

Addressing the Concerns of Manitoba and Newfoundland and Labrador

Critical to a report that would respond appropriately to the outstanding issues related specifically to this round of constitutional development was keen and sensitive understanding of the concerns expressed at the hearings in Winnipeg and St. John's. Your Committee listened carefully, searching for answers to help get through this constitutional impasse.

The provinces of Manitoba and Newfoundland and Labrador have both expressed very strong concerns about the unanimity requirement for Senate reform. While the Committee heard persuasive testimony asserting that practical political considerations underscore the desirability of unanimous consent, we are sensitive to the point of view of Manitoba and Newfoundland and Labrador.

- 17. Your Committee is convinced that to avoid constitutional impasse the unanimous consent rule for Senate reform should be moderated after a limited period, say three years, if it has not produced success. We should then adopt a less restrictive amending formula with some form of regional approval.**

Your Committee was also interested by Manitoba's suggestion of a "Canada Clause" which would include recognition for the aboriginal people and recognize the multicultural dimension of our heritage. A similar idea was eloquently advanced by the government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

- 18. With respect to the recognition of aboriginal peoples and of our multicultural heritage, we encourage the First Ministers to respond to these fundamental elements of Canada by recognizing them in the body of the Constitution.**

The Manitoba Task Force recommended that an invitation to participate in First Ministers' Constitutional Conferences be extended to the elected leaders of the governments of the Northwest Territories and Yukon by the Prime Minister whenever he was of the opinion that agenda items would directly affect them. Testimony reinforcing this idea was presented to your Committee during the course of our hearings across Canada but particularly in Yellowknife and Whitehorse.

Therefore as suggested by the Manitoba Task Force:

- 19. We recommend that the Prime Minister of Canada should invite elected representatives of the governments of the Yukon Territory and the Northwest**