

Report of Nova Scotia's Select Committee on National Unity

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

Mr. Roderick MacArthur
Chief Clerk of the House
House of Assembly
Province House
Halifax, Nova Scotia

M. Roderick MacArthur
Greffier principal de la Chambre
Assemblée législative
Province House
Halifax (Nouvelle-Écosse)

Monday, February 16, 1998

Lundi 16 février 1998

Dear Mr. MacArthur:

Monsieur MacArthur,

In accordance with Resolution 164 passed by the House of Assembly on Friday, November 28, 1997, the Select Committee on National Unity is pleased to submit its Report which contains a Resolution for consideration by the House of Assembly of Nova Scotia.

En accord avec la résolution 164 adoptée par l'Assemblée législative le vendredi 28 novembre 1997, le comité spécial sur l'unité nationale est heureux de soumettre son rapport dans lequel est contenue une résolution pour considération par l'Assemblée législative de la Nouvelle-Écosse.

Respectfully submitted / Soumis respectueusement

Eleanor Norrie, MLA / Eleanor Norrie, MAL
(Truro - Bible Hill)
Chair / Présidente

Select Committee on National Unity / Comité spécial sur l'unité nationale

Halifax, Nova Scotia / Halifax (Nouvelle-Écosse)
February 1998 / février 1998

Membership of Nova Scotia's Select Committee on National Unity

Eleanor Norrie, MLA, chair
Truro - Bible Hill

Robert Carruthers, MLA, vice-chair
Hants East

Paul MacEwan, MLA
Cape Breton Nova

Ronald Russell, CD, MLA
Hants West

Ernest Fage, MLA
Cumberland North

John Holm, MLA
Sackville - Cobequid

Serving as an alternate for the
three government members:

Lila O'Connor, MLA
Lunenburg

Procedures and Operations

The Select Committee on National Unity met on the following dates:

Committee Meetings

December 5, 1997
December 11, 1997 (News conference)
December 16, 1997
January 28, 1998
January 29, 1998
February 3, 1998
February 16, 1998 (Tabling of report)

Public Hearings

December 16, 1997 - Halifax
January 6, 1998 - Sydney
January 7, 1998 - Port Hawkesbury
January 8, 1998 - Truro
January 12, 1998 - Kentville
January 13, 1998 - Pointe-de-l'Église
January 14, 1998 - Yarmouth
January 15, 1998 - Bridgewater
January 20, 1998 - Dartmouth
January 21, 1998 - Halifax

Notices

Notices of committee meetings and public hearings were sent to all members of the committee, staff of the caucus offices, and the legislative staff.

Advertisements for the public hearings were placed in all English- and French-language daily and weekly newspapers in the province and in the monthly Micmac Maliseet Nations News. A news conference was held to launch the process, and weekly media advisories giving details of the hearings were also issued. A number of ads and interviews of committee members were broadcast on radio and television stations.

Transcripts

Transcripts of the public hearings are available from the Legislature Committees Office, Third Floor, Dennis Building, 1740 Granville St., P.O. Box 2630, Station M, Halifax, N.S. B3J 3N5; telephone 902-424-4432.

Research Material

The Legislature Committees Office compiled all research for the Select Committee on National Unity. The Department of Intergovernmental Affairs provided the majority of the information distributed to committee members.

Report of the Select Committee

The Report of Nova Scotia's Select Committee on National Unity was compiled and written by Tom McDougall. Once the initial draft was edited, it was sent to committee members for consideration. Following revisions, the report was tabled with the Clerk of the House on February 16, 1998.

The report was distributed to: the Clerk of the House/Speaker, all members of the Legislative Assembly, all Nova Scotians who made presentations at public hearings, the legislative libraries in all provinces and territories, the chairs of all provincial and territorial national unity committees, and the news media.

The report is available to the public through the Nova Scotia Government Bookstore at 1700 Granville St., Halifax; 1-800-526-6575 or 1-902-424-7580.

Acknowledgments

The Select Committee on National Unity wishes to extend its gratitude to those Nova Scotians who appeared during the public hearings for taking the time to voice their opinions on the issue of national unity, and to the many others who telephoned, faxed, e-mailed, mailed, or hand-delivered their submissions.

All public hearings began with the singing of the national anthem. The committee wishes to thank the following Nova Scotians for their

beautiful renditions of O Canada:

Jana Miller of Truro, Leah Johnston of Truro, Danielle LeVangie of Sydney, Alicia Covey of Sydney, Allison Carruthers of Port Hawkesbury, Melissa MacKenzie of Port Hawkesbury, Brenna Conrad of Truro, Haley Dempsey of Kentville, Heather Rosvold of Kentville, Anthony Gray of Kentville, Brigitte Deveau of Pointe-de-l'Église, Heidi Deveau of Yarmouth, Roger Bowman of Halifax, Kiley O'Neill of Dartmouth, and Joan Cunningham of Halifax.

The Select Committee on National Unity also wishes to thank:

From the Legislature Committees Office, for organizing committee meetings and public hearings, Mora Stevens, co-ordinator of the select committee, and staff members Darlene Henry, Sherri Mitchell, and Cynthia Pilgrim;

From Intergovernmental Affairs, Alastair Saunders, executive director, and Darryl Eisan, research officer;

From Acadian Affairs, Paul Gaudet, executive director;

From Communications Nova Scotia: Jim Vibert, executive director, and staff for editorial, advertising, media relations, website, graphic design and publishing support, in particular, Maggie Marwah, editor, and Geoffrey Kerson, co-ordinator of electronic publishing services;

From Text in Context, Translation and Linguistic Services: Annie Williams for translation of the report of the committee and of material used in news releases and advertisements and on the website.

