

During the fiscal year 1978-79, the Indian and Inuit program approved 313 loans for \$3.8 million and guaranteed 33 loans from private sources totalling \$11.0 million.

Main estimates during the fiscal year 1978-79 authorized about \$25.0 million in grants and contributions to develop corporations such as National Indian Arts and Crafts Corporation (NIACC) and Manitoba Indian Agricultural Program (MIAP). The economic development branch has provided to Indian enterprises 562 IEDF grants and contributions for start-up and operating costs totalling \$5.3 million. To help Indians establish their own enterprises, the branch, through the IEDF, assisted them with business planning and helped provide other professional and technical services. A total of 789 jobs were created or maintained in 1978-79. In the first eight years of the fund's operation about 13,800 employment man-years were created or maintained. Financing was advanced to enterprises in agriculture, forestry, fishing and trapping, construction, real estate, manufacturing, transportation, communications and wholesale-retail operations.

The reserves and trusts group is responsible for ensuring that treaty obligations covering lands and memberships are met and that statutory responsibilities under the Indian Act for membership and the administration and management of Indian lands are fulfilled. The group also helps bands obtain maximum benefits from renewable and non-renewable resources on their own reserves.

Since 1969 the government has provided financial assistance to native people throughout Canada to research and develop their claims to traditional interests in lands, and their rights under treaties or the Indian Act.

In August 1973, the minister of Indian and northern affairs announced a claims policy which recognized that "comprehensive claims" must be settled and stated that the most promising way of reaching settlement was through negotiation. Comprehensive claims are based on the loss of traditional use and occupancy of lands (described as a "native interest" in the lands) where it has not been extinguished by treaty or superseded by law. The 1973 policy also reaffirmed a longstanding government policy that lawful obligations must be met, in stating it would deal with "specific claims" which are based on alleged maladministration of Indian land or assets under the Indian Act and on the alleged improper interpretations or fulfilment of treaties.

In July 1974, the Office of Native Claims (ONC) was set up to be primarily responsible for representing the department and the federal government in negotiations with native groups about their claims.

**Comprehensive claims.** In 1971 the Crees in Northern Quebec began to express concern about their rights of usage and occupancy in the area of the proposed James Bay hydroelectric power dam. Negotiations began between all parties in 1974, culminating in a final agreement in November 1975.

In February 1976, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC) presented a claim on behalf of the Inuit people of Northwest Territories. This was subsequently withdrawn and a revised claim presented in December 1977. Between May 1978 and February 1979 five negotiating meetings were held. In February 1979, due to a lack of progress, the ITC appointed new negotiators.

The Committee for Original People's Entitlement (COPE) submitted its claim in May 1977. After months of intensive negotiations, an agreement-in-principle was reached in October 1978.

In July 1974, the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories (IBNWT or Dene) and Métis Association of the Northwest Territories (MANWT) announced they would seek a single land claim settlement on behalf of the native people in the Mackenzie Valley. The MANWT subsequently decided to develop its own claim as it could not support the Dene declaration. The IBNWT submitted its claim in October 1976; the MANWT in September 1977. In September 1978, after several unsuccessful attempts to bring the two groups together to negotiate jointly their overlapping claims, the minister suspended negotiation funding. Both groups have been seeking ways to establish a joint negotiating process.

In Yukon, the Yukon native people presented their claim in February 1973. Between 1973-75, a series of meetings was held between all parties. Discussions during