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Cabinet du Ministre de la Justice
et Procureur général du Canada
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0H8

Office of the Minister of Justice
and Attorney General of Canada

T.P.

AUG 21 1981
AOÛT

Ms. Carol Leslie
Policy Assistant
Liberal Party of Canada
102 Bank Street
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Ms. Leslie:

This is in response to your note of July 29, 1981 regarding resolutions passed at the 1980 National Convention. I have provided comments with respect to three of the resolutions.

Yukon and Northwest Territories Priority Resolution

c) The provisions of the Constitution Act, 1981, that deal with the relations between governments (equalization, First Ministers' Conferences and the amending formula) refer to relations between those governments that exercise legislative authority under the terms of the British North America Act. The Northwest Territories and the Yukon have not yet attained this status. Independent representation at First Ministers' Conferences by the Territories would be inconsistent with their present status as territories and not provinces. As long as they remain territories, their formal representation must legally remain under the aegis of the government of Canada.

Second Western Resolution of General Priority

a) and c) The Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice have given on a number of occasions "a commitment to pursue the issue of native rights at the highest level of political negotiations in the next phase of the constitutional renewal process, and to fund the national

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Native organizations to help them fully prepare for their direct participation in those negotiations.

In addition, section 36(2) of the Constitution Act, 1981 guarantees that constitutional matters directly affecting the aboriginal peoples will be discussed at the next First Ministers' Conference on the Constitution and that representatives of the aboriginal peoples of Canada will be invited to participate in the discussions of these matters.

I hope that these comments will be of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

Original Signé par
Original Signed by

Pierre Fortin
Executive Assistant

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