as Quebec goes - and Quebec has the same language as Manitoba and also the Government of Canada has similar language - the act does not say, only the Legislature and the courts. In almost any reference that has gone to the courts so far, they have interpreted it on an expansion of the jurisdiction of the Legislature and the jurisdiction of the courts.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question, please.

MR. D. SCOTT: So given that connotation, what is your expectation that if you wanted to go back and just to limit it to the Legislature and the courts, do you not recognize that you would likely be overturned by the courts and that you are trying to read something into the act that was not there?

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you followed that, you can answer it. I didn't follow it.

MR. R. SIGURDSON: This would be an interim thing. I would be in favour of getting the opinion of the majority of the people in Manitoba, and I say, the vast majority. With that in hand, I would try to make changes to the act of 1870. Because I think that if it was felt to be

needed in 1870, it's much much more so now and would stop a lot of confusion and stop a lot of hard feelings around the country. There is no way we're going to avoid that, and I think it's insane for a government to go ahead with the legislation as intended right now.

MR. D. SCOTT: Following that response, I'm wondering if you recognize that what we are trying to do is we're trying to change Section 23, but it's not our act. It is a federal act. All we, as a Legislature, can do is pass a resolution requesting the government to change our act. The Government of Canada then follows and changes the act.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question, please.

MR. D. SCOTT: Given that, do you see any possibility of a Federal Government of any stripe doing away with minority language rights in Canada? In other words, can you see a Federal Government being able to strike out the rights of the English language minority in Quebec, or the French language minority in New Brunswick, or in Manitoba? Can you see that being feasible for a Federal Government to make such of a change?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: Once the need is no longer there, then I see no reason why it cannot be changed or should not be changed. I think the need is much greater to make English the official language right now than the need to entrench both French and English into our Constitution.

MR. D. SCOTT: Who determines need, the majority or the minority whose rights are protected for that service?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: I'm not quite sure if I understood the question quite right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Scott, could you rephrase the question?

MR. D. SCOTT: You just stated, I believe, that when the need is no longer there, the Francophone community in Manitoba is telling us, there is a need, and they want to be able to have services as provided for under The Manitoba Act from their government. You are saying to them that they don't have the need. Who tells that need? Is it the English-speaking majority, or do the people whose minority rights are protected determine when they want to give up that right?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: I suspect that the need that the Franco-Manitoban Society is telling us is there is being prompted by a campaign from the Federal Government at this present time. I think there is no doubt about it. The willingness of the Prime Minister to try to get the Opposition Leader and Ed Broadbent into his camp on this issue shows the enthusiasm and zeal that they have to push this thing through in Manitoba.

I kind of think that we are being used as pawns in that game. Otherwise, I don't see Trudeau going and trying to get the opposition together with him in an agreement on anything right now. Why the real desire

to have Manitoba bilingual when the people of Manitoba, by and large, aren't interested, could care less whether it is or not except for maybe a handful of people?

MR. D. SCOTT: Just as a final comment and question then, you do not believe that there is any demand by the Francophone community in Manitoba for service in French. Is that what you're saying?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: I'm not saying, there isn't any. There is some. We can't argue that there isn't any.

MR. D. SCOTT: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions?
Mr. Graham.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Reeve Sigurdson, you have stated that you would prefer that the Bilodeau case go to court, and the province live with the Supreme Court decision that might be rendered in that case. Is that correct?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: I believe I said that I don't think that a decision of the Supreme Court would go as far as the amendments that are being proposed.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Well, Mr. Chairman, the proposed amendment that we have here in this resolution, I believe, states that, instead of 4,500 statutes, only 300 or 400 would have to be translated. If the Province of Manitoba is in agreement with that, if the Society Franco-Manitoban is in agreement with that, and if the Federal Government is in agreement with that, do you think a Supreme Court would broaden the scope of required translation above and beyond what the province, the Federal Government and the Society Franco-Manitoban are already in agreement on?

MR. R. SIGURDSON: I don't think so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions?

MR. H. GRAHAM: No further questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Sigurdson, on behalf of the committee, I'd like to thank you very much for appearing here today.

MR. R. SIGURDSON: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Velma Adamek. Velma Adamek, please. Karl Lange, please. Karl Lange.

MR. T. HOFFMAN: I am Ted Hoffman from the Local Government District of Grahamville, and I'm reading this brief on behalf of Karl Lange as he was unable to attend.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What was your name again sir?

MR. T. HOFFMAN: Ted Hoffman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hoffman?

MR. T. HOFFMAN: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please proceed.

MR. T. HOFFMAN: Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, I am pleased to be here today to present the brief on the very important matter of French Languages Services for Manitoba.

I am a farmer in Moosehorn district, and I am here today representing my own views and concerns on this matter. My ethnic background is German, and I am married to a woman whose ethnic background is Ukrainian. Both of these are minorities in Manitoba population. Because we belong to minority ethnic backgrounds, I feel compelled to be here to support our Manitoba Government and the resolution they are proposing for French Language Services. Let me explain.

In 1870, when Manitoba became a province, our ancestors declared that there would be two official languages. Now more than 100 years later, the French-speaking people of Manitoba are a minority. Services in their language is their right, not merely their privilege. If therefore, we deny them as a minority their right, other minorities like Germans, Ukrainians, and Natives haven't got a chance. I am not suggesting that ethnic groups be given the legal right for language services. I am suggesting, however, that if we want our particular cultural contribution to be kept alive in this province, we shall receive very little encouragement and support if we develop an attitude of opposing minorities. So I say, let not the English-speaking majority have their way in this matter. Let us reaffirm the right of the French-speaking minority and, by so doing, protect the rights and privileges of the minorities. Remembering that German and Ukrainian schools were closed in 1916, we know how possible and maybe even probable it is to stamp out ethnic minorities in the province, and that is just what I don't want to see happen.

Another point I wish to make is simply this. Let us support our Manitoba Government and the resolution they are proposing as the only sensible alternative to a situation brought upon us by a person who is threatening to take to the Supreme Court of Canada his case against English-only written law in Manitoba. It seems highly ridiculous to me that people who say they are against French Language Services in Manitoba would oppose the resolution, which is intended to limit French Language Services in the province.

If Mr. Bilodeau's case goes to the Supreme Court, we may very well end up with much more French in the province than we will if the resolution of the Manitoba Government is passed. If you are opposed to any, you might better support the less than the more. There will be less as a result of the resolution; more if the Supreme Court rules the matter.

I conclude by saying that I strongly support the proposed resolution of our Manitoba Government for the reasons I have outlined. Karl Lange, Moosehorn, Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Hoffman, for reading Mr. Lange's brief. Are you prepared to answer any questions? Did you discuss it with him?

MR. T. HOFFMAN: Well I do feel much of the same.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't know if any members have questions, but, if you are prepared to try to answer them, I'm sure members would appreciate it.

MR. T. HOFFMAN: I will try.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions from members of the committee for Mr. Hoffman?

Mr. Doern.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Hoffman, just a couple of points, don't you think that the main responsibility to continue a language or a culture is up to the family or a language group, rather than the government? I mean, if you want to teach your children German and Ukrainian, do you really have to have a grant? I mean, can't that be done in the home?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Hoffman.

MR. T. HOFFMAN: I think there is such a thing as grants, if it's requested to learn other languages than French in schools.

MR. R. DOERN: I'm saying, as a parent - I assume you have some children?

MR. T. HOFFMAN: Yes.

MR. R. DOERN: Did you, yourself, teach your kids any German or Ukrainian over the years?

MR. T. HOFFMAN: I failed to do so. I didn't do any.

MR. R. DOERN: Are you familiar with the German Society of Winnipeg?

MR. T. HOFFMAN: No, not really.

MR. R. DOERN: And are you familiar with the Franco-Manitoban Society?

MR. T. HOFFMAN: No, not really.

MR. R. DOERN: Well I just wondered whether you would have heard, for example, that in one instance the Franco-Manitoban Society . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The purpose of questions is to seek clarification, not provide additional information.

MR. R. DOERN: Fine. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions? Questions from other members for Mr. Hoffman? Seeing none, Mr. Hoffman, thank you very much for reading Mr. Lange's brief here today.

Mr. Mike Taczynski. Mr. Taczynski please.

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Mike Taczynski, and I reside at Gypsumville.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, all my life I have had a serene and peaceful existence. Being a citizen of this province and a member of its society,

I always felt that I would not be fulfilling my duty if I did not participate in its political and social life. So I participated fully. I follow the activities in the Legislature. I read extensively and generally keep myself well-informed. We have seen some very good legislation passed since the party of so-called free enterprise, greed and exploitation were thrown out on their ear out of the Legislature. The point at issue is the inalienable right of the people of this province to speak in the language of their choice in either of two official languages of our country.

When our province was formed one of the fundamental rights of its people was the right to express themselves in either French or English. This situation existed until 1897 when the English-speaking government to some extent restricted the use of French. In 1916, the use of French was totally abolished and the French-speaking citizens who had been communicating with other citizens in French were denied that right.

