

reached the point of agreement-in-principle has set dangerous precedence for the Native salmon fishery of British Columbia. The Nishga'a treaty is the only one nearing stage five of the six-stage process. This agreement contains no provision for a treaty-assured allocation of the salmon resource. Without such protection in place inevitably the Native people will find themselves excluded from access to the resource which plays such an important role in their cultures. In relation to fisheries the Nishga'a agreement-in-principle specifies that they will receive \$11.5 million towards the purchase of commercial fishing vessels and licenses. This at a time when the federal government is attempting to reduce the number of commercial fishing vessels through a buy-back program. Second there are no constitutionally entrenched Nishga'a commercial fishing rights as part of the treaty. This is a serious omission that other bands should heed in their on-going negotiation processes. Without the protection of treaty the right to harvest salmon for sale is doomed to end with the completion of the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy in 1998.