



# The United Church of Canada General Council

## GC31 Militarization of Native Land in Labrador and Quebec (1986M351)

True Document Date

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WHEREAS since 1967 ultra-low level military flying exercises, down to an altitude of thirty metres, have taken place over Innu territory in Labrador and North East Quebec; and

WHEREAS the territory in question has been the traditional Innu land from time immemorial, and today is fully occupied by Innu people who live off the land; and

WHEREAS the Innu people of this region have been seriously traumatized by frequent overflights of fighters and medium range bombers, sometimes in pairs, generating noise levels about 130dB; and

WHEREAS the government of Canada is proposing to offer this region as the site for a NATO Tactical Fighter Weapons Training Centre; and

WHEREAS the establishment of such a training centre would greatly increase the frequency of ultra-low level flights in the region, carried out at night as well as in the daytime, with the addition of supersonic dogfight training, generating "super focus" sonic booms in which shocks merge and are amplified; and

WHEREAS the military exercises in this region, both actual and proposed, are related directly to the current NATO war strategy in Europe, known as “Follow On Force Attack” or “Deep Strike,” that is, massive counter attack deep into East Europe, an offensive capability that is inherently destabilizing, in contrast to the strategy of “Non-provocative Defense” as proposed by thirteen former NATO Generals in the organization, Generals for Peace and Disarmament; and

WHEREAS the Innu people of this region have never ceded, through treaty or land claim agreement, their collective right to self-determination and permanent sovereignty over their territory and its natural resources:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the General Council of The United Church of Canada:

1. REQUEST the government of Canada to place a moratorium on all low level flights of military aircraft in Labrador and North East Quebec and to make no commitment to establish a new Tactical Fighter Weapons Training Centre in this region and to provide economic alternatives for the community (financial subsidy support);
2. URGE the Church in Society Committee of all presbyteries in Canada, to study this urgent issue in the light of Christian commitment to justice, and as part of this second year of our mission study, “A Dialogue with Canada’s Native Peoples”;
3. ALSO THAT the General Council of the United Church of Canada request the government of Canada to settle with the native people a just land claim, and that The United Church of Canada work with the community of Goose Bay, Labrador, to find options of economic conversion.

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