

ment (DIAND). Many witnesses referred to the consultations held in 1967 and 1968 for the purpose of amending the *Indian Act* and the subsequent introduction of the 1969 White Paper which, they felt, did not reflect the views they had given. In still other cases, witnesses did not distinguish between the Special Committee and the Standing Committee (many of its members are the same) and took the opportunity to air grievances against the Department. Committee members had to emphasize constantly that the Committee was not a consultative mechanism on the DIAND Indian band government proposal and that the Committee was quite separate from the Department. As well, in some places, notably Alberta, Saskatchewan and the Maritimes, objections were raised to the presence of the *ex officio* or liaison members of the Committee. All of these reactions reflected a sense of mistrust and uncertainty about the Committee's role and responsibilities.

## **Relationship with Other Aboriginal Peoples**

It should be pointed out that the Special Committee was directed to examine Indian self-government, not aboriginal self-government. The Committee therefore devoted its efforts exclusively to discussing changes in the relationship between Canada and Indian peoples, even though the Constitution identifies three aboriginal peoples—Indians, Inuit and Métis. Inuit were not among the witnesses. Although some Métis people were included as witnesses as part of delegations from the Native Council of Canada and its affiliates, the Committee did not have a mandate to report on issues of concern to the Métis.

## **The Special Committee Process**

To ensure that the Canadian public was informed about its work, the Committee placed advertisements in various newspapers throughout Canada and used the media as widely as possible to publicize its activities.

The Committee received information in three principal ways: from oral testimony at public meetings where members questioned witnesses; from submissions made in writing; and from the research projects it commissioned. To give prospective witnesses an idea of the range of items under study, the Committee distributed a list of sample questions that witnesses might expect to be asked. Included in the list were questions relating to structures of government, the process of achieving self-government, fiscal relationships, the delivery of services, economic development, and treaty and aboriginal rights.

The Committee endeavoured to hear as many oral presentations as possible from Indian governments and from other organizations and individuals. Criteria were established for the selection of witnesses to ensure a representative cross-section of Indian bands and organizations. The Committee heard a total of 567 witnesses, during 215 oral presentations. Witnesses' names and affiliations are listed in Appendix A.

To obtain first-hand information, the Committee travelled to all regions of Canada. Of its 60 public meetings, only 21 were held in Ottawa. The Minister of Indian Affairs appeared before the Committee in Ottawa on four occasions; officials of the Departments of Justice, Secretary of State, and National Health and Welfare also testified. The Assembly of First Nations and the Native Women's Association of Canada each appeared twice in Ottawa and