

The Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs recommends that the Government empower the Commission to appoint working groups on specific issues, each headed by a Member of the Commission. The working groups should reflect a balanced representation from all regions of the country and aboriginal people.

The purpose of the working groups would be to examine specific subjects and to report to the Commissioners. These areas could include native justice, comprehensive land claims, socio-economic issues, human rights, the Indian Act, diverse taxation issues, sovereignty, land entitlement, federal-provincial relations issues affecting indigenous people, and other issues.

In the context of constitutional reform, the Commission should be specifically mandated to examine models in other countries such as the "domestic dependent nations" model in the United States, the Saami Parliament in Norway and the status of indigenous people in the Parliaments and under the Constitutions of New Zealand and Australia.

2. Review of the National Defence Act

The Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs recommends that an Order of Reference be issued to a Committee of the House to review Part XI of the *National Defence Act* in light of concerns about the need for stronger review mechanisms and additional reporting requirements respecting the use of the armed forces as an aid to a civil power.

3. Federal Land Claims and Dispute Resolution

The Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs recommends the Government take the following action affecting land claims policy, subject to consultations with aboriginal people:

- (i) Establish a body independent of government to conduct an independent review of the validity of claims and to make recommendations to the Government on acceptance of claims for negotiation;
- (ii) Establish a judicial tribunal independent of government to deal with the validity of specific claims and to recommend compensation required to meet valid claims;
- (iii) Establish an independent body to monitor and review the implementation of claims policy and of claims agreements to ensure fairness;
- (iv) Establish a National Mediation Service, independent of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and of the Department of Justice, composed of expert mediators in each region of the country acceptable to the parties involved. These people would be made available to apply their mediation skills to prevent local land use conflicts from expanding into larger disputes.

These four functions could be performed by the same institution.