Ministers' meetings that deal with or touch upon matters affecting aboriginal rights. It is crucially important that aboriginal people not be inhibited or dealt with unfairly in terms of these vital constitutional matters.

Members of the House and Canadians generally should recognize how the wording in relation to aboriginal rights came to be in the Constitution Act, 1982. That wording was withdrawn by Prime Minister Trudeau and it was only under pressure from the New Democratic Party that it was restored. Canadians should understand that in terms of the evolution of aboriginal title and rights in this country.

It has only been through the ongoing battle by groups such as the Nishga Tribal Council of British Columbia who took their case to the Supreme Court 15 years ago. After a century of trying to deal with Great Britain and Ottawa, trying to deal with kings, governors general and political Parties, they, along with Tom Berger, finally took their case to the Supreme Court of Canada where they obtained a tied decision on the matter of Nishga title in the Nass Valley.

It was at that point that the assimilation and cultural extermination policies of the Parliament of Canada were reversed. The Minister at that time, Mr. Chrétien, backed away from the White Paper proposals on assimilation. It led to the march toward the constitutional wording that is there. We must move on to the constitutional conferences that must be held to bring on side those Premiers and political Parties that would live in the historically inaccurate backwaters of Canada rather than move forward to recognize title and remove those grey areas that are infringing on the rights of Canada's first nations and citizens.

I want to spend a moment dealing with fairness for Canada's northern citizens. In my view, three new provinces would be created in the North, of which two would be in the Northwest Territories, perhaps to be called Denedeh and Nunavut, and the Yukon. As my colleague, the Member for Yukon (Ms. McLaughlin), pointed out so well, even in the words of Erik Nielsen, the concept of provincial status was the lodestone for more than half a century of northerners as they look toward their aspirations of becoming provinces.

I spoke to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) after the Accord was signed and asked how there could have been such blindness in requiring the unanimity rule for the creation of new provinces north of sixty. I was somewhat saddened to hear the Prime Minister, as the number one statesman for Canada, one would always hope, taking such a legalistic approach. He said that making them new provinces would affect the Consolidated Revenue Fund and federal institutions. He said this would require a First Ministers' Conference and the need for unanimity and so on.

That is hardly the case. All our other provinces entered Confederation in a bilateral process between the federal Government and themselves. It was only after 1982 that it was changed to seven provinces with 50 per cent of the population, along with the federal Government. This represented a much higher wall to be scaled by Yukoners and residents of the Northwest Territories in their aspirations to become provinces.

They now face the bleak prospect of a wall that many of them believe is perhaps impossible to scale in order to become provinces. I believe that the First Ministers should have put much more thought into the feeling this leaves with northerners. As my friend from Yukon pointed out, northerners now experience, as Quebecers once did, the feeling of being left out and that this is a southern Constitution which ignores a third of Canada north of sixty.

I reviewed press clippings from the last decade to see whether any political Party or leader in Canada ever suggested that Clause 43 should have been changed in this Draconian way in terms of the creation of new provinces. I could find none. I believe that the First Ministers did not notice this omission and, in their view of the greater picture of Canada, they ignored the fact that northerners—I am proud to consider myself as one—hold dear the feeling of fullness in participating in the Canadian family.

Not only do we face the unanimity rule, there is also the fact that northerners, whether members of the Bar or the bench, are excluded from the opportunity to even be proposed to be members of the Supreme Court. My uncle in Yukon is the Supreme Court Justice of Yukon. I find it dumbfounding that he should be prohibited from having his name submitted for sitting on the bench of the Supreme Court of Canada. While I do not want to speak for him, and do not know whether he would want to take on such an onerous task, I believe it is unfair. Furthermore, the Supreme Court Justices of Canada said as much to the Canadian Bar Association, and it is very rare that Supreme Court Justices would speak out about the unfair, un-Canadian and perhaps even unconstitutional move to prohibit certain Canadians from having the opportunity to be nominated or placed on the Supreme Court of Canada. That is a terrible oversight and is something that we hope to rectify as part of our amendments.

Let me deal for a moment with the Senate. Premier Getty and others said much in the West about a Triple E Senate. They were certainly snookered at Meech Lake.

I believe that the Senate is one of those anachronisms in Canada. We should abolish it first, then decide what is required in addition to the democratic institution of Parliament. That opportunity was missed, although I suppose the Premiers were somewhat appeased by being able to submit names for the Senate, as though it would in any way deal with the important issues which this country must face.

I want to talk about the participation by the territorial Governments. They must be given more than simply slots on the agenda in terms of the First Ministers' meetings. There must be participation by territorial Governments, particularly at meetings where matters affecting them are on the agenda. As a northerner, I certainly serve notice that northerners intend to move to provincial status in the future. It is very important that the venues and ongoing access to major