

MEMBERTOU HERITAGE PARK



Raytel

An Agreement between the City of Sydney and the Department of Indian Affairs was signed Monday, March 22 by the Hon. Jean Chretien, Minister for Indian Affairs. Mayor Carl Neville signed on behalf of the City of Sydney.

Under the Agreement the City will provide the services of police and fire protection, street and sewer, street lighting and all other Municipal services to the residents of Membertou. Negotiations got under way some 15 months ago by a special committee consisting of Chief Roy Gould for Membertou, alderman James Lovelace, Deputy Mayor Charlie Palmer, alderman Vince MacNeil and alderman Elizabeth Vaughan. Department of Indian Affairs officials involved in the drafting of the agreement in-

clude Mr. W. MacDonald, Mr. H.S. MacNeil, and Mr. John Nicholas. Meanwhile, the reserve's Special Constable, Fred Googoo, has resigned. No decision has been made for a replacement as yet.

The Minister took part in what turned out to be an historic occasion when he signed an agreement on behalf of his department with the City of Sydney and Membertou Reservation.

Under terms of the agreement Sydney will provide municipal services to the Reservation with the federal government paying the cost.

Mayor Carl Neville signed the contract on behalf of the city and Chief Roy Gould for the reservation, located within the boundary of the City. It is believed to be the first such agreement signed in Canada and other municipalities and Indian bands are likely to follow the same formula worked out over the past year by the three parties.

Mr. Chretien termed the agreement a good example where Indians are to receive the same municipal services as other citizens. Indians of Nova Scotia, he said, have long claimed they settled the province before French and English-speaking people and they should receive all the same rights. But at the same time they don't want to lose their own unique culture.

Mayor Carl Neville said Sydney was proud of its past association with the Indian people. Co-operation between the municipal government and the reservation, he said, has been going on since 1961. The new agreement, the mayor said, will bring in a complete program of municipal services.

Reservation Band Chief Roy Gould also welcomed the agreement.

"We are going to get complete municipal services," he said. Some services, he said, have been provided in short-term programs for such as garbage collection.

But there have been no formal agreement such as this one, Chief Gould said. Now the reservation will receive all municipal benefits in the form of police and fire protection, sewer and water and street lighting.