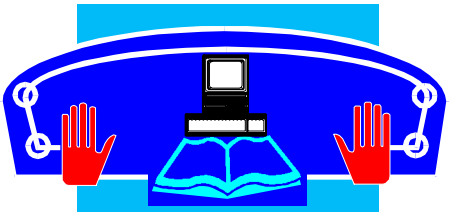


Arctic Development
Library

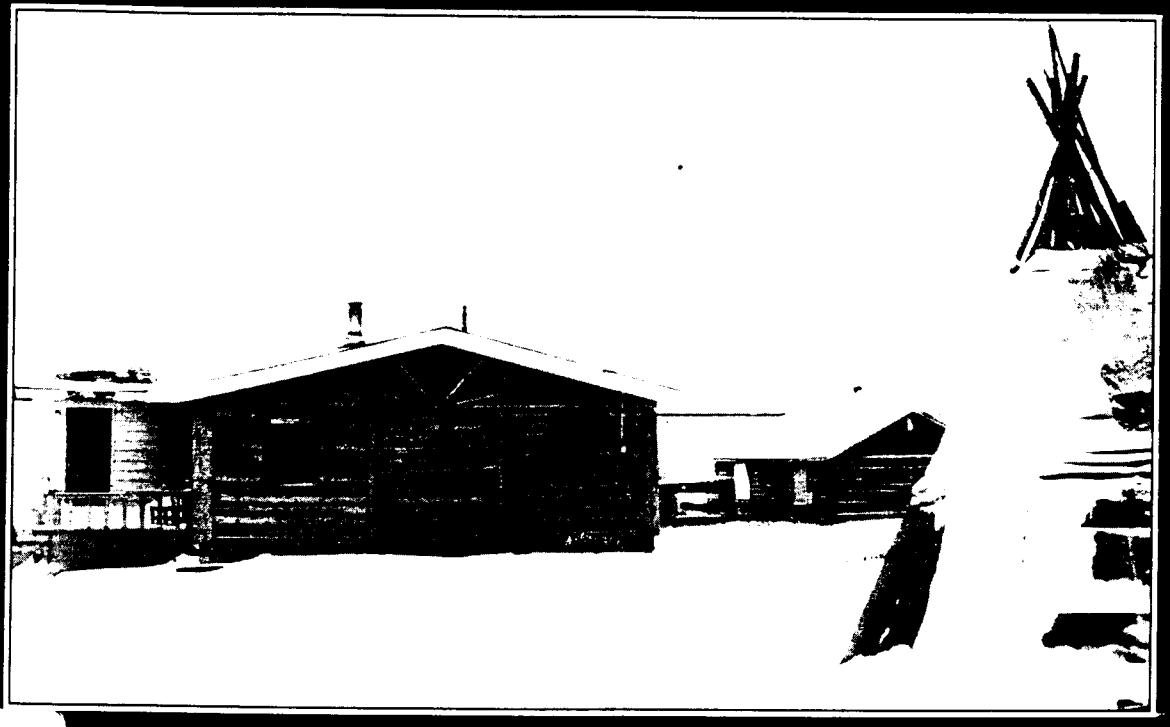
# Northern Communities: The Prospects For Empowerment

Type of Study: Analysis/review
Date of Report: DISP
Author: Gurston Dacks/ken Coates
Catalogue Number: 9-5-403

Library Managed By Strategic Planning, Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development, GNWT, and by:
The Inuvaluit Community Economic Development Organization (CEDO), Inuvik, NWT
Financial assistance provided by Indian and Inuit Services.

# Northern Communities: The Prospects for Empowerment

Gurston Dacks and Ken Coates
Editors



Occasional Publication Number 25

# Northern Communities: The Prospects for Empowerment

Gurston Dacks and Ken Coates
Editors

A publication of
Boreal Institute for Northern Studies
1988

# Northern Communities: The Prospects for Empowerment

Gurston Dacks and Ken Coates, Editors

## Table of Contents


Abstrac t ..... ...5

fieface ..... ...7
Gurston Dacks

Upsetting the Rhythms:
The Federal Government and **Native** Communities in the Yukon Territory, **1945 to 1973....11**
Ken Coates

The Changing **Situation** of **Dene** Elders, and of Marriage, in the Context of **Colonialism:**
The Experience of Fort Franklin **1945-1985** ..... ...23
Lynda Lange

Self-determination, **Medical Ideology** and **Health** Services in **Inuit** Communities ..... **33**
John D. O'Neil