Others whose assistance was invaluable to the committee were: Eddie Comeau and Richard Landry for providing simultaneous translation at the public hearings, Edwin Doucet, for providing and installing the equipment necessary for simultaneous translation, as well as assisting those in attendance at the public hearings; Rodney Caley, editor of Hansard, and Hansard staff; Don Ledger, co-ordinator of Legislative Television and Broadcast Services, and the staff that accompanied the committee on its hearings throughout the province, Roger Bowman and Scott MacTavish; and Michael Laffin, co-ordinator, House of Assembly Operations, and staff.

Report of Nova Scotia's Select Committee on National Unity

Introduction

National unity has been a challenge in recent years; outstanding issues continue to threaten the future of Canada. Unaddressed and unresolved, these tensions may leave the country regrettably divided as Canadians head into the next millennium.

On September 14, 1997, the premiers of the nine provinces outside Québec and the leaders of the two territories met in Calgary and took up this challenge: to find a vision of Canada that everyone can agree on, a Canada where all Canadians can feel at home.

The political leaders wanted to know what Canadians envisioned for their country. To this end, the premiers and territorial government leaders produced a seven-point document that quickly became known as the Calgary Declaration.

The declaration is not a constitutional amendment. It is not part of a new round of constitutional negotiations. Instead, its authors regard it as a framework for discussion—a guide to Canadians as they examine their views on the values that underlie their sense of nationhood. The political leaders committed to taking the document home to seek opinions and suggestions from their respective publics and legislatures.

A second component was added to the provinces and territories' search for public input after the leaders of several national aboriginal organizations, following a meeting in Winnipeg on November 18, 1997, expressed concern that the Calgary Declaration could adversely affect aboriginal rights.

The aboriginal organizations presented their own framework for discussion, one concerning relationships between the federal, provincial, and territorial governments and aboriginal governments and peoples. The premiers and territorial leaders agreed to add discussion of this second document to public consultations on national unity.

Nova Scotia's Select Committee on National Unity

Each province and territory was to choose its own fashion of gathering public input. Guidelines developed in Calgary required the consultative process to be open to all, creative, and non-partisan.

Nova Scotia sought a broad-based approach and put in place various means through which citizens across the province were encouraged to voice their opinions.

Premier Russell MacLellan, Conservative Leader John Hamm, and NDP Leader Robert Chisholm established an all-party Select Committee on National Unity. Eleanor Norrie served as chair and Robert Carruthers as vice-chair, while other members were Paul MacEwan, Ronald Russell, Ernest Fage, and John Holm. Lila O'Connor served as the government's alternate member.

The committee planned nine public hearings across the province between December 16, 1997, and January 20, 1998. They were in Halifax, Sydney, Port Hawkesbury, Truro, Kentville, Pointe-de-l'Église, Yarmouth, Bridgewater, and Dartmouth. As public interest grew, the committee added a 10th hearing, back in Halifax on January 21, 1998, in the Red Chamber of Province House.

Advertisements announcing the public hearings and calling for submissions were placed in every English- and French-language weekly and daily newspaper in the province. The large ads, which included the seven points of the Calgary Declaration, were also placed in the monthly Micmac Maliseet Nations News. Posters printed from these ads were made available to public libraries and constituency offices of members of the Legislative Assembly.

Public service announcements and radio ads also ran in some communities, and Eleanor Norrie and other committee members drew further interest by appearing on radio talk shows.

The process marked a first for a Nova Scotia legislature committee by looking to cyberspace for responses. Nova Scotians who could not or did not attend a hearing were encouraged to submit their views and concerns via e-mail or an Internet website specifically designed to accept e-mail messages. The website, devoted to the unity issue, was attached to the Nova Scotia government home page and linked to the unity sites set up by other provinces and the territories.

Nova Scotians could also submit input on a toll-free telephone line, by fax, or through traditional post to the Legislature Committees Office.

In all, 136 presentations were made at the 10 public hearings, and 77 people responded by telephone, 67 by e-mail, 24 by fax, and 81 by post-for a total of 385. A number of telephone calls was also received during radio and television call-in shows.

The committee's mandate was to listen to Nova Scotians and then draft a resolution reflecting those views—specifically, views on the Calgary Declaration and the subsequent framework for discussion from aboriginal leaders.

The committee was required to report to the House of Assembly with the resolution no later than February 16, 1998. The resolution will be subject to a free vote following debate in the legislature.

Nova Scotians Speak

The responses left no doubt that an overwhelming majority of Nova Scotians deeply want Québec to stay in Canada. Almost everyone who made a submission spoke—at times with eloquence and often with passion—of the need for national unity and of their love for Canada.

The committee heard the concerns of the Acadian community and the aboriginal community. Members were encouraged by the presentations of young Nova Scotians, including presentations delivered with insight and enthusiasm by several high school history classes.

Nova Scotians endorsed the guarantees of equality of individuals and provinces, but many noted that equality remains a goal, not a present reality in all cases. Others said equality should not be interpreted in a way that prevents different and flexible responses in different circumstances. Still others said they want it to mean a continued strong federal government with a maintenance of comparable public services across Canada.

Many said the people of Nova Scotia and Québec need to know each other better and need to know about their respective experiences and aspirations. They called on Nova Scotians to learn more of Canada's history and urged more English speakers to learn French.

Some said Canada has to clearly explain to Quebecers the costs of separation and the benefits of staying.

In all, support for the Calgary Declaration outnumbered opposition by about two to one. Roughly half the submissions did not deal directly with the declaration. Instead, the authors or presenters of these submissions poured out their feelings for Canada or suggested other

ideas for resolving unity issues.

No one said they want Québec to leave, although a few recommended Canada willingly negotiate a separation agreement if Quebecers voted to leave Confederation. Some feared the Constitution's notwithstanding clause would apply to any constitutional changes that may evolve from the Calgary Declaration.

