

NEW SHOWDOWN LIKELY ON BLACK POWERS AND TENT HQ

From PETER REES

CANBERRA. — The National Aboriginal Consultative Committee was last night headed for a showdown with the Federal Government.

The NACC refused to reduce extensive powers its draft constitutions gives its "ministers."

It also criticised the Aboriginal Affairs Minister, Senator Cavanagh, for demanding the removal of the tent embassy opposite Parliament House.

The NACC communications "minister," Mr Bruce McGuinness, said: "We are not going to be dictated to."

"We disagree with the minister."

"We will not kow-tow."

He said the NACC agreed that its constitution did not give too much power to the executive.

The 41-member body earlier "passed" a motion calling on Senator Cavanagh to retract his statement that the aboriginal "embassy" was unsightly and was not helping the aboriginal cause.

Refused

Last night Senator Cavanagh refused to back down over his stand on both the constitution and the "embassy."

He said from Adelaide: "I have agreed to submit the final constitution to Cabinet."

"But in its present form, I will not support it."

Questioned on the "embassy," he said: "In the interests of the welfare of aboriginals I will not issue a retraction."

On Wednesday, Senator Cavanagh told the NACC he would strongly oppose the draft constitution in Cabinet unless major amendments were made.

He said the constitution gave too much power to the council of "ministers."

Without Senator Cavanagh's support, the proposed constitution has no chance of being approved by Cabinet.

Yesterday's NACC decision came after a week of talks in which Senator Cavanagh made it clear he was willing to compromise on several issues to ensure smooth relations between the Government and the advisory body.

'Unified'

On Wednesday, both the

31 "SUNDAY PRESS"

Melbourne, Vic.

said they were now unified in their desire to solve aboriginal problems.

Senator Cavanagh said then that all criticism he made at the meeting had been supported without dissent by the NACC members.

He said he wanted to ensure that power stayed with the rank-and-file of the organisation.

Yesterday's decision, which was not expected, is sure to lead to fur-