Community Participation **in Socio-Legal** Control: The Northern Context ..... **51**
Harald W. Finkler

Stable Community **Development in the North:** Properties and Requirements ..... **59**
William E. Rees

Patterns of **Transformations and Local Self-determination:**
**Ethnopower** and **the Larger Society in the North:** The **Sámi** Case ..... **77**
Tom G. Svensson

Northern Resources **Planning** and Management:
perspectives **on Community Self-determination** ..... ..91
Robert F. Keith and David A. Neufeld

# Abstract

The papers in this collection assess the prospects for the greater empowerment of the smaller, primarily aboriginal communities of the North. Papers on Yukon Indians and changing Dene gender and family roles examine the historical processes which have shaped contemporary life in these communities in Yukon and the Northwest Territories. Papers on health policy relating to the Inuit, the justice system and local economic development assess the need and prospects for greater community power over these features of northern society. Papers on the Sámi, particularly after the Chernobyl accident, and resources planning and management in northern Canada consider mechanisms by which northern Native communities can participate in national decision making which affects their interests and the degree of success they are likely to achieve. The preface reports the dominant themes and the conclusions reached during discussion of the papers.

# Preface

As part of the celebrations of its twenty-fifth anniversary, the Boreal Institute for Northern Studies of the University of Alberta sponsored a conference titled "Knowing the North: Integrating Tradition, Technology and Science." The conference, which took place on November 20-22, 1986, featured six day-long interdisciplinary workshops on northern subjects. The papers included in this collection were presented at the workshop on "Contemporary Community Institutions: Historical Transitions in the North."

The purpose of this workshop was to assess the prospects for greater empowerment of the smaller, predominantly aboriginal communities in the North. The people of these communities historically have had little control over the social programs — education, health care and social services, in particular — and the economic conditions which determine their material and spiritual well-being. However, in recent years, efforts have been made to devolve some powers to the local level. For example, local education authorities and housing authorities have been established in Northwest Territories communities. These changes reflect a growing recognition that responsiveness to local concerns lies at the heart of successful social programs and that the best way of ensuring this responsiveness is to put power into the hands of the programs' clients, the people in the communities. In addition, they reflect pressure from aboriginal people that more real authority over programs important to their daily lives be transferred to the local level. In general, the political culture of aboriginal northerners emphasizes the local over the regional. Community residents feel more confidence in government which takes place near them than in distant and impersonal government. Indeed, in the mid-1980s both the Dene Nation and the Council for Yukon Indians revised the processes by which they are developing their aboriginal claims in order to give more emphasis to the views of people at the local level. As aboriginal northerners have become increasingly sophisticated about non-aboriginal politics and more assertive, they are pressing the governments which have been imposed on them to respond to their preference for more power to be located at the local level.

This, then, was the premise of the workshop: if a measure of local empowerment was taking place or being promoted in the North, it was relevant to evaluate the prospects for this process of increasing local autonomy. The purpose of this preface is to summarize the discussion in the workshop as it addressed this premise. The workshop opened by considering the history of the development of communities in the North and the loss of self-determination which the largely government-inspired process of micro-urbanization caused. The workshop then examined some examples of social programs affecting the local level before turning its attention to the prospects of these communities taking initiatives to make themselves economically more self-determining.

Several conclusions emerged from the day's discussions. The first was that a degree of local empowerment is occurring. Second, the workshop was impressed by the strength of the arguments of several of the authors that the economic realm seems to offer the most promise for success in the short term. Indeed it may be necessary to nurture economic success in order to build the confidence needed to pursue successful empowerment in other areas of community life. This assessment reflected the third conclusion, that the legacy of colonialism, of powerlessness, in the communities will not be easily or quickly eradicated. The struggle is uphill. Thus the premise of the workshop turned out to be relevant, but decidedly optimistic given the facts of the contemporary situation. Fourth, empowerment which does occur at the local level will remain fragile in the sense that it will always be vulnerable to forces and events

determined outside the community over which the community exercises very little or no power.

