

(F) MFS.



10 DOWNING STREET

bc:  
Mr. Whitmore  
Mr. Ingham  
Mr. Philip Moore

cc. FCO  
LP's Office  
LCO  
Cabinet Office  
LOD.

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 January, 1982

*Dear Prime Minister*

Thank you for your letter of 19 December in which you asked that the British Government should take no action on the Federal Resolution until Quebec had consented to it or until the opinion of the Canadian Courts was known on the question of Quebec's right of veto.

I have studied your request carefully. I was sorry to learn that the Province of Quebec was unable to agree with the Federal Government and the Governments of the other nine Provinces of Canada on 5 November. A Joint Address from both Houses of the Federal Parliament has now been submitted to Her Majesty. In accordance with established procedure the British Government are now asking Parliament here to pass a Bill which will give legal effect to the Address from the Canadian Parliament. Given the terms of the judgment of the Supreme Court of Canada on 28 September 1981 and the fact that an Address has been submitted to Her Majesty I am satisfied that the existence of further legal proceedings in Canada of the kind to which you refer is entirely a Canadian matter. I therefore do not think that it would be appropriate to suspend action on the Canada Bill in the way that your letter requests.

*Yours sincerely*

*Rene Levesque*

The Honourable Rene Levesque.

SW.



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

12 January 1982

PREMIER OF QUEBEC

Thank you for your letter of 7 January enclosing a revised draft for the Prime Minister to send to M. Levesque in response to his letter of 19 December.

I enclose a letter to M. Levesque which the Prime Minister has signed. Your draft was slightly amended following a further discussion with the Lord President.

I agree with the procedure you propose for forwarding the text (the last paragraph of your letter under reference). You also told me on the telephone that you would arrange for a copy of the correspondence to be given to the Canadian Prime Minister.

I am copying this letter, and its enclosure, to David Heyhoe (Lord President's Office), Michael Collon (Lord Chancellor's Office), David Wright (Cabinet Office) and Henry Steel (Law Officers' Department).

Roderic Lyne, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.