

Canada Weekly

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Ottawa, Canada

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First Ministers Conference on the Constitution

The Prime Minister and the ten provincial premiers, assisted by their ministers, met in Ottawa, October 30 — November 1, to discuss an agenda for constitutional renewal which included: a charter of rights and freedoms for Canadians; the distribution of powers between Parliament and the provincial legislatures; the institutions of the Canadian federation; and the process of constitutional revision, including, except for Quebec, patriation and an amending formula.

Many observers attended, including: the leaders of opposition parties in Parliament; senators and members of the House of Commons, and members of provincial legislatures, members of the Task Force on National Unity; leaders of national and some provincial native organizations such as the National Indian Brotherhood, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, and the Native Council of Canada; and representa-

tives of the Federation of Municipalities of Canada and some provincial municipal associations.

The renewal of the Constitution

First Ministers agreed on:

- the importance and urgency of constitutional change;
- the responsibility that rests on the Federal Government and provincial governments to find solutions to constitutional problems;
- the need for all governments to adopt a flexible approach and to demonstrate a willingness to compromise; and,
- the need for all governments to devote time and effort to the task of renewal.

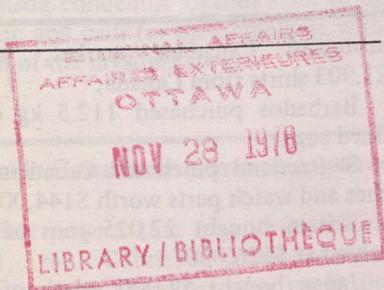
Process of renewal

The First Ministers agreed:

- to establish a constitutional committee composed of designated federal and pro-



Participants at the Federal-Provincial Conference of First Ministers in Ottawa from October 30 — November 1 (standing left to right): Premiers Bennett Campbell, Prince Edward Island; William Bennett, British Columbia; Peter Lougheed, Alberta; Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau; Frank Moores, Newfoundland; William Davis, Ontario; Sterling Lyon, Manitoba; (seated left to right): Richard Hatfield, New Brunswick; René Lévesque, Quebec; Allan Blakeney, Saskatchewan; and John Buchanan, Nova Scotia.



One hundred and seventy-two years ago yesterday...

Le Canadien, the first newspaper in Canada printed entirely in French, was published.

Ted Grant

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