Talk about freedom, let's stand back and look at the situation. Citizens of this province who speak French have been speaking it since time immemorial. They may be fluent in English, but there is a difference in the words of a farmer from Giroux. "I have a feeling that I don't quite belong when I have to use English. I feel just a little bit awkward, I've been speaking French for ages and it comes as naturally to me as English comes to you." Now put yourselves in his place. How would it be if you were denied the right to speak the tongue that your mother spoke to you from the day you were born, except that it's English in your case? I know it's difficult, but try. Now you know how it would feel.

We live in one province. Our parents came from four corners of the earth. They speak a myriad of tongues and the greatest favour we could do for each other is accord each other the freedom to dream, to think, to speak and still accept each other as a fellow Canadian without the slightest hint that he's something different. That's how I feel.

The hardest thing to break amidst the population is the thinking that "we conquered the French and they should speak English." This would be acceptable if this was a dictatorship, but we're telling everybody that this is a democracy and it would look somewhat awkward if we imposed the use of English on our French-speaking citizens. In those distant days of 1759, the English conquerers of Canada were magnanimous enough to let the citizens of the country speak their own tongue, can't we do at least that much now?

I would like to think that the days of 1759 are gone; that we live in a new world, a more tolerant world where we don't force our will on other people. What was accepted in 1759 is not accepted now, especially as our French speaking citizens are not conquered people but free citizens. It would be my hope that as people live together in communities over a period of time, a long period of time, I have to concede, that they will get used to each other, get used to the sound of different speech and accept and tolerate their neighbours, even if they do speak a different language.

What triggered this whole issue off is a pending case in the judicial process where a man demands that certain acts be written in French. The association of Franco-Manitobans offered not to proceed with the case

if the Government of Manitoba pledge constitutional right to the French-speaking people of Manitoba that we will have the right to use French in public institutions where there is need for it.

The Conservative Party decided to grab this as an issue to improve its image which had deteriorated a great deal due to the circus antics of its leader and his cohorts in the Legislature resulting in total loss of respect for them in the population. They were looking for an issue that would arouse emotions and they pounced on this, that their vicious opposition will arouse hostility, didn't seem to worry them as long as it directed public attention from their dismal performance in the Legislature.

And here I want to point out the inconsistency of the Conservative stand. As well they insist that the Legislature is supreme. They are determined that the Legislature will have no hand in solving this problem and are insisting that the whole matter should be left to the courts. But their obstruction has only one purpose. Sometime in the future if the Francophone rights were not imbedded in the Constitution a Conservative government could simply abrogate these rights and we would be back in 1879 and 1916. Their opponents, through this legislation, amongst other things, claim that if you give in to the French, you have a proliferation of languages in our province. One of the things that they overlook is that as people have command of more than one language, they become more proficient in all languages automatically and the cultural and educational level of their population would be higher.

I wonder what Sterling Lyon will do now that his federal leader has openly proclaimed his support for the equality of the two official languages. The parliament's supreme issue here after all is said and done is the unity and tranquility of our country. If the Manitoba Government yielded to the dissension fostered by the Conservatives that would have repercussions in other parts of the country such as Quebec where an English-speaking minority occupies a position reverse of the French minority here. Don't you think that the whole Quebec would be watching what we do here?

By this agreement with the Franco-Manitoban organization, the Government of Manitoba is saving the province \$9 to \$11 million, which would be the sum that would be spent if there was no agreement and the case went through all the stages of litigation until it wound up before the Supreme Court. The turmoil created by the opposition to this legislation poses a great danger to our province and also to our country. The sooner we face this issue with good will and tolerance, the better. Our country's future may be at stake.

Respectfully submitted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Taczynski. Questions for Mr. Taczynski from members of the committee?
Mr. Graham.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Through you to Mr. Taczynski, Mr. Taczynski, in your brief, you said that you do a great deal of reading on political matters, I presume, and on the affairs of State and you read the Hansards and all the rest of it. Have

you read Mr. Lyon's speech which he gave when this resolution was first introduced in the Legislature?

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: Yes, I did read it thoroughly.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Taczynski, I also like to read. Being a farmer, quite often I read the Grain News, which is a magazine put out by the United Grain Growers. There is a column in there that is written by a Mr. Mike Taczynski. Is that the same person?

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: Yes.

MR. H. GRAHAM: That column is entitled, "The Report from the Left," is it?

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Taczynski, I appreciate that column very much because I think, if we added that column to the brief that you have presented here today, we might have a much broader understanding of the person that has made the brief. I would like to ask you if your concerns today in this very important matter that is before this committee are concerns that are based on the need of the French community in Manitoba, or are they political concerns that are raised by yourself?

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: I thought I emphasized in my brief that it's natural for a person that has been speaking his or her native language to feel most comfortable in that language. Nothing can ever take its place.

I have to admit something else in my own mental makeup. There was a time when I used to pray to God, "Good Lord, make it so that I could speak English as well as I speak Ukrainian." Now I phrase my prayer in the reverse order, "Good Lord, make it so that I speak Ukrainian as well as I can speak English."

MR. H. ENNS: Why don't you pray for French?

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: This particular farmer in Giroux was very sincere, and you can't hold it against him for having spoken French all his life. It's a French-speaking community, and he feels more comfortable in French than he does in English, the same as I feel more comfortable in English now than I do in Ukrainian.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to assure you, Mr. Taczynski, that all members of this committee believe that everybody that appears before them are very sincere and earnest in their considerations that they put before us. That's why we are here to listen to them. It was not with a sense of frivolity or anything that I asked you those questions. I know the sincerity with which you have always spoken, but I wanted to know whether it was primarily a political concern that you had or whether it was a concern for the French-speaking people.

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: I am animated by only one single objective, that everyone of us, you and I and the rest of this audience, have the widest freedom to speak the language that they desire.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions by members?
Mr. Malinowski.

MR. D. MALINOWSKI: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask Mr. Taczynski, how many languages do you speak?

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: I speak Ukrainian, Polish and a bit of English.

MR. D. MALINOWSKI: Thank you. Mr. Taczynski, you mentioned something about 1916, that French language was eliminated from the school. Are you aware that also 118 Ukrainian schools were closed in the same year, and also approximately 3,000 Mennonites chose to leave the province in order to maintain their cultural heritage? Are you aware of that?

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: I am fully aware of that. I heard my parents discussing it years after it happened.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would point out to honourable members that the introduction of additional information does not assist in clarifying the brief.
Further questions?

MR. D. MALINOWSKI: A further question, do you believe a full implementing this Section 23 of The Manitoba Act to our Constitution, that something like that which occurred in 1916 won't repeat again?

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: I am very much afraid of it. If some time in the future a Conservative Government is elected, I have absolutely no doubt in this world that they would abolish the right of the French-speaking people to speak their own language unless the Constitution could stymie it.

MR. D. MALINOWSKI: Okay. Ukrainian spoken here.

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: Ukrainian spoken here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions for Mr. Taczynski?
Mr. Enns.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I too appreciate our witness's long interest in politics. You might remember, Sir, who was the government in 1916 when certain language rights, specific education rights, were withdrawn?

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: Norris, a Liberal Government.

MR. H. ENNS: It was a Liberal Government?

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: Yes.

MR. H. ENNS: You would recall that in early 1960, the first serious efforts to restoration of French language rights in education were restored. Who would have been the government at that time?

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: The Conservative Government.

MR. H. ENNS: Under Mr. Roblin?

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: Yes.

MR. H. ENNS: It was also a Conservative Government that brought language instruction in French into the educational system. Was that not the case, Mr. Taczynski?

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: There was some use of French before that.

MR. H. ENNS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions for Mr. Taczynski by members of the committee? Seeing none, Mr. Taczynski, thank you very much for your presentation here this afternoon.

MR. M. TACZYNSKI: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In case members were wondering why I skipped Item No. 5, it was asked to be removed from the list as well as Item No. 9. I'll now call No. 10. Margaret Smith, please. Margaret Smith.

John Cochrane. John Cochrane, please.

MR. J. COCHRANE: Members of the committee, I'm not here representing a group. I'm simply representing my own viewpoint, as I have been asked to do. The reason that I felt that I had to do so is because we hear a great deal of talk in the media about people who are in opposition to the present legislation, and I think that it's necessary, therefore, for people who do support the legislation to speak out.

In 1870, of course, Manitoba would not have become a province if it were not for the actions of Manitobans led by Francophones. They fought not only to prevent Manitoba coming into the country as a governed territory, but also for their own language rights. As a result, they got a Constitution which granted them those rights.

In 1890, as soon as the government was able to finagle the situation around and get enough votes to find themselves in a powerful enough position, they immediately reneged on those promises, and passed the law which went directly counter to the intent of the 1870 legislation.

Throughout the years then, the Franco-Manitobans had to struggle to maintain their language and did, I think, an excellent job in that struggle. We all know the stories probably of how books in the French language were banned from schools, and it was necessary to almost smuggle books into the school and hide them when the superintendent or rather the inspectors came around in order that some French language could be maintained. This is the kind of struggle, this is the kind of background that has led to the present time.

Finally, after these years of struggle, Franco-Manitobans have come to the point where they have said, we are not putting up with this injustice any longer. These are our rights. Even though we are a minority, we are entitled to rights as a minority. These rights are ours in law. Therefore, they took to the courts.