The Calgary Declaration is designed as a starting point, and many Nova Scotians said it was on that basis that they support it. Many presenters offered suggestions for changes, but others warned the original wording should not be altered, at least not now. That was the view of the Council for Canadian Unity:

“The Calgary Declaration is the product of hard and careful bargaining among nine provincial governments, with input from the federal government and the territories. It is a perilous business to start unilateral rewriting of such complex documents.

“We understand that some Canadians—for example aboriginal peoples and francophones outside Québec—are dissatisfied with the way the declaration addresses their concerns, and we accept the legitimacy of those concerns.

“But we believe they would be better addressed in a separate process. If the House of Assembly does wish to address other concerns, we suggest that it do so through completely different resolutions.”

The Seven Points

Most of the Nova Scotians who made submissions to the committee chose to discuss general unity principles rather than analyse each of the seven points of the Calgary Declaration. Those who did present a point-by-point analysis approved every point, including the fifth, by an indisputable majority.

Some called the entire declaration motherhood and apple pie; others used that epithet for the equality clauses but had difficulty in accepting point 5, which expressed “the unique character of Québec.”

Supporters and opponents alike often suggested changes to the Calgary Declaration in support of their varying points of view.

1. All Canadians are equal and have rights protected by law.

This declaration of individual rights received high approval. Those who suggested changes mainly wished the sentence specified the rights being referred to.

Suggestions included:

specify rights to medicare and other social services

specify in terms of political, economic, legal and human rights

specify rights by using the Oxfam guide to basic rights, which includes rights to adequate food, housing, employment, etc.

state that point 1 would prevail if points 1 and 5 conflict

clarify that equality has not yet been achieved but is an objective

add “as well as shared responsibilities”

2. All provinces, while diverse in their characteristics, have equality of status.

Provincial rights also received considerable support, although some respondents argued that equality of status must not mean that provinces in different economic and social circumstances should be treated as if they had the same needs. For instance, federal social programs that do not recognize the differences between the have and have-not provinces would lead to less, not more, equality.

3. Canada is graced by a diversity, tolerance, compassion and an equality of opportunity that is without rival in the world.

This point, which recalls some of the virtues the United Nations recognized in Canada, draws together the equality and diversity elements and seasons them with tolerance and compassion. Few Nova Scotians disagreed with it, but some said equality is not yet a reality. One found the phrase “without rival in the world” arrogant; another argued that it says nothing.

Suggestions included:

delete “without rival in the world”

clarify that equality has not yet been achieved but is an objective

4. Canada's gift of diversity includes aboriginal peoples and cultures, the vitality of the English and French languages and a multicultural citizenry drawn from all parts of the world.

This point, identifying the four key groups in Canada's diversity, was described by many anglophones as one of the apple-pie statements. La Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse, however, asked to be specifically included.

The federation, though strongly endorsing the Calgary Declaration in general, stressed that points 4 and 6 must be changed to include them. Acadians are a historically separate culture from Québec francophones, the group said. Acadian speakers repeatedly voiced their objections to being referred to as “francophones outside Québec.”

L'Institut de développement communautaire, in a presentation at Pointe-de-l'Église, said: «Au Canada, en raison de notre histoire, nous sommes, au regard du monde entier, une nation attachée à la dignité de la personne humaine et à la solidarité entre les peuples. Ne nous laissons pas de nous montrer fraternels à l'égard de ceux et celles qui parlent une autre langue et qui dans leur corps et dans leur coeur vivent une culture et une aspiration légitime qui sont précaires et menacées à l'intérieur de nos frontières.»

[“Because of our history, we Canadians are seen by the whole world as a nation that cares deeply about human dignity and the fellowship of peoples. We always behave in a fraternal way toward those who speak another language and who, heart and soul, live their culture and maintain a legitimate aspiration even when these are precarious and threatened within our borders.”]

Aboriginals in Nova Scotia objected to the “gift of diversity” phrase on grounds it implies their culture is a gift. The Union of Nova Scotia Indians said it was inadequate that the only mention of aboriginal peoples is in this phrasing of the declaration. (The union's submission is discussed at greater length on page 26.)

The chair of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, a Mi'kmaq, expressed this concern at the Dartmouth hearing: “We are not simply Canada's gift of diversity but part of the foundation of this country, and this must be respected.”

Suggestions included:

delete the words “gift of”

recognize Acadian culture by adding an Acadian reference to the English and French phrase

5. In Canada's federal system, where respect for diversity and equality underlies unity, the unique character of Québec society, including its French-speaking majority, its culture and its tradition of civil law, is fundamental to the well-being of Canada. Consequently, the legislature and Government of Québec have a role to protect and develop the unique character of Québec society within Canada.

Nova Scotians recognized that this is a crucial clause. Without it, the Calgary Declaration would fail to speak to the concerns of those Quebecers who consider the unique features Québec brings to Canada are not sufficiently recognized by their fellow Canadians, and who may feel that there is no place for them in this country.

As with previous attempts to give recognition to Québec's French-language majority, its culture and its civil law tradition, this clause generated the most debate.

“It is vital,” the Council for Canadian Unity said of point 5. “It is not an open-ended gift to Québec governments; it carefully specifies the areas in which Québec has unique needs and it recognizes that Québec's government has a legitimate responsibility to meet those concerns within the Canadian federal system. It does not diminish the rights or harm the interests of other Canadians in any way. Without it, the declaration would receive negligible support in Québec.”

The editor of Unity Link, an Internet magazine, told the second Halifax hearing: “It can't do any harm, since the unique character of Québec is already recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada. It's the law of the land. And if it means more power for Québec, then the declaration states the other provinces get it too—equality is respected.”

