

called "Making Our Future". They relate to, first, Quebec's distinct character; second, greater protection for Quebec under the amending formula; third, entrenchment of the Supreme Court of Canada and the requirement that at least three of the nine Justices be from the Quebec bar and that Quebec participate in their nomination; fourth, strengthening Quebec's powers in the area of immigration; and, fifth, establishing limits on the exercise of Parliament's spending power.

Those are the conditions on which Mr. Bourassa won his election. Those are the conditions which Mr. Getty and the other Premiers agreed unanimously would be the basis of this discussion.

We agree with that unanimous view of the Premiers. In the course of our own overwhelming national election victory, the Prime Minister committed Canada to opening a dialogue on Quebec's return to the Canadian Constitutional family. Understanding the complexity of the issue, he cautioned against improvised solutions, and said that eventual negotiations would not be launched until minimal conditions for success had been met.

Our first Speech from the Throne noted that the Constitution was not a matter for resolution between the Government of Canada and the Government of Quebec. All the provinces must participate in achieving a new Constitutional consensus.

When First Ministers met in Vancouver last November, they confirmed the unanimous Edmonton position taken by the Premiers. They agreed to intensify discussions, based on Quebec's five proposals. Matters moved ahead, but on March 17, 1987, the Prime Minister came to the conclusion that preliminary discussions had gone as far as possible without further consideration by First Ministers. He therefore invited the Premiers to a meeting at Meech Lake on April 30th to take stock of progress, and to consider next steps.

The Prime Minister, Senator Murray, and our Cabinet have considered carefully the approach the Federal Government should adopt to Quebec's five conditions. It might be appropriate if I give some indication of that approach. Naturally, I won't discuss the details, which are for First Ministers, but I want to indicate our principles.