In view of the decisions that have come down from the Supreme Court, it is pretty clear, I think - I'm not

a lawyer, but I think it's pretty clear what the kind of decision would be; that it would have, in fact, been a decision which would have been very expensive for Manitoba, and perhaps even disruptive.

The worst possible scenario, of course, would be that Manitoba's laws would all be disallowed. That, of course I would think, would probably be not very likely, but it exists. The Manitoba Government then faced the choice of either fighting that through the courts or, recognizing that right was on the side of the Franco-Manitoban community, negotiating a settlement which could be lived with by both sides.

The result is, in its original form I think, something that can be lived with, certainly as far as I'm concerned. A number of people, I'm sure, agree that it is a sensible, simple course of action. In fact, I often find myself wondering why in the world there is any opposition to what is simply a method of implementing what should have been done 100 years ago.

One of the reasons that immediately comes up, and I hear it coming up often when people present their viewpoints - they present sort of rational reasons why but then, sneaking into the background, comes this almost paranoid, racist attitude that somehow the French are out to get us, and that we've got to defend ourselves against these terrible people led by Pierre Elliott Trudeau, the original devil incarnate. I don't know if you can answer that kind of an argument. It has its own logic, its own reasons, its own rationale, and you can't really deal with that in any kind of rational way other than simply to say, identify it as what it is, racism.

Other people state that we should leave this to the courts, since the courts will have a nice sensible decision. I've been sitting here for awhile. I heard Mr. Graham suggest that, if this is what the Franco-Manitoban Society and the Manitoba Government have agreed to, then surely the courts won't go any further than that. Well if we leave it to the courts, all I can say is that I'm glad that the people who would make such a suggestion are not in government, because I'd hate to think of what other ways they would find to waste my tax money, fighting something that should not be fought in the first place.

Other objections have been raised that it should not be, in fact, embedded in the Constitution. They raised the spectre of endless court battles. Well the Winnipeg Free Press, which is not exactly known as a pro-government newspaper, has dealt with that in an editorial in which it simply points out the reality that similar promises - in fact, the exact same wording - exists in the present Canadian Constitution, and similar promises of even more extensive nature are given to the Province of New Brunswick. We don't exactly have a swarm of cases presented to them as a result of that.

I surely would hope that the people would understand, in view of the history of the Franco-Manitoban community, why Franco-Manitobans would desire that the matter be embedded in the Constitution. It is not something that they want to have tossed about like a ball and available to be taken out any time the government wishes it to be taken out. They want it to be embedded in the Constitution as a guarantee. They have the precedent. In 1870, they had the rights right in law, and it was taken away from them. But because it was in law, they were able to fight back. That, I think, is the principle upon which they wish it embedded in the Constitution, and which I would completely endorse.

I think it's necessary to protect the rights of all minorities. If we start to yield on one point, the question is: where do you draw the line? How can you defend the rights of one group to maintain its language and then say, we're going to take away what other groups already have? It seems to me that this is not a position that can be defended.

Racism today is being raised throughout the Western world. The reason is obvious because we are living in difficult economic times, and I think we must fight back wherever we see any vestige of racism. I'm not saying, of course, that all opponents of this legislation are racist, but nevertheless many of them are quite willing to allow racism to be used in the argument without specifically combating it by their own words and actions.

I think that in Manitoba, as well as in Canada, we enjoy an accident of history that allows us to be a bilingual nation, a nation that can be built out of many, a pluralism. By denying the rights of one group - and these are rights that already exist - by denying those rights, we are denying our birthright as a pluralistic society.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Cochrane. Questions for Mr. Cochrane from members of the committee?

Mr. Enns.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Cochrane, I choose to direct a question to you because it has been raised not only here at Arborg, but other meetings of this committee, the tying together of the issue before us, which after all is fairly clear - expansion of French services in Manitoba - with that of all other minority rights. Let me examine with you, what rights to Icelanders or Mennonites or Germans or Ukrainians have in our Constitution, in our system? I'm not aware of any. Can you name me any legal rights that people of those other ethnic backgrounds, other than the two founding nations, English and French, have in our country?

MR. J. COCHRANE: I don't know of any point, for example, in the Constitution where they are forbidden the use of their language, even the use of their own schools. These are rights that they have, even if they are not specifically spelled out.

My point is that if one is prepared to start taking rights away which exist in law, where do you stop? The rights of one group cannot be taken away. Then you immediately begin to start taking rights away from others.

MR. H. ENNS: I'm sorry, you didn't answer my question. The right for me as a parent to educate my children or pass on the culture that I choose to, I don't think anybody in Manitoba or in Canada or indeed in many parts of the world would take issue with. I am asking you, many proponents speaking for this resolution talk about certain rights of other ethnic minority groups. We are not talking about other ethnic minority groups here; we are talking about expansion of French rights.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you have a question?

MR. H. ENNS: My question to you is: Can you point out to me - I'm not aware of any specific rights or

obligations that the Manitoba Government or the Canadian Government has to ethnic groups belonging to the German community, of the Ukrainian community, the Jewish community, Spanish, Portuguese community. I would be interested. I think you're a reasonably astute and knowledgeable person. Can you suggest to me that I am wrong?

MR. J. COCHRANE: I think that you're missing the point. The point is that there are certain rights which the Franco-Manitoban community should enjoy in law, and this has been recognized by Supreme Court. Those rights in law which I agree with because, as I've pointed out in my initial remarks, it was the Franco-Manitobans who led this country into Confederation, and those rights must be protected. I look upon this as a protection of rights, not as an extension of rights. In the same way, I look upon the rights to educate your children in the language, to protect your culture. Those rights are not automatic.

If you don't know that, then you don't know very much history. Those rights have had to be protected. The biggest, most well-known example, perhaps, is Germany in the '40s when rights were denied to people.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the rules of the committee don't force a witness to answer the question. Allow me simply to state again, as a person of Mennonite background, I know of no rights that I have specifically guaranteed me, as does the French community correctly have under the Act of Confederation of 1870, under the amended case brought forward by the Supreme Court in 1979.

Mennonite people do not have that right. Now, that doesn't stop the Mennonite community from having their own schools, practising their own language in their churches and doing a host of things that we of the Mennonite community have done, but I fail to see the linkage. Now obviously, Mr. Chairman, the witness doesn't wish to answer that question.

I will ask the other question. What rights are being denied? I'm really baffled. I want to know what rights are being denied? We're not talking about denying anybody rights. In fact, it's often pointed out to us by members opposite that it was the Conservative administration that accepted, à la the Forest case, the Supreme Court decision that struck down the illegal act of 1890 . . .

A MEMBER: Where's your opposition?

MR. H. ENNS: . . . that at that time restored totally to Square One the initial rights granted to the Franco community society in Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question, please.

MR. H. ENNS: Why do we have to do anything to restore something that we all acknowledge is there? No action being contemplated, no matter how we look at this resolution, is taking any rights away. Even many of the spokespeople . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, order please. Order please. Mr. Enns, I have provided . . .

MR. H. ENNS: Which rights are being taken away?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. I have provided you a great deal of liberty because I appreciate that it's a very important point, the question you're wanting to ask, but you are engaging in debate with the witness.

MR. H. ENNS: I apologize.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The witness has answered the question as he chose to answer it twice. Answering the question a third time isn't going to improve the thing other than to engage in further debate. I think questions should be clarification of the information provided in the presentation.

Mr. Cochrane, do you have an answer?

MR. J. COCHRANE: If the Conservatives acknowledge then that this is what should be done, I don't understand where the problem is.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I want to assure Mr. Cochrane that we in the Conservative Party don't think there is a problem. We wouldn't be here in Arborg today discussing a problem; we would be continuing advancement of . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, order please. You're debating the matter with the witness. Do you have a question?

MR. H. ENNS: One small question, which specific rights are being withdrawn from the French community whether the resolution before us passes or doesn't pass?

MR. J. COCHRANE: The resolution attempts to put into law and put into the Constitution those rights, and specifically indicate where French Language Services can or will be extended. Without that being placed in the Constitution, where is the guarantee that it will not be removed in the future? That, I think, is what motivates a large part of the feelings of the French community. I can certainly understand that, given their experience.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, how is it then possible for Mr. Forest to set this whole country upside down on a parking ticket at the expense of some 30,000 or 40,000 of taxpayers' dollars to make sure that his rights were being respected; that that parking ticket had to be in English and French without this entrenchment, I remind you? If you are suggesting to me that the Francophone community have no rights . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, order please. Mr. Enns, again, a long preamble - that is a debate not a question. If you have questions for clarification, I would appreciate hearing them. Otherwise, I am going to be forced as your Chairman to continually call you to order.

Do you have a question, please?

MR. H. ENNS: Under what rights was it possible for Mr. Forest to have the Supreme Court decide that a whole history, 93-year history of Manitoba lawmaking is in jeopardy and the original law wrong of 1890?

Under what rights did Mr. Forest manage to establish that?

MR. J. COCHRANE: By appealing to the law of 1870, as you well know.

MR. H. ENNS: Which the law of 1870 established certain specific language rights for the Francophone community, right?

MR. J. COCHRANE: But not to the extent obviously that it was necessary, otherwise, why have we had 100 years of Franco-Manitoban struggle? Why was it necessary? It obviously was not strong enough. Obviously, more was needed.

