

April 15, 1981

Edmonton Speech
at 5:00 a plate
Washed dinner

Why we are here:

To stress the importance of reaching the ordinary people to make them realize what dangers they are facing if the constitution is passed.

We realize that the province's primary concern is rightly natural resources. However, this approach is too remote for the ordinary person. To get the people involved, we feel that those aspects of the constitution which will most directly affect them must be explained and stressed.

The most important part of the constitution for the ordinary person is the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. To date, most of the information that people have had on the charter has come via Mr. Trudeau's spokesmen and national advertising campaigns. Both of these have made the charter seem like a 'dream come true,' especially for the less privileged in our society such as the handicapped, native people and women, most of whom were already protected in the Diefenbaker bill. Very few have explained the vital fundamental rights and freedoms that will be lost if the proposed charter is adopted.

One of these is the guaranteed right to the enjoyment of property. The federal government copied the relevant section of Diefenbaker's Canadian Bill of Rights until it came to Property Rights. These were omitted and are not included anywhere else in the charter.

Under our present laws, if the government takes property from anyone, it must compensate the owner. However, under the federal government's proposed charter, no government can be forced to pay compensation.

We may think that past laws will guarantee Property Rights. However Dr. Ruth Gorman points out that under Section 58, "... the constitution makes any law that is 'inconsistent' with the proposed charter 'inoperative' and of no force or effect. Since Property Rights are not included in the

charter, they will be 'inconsistent' and therefore 'inoperative.' Inconsistent means contradictory or incompatible. To have a right and not to have a right is contradictory and legally 'inconsistent' under the charter."

Under Section 34 1 (a & b) the federal government will have authority to do as it pleases with both provincial and individual property. We all know that Mr. La Londe said in March that when the constitutional package comes back to Canada, there will no longer be any need to negotiate resources with Alberta. They can be taken from the province by the Equalization provision in the charter. This provision applies to the provinces, companies and individuals.

The following excerpt from a letter dated March 17, 1981 from Ian Waddell, M.P. (N.D.P.) from Vancouver Kingsway clearly states the philosophy of the N.D.P. towards Private Property. He says: "As democratic socialists, we support the entrenchment of equalization which confirms our party's long-standing beliefs on the redistribution of wealth between the rich and the poor."

What has been done (January to April, 1981):

1. Collected more than 2,000 signatures for Iris Youngren's petition to Britain.
2. Printed 2,000 Gorman articles (1,000 for Britain; 1,500 for Calgary and Edmonton). Printed 1,500 Laura Sabia articles for Calgary and Edmonton.
3. Circulated petition, and Gorman and Sabia articles, in B.C. via active contact.
4. Sent 50 Gorman articles to Ottawa P.C. convention in February via delegates.
5. Sent 1,000 copies in bulk of Dr. Gorman's article with Iris Youngren, on March 10 to England, for British M.P.'s and members of the House of Lords.
6. Mailed Dr. Gorman's article to all of the Senators and most federal M.P.'s with covering form letters.
7. Distributed more than 700 copies each of articles by Dr. Gorman and Laura Sabia, at the provincial P.C. convention in Calgary in March.
8. Mailed letters, articles by Dr. Gorman and Laura Sabia, and Otto Jelinek's speech to the Agents General of B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.
9. Wrote about 20 letters of congratulations, also stressing that we are depending on them to keep the charter out of the constitution, to such people as Jake Epp, Lorne Nystrom, Otto Jelinek, Walter Dinsdale, Erik Nielsen, Fred King, Benno Friesen, Walter Baker, Joe Clark, etc.
10. Delivered to Pentacostal Tabernacle, articles by Dr. Gorman and Laura Sabia, and also lists of the British M.P.'s and the House of Lords.
11. Long-distance telephone calls to Calgary, Vancouver, Victoria, Toronto, Britain.
12. Contacted Sandy MacTaggart, and gave him Dr. Gorman's article.
13. Edited Ruth Gorman's article with her, to make it more suitable for Eastern Canada and Britain, and the ordinary person.
14. Sent Gorman article to:
 - a. Alberta Native Communications Society
 - b. National Indian Brotherhood.
 - c. Indian/Eskimo Association of Alberta
 - d. Indian Association of Alberta.
15. Wrote to Alberta and Quebec Agents General again, for list of active members of House of Lords.
16. Contacted Lord Rodney re list of active members of House of Lords, and his possible maiden speech on the constitution; in March, arranged for Iris Youngren to meet him when she was in London.
17. Duplicating Gorman and Sabia articles, Jelinek speech and many other speeches, letters and articles of interest. More than 1,000 altogether.
18. Sent edited version of Dr. Gorman's article to Editors-in-chief of:
Toronto Globe and Mail, Toronto Sun, Ottawa Citizen, Montreal Le Devoir,
Vancouver Sun, Vancouver Province, Alberta Report, Renaissance Canada (Toronto),
100 Huntley Street, (national Pentacostal T.V. program, Toronto),
Jack Webster show (Vancouver).

