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## NEXT MEETING

Date: November 18, 1997  
Time: 9:30 a.m.  
Topic: **What Governments' Aboriginal Policies are Doing to Canada**

Location: Stanley Park Pavilion  
Speaker: Melvin Henry Smith, Q.C.

Fred Cotton called the meeting to order at 9:20am. He thanked Jim McPherson and Bill Manson for arranging the excellent tour of the new aluminum catamaran ferries construction site. This was held October 18, 1997 and 53 members attended.

Jim McPherson discussed possible special events for the spring, such as a tour of the Boeing plant in Everett, and a tour of the Museum of Flight. Brice McDougall then mentioned representatives from Syncrude and the BC Medical Association as possible future speakers.

Dick Mathews introduced our guest speaker, Mr. Gordon Wilson, M.L.A. leader of the Progressive Democratic Alliance political party. Mr. Wilson opened his speech with generalized comments about BC politics. He discussed the long standing political polarization of BC. How this was broken down to some extent under W.C. Bennet, but in 1997 we are back to political polarization. He felt reform has disappeared as a political option. He discussed the confusion in BC parties, the discontent of the BC people with their present political options, and our increasing provincial deficit and debt.

Mr. Wilson then discussed five platforms of the P.D.A.:

1. The provinces should collect all taxes through a private firm collecting taxes for all provinces. The federal share being disbursed by the provinces to the federal government.
2. To make money available to essential services, such as health care, by streamlining government.
3. Resolve conflicts in the province that are affecting investor confidence.
4. Resolve native land claim issues.
5. Put in place a sensible land use plan.

Mr. Wilson then discussed the five political options open to him.

1. He could keep functioning in his present role.
2. How could try to expand P.D.A. to become a more potent political force.
3. Go to work for Campbell.
4. Go to work for Clark.
5. Quit politics.

He feels #1 and #5 are not palatable; #3 is not possible. He feels his decision will be based where he feels he can most benefit the people of BC, and to work towards helping our province keep up with a rapidly changing global economy. His talk was then followed by a wide ranging question period, with many questions regarding native land claims.

Stewart Brown then thanked our speaker for his excellent talk, and, on our behalf, wished him well in his political future.

The meeting adjourned at 11:20am.

Al Knudsen  
Secretary

"Bordering on the Spectacular" proclaims a billboard on Georgia Street advertising the Bayshore Marina now under construction. We admired the pun while inching towards a Probus meeting in traffic delayed by an accident in the Park. But on second thought it didn't quite work because "bordering on" something often means "borderline", and that gets applied to the bad not the beautiful (or spectacular). To my twisted mind the sign now conveys the wrong message, and I have a quiet chortle whenever I see it. As in "Everlast" shoes for runners.

I've had fun since then, off and on, collecting other entertaining boners seen around town. At my barbershop there is, a joy to behold, a disinfectant called Barbicide. Clever name, you say— except that, on analogy with homicide, suicide, insecticide etc., it ought to mean that it is useful for killing barbers. Or how about, at 5th and Fir, a garage entrance advertising a Minimum Clearance of 7ft. How's that again? What happens if your car is low slung? [This one also used to hang above the entrance to Pacific Centre's underground parking off Howe until some spoil-sport had it changed to "maximum". Probably the same boring official who ordered that the second note be removed from foghorns].

My current favourite can be seen near the front of some City buses, where Standees are instructed to remain a certain distance behind the driver. In my book, on analogy with "employee" (who works for an employer) or "trustee" (who is entrusted) or "examinee" (the victim of an examiner), a Standee ought to be one who, somewhat awkwardly, is stood upon by a Stander.

So why doesn't the notice specify "Standers", instead of unnecessarily coining a new word? We seem to be getting ourselves into the curious habit of using the "ee" suffix to mean, often, the *reverse* of what has up until now been its natural meaning. Some uses are of course perfectly legitimate (though I can't say that I care for "retiree", which somehow suggests cracked rubber and worn-out treads). Some, like "refugees" and "absentees", have an interesting etymology if you like words [see Fowler's *Modern English Usage*, after 70 years still a treasure]. Some are a matter of debate:— in a relationship, who is the Shacker and who the Shackee? But "escapees" for escapers and "attendees" for attenders (or guests) must go or we'll have desertees in the army and harassees at SFU.

There are lots of cheerful collectables to be had around and about, including creative mistakes in grammar and pronunciation and a variety of malapropisms, but they will have to wait for another Probe, except for a couple of gems. According to report, a surprised Main Street plumber, about to take with him a diaphragm to repair a broken dishwasher, was reminded by his slightly confused lady client to be sure to bring along a pessary. And then there is the "Best Buy" in a 4th Avenue flower shop (shades of Meg Hinckley):— "Erection Plant \$4.95". ["Resurrection"?]. Probably too much fertilizer.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

MELVIN HENRY SMITH, O.C.

Born Winnipeg, Manitoba, February 8, 1934

Educated in Victoria and Vancouver graduating with Bachelor of Commerce degree, UBC 1956 and Bachelor of Laws degree, UBC 1959; called to the Bar of British Columbia, May 1960.

### Professional Career

Joined the Public Service of British Columbia, June, 1960, through public competition, as Departmental Solicitor, (1960-1968) Department of Attorney General; appointed Director, Constitutional and Administrative Law, 1969-1980; appointed Deputy Minister (Constitutional Affairs) in 1977, (until 1984) first in Premier's Office then in 1980 to the newly formed Ministry of Intergovernmental Relations; appointed Deputy Minister of Intergovernmental Relations 1984-1987; appointed Deputy Provincial Secretary and Deputy Minister of Government Services on April 1, 1987; appointed Deputy Minister of Tourism and Deputy Provincial Secretary, July 6, 1988; appointed Deputy Provincial Secretary, 1989-1990; November 1, 1990 to April 30, 1991, commissioned by B.C. to prepare a comprehensive paper on the Constitution.

Has acted as Senior Constitutional advisor to the Government of British Columbia 1967-1987, as counsel before administrative tribunals and in significant constitutional cases including cases before the Supreme Court of Canada; has been directly involved in many significant public law issues including patriation of the Canadian Constitution, offshore mineral rights jurisdictional issues, Law of the Sea issues, international fisheries issues; Skagit Valley negotiations, aboriginal constitutional matters, E & N and other railway matters, etc.

Acted as Provincial Co-ordinator to the Royal Visit of The Queen in October, 1987 and supervised the granting of the Provincial Coat of Arms. Co-ordinated provincial involvement in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Vancouver in October, 1987.

A student of Canadian federalism, who became the longest serving government official in Canada on constitutional reform (1967-1987) and is a recognized authority on Senate reform.

Professional affiliations have included Director, Victoria Bar Association; Chairman Constitutional and International Law Section, Canadian Bar Association; Director, Canada West Foundation; Director, Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queens University.

Received Queen Elizabeth II, 25th Anniversary Medal, 1977 and appointed Queens Counsel, December, 1983.