MR. H. ENNS: One final question, the 1870 terms of condition of Confederation when Manitoba became a province provided the specific language rights in the Legislature, in the courts and the journals of the House. Nobody is suggesting that they should be diminished or be taken away. Is it fair then to say that your presentation before us is to see that those French services are considerably expanded in the form of this resolution, just so we understand this?

MR. J. COCHRANE: I think that it is right that a French-speaking Manitoban should be able to communicate with his government in his own language.

MR. H. ENNS: Okay, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Cochrane, we don't have a debate here really. I want to assure you, the Conservative Party accepts that position. Sterling Lyon accepted that position in 1979, after the Forest case. Is it fair to sum up your presentation as being not satisfied with that 1870 position, but wishing to see French services considerably advanced beyond that?

MR. J. COCHRANE: I wouldn't consider the present amendment to be considerable advancement beyond that, no.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions from members of the committee?

Mr. Brown.

MR. A. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question to Mr. Cochrane, first of all, is do you reside in this particular area?

MR. J. COCHRANE: If you define what I mean by this area, it's the Interlake; I guess I do live in the Interlake, yes.

MR. A. BROWN: You live in the Interlake area. In your opening statement you said that you came out here to express your own viewpoint, as you had been asked to do. Would you tell us who asked you to come and make a presentation?

MR. J. COCHRANE: My wife, for one. I am not now a member of the New Democratic Party, if that's the intent of your question, and it was not specifically at the urging of the New Democratic Party that I am here.

MR. A. BROWN: Are you aware at the present time that the English language is not entrenched in the Constitution of Manitoba, nor is the English community asking for entrenchment?

MR. J. COCHRANE: Considering that we are the majority, I don't really think that's very much of an issue; it's only an issue where a language is a minority. Minorities need protection, majorities don't.

MR. A. BROWN: And it's on that basis then that you think that the French language should be entrenched?

MR. J. COCHRANE: Yes.

MR. A. BROWN: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions from members of the committee?
Mr. Scott.

MR. D. SCOTT: Mr. Cochrane, you obviously empathize with the Francophone minority in the province and have, I think, as a non-Francophone - at least I believe you're not a Francophone - have sort of tried to put yourself a bit in their boots, and recognize the problems that they have as a minority trying to maintain rights that they feel that they do have, is that not a fair assessment?

MR. J. COCHRANE: As I understand your question, yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Scott, could you rephrase the question without a long preamble?

MR. D. SCOTT: Given what the impact of the proposed resolution is, in following Mr. Enns's questions, when the rights are already existent in the Province of Manitoba, then this could maybe be seen to be somewhat educational even in a way of recognizing the rights that Francophones already have in the province?

MR. J. COCHRANE: Certainly, there's no other reason.

MR. D. SCOTT: There has been analogy made in the past - and I'll finish the question with the analogy, and ask you if you agree with it - but in minorities, in general, where they have rights that are not normally addressed and accepted by the majority, when those minorities stand up for those rights there is usually a backlash by the majority towards that minority for standing up for its rights. Perhaps, and I don't mean this at all to be a crass comparison, but do you feel that there could be a comparison made between this situation here, and with the civil rights movement in the U.S. in the earlier days where people, as long as the blacks went to the back of the bus, didn't recognize them, but when they sat up front of the bus and demanded their rights that they did notice them and reacted against it?

MR. J. COCHRANE: Perhaps a trifle over-extended but, yes, in the main the analogy is certainly there.

MR. D. SCOTT: Thank you, sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions for Mr. Cochrane from members of the committee?
Mrs. Smith.

HON. M. SMITH: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I am wondering if Mr. Cochrane would agree that what Mr. Bilodeau was seeking was a greater degree of protection for minority French language rights in Manitoba, and what the proposed resolution offers is that greater degree of protection through entrenchment, a more reasonable package of statutes to be translated at a lesser cost with some federal dollars to assist, and a clear timetable for the translation of those statutes; and that is really the package under debate.

MR. J. COCHRANE: That would certainly seem to be his intention. I can't go into Mr. Bilodeau's head, but that would certainly seem to be his intention, to clearly establish that there had to be translation of these documents on a clear-cut timetable, and that the language receive a definite protection, which it did not seem to have sufficient protection.

HON. M. SMITH: Would you also care to comment on how the other minority groups see the connection to the French language rights issue, that it has been more a response on an attitudinal level, that they feel if there's a disregard for minority rights in one area that there will be an attitudinal return, if you like, to the old looking down upon people who were not English speaking by birth?

MR. J. COCHRANE: I think I tried to present that idea in my brief, I guess I didn't place it forward too well. As I say, the actions against one minority group can lead to actions against other minority groups, you can't draw the line at one and say, we'll take the rights away from this group, and that's as far as we're going to go. The struggle for minority rights is one, and you can't separate out one group and think you can get away with it.

HON. M. SMITH: That's fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions by members of the committee?
Mr. Malinowski.

MR. D. MALINOWSKI: Yes, I would like to ask, do you believe if this resolution to amend Section 23 of The Manitoba Act would be passed, do you think it will help other minority groups in Manitoba?

MR. J. COCHRANE: I think because it represents a victory over what - I don't like the term - the backlash, the feeling of English first, we're the greatest. I think the passage of this bill will represent a victory in that sense and could make the way easier for other groups to defend their own rights. Putting it the other way, of course, a defeat against this bill, particularly in view of some of the racist views that have been brought forward out of this would mean a very serious setback for the rights of minorities.

MR. D. MALINOWSKI: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions by members? Mr. Kovnats.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Une question. Pouvez-vous présenter votre discours en français?

MR. J. COCHRANE: Non, mon français est très mauvais.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Merci.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions? Seeing none, Mr. Cochrane thank you very much for your presentation this afternoon.

MR. J. COCHRANE: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Brian Lang, please; Mr. Lang. Mr. Robert Dubois.

Mr. Dubois, I see from your brief it is in French, will you be presenting it in French?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Yes, it will be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you mind the Committee's indulgence for a few minutes then, while we allow members to place the receivers on, and also to offer them to the audience?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Certainly not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, the technician beside the simultaneous translation booth has receivers, which you can sign out so you can follow the translation of Mr. Dubois's brief or any other French briefs which may be presented today. If you don't have them now, you may sign them out. The committee will take a short recess.

(SHORT RECESS)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would ask all members again to please take their seats. Please proceed.

MR. R. DUBOIS: Members of the committee, ladies and gentlemen, I appreciate very much this opportunity today to make my presentation in French to a Committee of the Legislature. Somebody made reference here of their ancestry and their arrival in Canada, I would like to mention, at this point, that I am very proud of the fact that the Dubois family first came upon the shores of Canada in 1652, and that in 1980, 400 out of the 650 of us celebrated the 100th Anniversary of the arrival of first Dubois in Manitoba.

Let me say, at this point, that there were many Polish, Ukrainian, French, English, Greek, all sorts at this 100th Anniversary of the Dubois.

Et maintenant, c'est dans l'écho des paroles prononcées par mes collègues du conseil d'administration de la Société franco-manitobaine que je viens aujourd'hui vous livrer quelques mots.

De prime abord, l'on voudrait conclure que tout a été dit. Toutefois, comment peut-on épuiser l'expression de la conviction intérieure d'une communauté dont la volonté et le désir de faire reconnaître ses droits se

cristallisent en une véritable qualité de la condition humaine.

M. le président, un courant revendicateur coule à l'horizon. Ce courant laisse voir que la Société franco-manitobaine n'est pas seule à vouloir voir respecter l'entente conclue le 17 mai dernier. En vérité, le même désir se manifeste de plus en plus au sein de la communauté francophone au Manitoba. D'ailleurs, comment plus vivace peut être ce désir qu'après plus de 90 ans d'injustice. Ainsi va la réalité intrinsèque d'une vraie communauté. Des gens qui s'unissent pour faire valoir leurs intérêts et désirs communs. Quoi de plus prometteur pour l'avenir que des groupes aussi divers et multiples qui s'efforcent à teinter de leur couleur, la toile socioculturelle du Manitoba futur.

Et ce Manitoba futur, que nous réserve-t-il? Si l'on en croit les propos de l'écrivain futurologue, Alvin Toffler, le Manitoba sera façonné par les effets de la troisième vague. De la fin de l'âge industriel, nous passerons à l'ère d'une société qui se démassifie. Une société qui se démassifie accordera une plus grande importance et un plus grand rôle à ses minorités, groupes multiples qui la composent. Mais là où Toffler voit dans l'avenir une place prépondérante pour les nombreuses minorités du monde, c'est dans la promesse d'une civilisation mieux adaptée aux problèmes, aux ressources et aux techniques du siècle prochain.

Nous parlons d'une société à la fine pointe de la technologie et de l'innovation sociale, société axée sur l'individu et les minorités. Certains craignent que cette recherche de la diversité sociale soit le début de la fragmentation et de la balcanisation de notre société. Ce sont là des croyances naïves de ceux qui se portent obstinément défenseurs de la civilisation du passé et qui voient les désirs des minorités comme étant de l'égoïsme menaçant.