Opponents saw no difference between “distinct” and “unique.” Some noted the words “within Canada” and questioned if that addition would give Québec powers over some of Nova Scotia's provincial jurisdiction.

Others saw a possible conflict between point 5 and point 1, in which

case they wanted point 1 to prevail. These presenters had concerns that the Government of Québec would attempt to use the “unique character of Québec society” as justification for discrimination against non-francophones in that province.

The majority of presenters, however, recognized that Québec's French-speaking majority, culture, and tradition of civil law do make Québec unique among the provinces of Canada. Furthermore, some presenters expressed their understanding of the necessary balance between individual and collective rights in the Constitution.

Suggestions included:

include wording such as “... and the preservation and promotion of the existence of French-speaking Canadians outside Québec.” (The committee heard that Acadians do not accept this terminology as a description of themselves; instead, they sought recognition, as Acadians, in point 4.)

give Canada a role, along with Québec, in promoting Québec's unique character

specify that other Canadians are also unique

6. If any future constitutional amendment confers powers on one province, these powers must be available to all provinces.

This point drew few comments, but some presenters feared that it could lead to undue devolution of powers that could weaken the federal government's ability to address the different social, economic, and cultural needs of all parts of Canada. The federal government might no longer be able to ensure comparable public services across the country, said some submissions.

La Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse said the federal government must continue to protect the rights of official-language communities that could be affected by the devolution of powers.

Suggestions included:

delete points 6 and 7 of the Calgary Declaration

add the words “... and it will be the responsibility of the federal government that all devolution should protect and promote the rights vested in the official-language communities”

add words to state there should be no weakening of the federal government's power to maintain comparable public services and standards

7. Canada is a federal system where federal, provincial and territorial governments work in partnership while respecting each other's jurisdictions. Canadians want their governments to work co-operatively and with flexibility to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the federation. Canadians want their governments to work together, particularly in the delivery of their social programs. Provinces and territories renew their commitment to work in partnership with the Government of Canada to best serve the needs of Canadians.

This point restates the principle of federalism and commits the two levels of government to co-operate. No submission disputed its theme, but representatives of several municipalities called for recognition of a third level of government: municipal.

Suggestions included:

add words recognizing powers of municipalities

describe Canada as a country

The Aboriginal Framework

The Framework of Principles for a Discussion of Relationships submitted by the national aboriginal leaders in Winnipeg expressed serious concerns that certain references in the Calgary Declaration might undermine the position of aboriginal peoples in Confederation.

The aboriginal leaders said any rebalancing of federalism must not derogate from aboriginal and treaty rights, Canada's responsibilities to aboriginal peoples or its capacity to honour those commitments.

They stressed that the "gift of diversity" phrase in point 4 must not negate the unique place of aboriginals in Canada or their rights in treaties and the Constitution.

The main response to the aboriginal framework was a written brief from the Union of Nova Scotia Indians. The union declared support for the national leaders' statement.

“The UNSI fully supports the statements of our national aboriginal organizations urging the provincial, territorial and federal governments to work together with our governments on resource sharing and management through which economic and social development of the Mi'kmaq can occur with certainty and public acceptance.”

The union noted the only mention of aboriginal peoples is in the gift of diversity statement of point 4, and it called that inadequate.

It said the Mi'kmaq nation entered into a chain of treaties with the Crown but has been repeatedly denied the rights flowing from that relationship.

“Aboriginal people have distinct rights and authorities that have been legislatively recognized and legally recognized within courts throughout the country. More specifically, within Nova Scotia the Mi'kmaq maintain and assume a unique legal, historical and indigenous status which goes beyond the scope of multiculturalism, as presented in this (Calgary) framework.”

Other Issues

Nova Scotians were invited to relate their feelings generally on national unity. Most respondents spoke with great feeling on the issue, at times overlooking the Calgary Declaration altogether and leaving committee members guessing as to their support for the document.

Running like a current through the hearings was a feeling that Nova Scotians—indeed, other Canadians outside Québec—need to talk to Quebecers, to show them who we are and let them show us who they are.

Many called for increased travel between residents of Nova Scotia and Québec. Existing student exchange programs such as those sponsored by the Terry Fox Centre in Ottawa and service clubs were lauded with pleas for more of the same, including some for adults. Others called for the teaching of French to more children.

Some called for promotion of a broad knowledge and understanding of the history of Canada.

Others proposed that Nova Scotia francophone leaders be encouraged to visit Québec to promote goodwill and understanding between the people of the two provinces.

A number suggested that Nova Scotians and other Canadians ensure Quebecers are sufficiently informed of the negative effects of separation.

Some suggested that Canada is indivisible.

Conclusion

Nova Scotians told the committee they support the concept of individual and provincial rights of equality, but they insist that equality means preserving a strong federal government that can protect social benefits, national standards, and the principle of equalization. The members of the Nova Scotia Select Committee on National Unity agree.

Mi'kmaq told the committee that recognition of Canada's diversity must not negate the aboriginal peoples' unique place in Canada, affirmed in treaties and the Constitution, by treating that diversity as a gift. The committee agrees and recommends the words "gift of" be deleted from the English-language version.

Nova Scotians told the committee the thriving Acadian culture within the larger provincial community can be viewed as an enviable model of two cultures living side by side. The committee agrees.

Nova Scotians told the committee that Canadians outside Québec must communicate more with Quebecers, and we must look to our shared history to better understand and appreciate each other. The committee agrees.

Nova Scotians told the committee that they accept the Calgary Declaration as a positive first step toward meeting Canada's national unity challenge. The committee agrees.

