

Loomis. Now it's Mrs. Robert Neckel (phonetic). Why is it our most sacred document of government, Loran, she said. I was really more interested in speaking to Clara Siebel (phonetic) who sat ahead of me and I wasn't paying much attention to the Constitution at that time, you know, about 11-years-old. But anyway, she said this is what it should be. All laws we have flow from our Constitution. It is the supreme law of the land. It is a document every citizen can rely on to protect them from the majority. Believe it or not, Miss Loomis explained, the Constitution is not for the protection of the majority, but for the protection of the minority. Why? Because the majority always have the votes and power to get what they want. The Constitution is a document that keeps the majority from going to excess and committing abuses against the minority. The Constitution is supposed to set the broad guidelines, the walls or the borders, if you would, within which government must operate. It is the statutes that are supposed to fill in the details after the borders have been carefully and clearly set up by the Constitution to tell all sides just how far they can go. Then Miss Loomis gave us a good example. The First Amendment, she said, is the best example of these borders. It says that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or preventing the free exercise thereof. Thus it sets the borders within which government must operate. It is simple and clear to everybody. Even the least educated citizen can reasonably understand exactly what it says. Then she asked me another question. Loran, she said, what is the single most important part of the Constitution and the part of which more Supreme Court decisions have been arrested than any other part of the Constitution? And remember, this was more than 50 years ago. Again, of course, I didn't have the answer but she did. She said the equal protection clause. It is the one thing that keeps us all civilized and from taking advantage of each other just because we are stronger or have more votes than the other guy or the other group. It says simply that identical situations should be treated identically in the law. Finally, she told us the thing that I remember most that day even though at the time it sort of angered me a bit. She said, what is the most important characteristic a Constitution should have? Again, I didn't know. The most important characteristic it should have is to be simple and...

PRESIDENT MOUL: One minute.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...understandable so that the average citizen