



**The United Church
of Canada
General Council**

GC34 Canada's Constitution

True Document Date: July 31, 1992

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 34th General Council

a. makes the following statement on the future of Canada:

"The 34th General Council of The United Church of Canada prays for and declares its hope for Canada, where, Aboriginal peoples, Quebecois and other francophones, Metis, anglophones, and peoples of many other cultural heritages share this land together in peace and justice, with respect and appreciation for each other's history, culture, language, and other distinctive gifts- a sign of hope for the global family of nations.

We deeply believe that

- in God's reign, to which we are called, there can be no room for creating enemy images;
- we are sisters and brothers of the One creating, redeeming, and sustaining God.

In light of the facts that

- the 34m General Council is insufficiently representative of Canada's diversity;
- the official constitutional process has not revealed to anglophone Canada the hopes and aspirations of various social and political movements in Quebec;
- the 34th General Council had before it a limited range of petitions dealing with this crucial issue, which requires the attention of all Canadians;

therefore, the 34th General Council acknowledges that

- there are some within The United Church of Canada and many beyond, who do not share our hopes for a Canada based on renewed federalism, and who pursue a political option which could result in the separation of Quebec from the rest of Canada, and
- the basis of their position is largely unknown to us; and

the 34th General Council calls upon all United Church members and adherents and all people of good will to respect the strongly held differences of opinion which characterize the constitutional process and debate.”

- b. requests the General Council Sub-Executive, in consultation with the Montreal & Ottawa, Manitou and Maritime Conferences, to create a Task Group with the mandate to:
 - 1. gain understanding from and about the divergent social, political, and religious movements in Quebec, and the hopes and aspirations of all Quebecois;
 - 2. report the Task Group’s findings, including implications in the light of political developments, to appropriate units of the Church.
- c. calls upon the Government of Canada and all provincial and territorial administrations to ensure the enshrinement of a social charter in the Constitution of Canada; that this charter guarantee access to basic social, health care, and economic services regardless of gender, ability, race, age, sexual orientation or place of residency; and with a commitment from the federal government to the maintenance of national standards and federal funding to achieve the goals of such a charter.
- d. recommends to the Government of Canada that:
 - 1. it acknowledge the inherent rights of Aboriginal Self—Government;
 - 2. it enter into a process of negotiation on a federal and provincial level with the First Nations which will finally put into practice the principle of the "Two Row Wampum" - the Aboriginal tradition of having independent nations living together in the same land with peace, friendship, and respect.
- e. While the 34th General Council celebrates the achievements of the current first ministers’ meeting (18-20 August 1992) so far, the 34th General Council conveys to the first ministers and to Aboriginal

Peoples’ representatives gathered in Ottawa that this 34th General Council insists that the rights and concerns of Canada’s Aboriginal Peoples be addressed in these current first ministers’ meetings, and that there can be no acceptable constitutional arrangement which fails to deal adequately with these rights and concerns.

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