Resolution

Submitted by the Select Committee on National Unity

For consideration by members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly

WHEREAS the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly wish to reaffirm their commitment to a strong and united Canada and

to the promotion of greater understanding and mutual respect among all Canadians; and

WHEREAS on 14 September 1997, nine premiers and the two territorial government leaders agreed to submit a Framework for Discussion of Canadian Unity, commonly known as the Calgary Declaration, to the citizens of their respective jurisdictions for consideration and comment; and

WHEREAS on 18 November 1997, the same premiers and government leaders received a Framework of Principles for a Discussion of Relationships from the leaders of five national aboriginal organizations and agreed to refer it to the consultative or legislative processes under way in their jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS a Select Committee on National Unity of the House of Assembly of Nova Scotia has consulted Nova Scotians on the Calgary Declaration and the Framework of Principles for a Discussion of Relationships; and

WHEREAS Nova Scotians, proud of their own rich and diverse heritage, have clearly indicated their belief that a united Canada in which Québec is a full participant is to the benefit of all Canadians; and

WHEREAS Nova Scotians consider that, in the Canadian federation, the federal government must continue to be able to address the diverse circumstances and needs of all the provinces, and to ensure comparable public services across Canada; and

WHEREAS Nova Scotians have expressed their support for the Calgary Declaration as a positive first step toward meeting Canada's national unity challenge;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House of Assembly, on behalf of the citizens of our province, endorses the Calgary Declaration as follows:

1. All Canadians are equal and have rights protected by law.
2. All provinces, while diverse in their characteristics, have equality of status.
3. Canada is graced by a diversity, tolerance, compassion and an equality of opportunity that is without rival in the world.

4. Canada's diversity includes aboriginal peoples and cultures, the vitality of the English and French languages and a multicultural citizenry drawn from all parts of the world.

5. In Canada's federal system, where respect for diversity and equality underlies unity, the unique character of Québec society, including its French-speaking majority, its culture and its tradition of civil law, is fundamental to the well-being of Canada. Consequently, the legislature and Government of Québec have a role to protect and develop the unique character of Québec society within Canada.

6. If any future constitutional amendment confers powers on one province, these powers must be available to all provinces.

7. Canada is a federal system where federal, provincial, and territorial governments work in partnership while respecting each other's jurisdictions. Canadians want their governments to work co-operatively and with flexibility to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the federation. Canadians want their governments to work together, particularly in the delivery of their social programs. Provinces and territories renew their commitment to work in partnership with the Government of Canada to best serve the needs of Canadians.

Terms of Reference

The Select Committee on National Unity, a six-member all-party committee, was struck by Resolution 164 on November 28, 1997, during the Sixth Session of the 56th General Assembly.

Resolution 164 states:

Be it resolved that:

(a) the House declare pursuant to the Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House of Assembly that a Select Committee on National Unity be established to seek the views of Nova Scotians on the Framework for Discussion which was endorsed by nine Premiers and the two Territorial Government Leaders in Calgary, Alberta, on 14 September 1997, and which is attached to this Resolution as Schedule A;

(b) specifically, the Select Committee shall seek to determine:

- i.the views of Nova Scotians on the seven statements describing Canada in the Framework for Discussion;
- ii.whether Nova Scotians believe any further statements should be added; and
- iii.whether, overall, Nova Scotians can support the Framework for Discussion as a vision of Canada with which they can feel at home;

(c) in seeking the views of Nova Scotians on the Framework for Discussion, the Select Committee shall ask Nova Scotians to take into consideration the points of the Framework of Principles for a Discussion of Relationships between Federal, Provincial and Territorial governments and Aboriginal governments and peoples which was presented to the Premiers and Territorial Leaders by the Leaders of the five national Aboriginal organizations in Winnipeg, Manitoba, on 18 November 1997, and which is attached to this Resolution as Schedule B;

(d) the consultation of Nova Scotians shall be undertaken by means of:

- i.public hearings;
- ii.receipt of written submissions;
- iii.provision of a 1-800 telephone number located in the committees office so that Nova Scotians may express their views orally, such views to be summarized in writing and provided to the Select Committee; and
- iv.provision of an Internet site, monitored by the Committees Office, so that Nova Scotians may express their views in writing by this manner.

(e) without limiting the right of any person to make a presentation to the Select Committee, the Select Committee may specifically request the views of Aboriginal, cultural and other representative organizations whose views may be of particular relevance to this consultation and may invite these organizations to make a presentation to the Select Committee at the public hearing most convenient for them;

(f) upon conclusion of the hearings, and taking into account the oral and written submissions received, the Select Committee shall, no later

than 16 February 1998, report to the House of Assembly with a draft resolution for consideration by the House of Assembly on the subject of the Framework for Discussion;

(g) if the House is not sitting when the report is completed, the Select Committee shall deposit the report with a draft resolution with the Clerk of the House of Assembly and it shall thereupon be deemed to have been laid upon the Table;

(h) pursuant to the Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House of Assembly the Select Committee shall be composed of six persons selected by the Striking Committee, three of whom shall be members of the Government Party, two of whom shall be members of the Official Opposition, and one of whom shall be a member of the third recognized Party in the House, the Chair of the Select Committee to be the person named as such by the Striking Committee;

(i) this House declares pursuant to Section 36 of the House of Assembly Act that the Select Committee not be dissolved by prorogation of the House and that the Select Committee is authorized to continue its inquiry after the House is prorogued;

(j) notwithstanding the said Rules or any Rules of the House, the Select Committee of the House is empowered to examine and inquire into all such matters and things that may be referred to the Committee by the House and from time to time report to this House the observations and opinions of the Committee respecting matters and things referred to the Committee and the Committee is further empowered to send for and examine witnesses, papers and records, and to extend to any witness the protection of this House;

(k) the Select Committee shall meet only in the Province and on matters pertaining to its study, review and recommendations;

(l) all the powers and privileges under the House of Assembly Act and amendments thereto and the Rules of the House applicable to standing and select committees while the House is in session shall apply and be of full force and effect during the sittings of the Select Committee;

(m) this House authorizes the Legislature Internal Economy Board on behalf of the Select Committee to employ such members and staff as may be necessary to enable the Select Committee to carry out its duties; and

(n) this House declares that the Legislature Internal Economy Board is authorized to provide the Select Committee, its members and staff with such facilities and funds as are required to carry out their duties and as are provided for by and pursuant to *Section 80 of the Public Service Act.

