



Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice

A national faith-based organization founded in support of Unitarian values

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Open Letter to the Media

Canadian Unitarians For Social Justice have written to ask our Federal Government to properly represent Canadians in their responsibilities to First Nations people. We want to ensure they have the levels of education, health, quality of environment and economic opportunity promised to them through the treaty process. The Conservative Government dismantled the agreement between all parties known as the Kelowna Accord. It has never replaced this with a different policy agreed to by First Nations, provinces, and the Federal Government. An apology without significant agreements is simply not enough. It is time the Federal Government came to the table and negotiated an acceptable deal with First Nations Leaders.

Furthermore, Bill C-35 affects the basic rights of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. It not only violates international human rights standards, it falls far short of the legal requirements established in Canadian law. We have to do better than this. We must give First Nations the respect of full consultation regarding activities in their territory and respect their rights.

We fully support Chief Spence in her call for these negotiations to begin in the New Year. As Canadians, we must not let this situation turn into a tragedy that will humiliate us for generations to come. We must step up to the plate and negotiate a fair deal for all Canadians. We will all do better when our First Nations grow and prosper and become a full partner with us in this country.

In faith,

Rev. Frances Deverell
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