

not only to preserve but, more important, to promote these minority language groups. Can the Minister tell the House if the Prime Minister offered to enlarge the role of Parliament and the Legislatures of this country to promote its linguistic duality? And, if so, who opposed it amongst the provincial Premiers? Why is it not in the Accord?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I do not want to slough off a very important and well-intentioned question. I was not at the discussions and negotiations. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice were there. I cannot really comment on what went on during the course of those discussions. Suffice it to say I will again draw the Hon. Member's concern to the attention of the Minister of Justice and, hopefully, he will be able to respond in a more fulsome manner next week. I would hope that the Hon. Member would allow that to occur. If he will just be patient, I am sure there is an answer to his question, but I cannot give it to him at this time.

#### REPRESENTATION OF LANGUAGE MINORITY GROUPS IN PUBLIC SERVICE

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier):** I thank the Minister for that answer. There is more to preserving and promoting the fundamental characteristics of minority groups, it also includes an area of my responsibility as critic, and that is equitable representation in the Public Service of Canada. We all know how difficult it has been for minority groups, both the English-speaking in Quebec and the French-speaking outside Quebec, to reach a demographic balance and obtain equitable representation.

Does the Minister not agree that by making the Parliament and Government of Canada obligated under the Constitution not only to preserve but to promote the linguistic duality of this country, one must ensure that staffing of the federal Public Service represents both the French-speaking minority outside Quebec and the English-speaking minority in Quebec?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is trying to get into some very pertinent details with respect to the Constitutional Accord. I think what we have is an Accord which embodies a number of principles. We have said we would submit the document to an appropriate parliamentary committee where these things could be explored. I am sure that if the Hon. Member is convincing, as he usually is, there will be some consideration taken. But I repeat, the constitutional process is not completed. The process which is put in place will make it easier to incorporate constitutional changes as deemed necessary. I would hope that these are the kinds of things which could be exposed and discussed during the course of the parliamentary committee hearing.

#### SITUATION OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

**Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill):** Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Deputy Prime Minister and is on the

subject of the Accord. As the Deputy Prime Minister is aware, native people feel ignored, if not betrayed, by what has happened in this Accord. Last night, when the Prime Minister was speaking to the nation, he said that four attempts to bring justice to our aboriginal people have failed, in large part because Quebec was not there to vote on behalf of our native people and perhaps next time, with Quebec's help, we will succeed.

Considering the Prime Minister's statement to the nation, will the Government guarantee there will be a First Ministers' meeting with aboriginal people and with northern representatives to iron out aboriginal rights in our Constitution within one year?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I think this was responded to yesterday by the Minister of Justice. The record of the Government on the entrenchment of aboriginal rights and the issues concerning the aboriginal peoples has been clearly a priority of the Government and several attempts have been made. I think the Prime Minister was quite correct in stating that now that Quebec is part of the Constitution the issues respecting aboriginal peoples will be resolved, hopefully more expeditiously.

• (1150)

As I indicated in answer to the previous question, the constitutional process is a continuing one. I am sure that given the priority that this Government has placed on the issue of aboriginal rights it will be dealt with in an expeditious fashion.

#### REQUEST FOR MEETING OF FIRST MINISTERS

**Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill):** Mr. Speaker, the native people of Canada want some guarantee that that process will take place. If the Deputy Prime Minister cannot guarantee to Members of the House and to the native people of Canada that there will be a First Ministers' Conference on aboriginal rights within the next year, can he, on behalf of the Government, contact the Province of Quebec which is expected to vote for aboriginal rights, according to the Prime Minister, and the other provinces, and ask them to agree to a meeting on aboriginal rights? Will he at least do that on behalf of native people?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Hon. Member, and all Hon. Members, that the priority with respect to aboriginal rights given by this Government has not diminished. As a matter of fact it has been enhanced as a result of the constitutional Accord that has been signed. I can assure the Hon. Member that in the future we will not shy away from dealing with this very important issue.

As to a specific time and a specific request, I am not in a position to give the Hon. Member that. However, I will