* CHAPTER 376 OF THE REVISED STATUTES 1989 An Act Respecting the Public Service EMPLOYEES OF THE LEGISLATURE Powers and Duties of Board

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All matters relating to the issuing of orders or requisitions, the passing of accounts and the general expenditure of moneys in connection with the House, other than members' indemnity, shall be dealt with and settled by the Board. R.S., c.376, s.80.

Schedule A

Framework for Discussion

Endorsed by nine Premiers and two Territorial Government Leaders, Calgary, Alberta, 14 September 1997

1. All Canadians are equal and have rights protected by law.
2. All provinces, while diverse in their characteristics, have equality of status.
3. Canada is graced by a diversity, tolerance, compassion and an equality of opportunity that is without rival in the world.
4. Canada's gift of diversity includes Aboriginal peoples and cultures, the vitality of the English and French languages and a multicultural citizenry drawn from all parts of the world.
5. In Canada's federal system, where respect for diversity and equality underlies unity, the unique character of Québec society, including its French-speaking majority, its culture and its tradition of civil law, is fundamental to the well-being of Canada. Consequently, the legislature and Government of Québec have a role to protect and develop the unique character of Québec society within Canada.
6. If any future constitutional amendment confers powers on one province, these powers must be available to all provinces.

7. Canada is a federal system where federal, provincial and territorial governments work in partnership while respecting each other's jurisdictions. Canadians want their governments to work co-operatively and with flexibility to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the federation. Canadians want their governments to work together, particularly in the delivery of their social programs. Provinces and territories renew their commitment to work in partnership with the Government of Canada to best serve the needs of Canadians.

Schedule B

Framework of Principles for a Discussion of Relationships

Presented by the Leaders of five national Aboriginal organizations, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 18 November 1997

The five participating National Aboriginal Organizations, the Assembly of First Nations, Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, Metis National Council, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, and the Native Women's Association of Canada, affirm the historic and primary fiduciary obligation of the Government of Canada to all Aboriginal Peoples, evidenced by Constitutional, Treaty and Aboriginal rights and invite the Premiers and Territorial Leaders to join with them.

The Aboriginal peoples of Canada have, and enjoy, the inherent right of self-government, a right recognized in S. 35 of the Canadian Constitution and in agreements between the federal government and institutions and governments of the Aboriginal Peoples and in tripartite and other agreements amongst federal, provincial and territorial and Aboriginal governments and peoples.

Provincial, territorial, federal governments and Aboriginal governments and peoples should seek to work together to resolve issues of resources sharing and management in a manner which will promote economic and social development with certainty and public acceptance without extinguishing or diminishing Aboriginal Rights, Treaty Rights and Aboriginal Title.

The rebalancing of Canadian federalism must always be undertaken and accomplished, in a manner which does not derogate from the Aboriginal and Treaty rights and jurisdictions of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. It also must not diminish, in any way, the fiduciary

and Constitutional responsibilities of Canada and its capacity to honour its commitments and obligations to all Canadians, including the Aboriginal Peoples. There must be a willingness to enter into partnerships rejecting federal off-loading to the provinces and to Aboriginal governments and peoples in favour, rather, of joint efforts to maximize best possible uses of available resources.

Canada is a federal system in which federal, provincial, territorial governments and Aboriginal governments and peoples work in partnership while respecting each other's jurisdictions, rights and responsibilities. Nothing in the Calgary communique can minimize or derogate from that principle or from existing Aboriginal and Treaty rights.

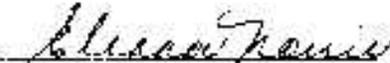
References in the Calgary communique to Aboriginal peoples and culture as one part of Canada's "gift of diversity" must not negate the uniqueness of the place of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, a relationship which finds affirmation in the Treaties and in Part II of the Canadian Constitution.

The Aboriginal peoples of Canada, the first peoples to govern this land, enjoy their own status and rights, including the equity of Aboriginal men and women, and have the right to ensure the integrity of their societies and to strengthen their relationships with their lands. The role of Aboriginal peoples in the protection and development of their languages, cultures and identities is recognized and supported by Canadians.

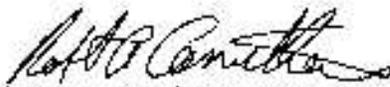
All governments must be committed to promoting and strengthening identifiable social, political and economic developments which will lead to improved education, housing and infrastructure and to stronger and healthier Aboriginal communities and people, particularly the young and those with special needs.

