



Oppose the Referendum!

Spoil your ballot!



<http://arcbc.tripod.com>

Should I Vote in the Referendum?

Those of us who support justice for the indigenous people of this area are striving to re-define how we should proceed in the context of a new, neo-conservative government in B.C.

Although many of us were dissatisfied at the pace and substance of treaty negotiations undertaken by the NDP, the situation with Gordon Campbell in power is much worse.

For at least the next few years we are faced with a two-headed dragon: a government with a massive (and disproportionate!) majority of the seats in the legislature; and even worse, a government with an overtly regressive strategy towards First Nations in British Columbia.

An Undemocratic, Unjust Referendum

As an example of this strategy, look at the upcoming referendum. Besides being profoundly unjust and undemocratic, this exercise is a colossal waste of money! Liberals are spending millions on a referendum at a time when harsh budget cuts elsewhere are misrepresented as inescapable. Very little has been done, a referendum now makes no sense. And more importantly, a referendum on rights issues is profoundly undemocratic: minority human rights cannot be based on majority votes.

"Holding a referendum will not change the issues the negotiators have to address," noted Miles Richardson, chair of the BC Treaty Commission in a recent report.

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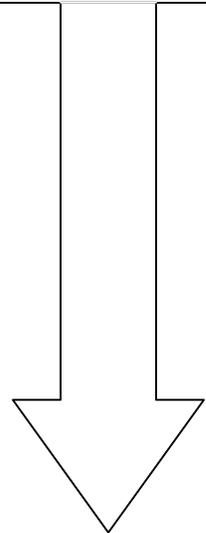
Wondering what's wrong with the draft referendum questions? Check out our website for a complete analysis of each question:

<http://arcbc.tripod.com>

Insert Instructions

- Cut out this insert.
- Staple it to your referendum ballot.
- Return both to the BC government:

Premier Campbell
PO BOX 9041
STN PROV GOVT
Victoria V8W 9E1



BC Referendum Insert

Is justice delayed, justice denied?

Yes

No

(Circle your choice)

Message to Gordon Campbell:

- Stop squandering our scarce tax dollars on this referendum!
- Stop wasting valuable time and get back to the bargaining table!
- I want reconciliation between the indigenous and non-indigenous people of the province!
- I want our government to sign fair treaties with First Nations! Get on with it!



50% of Negotiators Cut!

How serious is the province about settling treaties? As if a hostile, misleading, and regressive referendum strategy were not enough to kill the treaty process, Premier Campbell has not even spared the budget and employees of the provincial negotiators: 50% of negotiator positions have been declared "redundant"!

Wrong Direction

These moves takes us backwards: away from treaties, away from reconciliation and away from justice. Justice delayed is justice denied. It seems inevitable that land that could form part of treaties will instead be exploited by large corporations. In the long run, this will cost us more in court because there will be more damages requiring compensation. And of course, these delaying tactics moves us farther from political, economic and social renewal for First Nations.

Make Your Opposition to the Referendum Heard! Spoil Your Ballot!

In 2002 we must redouble our efforts to work with indigenous people to help them claim their human rights.

How? A few suggestions:

First Let the government know that you oppose their referendum! Start by spoiling your ballot with our insert. Rather than trying to interpret the partisan and sometimes misleading questionnaire, cross it out and attach the insert instead. Ask your friends and family to do the same.

Second, contact your MLA and tell him or her that they need to re-think their strategy. Let them know that we expect them to work towards reconciliation.

Third, learn about, and take action on, the issues of the day, such as the struggle of the Secwepemc people with Sun Peaks. ❖

Who we are

ARC is committed to justice for the first peoples of Canada. We have a vision of a Canadian society in which First Nations peoples are free to exercise the legal and political powers necessary to take control over their own lives, territories and resources.

Want to know more? Contact:

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phone/fax:

(250) 386-VARC (8272)

and check out our web site at:

<http://arcbc.tripod.com>

We want treaties, not a referendum!

Send a clear message to the B.C. Liberals: complete this insert and affix it to your spoiled referendum ballot. Or send it directly to Gordon Campbell:

Premier Campbell
PO BOX 9041
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Victoria V8W 9E1