Mais Toffler ne tarda pas à faire le point et je cite: "La punacité grandissante des minorités est le reflet entre autres choses des impératifs inhérents à un nouveau système de production dont l'existence même requiert une société beaucoup plus variée, plus colorée, plus ouverte et plus disparate que toutes celles que l'on a connues par le passé," dit-il. La troisième vague donnera donc lieu à la diversité d'où une évolution sociale et une nouvelle démocratie du 21e siècle reposant sur les minorités. Mais l'évolution sociale est présentement bloquée par ce mythe qui veut qu'une diversité croissante aggrave automatiquement les conflits dans la société. Cela est faux et Toffler veut faire comprendre que sous réserves d'aménagements sociaux adéquats que permettront les ressources et les techniques du siècle prochain la diversité peut être garante d'une civilisation paisible et stable.

Cessons ce jeu d'accusations d'égoïsmes envers les minorités qui se manifestent. Cessons cette jalousie aveugle nourrie par le statu quo d'une ancienne civilisation révolue. Toffler poursuit la discussion comme suit, et je cite: "La solution réside dans la mise en place de nouveaux dispositifs créatifs et dynamiques prenant la diversité en compte et la légitimant d'institutions nouvelles aptes à réagir au Désiderata, changeant des minorités fluctuantes qui ne cessent de se multiplier." L'auteur que nous citons serait certes le premier à condamner le plébiscite sur les droits d'une minorité que se propose de tenir la ville de Winnipeg.

Pour le futurologue qui a acquis une perception réfléchie de l'avenir, le vote et la recherche d'une

nationalité n'est qu'un cérémonial archaïque élaboré par des primitifs en mal de communication.

Un plébiscite sur les droits constitutionnels d'une minorité est donc une triste régression dans une société qui s'acharne à contrecarrer son évolution naturelle. Pourtant les conjonctures actuelles créées par les brillantes innovations techniques et la conscience collective augmentée du 21^e siècle donneront progressivement lieu à cette nouvelle civilisation. Les individus qui composeront cette nouvelle civilisation doivent donc s'efforcer dès maintenant à moderniser le système dans son intégralité, afin de renforcer le rôles des différentes minorités. Ces minorités devront même être encouragées à gérer davantage leurs propres affaires et d'en définir les buts à long terme. Selon Toffler, cela pourra créer chez certains groupes un sens de la communauté et de l'identité, tout en soulageant des organismes gouvernementaux surchargés d'une tâche nullement indispensable.

Mais si nous avons voulu aujourd'hui vous parler de l'avenir, M. le président, c'est parce que nous croyons que l'entente conclue le 17 mai atteindra sa valeur ultime dans le contexte de notre société manitobaine du futur. Nous croyons, M. le président, que cette entente tissée à partir de la riche réalité historique du Manitoba réserve l'épanouissement intégrale des ces effets pour les générations qui nous suivront dans la société de l'avenir.

Par surcroît, cette entente qui a la faveur de l'histoire et de l'avenir de cette province est juste et équitable pour la population entière. Elle fut négociée autour d'un principe de base auquel nous attribuons une importance qu'autrui ne pourra jamais déloger de nos plus fermes convictions intérieures. Ce principe de base, M. le président, est celui qui dicte que les langues officielles du Manitoba sont le français et l'anglais. Ces mêmes convictions intérieures nous assurent que ce principe est un élan porteur de la tolérance et du respect, qualités dont voudra certes s'emparer l'avenir de cette province. Ainsi, le Manitoba sera le précurseur d'une transformation sociale qui attirera la jalousie de tous les coins de ce pays.

Merci.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Dubois. Questions for Mr. Dubois from members of the Committee?

Mr. Doern.

MR. R. DUBOIS: I am prepared to answer the questions in English so there will be no need for the . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Mr. Doern.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Dubois, I guess one of the main questions I'd like you to try to answer is this, and it's not easy to put briefly, but perhaps you could make some clarifying remarks. I guess it has been said many times that it is difficult for a person who is French-speaking to continue their culture and language, but the question I want to put to you is: is this any more difficult than that problem which is confronted by Ukrainian-Canadians, German-Canadians, Polish-Canadians, Icelandic-Canadians, etc., etc? Almost all of these people simply, by an accident of birth, have sometimes been called names; some have suffered job

discrimination, real or discerned; some have had to change their names because of what they considered to be social, or political, or economic pressure; and some have felt that they were regarded as second-class citizens. So I simply say, in general, prior to a question, people of different ethnic backgrounds have felt that it has been difficult for them to sometimes just live in our society, and I am asking you what special or additional problems are felt by French-Canadians, or French-speaking Canadians?

MR. R. DUBOIS: I don't believe it is easy for any minority to preserve its culture or language. I believe I am already being favoured in that Canada has been recognized to be a bilingual country, and that I do have access to radio and TV in French. It certainly must be much more difficult for people of Ukrainian or German, or whatever descent. I recognize these assets for my community, my Franco community. I am quite pleased to accept those, but it is certainly does not make it any easier either, as I well know.

MR. R. DOERN: Aren't there some advantages that are experienced by Franco-Manitobans that are not available to other ethnic communities; for example, there are constitutional guarantees; there is fairly extensive funding from Federal and Provincial Governments - I don't know what your figures are, my figures are that the Franco-Manitoban Society . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Order please.

MR. R. DOERN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I am asking . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. It is not up to the member to provide information, but for the member to ask a question for clarification, or ask the witness to expand on his remarks.

MR. R. DOERN: Well, that is what I am asking. I am asking whether or not there are advantages that are accrued to the Franco-Manitoban community that are not available to other ethnic or cultural groups, for example . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Dubois, can you answer that?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Are you speaking in general terms, Mr. Doern, or speaking constitutional aspects?

MR. R. DOERN: Constitutional and in terms of federal and provincial grants.

MR. R. DUBOIS: Yes, the Société Franco-Manitobaine, the Franco-Manitoban Society is receiving subsidies from the Federal Government; yes, there is a Federal Constitution, and there is a Manitoba Act of 1870 which guarantees, or was supposed to guarantee until 1890, special rights which were deemed to be special at that time, but which by now - spontaneously the word "special" comes up to my head, even though it shouldn't be that way.

MR. R. DOERN: For example, does the Franco-Manitoban Society have a budget of the order of \$650,000 or more?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Yes, that is correct.

MR. R. DOERN: I don't know, these are my figures, but not necessarily yours, is it true that the grants, federal and provincial, to the Francophone community in Manitoba total some \$10 million per year?

MR. D. SCOTT: Point of order, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. D. SCOTT: Mr. Chairman, the purpose of the hearings is to receive briefs from the public, for us to ask questions of clarification. Sometimes we have a bit of preamble - the Member for Lakeside and I have a bit of trouble with that once in a while. But these questions, Sir, have had absolutely nothing to do with the brief that Mr. Dubois has presented to us. Mr. Dubois concentrated on Alvin Toffler's perception of the world in the future, and the implications that that has for all minority groups and what not, and here Mr. Doern is trying to get into the so-called politics - if I could use the word - of the Société Franco-Manitobaine. I just do not think it is in order at all for these hearings for him to go off on these kinds of tangents to harass the public.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To the same point of order, Mr. Doern.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I am not in the least interested in Mr. Toffler's views, I am quite familiar with Mr. Toffler; I am interested in Mr. Dubois, and I want to put some questions to him, and I am attempting to ask him for clarification, whether or not there are, in fact, not some advantages that are experienced by Franco-Manitobans, as opposed to the general argument that there are difficulties and problems and burdens; that there may, in fact, be some difficulties in some areas but not in others. I am attempting to ask him some questions in regard to certain specific areas, and I think it is for him to say that he doesn't wish to answer those questions, not for Mr. Scott.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To the same point of order, Mr. Scott, then Mr. Enns.

MR. D. SCOTT: Well, Mr. Chairman, with all due respect, we could be going on forever if one wanted to go back into the details of organizations or what one perceives may be behind a brief - not even behind a brief, because I don't think his questions of budget considerations have anything to do, whatsoever, with the brief that is presented here dealing with our proposed amendment to the Canadian Constitution.

I would ask Mr. Doern, and other members of the committee, to try and keep our questions somewhat pertinent to the presentations that are made before us, and I see his questions of budgets and numbers and whatever else as having absolutely nothing to do with this brief that is before us here today.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, it has been a relatively persistent theme through many representations before this committee to establish a linkage between the rights enjoyed by the Franco-Manitoban community in

Manitoba and that of other ethnic minorities. I believe, and it was expressed very clearly just by the immediate speaker before Mr. Dubois, about expressing this linkage. I believe Mrs. Smith referred to it, perhaps more correctly, as been attitudinal, but nonetheless there is constant reference to the question of minority rights and privileges being enjoyed by all minority rights in Manitoba, and I think what Mr. Doern is attempting to establish, correctly attempting to establish, is the kind of specific rights that are being enjoyed by the Franco-Manitoban community in Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further contributions from members with regard to the point of order?

Ladies and gentlemen, I think, very clearly the examination for clarification of the position of Mr. Dubois and the Society Franco-Manitoban on how other minority rights are affected, either by this resolution or by its absence, has been the subject of questioning by members throughout the hearings process, and I certainly would have some difficulty agreeing that that style of questioning should now be ruled out of order.