STATEMENT OF SUBMISSION / DÉCLARATION DE SOUMISSION

All of which is respectfully / Lequel est respectueusement soumis
submitted to the House of Assembly / à l'Assemblée législative
this 16th day of February, 1998 / le 16e jour de février 1998


Eleanor Korrie, MLA / MML
Chair / Présidente

I concur / Je suis d'accord


Robert Carruthers, MLA / MML
Vice Chair / Vice Président

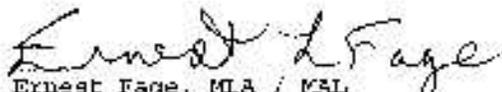
I concur / Je suis d'accord


Ronald Russell, CD, MLA / CD, MML

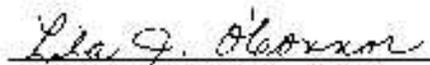
I concur / Je suis d'accord


Paul MacEwan, MLA / MML

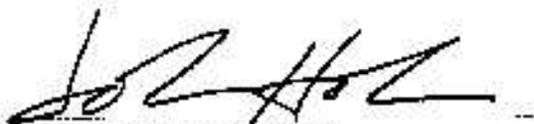
I concur / Je suis d'accord


Ernest Page, MLA / MML

I concur / Je suis d'accord


Lisa O'Connor, MLA / MML
Alternate / Alternative

I concur / Je suis d'accord


John Holm, MLA / MML

Appendix

Presenters at Public Hearings

Capt. Harvey Adams

Dr. Scott Armstrong

David F. Barrett

Neil Bergman

Bible Hill Junior High School (Grade 9 Class)

Désiré Boudreau

Henry Bradford

Bridgewater, Town of
Mayor Ernie Bolivar

Vince Calderhead

Lou Centa

Al Chaddock

Chamber of Commerce of Clare
Helene Thibodeau

Kevin Christmas

Chrysalis House
Mary DeWolfe

Cobequid Educational Centre

Cole Harbour High School (Grade 11-12)
Introduction by John Tilley (teacher)
Leslie Scott
Craig Cameron
Amanda Dean

Collège de l'Acadie

Dr. Real Samson, president

Ronald Colman

Gabriel Comeau

Paul Comeau

Comité régional de la FANE en Argyle
Clyde DeViller/Gary Seeley

Conseil Communautaire du Carrefour
Annette Boucher, president

Harry Cook

Council for Canadian Unity
Louis Comeau, Nova Scotia president
George Cooper, board member

Betty Cox

James Crombie

Ron Cromwell

S. J. P. Davies

Isabelle Davis

Clinton Desveaux

Bruce Devenne

Igino DiGiacinto

Disabled Persons Commission
Nita Irvine, chair (spokesperson)
Craig MacKinnon, commission member
Charlie MacDonald, executive director

Jim Doane

Jeanne Doucette

Suzanne Dugas

Frank Fawson

Fédération acadienne
de la Nouvelle-Écosse
Gisèle Blanc Lavoie

Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse
Jean Melanson, president
Carl Roach, communications director

Fédération des parents acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FPANE)
Marie Claude Rioux

Marg Forbes

Bob Frelick

Stuart Gamble

Dr. Karamchand Gandhi

Dr. Charles Gaudet

Dr. Richard Goldbloom

Dr. Morris Givner

Rafael Gómez-Morales

Halifax Canadian Club
Dr. Donald MacIntosh, president
Zilpha Linkletter, member of the executive

Don Hamilton

Michael Hinks

Gerald Hoganson

Homeowners' Association, Cornwallis Park
Gordon Willden, director

L'Institut de développement communautaire

Lisa Richard

Norm Jackson

Michael Janael

Cyrille LeBlanc

Danny LeBlanc (à Marc Alexandre)

Guy LeBlanc

Jeanne LeBlanc

Bob Lewis

Richard Lord

Lunenburg, Town of
Mayor Laurence Mawhinney

Lunenburg Unity Group
Gordon Watson, spokesperson
Dick Crawford
Shirley Powers

Allan Lynch

Allister MacDonald

John MacDonald

Elizabeth MacKenzie

Walter MacKinnon

John MacMullin

Kim McCallum

Allan McMullin

Member of Parliament for Halifax West
Gordon Earle

Member of Parliament for West Nova
Mark Muise

David Miller

John Moorehouse

Linda Moores

Murray Morse

Greta Murtagh

National Congress of Italian Canadians, Atlantic Region
Luciano Bianchini
Dr. Robert A. Bortolussi
Anna (DiCostanzo) LeBlanc

Phyllis Nixon

Harry Norrie

Dr. Jeffrey Norrie, Ph. D.

Nova Scotia Government Employees Union
David Peters, president/spokesperson
Ian Johnson, policy analyst

Roy Page

Joan Paquette

Joe Paquette

Henry-Dominique Paratte

Jim Peers

Charlie Philips

Evan Price

Gary Randall

Reform Party Constituency Association

of Kings/Hants
Lloyd Schmidt

Elliott Richman

Richmond Progressive Conservative Association
Frank Sutherland Richmond Progressive Conservative

Ladies Association
Eva Landry

Douglas Rodenhizer

Royal Canadian Legion, Valley Branch 147
Brooke Taylor

Bryden Ryan

Yvon Samson

Evan Scott

Scouts Canada - Second Wellington

Venturer Company
Daniel Doucet, secretary
Robert Morrison, vice-chairman

Derrick John Seaman
private citizen/spokesperson for
Parentfinders Nova Scotia

Mark Setlakwe

Status of Women Advisory Council
Patricia Doyle-Bedwell, chair

Strait Area Education & Recreation Centre
Class Representatives:
Andrew MacPherson
Jennifer MacDonald
Robert Bruce
Kevin MacDonald, teacher

Taiwoo Warriors

Andrew Fulton (Vice Admiral Ret'd), spokesperson
John Tilley

Truro and District Chamber of Commerce
R. T. (Bob) Baxter (Ret'd Col.)
managing director

Harvey Webber, CM, QC
Private Citizen/Council for Canadian Unity

Bill Whiffen

Byrne Williams

Unity Link
Tom Jorgensen

Unity Link
Graham Murray

Université Sainte-Anne
Harley d'Entremont

University College of Cape Breton
Greg MacLeod, Ph. D.

Voice of Women
Marion Pape

Yarmouth High School
John Nause, Ph. D.,
Canadian literature teacher

Luke Young

Robert Young

Andrew Younger

List of Respondents

Every effort has been made to include the names of all who made submissions to the Select Committee on National Unity. However, some names may have inadvertently been omitted or

misspelled. The committee apologizes for any omissions or errors.

