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province. Since this situation was not faced by any other province in order to enter the Constitution, it is a threat to the people of the Territories and Yukon.

We should not pretend that there will not be a province or provinces formed in the north. It was not that many years ago that people did not believe that provinces would be formed from the old Northwest Territories, the old Rupert's Land, and now there are more than three provinces formed by what used to be the Hudson Bay Company's land. Changes in population patterns and mineral development policies in the north may well mean that there may be even more than two or three new provinces in the future. It is important that when we change our Constitution we do not do so in such a way as to make it almost impossible to get the necessary agreement to form new provinces.

The aboriginal people of this country feel that they were left out of the circle. They believe they were not listened to at Meech Lake or last week. Their demands were quite simple. They wanted and still want a guarantee that there will be more First Ministers' meetings to try to make some constitutional amendments which will bring in self-government and answer other concerns of aboriginal peoples.

The aboriginal peoples recognize that there is no guarantee that we will find wording acceptable to all the provinces. They recognize that the federal Government may not consider this to be a high priority item on its political agenda. However, why could the Premiers and the Prime Minister not agree, as part of this process, that there will be more meetings on aboriginal rights, that the First Ministers will sit down with the leaders of the aboriginal people and the leaders of the Territories and work toward fully entrenching and fully explaining aboriginal rights in our Constitution?

The Minister of Justice (Mr. Hnatyshyn) and the Prime Minister have said that having Quebec in the Constitution makes it easier to have aboriginal rights entrenched. In the Prime Minister's speech last Thursday evening to the people of Canada he said in part 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.

Those were the words our Prime Minister spoke to the Canadian people, including the aboriginal people. If the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice were serious in their remarks, why has the Government refused to act to ensure that there will be a First Ministers' conference on aboriginal rights?

If the Government does not act, we must question its sincerity. On Friday in the House of Commons and only an hour ago in Question Period we asked questions on this issue. We are not asking for a guaranteed constitutional change. We wanted the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski), the Prime Minister, the Minister of Justice, or some Minister speaking and working on behalf of the federal Government, to call the Premiers and ask whether they can agree to have a

First Ministers' conference on aboriginal rights, preferably within the next year.

We did not request a constitutional amendment or an amendment to the Meech Lake Accord. We only requested that the Government take the initiative to work toward solving the question of aboriginal rights. It would have taken only a certain number of phone calls, yet the Deputy Prime Minister would not even confirm that he would go that far.

That lack of a very simple action by the Government is the reason that native people are very concerned. They have to be concerned when the Deputy Prime Minister will not say that the Government will take the initiative and do what it can to ensure that aboriginal rights are recognized and self-government is proclaimed under our Constitution. As you know, Mr. Speaker, prior to the last meeting of First Ministers on aboriginal rights the Prime Minister was criticized for not taking a very active role, for acting as a chairperson of the meeting rather than as one of the leading instigators of action at that meeting. As I watched the part of the First Ministers' conference which was televised, that impression was further entrenched in my mind because I did not see the Prime Minister making suggestions, pushing the Premiers, or trying to get an agreement.

In the dying hours of that meeting which, by the way, did not continue all night, the Prime Minister was offered an option by the native people and the Premier of Manitoba, Mr. Pawley. That option was that rather than adjourning the meeting forever they should recess it only for three, six or twelve months until the officials of the provincial and federal Governments and the native leaders could work out a deal. At the end of that meeting the Prime Minister said: "This is the end". He put down his gavel and said that the meeting was over and that was it.

Contrast that with what happened with regard to Quebec. The Premiers worked until dawn to resolve the issue. There were two meetings of the First Ministers within a five-week period. The action was quick, concentrated, and very serious. I have commended the Government for that, as have the native people. We now need that same type of leadership and concern from the Prime Minister and his Ministers to ensure that we do not forget about the aboriginal peoples.

It is fine for the Prime Minister to say that now that Quebec is in the Constitution we will be in a better position to resolve this issue next time. Those are fine words and they may well be true, but they are meaningless unless the federal Government is willing to take the initiative to ensure that there is a meeting of the First Ministers with the aboriginal leaders and the elected leaders of the Territories. He must take that initiative and that is the intent of this motion. It calls for that initiative on behalf of the aboriginal peoples of this land and to ensure that the people of the Territories do not feel like the new second-class citizens of Canada.