

Parliament passes resolution

The Canadian Parliament agreed to a final version of the government's constitutional resolution, April 23, after seven months of debate on the question.

On October 2, 1980 Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau made public the government's plans to "patriate" the British North America Act, Canada's principal constitutional document and to include in the patriation "package" an amending formula as well as a Charter of Rights (see *Canada Weekly* dated March 11, 1981).

Pending a decision of the Supreme Court of Canada on the constitutional validity of the proposed measures, the House of Commons voted unanimously on April 22 to accept a New Democratic Party amendment to the resolution to include new provisions in the Constitution. The amendment ensures equality for women under the Charter of Rights and strengthens protection for native people. The House also passed a government amendment recognizing the supremacy of God and changing the amending formula to put the western provinces on equal footing with the Maritimes.

Passed to Supreme Court

Following approval by the Senate, the constitutional resolution was passed to the Supreme Court of Canada which will decide whether the government has the right to ask the British Parliament to amend and patriate the Constitution without the consent of the provinces. The court will hear arguments from the federal government and each of the ten provinces. Ontario and New Brunswick will argue in support of the federal case.

If the Supreme Court declares the constitutional resolution legal there will be a two-day debate in the House of Commons and Senate before the resolution is adopted as a whole and sent to the British Parliament.

The resolution will request the British Parliament to transfer to Canada all remaining legal authority over all the provisions contained in British constitutional statutes relating to Canada, principally the British North America Act, the British law of 1867 by which the Canadian federation was created.

The Canadian parliamentary request also asks the British Parliament to enact provisions which will allow the Canadian Constitution to be amended in Canada,

and for the Charter of Rights to be incorporated in the Constitution. The provisions will also constitutionally recognize the principle of equalization or tax sharing among the federal and provincial governments.

Britain recognized Canada's equal sovereign status in 1931 by the Statute of Westminster, but authority to amend the BNA Act has remained with the British Parliament at Canada's request given the lack of a system of constitutional amendment in Canada. The Canadian government's proposal would see the BNA Act brought to Canada ("patriated") with a procedure established for amendment in Canada only. The Charter of Rights would provide, for the first time, constitutional legal protection of fundamental rights of citizens until now observed under legislation and by tradition.

Firm wins Nigerian contracts

An Ontario consortium has won two contracts worth \$44 million for the planning, equipping and staffing of two polytechnic schools in Nigeria.

Consult-Foundation Limited, a company formed by Consult Limited and The Foundation Company of Canada Limited, both of Toronto, will act as the prime subcontractor to the Canadian Commercial Corporation to provide academic services and equipment for the polytechnic schools at Bida and Ilaro, two regional centres in Nigeria.

"Within the next four years, what are now undeveloped sites will be transformed into modern campuses, complete with academic and administrative buildings, lecture halls, dormitories, all the required site services and technical education equipment," he added.

Ontario Educational Services Corporation (OESC), the new agency established to represent Ontario educational resources abroad, will undertake responsibility for the educational components of the project. Actual services, such as the development of major course groupings, will be provided by the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. Enrolment at each polytechnic is expected to be between 3,000 and 4,000 students.

Perrytech Corporation Limited of Toronto, will provide services related to vocational training equipment — from screwdrivers and diesel engines to engineering and laboratory equipment.

Defence ministers hold talks



Defence Minister Gilles Lamontagne (right) presents United States Secretary of Defence Casper Weinberger with a model of the Canadair Challenger during Mr. Weinberger's visit to Ottawa, April 15. The United States is considering purchase of the Challenger, which is a small business jet. During their meeting, the two defence ministers continued discussions which began in February when Mr. Lamontagne visited Washington.

Cancer grant largest ever

The National Cancer Institute of Canada has awarded the largest grant in its history — more than \$1 million — to the division of biological research at the Ontario Cancer Institute in Toronto, reports the *Canadian Press*.

The \$1,022,201 grant is one of the 286 research and equipment grants awarded to scientists for research by the Canadian Cancer Society's scientific affiliate.

The grants to support cancer research totalled a record \$20,714,672 million.

By province the breakdown is as follows: British Columbia, \$2,101,980; Alberta, \$1,708,855; Saskatchewan, \$396,116; Manitoba, \$953,018; Ontario, \$9,399,221; Quebec, \$3,587,894; New Brunswick, \$67,908; Nova Scotia, \$165,929 and Newfoundland, \$263,869.

The fund is separate from the Terry Fox Marathon of Hope fund, which now exceeds \$23 million and is aimed at more innovative types of research.