The most graphic example of vulnerability to external forces was Tom Svensson's discussion of the impact of the Chernobyl nuclear accident on the Sámi people of Fenno-Scandia. In recent years the self-determination and cultural confidence of these people have been increasing. They have vigorously resisted intrusions of southern needs which appear likely to harm the economic activities which provide their material well-being and underlie their culture. While their campaigns have not always succeeded, they have reflected the process of healthy social development which the Sámi have been experiencing. However, Chernobyl has disrupted this process. Since Chernobyl, the Sámi who have been affected most severely, those who herd reindeer in the South, find that fear of radioactive contamination of their reindeer meat has almost destroyed its market for human consumption. Moreover, they do not know how long this problem will persist. Promised compensation will afford some relief. However, it cannot recreate the former viable economy. The impact of Chernobyl on the Sámi most affected serves as a stark reminder that northern aboriginal communities stand threatened by encroachments from the South which are beyond their ability to contain through activities at the local level. Regional and national efforts afford the only protection against threats of this magnitude.

Even in northern communities which have not suffered as remarkable a disaster as Chernobyl, local conditions are likely to inhibit empowerment. They will also prove central to any attempts to promote local empowerment. The discussion of these conditions during the workshop turned on five prominent themes. The first, emphasized by almost all of the papers, was the complex and mutually reinforcing linkages among the processes affecting the lives and spirits of the aboriginal inhabitants of the small communities of the North. These papers began with the assumption that the means by which a people satisfies its basic life needs will profoundly affect its culture and self-definition. Papers on medical care, the administration of justice and on the gaining and retaining of economic well-being demonstrated how the respective structures defining these aspects of community life have informed the aboriginal peoples' sense of control (or lack of control) over their lives. They explained how these structures have determined the extent of personal worth or frustration community residents experience in their lives and how these feelings have influenced the levels of self-destructive behaviour to be found in the communities. Dealing with problems associated with powerlessness requires an appreciation of the full range of aspects of community life which manifest this powerlessness and the specific assaults on aboriginal sensibilities which each aspect involves. Only when such an understanding exists will it become possible to appreciate the total experience of powerlessness as it is felt in the community.

A second theme of the workshop was that gender relations are an extremely important dimension of community life. They are fundamental to understanding the consequences of destructive social change, the possibilities for future reconstruction and the priorities which the communities may attach to certain items on the local development agenda. For example, John O'Neil reported that aboriginal women have been the major victims of an unresponsive form of health care delivery and that it is Inuit women who are now leading the struggle for more local control of health care delivery. Also, Lynda Lange reminded the workshop that the family is the basic structure of cultural transmission. For this reason gender roles within families should be considered in any serious discussion of cultural rejuvenation or redirection.

A third theme was that the imposition over several decades or more of social structures and services has colonized many inhabitants of the small communities. These people view themselves as incompetent in many ways. They may not accept responsibility for managing aspects of their personal lives and their communities' affairs which they or their parents used to manage effectively and with

dignity. They have lost the ability to act autonomously. For example, they have been socialized to the autocratic pattern of doctor-patient relations which represented the conventional practice of the medical profession, in the South as well as the North, for decades. As a result, many expect doctors to prescribe medicine and resist the present-day attempts of progressive doctors to involve them as partners in the management of their personal health. They have been trained to prefer the doctor to be responsible for their health, rather than to assume some of that responsibility and the autonomy which comes with it and are finding it difficult to put that training behind them.

This unwillingness to accept responsibility and take personal and political initiatives was seen as a serious obstacle to local empowerment in many communities. Regaining a sense of control over their lives, and with it the self--respect necessary to decrease social pathology — alcohol abuse, violence and suicide — appeared as a task beyond the people of a number of communities in their present circumstances. This suggested a fourth theme, that care must be taken to avoid devolving power more directly or immediately than can be accommodated by some communities. While this concern ought not to serve as an excuse for denying power to communities which are well prepared to manage them, it might be prudent to develop a two-track strategy for devolution. The first track would transfer powers to communities as they can handle them. The Fort Good Hope arrangement is a working example of this approach. The second track of the strategy would be to nurture local empowerment by means of changes in patterns of government above the community level. In other words, some powers which will ultimately be vested in local governments might better be handled initially by governments which both are large enough to have the resources to manage these powers and also more responsive, culturally sensitive and accountable than are the present governments of the North. This may mean governments controlled by the aboriginal people themselves or it may mean regional governments. It will certainly mean forms of government very different from those presently in place. It was hoped that the accumulation of positive experiences dealing with such governments would encourage people in the communities to see themselves more as citizens and less as subjects, in all aspects of their lives. Safeguards would have to be put in place to ensure that these governments do not forget that they are only holding these powers in trust and do not deny them to communities which seek them and are ready for them. The cultural redefinition which community residents can plausibly be expected to evolve as they deal with more responsive senior governments will assist them to *become* more efficacious politically. This in turn should lead to more effective local politics, able to receive a growing range of transferred powers. In short, a comprehensive long-term strategy for local empowerment should consider how the forms of government above the community level can contribute to a political culture of empowerment at the local level.

