

Sub

SUBMISSION TO: Special Joint Committee on the Constitution of Canada

From: Vancouver Multicultural Society of B.C.

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Preamble:

The Vancouver Multicultural Society has convened a number of meetings with ethnocultural leaders concerned with the repatriation of the Canadian Constitution, and discussed ways of enshrining multiculturalism in the Constitution and in particular introduced amendments which would ensure for multicultural groups, an equal say in the governance of the country.

As a result of these meetings, it was the consensus that all peoples in Canada must realize that Canadian unity can only become a fact if the Anglophone, Francophone and "Ethnophone" communities, including the Native Indian and Eskimo peoples are recognized as equal partners in the building of Canada and in the re-fashioning of the Canadian Constitution.

It was furthermore agreed that regionalism must not be so strengthened as to weaken the concept and reality of Canada as a whole; that Canadian citizenship must mean the same for all Canadians regardless of ethnic origin, linguistic persuasion or cultural community; and, that there can be no unity without equality for all peoples in Canada.

Hence, the Constitution must provide for the implementation of the following propositions:

1. Canadian unity is paramount.
2. We endorse two official languages for Canada - English and French - with provincial choice as to emphasis and in addition, suggest other languages be offered for study, the choice to be left to each individual.
3. There is no dominant culture - that all cultures in Canada - including those of the native peoples, have had a share in the development of Canada.
4. The Canadian multicultural mosaic strengthens Canada's international status.
5. The social, economic, political and cultural aspects of Canadian life are all interdependent.
6. Canadian multiculturalism provides a broad base upon which to capitalize on all the rich human resources within the country. This concept of multiculturalism should be reflected in all teacher training programs in Canada.
7. Entrench the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in the Constitution.

18. The non-English and non-French sectors of Canada's population shall be given equal opportunity for linguistic and cultural expression in Canada's public and private media networks with control of policy retained by the Federal government.
19. The Senate of the Federal government shall be so constituted as to reflect both regional and cultural interests throughout Canada.

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