An Assessment:

Petitioning was difficult without any publicity or support. It was like pulling teeth, and much too important and too large for a small handful of already very busy people.

People are still not concerned enough to want to work or help. Until our leaders approve and participate themselves, no one is eager to leap on a bandwagon until it has received approval and become fashionable, or at least acceptable.

Nor is it easy to convince people to sign their names. Many people are afraid of signing such a petition. Some support Trudeau. Most do not understand the constitutional issue. However, there are still very many people who would eagerly sign a petition if they could be reached, and still many more once they realize the dangers in the charter..

It is unfortunate that the few people who are concerned enough to speak against the constitution are being discredited, and frequently labelled "paranoid." One often hears such statements as "Ruth Gorman is crazy. If the situation were really as dangerous as she says, our politicians would be telling us about it." Without verbal support and confirmation from our leaders, people will not believe that our situation is so grave.

Replies to the almost 400 mailed letters (mostly form letters) are still arriving. To date, Senators have mailed 14 letters and 8 speeches, about half of them opposing the constitution. M.P.'s have sent 44 letters and 16 speeches, more than half opposing the constitution. There was one telephone call from Ottawa, from an irate senator.

Among those letters opposing the constitution, there was a stated interest and agreement with Dr. Gorman's article, which some M.P.'s incorporated into their own speech or newsletter.

The letters and speeches show concern with the entire constitutional package. Some deal specifically with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and are concerned with such problems as Property Rights, the Courts and Bilingualism. Comparisons are made between Trudeau's charter and that of the Soviet Union. One must read the letters and speeches themselves to feel how worried are some of our M.P.'s and Senators over the constitution.

As for a further assessment, it is not possible to estimate the impact of all of the information we sent out, and all of the people it has reached.

Recommendations:

1. The politicians must lead the battle against the charter. This would entail explaining how the charter would affect the individual as well as future generations of Canadians in terms of their rights and freedoms. They must also inform the people what they can do, such as letter writing and petitions.
2. Place ads in national and local newspapers which tell the true facts about the charter to counteract Trudeau's ads which have made it sound so idyllic. It is essential to get this information out now to initiate a strong public reaction, and to inform the public in case there is a national referendum.
3. Encourage organizations like the Chambers of Commerce, churches, farm groups, women's groups, etc. to disseminate information on the charter.
4. Elected representatives must do everything possible to back up organizations that are fighting the charter.
5. Use all possible government outlets like municipal offices and appropriate government publications to disseminate information on the constitution.
6. Since there appears to be a considerable resistance on the part of the large urban daily papers to publishing this type of information, we feel that it should be directed as much as possible towards the rural press.
7. Advise the British Press on the devious and devious nature of the proposed constitution, pointing out that the majority of the people across Canada are against it.
8. Continue to lobby the British House of Commons, and even more importantly—the House of Lords. Special letters to active members from concerned Canadians.
9. We understand that the majority of the British M.P.'s believe that Mr. Trudeau's position on the constitution represents the Canadian position. We

feel that this erroneous opinion must be corrected if Britain is to make a wise decision for the Canadian people.

10. Tell political counterparts in other provinces what we are doing, and try to get them likewise involved.

11. Try to get more information to Northern Alberta. We understand that the people in this area are less informed and possibly more disgruntled than those in the south of the province.

12. Ask Albertans to do everything they can to enlighten the people and government of Ontario. They could be writing to friends, relations and M.L.A.'s there.

13. Encourage more petitions and letters to be sent to British M.P.'s and active members of the House of Lords, as well as friends and relations in Britain to explain the Canadian position.

14. Canadians across Canada must be told to support their premiers in their courageous solid front. The premiers and other leaders must in turn tell the people how they can best help them.

15. The people will not wake up until they are made to realize how the proposed charter would affect them as individuals most directly. Property Rights will be understood by everyone. In Southern Alberta, large crowds attend meetings which are advertised only as "Dr. Gorman — Property Rights." Therefore stress Property Rights so that everyone will understand what could eventually happen not only to the provinces but also to individuals if the charter is adopted.

16. If people were more aware of the dangers of the charter, they would be much more supportive of Mr. Loughheed's battle against the constitutional package. This should be reflected in the Gallup and other public opinion polls.