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The aspect of the meeting I take away with me concerns mood and in particular my mood and its shifts. *Our group consisted primarily of constitutional experts from law and political science who came from Québec, the Aboriginal community, and, with regard to the Rest of Canada, the various regions.*

At the outset, we were asked to provide some brief opening remarks about our visions of constitutional renewal and change. I heard strongly stated remarks that, as a whole, did not convey to me a sense of reaching out to "others" to find consensus. It did not feel good and I found myself angry and upset. After the morning session, I did not want to come back.

The afternoon of the first day brought further remarks and some general discussion. Again it felt closed, but dialogue did begin. I went home that night discouraged.

Things changed on the morning of the second day, when the session was about to end. Only then I began to sense a feeling of a collective "we" and a sense that the members of the "we" could, at least, usefully challenge each other and our entrenched ideas. As this attitude began to come to the fore, the atmosphere became warmer. My feeling was that the meeting was coming closer to a place where we might risk the possibility of trying to "work things out" together. I felt disappointed that we ended that morning. I only hope at least some of us get the chance to meet again to continue to build dialogue.

I am left with a feeling that our meeting encapsulated what we are addressing as a country. We, at least in the non-Aboriginal community, are starting with entrenched views and only a clear vision of ourselves and what we want. This leads to *monologue* and a general mental turning away from other; a kind of "let each only take care of self" attitude. If it is like our meeting, such a path will lead to a coldness in attitude that will eventually destroy Canada regardless of the specific compromises that constitutional experts might arrange for the self-centred good of each in the interim. What we need, if *our meeting* serves as an example, is the opportunity to move beyond monologue to establish a dialogue where, secure in self, we are prepared to reach out to the others to find a home that respects all.

If I have a fear it is that such a possibility does exist in Canada, but that, like our conference, time will run out before we have the chance fully to explore it and build on what we find.