

# TODAYS SITUATION



The 23 Bands with McKenna-McBride cut-offs have formed an Action Committee to push for a just settlement of this issue. The Committee seeks negotiations with both the Federal and Provincial governments. The Federal government has recently said it is ready and willing to come to a settlement.

The Action Committee calls upon the Provincial government to enter into negotiations. The McKenna-McBride Commission was a joint Federal-Provincial Commission. The Province was involved at every step of the Commission's work and approval, including the cut-offs. Today the Province has control over the cut-off lands. The Province has a legal, moral, and political responsibility to come to a just solution of this grievance.

The Committee calls for a land freeze on cut-offs and for the Province to recognize its responsibility to deal justly with Indians.

The Committee's position for settlement is: return of cut-off lands where possible or alternate lands of equal worth.

The Bands are willing to talk and the Federal Government is willing to talk. How about the Province?

Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs

# KITWANGA

## LANDS TAKEN

UNION OF B.C. INDIAN CHIEFS

In 1915 the McKenna-McBride Commission cut-off the Squinlixstat reserve of Kitwanga Band.

The McKenna-McBride Commission was set up in 1912 by the Federal and Provincial governments. Its job was to review the size and location of Indian Reserves in British Columbia. The McKenna-McBride Commission had power to make cut-offs only if the Indians agreed or consented.

In April 1915 the McKenna-McBride Commission met with the Kitwanga Band. Chief Jim protested the small size of reserves and gave no consent. The Chief laid claim to Kitwanga's entire traditional territory.

Kitwanga made strong protests about the general land claim. The McKenna-McBride Commission had been given no power to settle the land claim based on Native Title, because the Province of British Columbia refused to deal with it.

Chief Jim refused to have anything to do with the McKenna-McBride Commission because it would not deal with this issue of Native Title. Chief Jim said:

*"We are not asking for no money from anyone...all we are asking for is to get our land back."*

The Commission ignored this, so the meeting broke up.

A year later, the Commission ordered Squinlixstat cut-off despite the Band's protest. They based their decision entirely on statements made by the Indian Agent. No additional reserve land was allotted to Kitwanga Band. The Commission also took away Kitwanga lands by "correcting" the size of them.

## TODAY...