The final theme of the workshop's discussions was that future economic planning should be based on the premise that the mixed, "traditional" economy remains the most stable, hence appropriate, form of economic activity for the small communities. The discussion did not juxtapose wage employment and wildlife harvesting as hostile antitheses. Rather income earned in the wage economy was seen as often subsidizing wildlife harvesting. However, as Bill Rees argued, this linkage does not automatically validate large-scale non-renewable resource development because of the notorious instability of this type of activity. Instead, he and Mike Robinson[1] argued that northern communities should attempt to maximize the proportion of the services they supply for themselves. To an extent which has not been appreciated, communities can efficiently provide services which were formerly delivered by outsiders. Much of the present

[1] The content of the paper which Mike Robinson and Elmer Ghostkeeper co-authored has been substantially reproduced in the June 1987 issue *of Arctic,* hence it is not included in this collection.

extensive leakage of income out of the communities is avoidable. What is required is careful planning to develop a local service sector which will keep as much as possible of the income which flows into the community cycling through it. Particularly as money from aboriginal claims settlements becomes available this pattern should generate a flow of wealth which is much more stable than that derived from employment on externally generated projects. This stability, in turn, will provide an excellent base for working toward long-term economic stability and for developing the personal confidence and self-esteem on the part of community residents which will prepare them to pursue and manage empowerment in other areas of community life.

While the workshop closed on that positive note, the participants were sobered by how far many small northern communities at present are from attaining that goal. Community empowerment is certainly under way. However, the process appears partial, with more successes in some areas than others. It is also gradual in that many developments are only at the proposal stage, if that. The process confronts problems of social pathology and psychological colonialism. Moreover, there are some forces which can profoundly disturb communities which they simply cannot control. Still, particularly given the local orientation of so many of the aboriginal people of the North, local empowerment is an essential element for any strategy of northern social development. The essence of paper after paper in this collection is that people with power are in the best position to make a better life for themselves.

We believe that the papers in this volume place this obvious truth in its northern context. We hope that it will assist readers to appreciate the problems of northern communities and the challenges, and promise, which local empowerment holds out.

Gurston Dacks
June, 1987

# Upsetting the Rhythms: The Federal Government and Native Communities in the Yukon Territory, 1945 to 1973

By Ken Coates
Department of History
University of Victoria

The last forty years have witnessed marked changes in the organization and function of Indian communities in the Yukon Territory. Before the collapse of the fur market in the late 1940s, most Yukon Indians maintained their nomadic habits, moving seasonally from fishing camp to trap-line. They were, after 100 years of contact, much changed from their pre-contact ancestors, but they retained their autonomy and relied on traditional means of social control. In the aftermath of World War II, the balance between Indian harvesters and the increasingly dominant non-Native sector of Yukon society shifted dramatically. The opening of new mines, expansion of existing towns and construction of roads into previously inaccessible comers of the territory, combined with a greatly increased federal presence in the territory, upset Yukon society and forced a reorganization of Indian life. Not since the first years of direct contact with Europeans had the Indians of the Yukon Territory faced such sweeping transformations. Within a decade, the foundations of their economy were uprooted, a new social and political superstructure imposed, and the very fabric of Native culture assailed.[1] The social and cultural dislocations attending this transformation have often been noted: serious alcohol problems, economic despair, reliance on government welfare payments, culturally insensitive health care, the establishment of an assimilationist education system, and family and community tensions. The litany of social ills helps illustrate the depth of the dislocations. It does not, however, explain the cause or timing of the changes.[2]

At the crux of the social upheaval was the destruction and re-creation of the northern Indian community. In the process of 'hinging the northern Indians into the twentieth century," — a common phrase among federal civil servants in the post-war period — the government systematically undermined the essence of Native social organization and life. The process was neither deliberate nor malicious. Most of the changes came unexpectedly, and as a result of policies designed to "improve" the northern Indians' social and economic conditions. Whatever the intent, the government's programs nonetheless upset the rhythms of Native life in the Yukon Territory. In its place, government policies created new Indian communities, funded by welfare subsidies and controlled by Department of Indian Affairs officials. An examination of this process in the Yukon Territory, 1945-1973, illustrates the nature of the

[1] The Yukon Indians were, of course, not alone. Indian and Inuit groups across the North faced similar changes, although the timing and scale of the transformation differed from place to place.

