



**The United Church
of Canada
General Council**

GC32 Free Trade (1988F676)

True Document Date: October 31, 1988

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the 32nd General Council endorsing the action of the Division of Mission in Canada:

THAT the concern expressed by the 31st General Council Record of Proceedings, pages 120-121, and the guidelines approved by the 30th General Council, Record of Proceedings, pages 106-107 and 325-329, has not been adequately addressed in the published bilateral trade agreement, in particular that it limits our democratic ability to use capital resources for worthy national purposes and our ability to use our democratic and economic institutions to more adequately care for each other as Canadians, working at home and abroad for a truly just, participatory and sustainable society, and

DECLARE that, although the agreement will be of economic benefit to certain sectors and economic justice in Canada, but in fact will leave the weakest and poorest among us more vulnerable;

HOLD UP the principle that there are a variety of options, and thus renew its call to the Church and the nation to examine this agreement in the light of the fundamental value questions raised by the General Council and to examine alternative economic directions for Canada which would enhance social and economic justice, as recommended by documents such as "The Quest for the Shalom Kingdom"; and

REMIND our Members of Parliament that, in the democratic process by which they were elected in 1984, the Canadian people were led to believe that no party was prepared to make this comprehensive policy an issue during their tenure of office, and therefore protest the lack of any effective process by which Canadian citizens would be consulted on one of the most important issues to confront our people in this century, and call on the Government of Canada to suspend further steps toward the implementation of the agreement (i) until such time as the people of Canada may be more adequately consulted, and, (ii) until such time as there is adequate protection of the eleven concerns referred to in 1 above; and

RECOGNIZE that there is a variety of opinions in the Church and in the community on this issue, and invite the appropriate bodies at the Conference, Presbytery and local level to examine the issues raised by the agreement in the light of our faith, fundamental values and our tradition as a church; and

PROVIDE within the context of the Divisions of Mission in Canada's current resources and priorities, sufficient resources, financial and personnel, to encourage full discussion of the Church's concerns in community and public debate, continue to monitor the process, provide analysis, explore alternatives and represent the position of the United Church, in coalition with other denominations and social organizations who share our concerns; and

COMMEND the ecumenical coalition, GATT-Fly, for its work of analysis, information and education regarding this vital issue, and encourage the circulation of its resources in the United Church and beyond, and recommend that appropriate church bodies review current priorities in the light of the immediate importance of the issue to ascertain what additional resources may be made available in pursuit of these purposes;

FORWARD this resolution, with explanations, to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Leaders of the Opposition Parties, the Minister of International Trade, and the Premiers of the Provinces.

General Council: 32nd General Council, 1988

1988 ROP, p. 193

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