



ALSO KNOWN AS THE C.J.L. FOUNDATION

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Let's Journey Together in Mutual Quest for Justice, CPJ urges First Nations Circle**

In a January 20, 1992 presentation, "Journeying Together: Creating Room for Expressing Diversity", Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) stated emphatically that all Canadians must take immediate measures to advance the aboriginal agenda for protection of rights, for development and change. A national commitment to action of this kind must be the first step toward building political community in Canada. Indeed, constitutional success depends upon it.

CPJ, a non-aboriginal organization, was granted the distinguished honour of appearing before the First Nations Circle on the Constitution of the Assembly of First Nations. The meeting took place at Standing Stone School on the territory of the Oneida First Nation just southwest of London, Ontario.

CPJ's presentation proceeded to articulate CPJ's hopes for a new Canada by:

1) Offering CPJ's wholehearted support to the aboriginal peoples' quest to find a just and appropriate place for themselves within Canada. This must include a full scale Canadian commitment to:

- accept aboriginal peoples' inherent right to self-government.
- engage in fair negotiations in determining aboriginal peoples' jurisdictional authority over resources required to make the experience of self-government meaningful.

2) Seeking aboriginal peoples' advice on how CPJ and other like-minded non-aboriginal organizations might most helpfully stand in active solidarity with aboriginal peoples as they seek to struggle to attain what is rightfully theirs within Canada.

CPJ concluded its presentation by embracing the challenge posed by aboriginal elder Peter O'Chiese who declared recently, "we must lift each other up". Linkages of solidarity and mutual support must be built up between aboriginal and non-aboriginal Canadians premised upon the recognition and fulfilment of aboriginal peoples' historic rights within Canada. It is urgent that all Canadians join ranks now to impress upon federal and provincial governments the need to deal with the issues surrounding the implementation of aboriginal rights.

CPJ is convinced that securing a rightful place for aboriginal peoples will be the litmus test for whether we can generate mutual respect and responsibility among all Canadian citizens and communities. In the end, justice denied to some in Canada, is justice denied to all.

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Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) is a national, non-partisan citizens' organization which seeks to promote justice and stewardship in Canadian public affairs. CPJ engages in research, education and advocacy promoting a biblical perspective on life and justice for all people. CPJ has affiliates in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia and an active membership across the country.