Statement by
THE CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS
in support of the demands by the
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES OF CANADA
FOR THE CONSTITUTIONAL ENTRANCEDMENT OF
THEIR ABORIGINAL AND TREATY RIGHTS

While the Canadian Labour Congress has refrained from taking
a formal position on the Constitutional issue, we are making one excep­
tion, because of the unique and special position which Canada's Aboriginal
Peoples must have in our country.

Though the solemn treaties, guarantees and promises they re­
ceived left much to be desired in being honoured, they at least provided
hope as well as a basis for advancing just claims for fulfillment.

Now that Canada's constitutional arrangements are about to
be substantially altered, our aboriginal peoples are understandably
alarmed at the prospect that they may well lose even the limited rights
they were promised by the Crown and by the governments composed of
other Canadians admitted into their homeland.

The CLC shares the sense of alarm of our Aboriginal Peoples
at this very real prospect. We believe that other Canadians and their
various governments have a special obligation at this time to ensure
that the aboriginal and treaty rights are reaffirmed, secured and honoured
in full.

The CLC, therefore, calls upon the Governor-General, the Prime
Minister and his government, as well as the Joint House-Senate Committee
on the Constitution, to act promptly and effectively to ensure the en­
trenchedment of aboriginal and treaty rights in the revised Constitution,
and also on the right of aboriginal peoples to be fully and meaningfully
involved in the process of constitutional change.

We also call upon provincial governments to promptly affirm
their full support for these just claims of our aboriginal peoples; and,
within the limits of their powers, to put these rights into practice.