

Aboriginal leaders seek more control

CANBERRA. — The National Aboriginal Consultative Committee yesterday moved to gain far-reaching control of aboriginal affairs.

It sought power over policy, spending, natural resources and the right to make laws affecting aboriginals.

The NACC called for the extensive powers in a constitution it released yesterday to set up a national aboriginal congress.

Under the constitution, the NACC's nine-man council of ministers would keep most control.

The Aboriginal Affairs Minister, Senator Cavanagh, will discuss the constitution today at a NACC meeting in Canberra.

He is sure to oppose big parts of it and urge the NACC to amend them.

Senator Cavanagh has opposed moves by the NACC to assume executive status.

He was to have discussed the issue yesterday, but was called to urgent talks in Sydney on an application by Queensland Mines to mine uranium on an

aboriginal reserve at Nabarlek (NT).

But before he left, Senator Cavanagh made it clear he opposed the NACC holding a dual role — that of a consultative committee advising the Government as well as an executive body with some financial independence.

On February 5, the NACC voted to change its name to the National Aboriginal Congress and to assume executive status.

However, when Senator Cavanagh said he had no power to pay such a body and threatened to withhold the \$6000 salary which each member gets, the NACC agreed to continue its consultative role while the constitution was completed.

Senator Cavanagh yesterday denied claims that salary spending at his department had quadrupled this year.