[2] Scholars, particularly anthropologists, have commented extensively on the post World War II conditions in northern villages. For a good example of this work, see the special issue of Anthropologic. NS VO1 V, No. 1 (1963), which deals with aspects of Native communities in the North.

reorientation, the problems that accompanied government programs, and the Natives' response to the restructuring of their lives.

The dominant goal of federal intervention in Yukon Native affairs was to break the rhythms of Indian life. Beginning with the Hudson's Bay Company fur trade, which reached the region in the 1840s, the Yukon Natives had proved adept at responding to opportunities presented by white expansion. They participated enthusiastically in the trade, worked as guides and tripmen, sought temporary wage labour with the miners, and otherwise adapted to the new economic realities. The Natives were not, however, fully integrated into the emerging industrial order. White exclusionist policies, based on stereotypes of Native work abilities, limited opportunities for regular employment, but it was primarily the Indian preferences for a harvesting lifestyle that determined patterns of Native-white economic interaction.

These forces, in place before the Klondike Gold Rush, determined the nature of Indian response to white society in the North over the next half-century. Natives continued to work as casual labourers on the periphery of the industrial order, but only as determined by the dictates of harvesting. Most Yukon Indians followed a migratory pattern, representing an adaptation from the pre-contact norm of following the seasonal cycles of hunting, fishing, trapping and trading. Harvesting continued, in season, but the dictates of the fur trade economy, the season of riverboat travel on the Yukon River and tributaries [many Indians cut cordwood for the stern-wheelers], and the needs of the mining economy for casual labour also had to be taken into account.

Since hunting, trapping and fishing occurred away from white settlements, the continuation of harvesting ensured that most Natives, and not just those living in isolated areas, stayed away from those communities for much of the year. The situation frustrated missionaries and schoolteachers, who continually saw their efforts at Christianization and education eroded by the Natives' time in the bush. The parsimonious federal government, although providing modest assistance to Anglican and Catholic schools, refused to take a more integrative approach to Native affairs, preferring to leave the Indians as Indians. Their flexible lifestyle, which combined temporary access to the industrial economy and the stability of harvesting, proved quite persistent, surviving even the disruptions of the building of the Alaska Highway. The rhythms of Yukon Indian life, built around a viable fur trade, subsistence hunting and Native preference for harvesting over industrial labour, would face a new challenge in the 1950s.

This seasonal pattern, changed after the arrival of whites, left the structure of Native society substantially unaltered.[1] Most Natives spent much of the year, as they had in pre-contact times, in family or extended-family units. A number of families, loosely organized into bands, would gather together regularly for specific hunting or fishing tasks, most often the summer fishery, before breaking up again into -- family units when local resources could no longer support the larger group. As a nomadic, family-oriented people, the Yukon Indians lacked internally generated hierarchical controls; as with other hunting and gathering peoples, decision-making came through "an. egalitarian system of largely consensual, informal authority (Stone 1983:216). community controls traditionally worked through the avoidance of conflict and a non-hierarchical and flexible authority system. This situation fit well with the seasonal mobility and social flexibility of the Yukon Indians; it did not suit the changing plans of the federal government in the post-war period.

Before discussing the territorial situation in detail, it must be noted that the federally-sponsored reorganization of Indian society was in no way unique to the Yukon Territory. From the 19th century, successive Canadian governments exhibited their displeasure with Native lifestyles by encouraging settlement on segregated reservations and assisting assimilation through education. On the western plains,

[1] Marriages between Native women and white men upset the social balance somewhat, lowering the marrying age of women and raising the age for men.

the treaty process accelerated this transition, forming permanent communities of previously nomadic peoples. The Natives did not always oppose the changes that accompanied treaties, reserves, annuity payments, and the like. There is increasing evidence of the Indians' willingness to adapt to new economic and social realities and to adopt new technologies or lifestyles that suited the altered conditions (Tobias 1983a).[1] It is also clear that the federal government, acting primarily through the Department of Indian Affairs, did not always welcome or support Native attempts at integration. The officials seemingly believed that Natives had to be brought slowly toward the standards of white Canadian society (Tobias 1983b).

Although the government programs seldom met either official goals or Indian aspirations, they nonetheless reorganized Native society. The most visible symbol of this transformation was the Indian village — a seeming remnant of traditional days, but in fact a stark reminder of the inability of federal policy-makers to understand Native life. In its path-breaking report on social and economic conditions among the Canadian Indians, the Hawthorn Commission paid particular attention to this transition:

> For the first time, thousands of Indians found themselves living in permanent, sedentary communities with clearly defined spatial and social boundaries. A growing body of formal rules governing corporate land usage, residential rights, band leadership rights, and so on, gave these mostly quite small communities a legal character and exclusiveness which stood in marked contrast to the traditional residential grouping [Hawthorn 1968:177].

