

Administration.—Pursuant to the British North America Act, the administration of Indian affairs, which had been under the management of several provinces, came under the jurisdiction of the Government of Canada in 1867. From January 1950 to December 1965, Indian affairs were the responsibility of a Branch of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. In June 1966 (SC 1966, c. 25) a new Department was formed whereby the Indian Affairs Branch joined with part of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources to become the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

The Indian Affairs Branch is composed of a headquarters staff at Ottawa, eight regional offices and 76 field agencies and district offices. Attached to the headquarters and regional and district offices are specialists in such matters as education, economic development, community development, resource management, social welfare, and engineering and construction. Liaison is maintained with the Medical Services Directorate of the Department of National Health and Welfare, the federal agency concerned with the medical care of Indians.

It is the primary function of the Indian Affairs Branch to administer the affairs of Indians in a manner that will enable them to participate fully in the social and economic life of the country. Underlying administrative duties of the Branch include the management of Indian reserves and surrendered lands, the administration of band funds, estates management, enfranchisement of Indians and the administration of treaty obligations.

Five main objectives are being pursued vigorously in an attempt to assist the Indians in adjusting to the pace of social and economic growth. (1) An accelerated program in education places more emphasis on vocational training, retraining for employment, assistance in placement, adult education, kindergartens and a greater use of provincial schools. (2) The program of industrial and resource development, which in the beginning was a program dependent mainly on the traditional resources of fur, fish, forestry and farming, has been expanded to afford opportunities in new areas through loans and other incentives to foster industrial development on the reserves and to facilitate the relocation of families to places where full-time employment is available. (3) A five-year \$112,000,000 program of reserve improvement has been instituted to provide better housing, water and sewerage systems, electrification and roads. (4) Indian bands, where possible, are being encouraged to operate on the same basis as local municipalities and, where required, grants are given to meet some of the financial needs of the Indian community. (5) Provincial services to Indians are being extended; where bands so desire, discussions are held with the province concerned with respect to the provision of services additional to those already in effect.

Eight Regional Indian Advisory Councils established by the Department provide machinery for effective consultation with representatives of the Indian people. Each Council is composed of eight to 12 Indians elected by the bands in the region, as well as representatives of Indian organizations. The consultation procedure is used to interpret federal policies to the Indians and to obtain the views of the Indians on matters of policy, proposed legislation, federal-provincial agreements, new programs and proposed program changes. The National Indian Advisory Board brings together Indians representing all regions. The Board is made up of 18 representatives named by the Regional Councils on a population basis. Its function is to advise the Department on matters of national importance to the Indian people as distinct from matters of regional interest. In addition, Federal-Provincial Co-ordinating Committees are in operation in most provinces. They meet fairly regularly, some as often as once a month, and perform an important function in guiding the plans and programs of the federal and provincial governments in relation to Indians, and in establishing effective liaison between the governments and a better understanding of their respective objectives, policies and programs.