

with disabilities. Despite the recommendations in *Obstacles* and in the *Follow up Report*, consultation continues to consist of little more than bureaucrats and Aboriginal people talking at one another. All too frequently, this does not lead to constructive action but instead causes polarized views and disagreement about a common course of action.

This report has outlined examples of the flaws in the process of consultation. None is more revealing than the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development's admission that it did not consult Aboriginal people about its initiative under the National Strategy for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities, even though it directly responded to recommendations made by them.

The Committee believes that real consultation means more than permitting Aboriginal people to pass comments on pre-approved government programs. It must involve the direct and equal participation of Aboriginal people in the design,

planning and implementation of any disability strategy. This

means listening to the grass roots, the disabled consumers, as well as organizations that represent

Aboriginal people with disabilities at all levels.

The work of this Committee has shown us that Aboriginal people with disabilities know their needs and the best means of meeting them.

