

Challinor, Harrison spearheading local 'Yes' committee

If the Charlottetown Accord constitutional amendments aren't approved in the October 26 referendum there could be a "messy divorce" between today's Canada and Quebec, former town councillor Rose Harrison warned Monday.

Ms Harrison and current Ward 2 councillor John Challinor are co-chairing the Milton office of the Oakville-Milton Canada Committee, a pro "yes" vote organization led by members of the three largest federal political parties.

Mr. Challinor agrees the country "could break up" in the wake of a "no" vote in the referendum, "but I think before that happens we'll see a Royal Bank scenario."

Mr. Challinor was referring to a recent



John Challinor



Rose Harrison

speech by Royal Bank chairman Allan Taylor predicting 15 per cent unemployment and a 16 per cent drop in the standard of living if the nation shatters. As well, more than 1 million

Canadians would flee the country, Mr. Taylor warned.

In a "worst-case scenario the country breaks up and chunks go to the United States," Ms Harrison predicted. What would be left is "a little central piece and the Maritimes."

Mr. Challinor said the question he would pose to those pondering voting "no" would be, "what assurances do you have that life as you know it would be the status quo" if the anti-deal forces win?"

The councillor flatly rejects the Reform Party contention that the whole issue can be shoved onto the back burner for five years, "That won't happen. Quebec, the Native people, the west, Ontario — they're not going to wait five years."

Neither spokesperson is an unabashed admirer of the Accord, but both feel it is an effective compromise. "Finally we're recognizing some old issues we need to address," Ms Harrison said.

"Quebec was left out" of 1982 constitutional deliberations, Mr. Challinor added. "That was just not right. Now we have them at the table. The agreement recognizes reality."

Both Mr. Challinor and Ms Harrison may be contacted, in the evenings, for more information about the Accord or to help people with voting-related concerns, such as transportation. They're also looking for volunteers to help with their campaign. Ms Harrison can be reached at 878-2185, Mr. Challinor at 878-7638.

THE NEW CONSTITUTIONAL AGREEMENT

THE HIGHLIGHTS

Over the past two years, federal, provincial, territorial and Aboriginal leaders have consulted with thousands of Canadians and concerned groups from coast to coast. These consultations included Royal Commissions, participatory conferences, parliamentary hearings, and hearings in the provinces and territories held by provincial and territorial legislatures.

A Social and Economic Union

Federal, provincial, territorial and Aboriginal leaders have agreed unanimously on August 28, 1992 in Charlottetown on a package of constitutional proposals that recognizes the equality of all Canadians and represents all of our interests. The agreement is now before Canadians.

The agreement proposes that the new Constitution would contain a statement of key economic and social objectives shared by all of the governments in the federation. The objectives include comprehensive, universal, portable, accessible and publicly administered health care, adequate social services and benefits, high quality primary and secondary education and reasonable access to post-secondary education, collective bargaining rights and a commitment to protecting the environment. The economic policy objectives to be entrenched would be aimed at strengthening the Canadian economic union; the free movement of persons, goods, services, and capital; ensuring full employment and a reasonable standard of living for all Canadians; ensuring sustainable and equitable development.

Exclusive provincial jurisdiction would be recognized in the areas of forestry, mining, tourism, housing, recreation, municipal affairs, cultural matters within the province, and labour market development and training. In addition,

Distinct Society

to ensure the two levels of government work in harmony, the government of Canada commits to negotiating agreements with the provinces in areas such as immigration, regional development and telecommunications. Federal-provincial agreements on any subject could be protected by the Constitution from unilateral change.

The new Canadian Constitution would recognize the distinct nature of Quebec, based on its French language, unique culture and civil law tradition.

Avoiding Overlap and Duplication

In the reformed Parliament, the Senate would reflect the equality of the provinces while the House of Commons would be based more on the principle of representation by population. As well, various provinces would be assured a minimum amount of seats in the House of Commons.

Parliamentary Reform

The proposed Senate would be made up of six elected senators from each province and one from each territory. Additional seats would provide representation for Aboriginal peoples. The reformed Senate's powers should significantly increase the role of the elected Senators in the policy process.

The proposals recognize that Aboriginal peoples have an inherent right to self-government and that the Constitution should enable them to develop self-government arrangements and to take their place in the Canadian federation. The proposals recognize Aboriginal governments as one of the three constitutionally recognized orders of government in Canada. In addition, the proposals provide for a negotiation process between Aboriginal leaders and provincial and federal governments to put this right into effect. The recognition of the inherent right would not create any new rights to land, nor dilute existing treaty rights.

Now that Canada's federal, provincial, territorial and Aboriginal leaders have reached a consensus, it is the right of all Canadians to understand the new proposals. Call the toll-free number below to receive an easy-to-read booklet on the new constitutional agreement or a complete text.

It's your right to know what the constitutional proposals say, before voting on October 26.

Aboriginal Self-Government

**FOR INFORMATION CALL:
1-800-561-1188**

Deaf or hearing impaired:
1-800-465-7735 (TTY/TDD)

Canada