I would, however, point out to members that questions with regard to budgets of the Society Franco-Manitoban and other organizations in the Province of Manitoba were answered quite extensively and thoroughly and are a matter of record in the transcripts of this committee and were asked in Winnipeg, and I don't think it is appropriate that we now confirm those figures when we have them on record from the chief officers of the association.

It would seem redundant to now pursue that from someone else, who is not the responsible officer for those figures, just as we would not ask someone from the Ukrainian Bilingual Program here in Arborg, if there is such a program, to confirm the operative figures for the overall organization in the province. So I would ask that Mr. Doern not pursue that line of questioning, but certainly the line of questioning of the impact on French-speaking Manitobans and other minorities in Manitoba is certainly in order.

Mr. Doern.

MR. R. DOERN: Are you aware, Mr. Dubois, of any other ethnic or linguistic group that has a newspaper like La Liberté which is distributed free?

MR. R. DUBOIS: I'm aware of a number of other ethnic newspapers. I'm not aware whether they're being distributed free or not.

MR. R. DOERN: Are you aware of any other ethnic or linguistic group that retains or imports constitutional experts from outside the province like Mr. Magnet?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Nope.

MR. R. DOERN: The final couple of questions I wanted to ask you about was this: can you explain the connection that is seen by some people and seems to be rather recent, a connection between the Franco-Manitoban community and the other ethnic communities in our province? Do you see your rights as identical or do you see your rights as somewhat different?

MR. R. DUBOIS: As compared to the other ethnic communities?

MR. R. DOERN: Yes. Can you explain the connection that some people make or do you think that there really isn't a connection - the fighting for your rights and your cause is one thing and their cause is another thing?

MR. R. DUBOIS: I can't help but agree with a few of my predecessors here today that there may be some connection. If the government pursues its proposed amendment to Act 23 and does entrench French rights - which I very clearly stated I feel it ought to - there could be something, certainly not clearly in the package, but in terms of attitudes towards other minority groups. I think all of Manitoba would gain from it, nobody would lose.

MR. R. DOERN: So is the strongest statement you're prepared to make that there maybe some connection - those were your words - or would you say that there is a connection?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Well, there would be no direct connection written in, but I feel that probably the Manitoban society, as a whole, would be much more open, would have a much more mature attitude towards all ethnic and cultural endeavours.

MR. R. DOERN: Can you also explain how there seems to be a more recent connection or possible connection, or suggestion of a connection now, when this didn't seem to be apparent as recently as a few years ago? This seems to be a recent argument as opposed to a historic argument in Manitoba.

MR. R. DUBOIS: Well, personally I've always felt that if Manitoba achieved its most mature level and abided by the law of 1870, I've always felt that this would be good for all of Manitoba's society, including all ethnic groups. I've always felt that way.

MR. R. DOERN: Could you explain the remarks that I believe were made by your president, that when the original deal or agreement was made with the governments, federal and provincial, that the Franco-Manitoban community or the Franco-Manitoban society got more than it asked for or more than it hoped for?

MR. R. DUBOIS: I'm not aware that he said that we got more than we asked for. I wasn't personally involved in the actual negotiation, but I was aware that it was happening, and because I have been a member of the executive of the society for two years now, I was aware. To me it simply makes it clear what Manitoba ought to do with regard to the other official language, French.

MR. R. DOERN: Can you explain how this agreement goes beyond 1870? It has been said many times that the agreement extends beyond 1870, so that the rights of 1870 are, in fact, restored or guaranteed, but that the agreement goes beyond? Can you explain what is additional in the agreement?

MR. R. DUBOIS: I don't agree that it's additional. I think that in 1870, of course there was much less government. We may be of two minds with regard to that, but there is more government and there are more

services now than there was then. Education was mostly done by religious organizations at that time and basically all there was is the Legislature and the courts at that point. But certainly what was expected at that time was that people would have a right to get service in French or English, and there was just as much to protect the English rights at that time, that it was written into the legislation. It was just as much to protect those rights as to protect French rights initially.

MR. R. DOERN: Can you see, in the Constitution or The Manitoba Act of 1870, the establishment of a specific number of positions or the entrenchment of positions or the implication that a specified number of positions would be set aside for bilingual people?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Well, in what is being proposed by the government, I certainly don't see any specific numbers being attached. What I see is specifying which levels of government would have to give service in French and certainly it's restrictive rather than being very general in nature.

MR. R. DOERN: Are you familiar with the make-up of the province in 1870 in terms of the kind of people who lived here and their linguistic abilities?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Well, I'm certainly not a historian by any stretch of the imagination, I'm a psychologist, but basically, it is my understanding that the French or French-Metis were slightly better than half of the population of Manitoba, which admittedly, was much less than it is now.

MR. R. DOERN: Is it true that a number of people in the Red River Settlement in 1870 could only speak one language, that there was several thousand people who could speak English but no French, and several thousand who could speak French but no English?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Yes, that is clear to me. There were much less educational structures at that time and certainly many people either spoke one language or the other. I'm quite personally very pleased that I can speak English and I certainly wouldn't want to deny that at any point or anywhere.

MR. R. DOERN: Can you indicate any estimate or guesstimate as to the number of Franco-Manitobans who cannot speak English?

MR. R. DUBOIS: I believe there are very few Franco-Manitobans who don't speak English, except perhaps the children, but I don't believe that's relevant to the question I brought forth today.

MR. R. DOERN: My final question, Mr. Chairman, is this: in relation to numbers, do you think that the size of the French-speaking minority in Manitoba bears any relation to the services offered, or do you see any connection or no connection to numbers?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Well, I don't believe it's a question of 6 percent versus 94 percent or 12 percent versus 88 percent. I don't think it has anything to do with that.

However, I certainly cannot see in the proposed legislation that this would mean a proliferation of positions that would have to be identified bilingual. In fact, I already know that there are many Franco-Manitobans or people who can speak French who already work for the Civil Service and actually I see very little disruption, if any at all. In fact, I don't believe there would be any disruption at all, whatsoever, if this legislation is enacted, which I believe it should be.

MR. R. DOERN: Do you see any validity to the argument that if the number of Franco-Manitobans doubled that the services might be increased, or if the number of Franco-Manitobas fell by 50 percent that the number of services might also decline?

MR. R. DUBOIS: That's a very hypothetical question. The way I read the legislation, and I'm not a jurist, seems to me that the number of positions identified would be quite minimal and basically if we should increase the 12 percent of the Manitoba population, I don't think you would need that many more identified positions anyway. Conversely, I don't think there would be any place to restrict Civil Service posts if we went down to 3 percent of the population, for instance.

MR. R. DOERN: Thank you, Mr. Dubois.

MR. R. DUBOIS: You're welcome, Mr. Doern.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: Mr. Dubois, it seems that the major point that you are making in your brief is that the official languages of Manitoba are French and English, not based on a decision that one is a majority language and one is a minority language, but both should be delivered equally to the people that need them. Is that the major point that you are making?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Yes, that is the point. The only reason, for instance, that I presented my brief today in French is because this is a committee of the Legislature. I have lived six years in Brandon, for instance, and I never thought or ever even dreamed of walking into City Hall and speaking French or demanding French services in Brandon, and I don't foresee doing that in Steinbach City Hall either, but I would expect federal services such as Manpower, which have nothing to do with this committee here today - Manpower, if I walked into my Manpower office in Steinbach, I would expect French services. Unfortunately, I live in St. Norbert, so therefore, The City of Winnipeg Act does not include St. Norbert and I would certainly dearly wish that St. Norbert would be included, which, again, has nothing to do with this committee here today.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: Thank you. Of course, St. Norbert would be included if there was significant demand and there was a central or a head office of the Provincial Government in your community. You would expect, regardless of whether you are a minority in that area, to receive the services from the Provincial Government from that office?

MR. R. DUBOIS: With regards to the Provincial Government, yes.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: With regards to this particular amendment?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Yes.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: Right. I guess the question of minority and how big a minority has to be before that is recognized. I wonder if you would consider it ludicrous considering that women are the majority in the province, if services were only available to women and not available to men because they made up the minority in the province?

MR. R. DUBOIS: I find that a very interesting question, I hope to God it never does happen, because I'm out, I think.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: So the question of 6 percent, 12 percent or what percent a group has to be before they have certain services provided to them should not be the basis, the criterion on which we base our decision, but that on whether it is required that services be provided in both languages?

MR. R. DUBOIS: To me, yes that is clear. It is not a question of 52 percent versus 48 percent. That does not mean that I am dreaming that every member of the Legislature must be bilingual. I don't foresee that ever, or certainly not in the next 15 years anyway. I simply wish for my rights to be recognized as they were originally and to obtain service in French.

MS. M. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Dubois, I understand that you are, aside from I believe an executive member of the Société franco-manitobaine, you are also associated with the educational system through the Seine River School Division, is that correct?

MR. R. DUBOIS: That is correct, yes.

MR. H. ENNS: My information on you has it that you are a psychologist.

MR. R. DUBOIS: That's right.

MR. H. ENNS: May I say that your brief reads like a psychologist, Mr. Dubois.