Respondents by E-mail

Kurt Ahlblad

Peter Alapin

Gary Arnett

Bradley Austen

Joseph E. Bellefontaine

Ian Brunton

Dan Bunbury

Dorothy Carson

Martha Cassidy

Ches Chaulk

David Cheney

Col. (Ret.) John M. Cody

Joyce Colbert

Keith Daly

Barry Daniels

Peter Dawson

Malcolm C. Duncan

Winnifred Erlendson

Emery Faught

William R. Gard

James R. Gavel

Alf Gerritse

Christopher Gill

J. Stuart Grossert

Stephen Heard

Ken Hiltz

Larry Kelly

Wayne Kennedy

R. Lee Kirby, MD, FRCPC

Kathie Landry

Edward LaPierre

Dennis MacDonald

Mary Lu MacDonald

Andrew MacDougall

Nathan MacGillivray

C. A. (Sandy) MacKenzie

Bill MacLeod, Ph. D.

Charles D. Maginley

Steve March

Harold & Pat Marshall

Harry McKinley

David Millen

Nicole Muise

Ron Murdock

John A. Murray

Dr. Tom Musial

Robert G. Osgood

Joe & Joan Paquette

Jaywant Patil

P. Reynolds

Paul Robinson

A. Romain

Charles Schafer

Peter Sheehan

Walter S. Sloan

Ivan Smith

Olive Smith

Gerald D. St-Amand

Jennifer Theakston

Charles Thompson

Union of Nova Scotia Indians

Betty L. Wamboldt

Ralph Winter

Gloria Wood

* Three e-mailed submissions did not include the sender's name.

Respondents by Fax

John E. C. Britton

Thomas F. Brown

Danny Cavenagh

Joan Cleather

N. P. Cloghesy

Municipality of Colchester

André Gaudet

Robert Huby

Peter G. Ineson

J. A. Jamieson

William J. Johnston

Kathie Landry

Marie McKean

Charles M. Musial

Hank Niesten

The Royal Canadian Legion,

Nova Scotia Command

Mukhtyar Tomar

Town of Truro

Ronald B. Twohig, QC

Joan Weldon / Carol Dobson / Laura Shea

Frank N. Wood

* One faxed submission was unsigned.

Respondents through Post or by Hand-Delivery

Bruce Aikman, PEng

Edward A. C. Amy

A. J. Aucoin

Jennifer Aucoin

Terry Aucoin

C.A. Balesdent

Verna B. Banfield

Kristy Herron Bishop

Connie Brauer

John S. Bubar

Amanda Cassidy

Chamber of Commerce, Nova Scotia

Doug & Jackie Christen

Rev. R. Stewart Clarke, BA, M.Div., M.Th.

Lynn Deveau

Albert J. Dugas

Willo Dunphy

Blair Edmonds

Gerald Fisher

Adam Fitzgerald

Murray J. Francis

Brandy Fraser

Clifford Freeman

Ronald F. Freeman, Ph. D.

Jean-Pierre Galipeault

Agatha C. Ganong

Claude Gonzales

Audrey Hanrahan

Vic Harris

G. Henry

G.W. Holbrook

Raymond F. A. Hunter

Monica E. Hylton

J. Sandy Irwin

Jewish Council, Atlantic Region

Ronald Jung

Jayson Larade

John V. Leblanc

Keith Leblanc

Danny LeBlanc

Harold A. Little

Willis Lunn

Dr. Harold P. MacCormack

George MacDonald

Saywerd MacDonald

Catherine MacLeod

Johnathon MacLeod

Donald S. McNeille

Murray N. Morse

Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia

David A. Olding

Town of Parrsboro

Olive Pastor

Malcolm Patterson

Christine Poirier

Leon Poirier

Evan Price

A. P. Pross

Diane Robinson

Spurgeon G. Roscoe

P. John Rose

Clive Schaefer

Joseph Shaw

Douglas Simmons

Annie V. Smith

Matthew Smith

Rev. Frank B. Stiles, BA, B.Ed., M.Div.

Stephen Sutherland

Jim & Inez Sweet

Edward D. Teiman

Brian Tennyson, Ph. D.

Andrea Timmons

Stacey L. Timmons

Sherry Tremblett

Perry Wallace

Mr. White

* Five submissions mailed in or hand-delivered were unsigned.

Respondents on a Toll-Free Telephone Line

Alex Bielak & family

Ross Blackburn

David Boudreau

Earl Bower

Vicky Cameron

Jane Charboneau

Mary Clare Clogh

Martha Crosley

George Earnst

Tom Earnst

Doug Embrie

Chuck Fitzgerald

Barry Flicker

Harry Giles

Dr. M. Givner

Shirley Heath

Florene Hennigan

John Hiltz

Walter Hirtle

Terry Hunington

Monica Hylton

Steve Juseda

Reg Knight

Michael Kolman

Rhoda Lanceleve

Danny Leblanc

Howard Libbey

Mr. Little

Robert Louts

Hugh MacKenzie

Bob Mann

Hugh McLellan

Gne Mmi

Irene Nickerson & husband

Richelle Owen

Bob Pietiarzak

Bryden Ryan

Richard Sanderson

Robert Saularde

Paul Saunders

Evan Scott

Robert Snow

Ellen Sweeney

Ronald Walsh

Tom White

* Thirty-two callers did not leave their names.

Respondents via Radio and Television Stations

The committee wishes to thank those who took the time to voice their opinions during call-in shows on the following radio and television stations: CJCB Sydney, CJCH Halifax, CJLS Yarmouth, and Bragg Communications (cable television, Truro).