

Ministers move quickly to resolve the question of the timing of additional changes.

Your Committee then looked at the specific concerns of the New Brunswick, Manitoba and Newfoundland and Labrador governments keeping in mind the concerns identified by others who felt their interests were left out in the process that led to the Meech Lake Accord.

B. The Content

New Brunswick would like to see an addition in the Meech Lake Accord to the clause respecting Canada's linguistic duality and Quebec's distinct society, namely that within New Brunswick, the English linguistic community and the French linguistic community have equality of status and equal rights and privileges. This would entrench a principle presently stated in a New Brunswick statute.

- 4. Your Committee recommends that the clause respecting the equality of New Brunswick's two official linguistic communities is an appropriate subject for a Companion Resolution.**
- 5. Similarly your Committee agrees with the New Brunswick proposal to affirm a role for the legislature and government of New Brunswick to preserve and promote the equality of status and equal rights and privileges of that province's two official linguistic communities.**

The Meech Lake Accord affirms the role of Parliament to preserve one of Canada's fundamental characteristics—linguistic duality. Premier McKenna has proposed in his Companion Resolution to affirm as well Parliament's role to promote our linguistic duality.

Testimony from constitutional experts is unanimous in affirming that the promotion of linguistic duality as proposed is limited to federal jurisdiction. This is also clearly understood by minority language groups who testified before the Committee.

Although the promotion role suggested by Premier McKenna is now demonstrated in law in the revised *Official Languages Act* (R.S.C. 1985, 4th Supp., 31), your Committee has been persuaded by the repeated argument made by minority language groups to the effect that even though a promotion clause may not add anything legally it would have a dynamic effect on these groups.

- 6. Your Committee endorses the clause in the New Brunswick Companion Resolution which calls for promotion of Canada's linguistic duality by the Parliament and Government of Canada.**