Mr. Dubois, having been involved in the educational system I assume for some time, would you not concur that particularly over the last 20 years now, just about 18 years, that there has been, albeit not perhaps to the satisfaction of the Franco-Manitoban Society, but steady progress in the delivery in various forms of French instruction through the school system?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Yes, Mr. Enns, I quite agree that there has been tremendous improvement. I've got three children: 16, 14 and 12 and all of them have received their instruction in French in Language Arts except for English. Therefore 25 percent of the time, they are instructed in English, the rest in French for all the other subjects. This was not the case for myself. I believe if it had not been for those improvements it would have

been impossible for my children to speak French today, as it was perhaps easier for me in 1945 than it is in 1980.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Dubois, would you further agree that the action taken by the then Conservative administration in 1978 to legalize, I suppose is an appropriate word, the first substantial financial aid to what is often referred to as private parochial schools, I prefer the term "independent schools," which of course embraced not only the French community, but various other independent schools - we have some Jewish schools, some Mennonite schools - that was a substantial further step taken in 1978 to regularize - if you like, or to acknowledge the past injustice, if you like, in your point of view - the past 90 years as a sincere and honest effort on the part of the government to recognize the minority rights, whether they be expressed in religious terms, as in some instances independent schools have, or linguistic terms.

MR. R. DUBOIS: I think the government of Mr. Roblin has been frequently applauded by members of my French community for its start in legislating or permitting French education. Certainly that was the start and I believe Bill 113 in 1970 was an improvement on that, and perhaps it's not a question of governments, but a question of a society becoming more mature that it occurred that way. As far as I'm concerned, it could have been a Conservative Government that passed a 1970 act. It was not, it was the NDP Government, but certainly Mr. Roblin, whom I have met a number of times, kicked it off very well indeed.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, through you to Mr. Dubois. The point that I am establishing with Mr. Dubois is that taken in the general context, surely it can be said that Manitoba was moving to a more harmonious relationship between the ethnic minorities of all description, but specifically the Franco-Manitobans, certainly in terms of recognition of their educational language instruction rights, and with the aid of the Federal Government in a much broader general way in terms of support of one kind of another.

Is that not a fair statement to say that we were, I would say to use a time frame, from the period of Mr. Roblin's Government on, through the Schreyer years, through Mr. Lyon's years and up and to the present time, would you not describe the graph as being one that recognized and favoured your positions as a society?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Yes, I think the curve is on the ascendant here. I think you're leading up to the question of to entrench or not to entrench, but I'll let you go on.

MR. H. ENNS: Well, Mr. Dubois, all that occurred without the necessity or the introduction of the kind of potentially - I should perhaps withdraw that word - I think it is becoming a divisive debate within the Province of Manitoba. Do you not share some concern - I won't say responsibility - but some concern about losing or interrupting that flow chart in the direction that it was heading?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Certainly, I see some things happening in Manitoba in the past four months and fortunately I was off on a five week trip, so I missed part of it. I don't like everything that's happening in Manitoba right now, and certainly it is happening because of the government's effort to redress an issue. But I agree with you, Mr. Enns, that things are improving and that the act can be passed and that Manitoba will actually grow even more from there without acrimony. Actually most of the acrimony that is present right now would disappear very quickly, I believe, and we would all live happily ever after.

MR. H. ENNS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I want to very careful how I phrase this next question. I want to assure Mr. Dubois that it's not meant to offend, but simply to perhaps point out how and why apprehension and fears are raised in public generally. Your office - I understand you work out of Ste. Anne. This committee is going to be sitting in Ste. Anne tomorrow and you could have made your presentation to this committee to us tomorrow in Ste. Anne and maybe have allowed a few more representatives from the Interlake area to make presentations to us. After all . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question please. Mr. Scott on a point of order.

MR. D. SCOTT: Mr. Chairman, let's not get into clarification of a question. We're sitting both this afternoon and again this evening. There's no question of time limitation put on people and I don't think it's proper for Mr. Enns to go after someone who has come in to make a presentation and give their expression of his viewpoint, and to say that he doesn't have the right to appear before the committee. It's quite extraneous to the whole point and I do not think it's pertinent to the questions of clarification of Mr. Dubois's brief.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Scott, I appreciate your raising the point of order. I'm not prepared to hear further discussion of the right of any Manitoban to appear before this committee at any location. That's an affront to the citizens of the province, and as your Chairman, I think I have a right to protect the rights of Manitobans to be heard at this committee. Anyone can choose to be heard at any location. That is their right. We have not segregated the province into specific boundaries for specific locations. Do you have a further question, Mr. Enns?

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.

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

MR. R. DOERN: I think there is a distinction to be made between a citizen and an organization. It is a fact that there are two organizations that are appearing at every location, Manitoba 23 and the Franco-Manitoban Society.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Enns do you have a further question?

MR. H. ENNS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I thought I tried to avoid this difficulty, because I did not raise the issue

for the reasons that you are suggesting. One of the concerns that Manitobans have, and we've heard the Mayor of Arborg say to us today, well of course it's not going to affect this area because we have very little or no French-speaking people in this area, but the concern is that with entrenched rights that people will move around to create these kind of circumstances. That is being suggested and that is being practised in some instances. I suggest very sincerely to you, Mr. Dubois, that in a sense, the Franco-Manitoban Society is presenting your brief here in Arborg today, knowing that they're not going to be that many briefs presented from that point of view, to relay the information to this committee of the kind of broader support in the Interlake area, than there is for your position. I say that without bias, without prejudice. I simply . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Do you have a question?

MR. H. ENNS: My question to Mr. Dubois is: why would he not have saved this presentation and made it in his hometown at Ste. Anne tomorrow where the committee is meeting?

MR. R. DUBOIS: I believe there is enough time here in Arborg. I have no intention of moving to Arborg. I'm quite happy living in St. Norbert. My wife is mandated by her own parents' committee for école Noel-Ritchot to make a presentation in Ste. Anne tomorrow. But, I think, you are quite aware, or certainly I'm not sure that it's always been the same members on the committee in every town, but I think you're quite aware that the Société Franco-Manitobaine has made a presentation in each town.

I believe one of the objects of this exercise was to open oneself to other points of view, and to learn what is law and what is Manitoba, what is its nature, and the SFM chose to take this as an opportunity to reiterate its point, and it is certainly not to steal any time from Interlake citizens, or Thompson citizens, or Brandon citizens.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Dubois, I accept that that is a very legitimate role for the Society to play. In doing so, would you not also agree with me, as a member of this committee, that when the Committee of the Legislature sets out on an exercise of the kind that we are just going through, and we specifically say now we want to hear from the different regions of the province - this committee has been up to Thompson, to Swan River, to Ste. Rose du Lac, we've been in Brandon, Morden, now in Arborg, tomorrow in Ste. Anne - the purpose for the committee, of course, is to try, as best we can, to hear from these different localities the different views of the communities that are located in and around those centres that we chose to have our committee meetings.

Now my question is: will you at least concede with me, as I have conceded with you, that you have an educational role to present, as well, at these meetings and you have every right; that is not being challenged at all, but that there then is also the possibility of some distortion in terms of the committee's point of view if we hear Société Franco-Manitobaine briefs at all these locations, and sometimes at the expense of hearing

other briefs that might have been coming from those locations? Mr. Chairman, I simply ask that question.

MR. R. DUBOIS: I believe that in Arborg everybody will get a chance. I understand there are 25 presentations, of which there are 15 already gone forth.

I am quite pleased that many points of view were presented today, not just the SFM's way of looking at things. I have heard a number of favourable presentations to our point of view, or to the government's point of view; I have heard some less favourable presentations to the government's presentation.

I quite concede to you, Mr. Enns, that the SFM, in its going to every community where there were public hearings, brings forth always that point, but I believe nobody is being squelched. As a matter of fact, I know full well that there are at least 90 briefs to be presented in Ste. Anne tomorrow, most of which are favourable to the Franco-Manitoban aspirations, as presented by the government.

I don't believe that there will be 90 heard tomorrow. It's tomorrow that there's a problem, not today.

MR. H. ENNS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As a point of information to the committee, I should advise that the committee has exhausted its list at every location to date so far. I don't know if we'll succeed here in Arborg this evening, but the committee has succeeded in hearing all those who wanted to be heard at every location to date, if there is any question in anyone's mind about that.

Mr. Malinowski.

MR. D. MALINOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Dubois, obviously you speak fluently both French and English. In respect to your brief, I have a question. I would like to ask you, are you supporting this proposed resolution on the basis of lack of communication in French language, or on the basis of constitutional rights?

MR. R. DUBOIS: On the basis of?

MR. D. MALINOWSKI: Constitutional rights.

MR. R. DUBOIS: Or?

MR. D. MALINOWSKI: Or on the lack of communication in French language.

MR. R. DUBOIS: On the basis of constitutional rights, basically.

MR. D. MALINOWSKI: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions for Mr. Dubois from members of the committee.

Mr. Graham.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, through you to Mr. Dubois, Mr. Dubois you were very careful in your presentation to refer to the agreement of May 17th, and you made no mention

of the proposed amendments that the government has put forward on September 6th. Have you had the opportunity to look at those amendments that were presented to this committee on September 6th?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Yes, we have. It is the SFM's position that we don't like the amendments to the amendments of September 6th. We believe it is a clear loss to our community, and we also believe that the Franco-Manitobans, in general, are quite in agreement with our position on this.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Well we, as committee members, are looking for advice and suggestions from the people that appear before this committee, and if the government appears inflexible, what advice would you give to us, as committee members? Should we support the amended version, or should we suggest that they withdraw it, and go back to Square One and start all over again?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Well, I'm not blind nor deaf, so I quite clearly see that there's intense political pressure, even for the amendments as presented on September 6th. However, it is my position, as a private citizen, and it also is our position as a member of the SFM Executive, that there should be no flexibility, no withdrawal from the government on its presentation of the 17th of May.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

MR. A. KOVNATS: I'm going to make a few remarks in French, there are only going to be a few remarks so you don't have to go running for your earpieces because it's not going to be of that great a length.

Mais je suis un nouveau étudiant en français, M. Dubois. Vous parlez français très bien et vous êtes un bon représentant de la famille Dubois.

MR. R. DUBOIS: Merci.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Je te pose mes questions en français mais j'ai beaucoup de peur que je fais une erreur en français. C'est permis pour moi de poser mes questions en anglais?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Définitivement.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Mr. Dubois, how can you, as a member of the SFM, Society Franco-Manitoban, appear to negotiate for Mr. Bilodeau?

MR. R. DUBOIS: Well, I don't see myself as negotiating for Mr. Bilodeau. It is a fact that the SFM did ask Mr. Bilodeau to put his case in abeyance as it was going to appear originally on the 30th of October, I believe.

I'm not too sure about that date, but it was definitely going to appear at some point, perhaps even this spring and then pushed back to this fall, I'm not exactly certain. But we did ask Mr. Bilodeau if he would see fit, him and his lawyer, of course, to put his case in abeyance when the government approached the Franco-Manitoban Society to see if it could arrive - I heard the mention of a settlement out of court. I don't know.

I have heard on TV and read in the press that a settlement out of court is, nine times out of ten, superior

than a settlement in court. So I was quite in favour of this attitude of the government to try to settle out of court, rather than just to rely on the courts.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Do we have any assurance or does the Societe franco-manitobaine have any assurance and can they assure the people of the Province of Manitoba that Mr. Bilodeau will not proceed if an agreement is made with the Provincial and Federal Governments?

MR. R. DUBOIS: To me again as a citizen and also for the SFM, our position is very clear. This is an amendment to the Manitoba Constitution which is a federal Charter. If it is amended, such as presented on the 17th of May, of course, then it becomes the Manitoba Constitution and it becomes a federal package. We couldn't even touch it even if we wished to. Bilodeau would have no case at all. That's my position and, to me, that's quite clear.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I recall reading somewhere, "Damn the torpedoes. Full speed ahead." I would like to bring that into a little bit of perspective in the problem that we have here, and it is a bit of a problem. It's a problem that I have been aware of for quite some time, because I have been a supporter of the French language and the French culture. I enjoy the French language and the French culture, and I would like to associate myself with it, not at the expense of other Manitobans though. For making those remarks, I am considered a bigot, but let it be what it may.

I notice that there is a lot of bitterness and hate. Really there is bitterness and hate on both sides of the fence, the Francophone towards the . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question, please.

MR. A. KOVNATS: It's coming up, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure, it's back here and it's moving forward as I speak - the hate and the bitterness between the Francophone towards the Anglophone and the Anglophone towards the Francophone. I've heard the Anglophone, because they have confided in me, and I have heard many things said about the actions of the Francophone in Manitoba. I don't like to hear these actions. By the same token, I . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question, please.

MR. A. KOVNATS: It's coming forward, Mr. Chairman. I see where in La Liberté, which allegedly is the voice of the Francophone, the French people of the Province of Manitoba, the ridicule and the bitterness and the hate towards the Progressive Conservative Party for one, Mr. Doern for another, depicted as Ku Klux Klan and I depicted as . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, order please. If the member doesn't have a question, I am going to have to call on another member.

MR. A. KOVNATS: I have a question, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's a very extended preamble, much beyond what we have allowed to other members. I ask for your question now, please.

MR. A. KOVNATS: I'm glad that you, Mr. Chairman, have made the remark rather than some of the other members who I don't believe would be entitled to, and I accept your admonition of the lengthy preamble.

Mr. Dubois - I told you it was a famous name before and it slipped my mind just for a second, Mr. Dubois. Mr. Dubois, can you advise whether it is the attitude of the Francophone, the SFM, the Societe franco-manitobaine in Manitoba to "Damn the torpedoes. Full speed ahead," and have no regard to the consequences of these actions, or do you want these amendments to Resolution 23 of The Manitoba Act to proceed without any changes and regardless of any of the problems that might occur? Can you not see anything happening where there could be just the support of Resolution 23 without the amendments being satisfactory to the people and the Francophones of the Province of Manitoba and all of the other people of the Province of Manitoba? Can you see some sort of an arrangement made so that all people can come out with their heads above, walking high, and be satisfied with an agreement? What would that agreement be?

MR. R. DUBOIS: You record whistles?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Don't ask him to repeat the question, please?

MR. R. DUBOIS: What question? In terms of the bitterness and the hate, I personally, for instance, have certain bitterness towards what has happened in the past in Manitoba. However, I bear no hate to anybody. That includes the Conservative Government and Mr. Doern and Mr. Lyon and Mr. Enns and Mr. Kohnats, I'm sure. In fact, I think you've heard the phrase before, "Some of my best friends are English." I have heard that somewhere.

MR. H. ENNS: But are some of your best friends Conservatives?

MR. R. DUBOIS: That's right. Gabe Gerard, for instance, is a very good friend of mine, and Renauld Guay may be Conservative.

However, with regard to your question, "Full speed ahead; board the torpedoes" or whatever, I have sometimes wondered in the recent past whether going to the Supreme Court would perhaps assuage or mollify or make people feel better. I have wondered about that recently. However, I feel it's the responsibility of government, including oppositions, to be responsible to the people, all people, and that includes me as a Franco-Manitoban. I think there is a responsibility here towards leadership. I think that's what the government was trying to provide.

I don't believe that the proposed amendment is going that much forward over what The Manitoba Act, 23, says in the first place. I just think it stipulates clearly. I don't think it is that much of a progression. In fact, if we go back in the history, it's restrictive compared to what it was supposed to do originally.

However, like I said 10 minutes ago before your question, I am not blind nor deaf. I know what's happening in Manitoba; I don't like it. I wish it would lie down and go away, but it is there. Therefore, it is

up to me and it's up to you and it's up to the government to provide leadership. I don't see that going straight to the Supreme Court is an answer but I do see, if the answer comes, I believe that there will be greater unity eventually. I really profoundly believe this. It may take a year or so.

MR. A. KOVNATS: I repeat, Mr. Chairman, vous êtes un bon représentant de la famille, Dubois. Merci beaucoup.

MR. D. SCOTT: Shortly, a comment you just about finished up there with, Mr. Dubois, was that you saw this as perhaps being somewhat restrictive compared with what could be interpreted, in other words, the original as proposed amendments, the agreement amendments; and that perhaps you might be better off going to a court and having a decision made in a court. Do you see the amendment as was agreed to and the proposal that is before us today as being a reasonable vehicle for the reintroduction and recognition of services in the French language and the translation of the acts. Given today is 1980, and not 1870, that it is a reasonable package that could be brought forward to appease and not necessarily make up for all the wrongs of the past 90 years, but at least as a vehicle for the reintroduction of those rights and services.

MR. R. DUBOIS: Well, when I mention, Mr. Scott, that I wondered recently whether we might not be better to go to the Supreme Court, I didn't mean that I was hoping we would get more than what the government has proposed in the first place. I meant simply that for all of Manitoban society, not Franco-Manitoban society, but for all Manitobans, whether it might be better for the government to forget its proposed amendment and go to the Supreme Court. I've heard a lot of people claim that this would be better; I personally don't believe it would be better. I believe it would lead to probably approximately the same thing, but the guidelines rendered by the court might be more stringent. I don't really think that the judges of the Supreme Court would render all laws null and void at the very instant of their judgment, I don't see that. I agree with everybody who has said that in here and elsewhere.

However, yes, I do think that what is being presented by the government is quite fair, quite reasonable, and that's why I voted on it, as a member of the executive, and then we presented it to the people of Manitoba, the French community, twice. They've both times agreed that they feel it is reasonable and just and we certainly urge the government to go forward and we urge the oppositions, whatever their nature, to accept this piece of legislation. I think this would settle the issue once and for all.

I think that people's lives would not be changed that much. I certainly agree that in Arborg, if this was not a legislative committee I certainly wouldn't have come here to speak French in Arborg today. I don't foresee that.

I believe it's a good piece of legislation, which will stop this issue, and make Manitoba a great province.

MR. D. SCOTT: Merci beaucoup, M. Dubois pour ta présentation. Je crois que ta présentation cette après-

midi a été une bonne . . . de cette issue. Merci beaucoup.

MR. R. DUBOIS: Merci.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further questions by members of the committee? Seeing none, Mr. Dubois, on behalf of

the committee I would like to thank you for being here and representing the Society Franco-Manitoban today.

Our normal hour of adjournment having been 44 minutes ago, committee is adjourned and stands adjourned until 7:30 this evening.

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