There was no such effort in the Yukon Territory until after World War II. Before that time, a combination of federal parsimony and limited interest in the Canadian North limited federal involvement in Indian affairs in the Yukon Territory. The government did not completely ignore the Indians; the Department of Indian Affairs appointed an Indian Agent in 1914. He, in turn, provided relief payments for the destitute and ensured that health services were available for those able to visit a physician's office in Whitehorse or Dawson City. In the main, however, the government recognized that the Indians wished to remain as harvesters, and realized further that a continuation of Indian seasonal mobility limited the demands on the federal coffers. Minor initiatives were taken to protect Native access to resources (provided such regulations did not interfere with mineral exploration) and residential reserves were surveyed near the principal non-Native centres. In the latter case, the purpose was not to attract Indian residents, but rather to ensure that Natives and whites did not live close together. For their part, the Yukon Indians did not protest government indifference. They enjoyed relatively unimpeded access to harvestable resources, the fur trade remained strong, and seasonal mobility continued as before (Coates 1984).

A series of events in the late 1940s, all outside the control of the Yukon Indians, conspired to upset the rhythms of Native life and to introduce a new era in federal-Indian relations. The transition started with a new national commitment "to universal social welfare. Prodded by the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation on the political left and almost out-manoeuvred by the newly-minted Progressive Conservative Party on the right, the Liberal government of William Lyon Mackenzie King took a few tentative steps towards the creation of a universal welfare system. This program was national in scope, drawing Native people into a web of initiatives that paid no attention to their particular needs and aspirations. At the same time, a new commitment to the economically disadvantaged led the federal government to the specific realization that Native people had fallen far behind the rest of Canadian society. While government programs for all Canadians increased in the postwar period, therefore, many new initiatives

[1] As this related to other northern Indians see Coates and Morrison (1986a, 1986b, 1986c). See also Fumoleau (1975).

targeted specifically at Native "problems" also emerged (Guest 1980).

This interventionism proved particularly trying for the Indians of the Yukon Terntory. Having been all but ignored over the previous half-century, the Natives now faced the impact of national policies, country-wide initiatives for Indian people, and specific measures aimed at northern Natives. The transition from neglect to regular involvement was abrupt and disruptive. The government possessed substantial financial and legal resources in its attempts to restructure Native society; the Indians had little with which to respond, beyond a determination to remain as Indians and resist the assimilationist tendencies.

The process started, rather innocently, with the introduction of Mother's Allowance in 1944. Any Canadian parent with a child under the age of 16 years could receive the monthly payments of up to $5.00. Since most Natives in the Yukon Territory did not have access to schools, primarily due to family mobility, the government waived the requirement that school-age children be registered in and attending schools. At the same time, however, the government refused to trust Native parents to spend the money on the children as intended. Fearing that the Indians, having returned from several months in the bush, would "waste" the generous federal supplement, the government insisted on paying northern Natives "in kind" rather than by cheque. This allowed federal officials to dictate what the Indians could and could not buy. Canned milk and tomatoes, southern clothing and prepared baby foods were high on the list of authorized items, a clear indication of official disapproval of Native eating and clothing habits (Indian Affairs 1945 -48).1 Other programs offered in the immediate post-war period were similarly benign. The federal government established a pension for elderly Natives and a public health nurse to administer routine medical services and to provide health education. Similarly, doctors began regular visits to Native communities and a dentist provided dental clinics in isolated Native villages. The government conducted a major tuberculosis survey, and built an addition onto the Whitehorse General Hospital to house Indians with the disease. The government even established a trap-line registration program in 1950, hoping to protect Indian access to fur resources and to keep out southern interlopers (McCandless 1985). The programs appeared to deal with the specific conditions of the Yukon Indians, promising to preserve their economic base — the fur trade — and to respond to the serious medical problems among the Native population.

The government had, as well, altered its long-standing opposition to offering welfare payments to northern Indians. In 1933, John Hawksley, the Yukon Indian Agent, offered a clear statement of government options in this area:

> The Indians, owing to changed circumstances, cannot afford to stay around the villages or leave their families while the men go away to hunt and trap, they are compelled to separate into small parties and live in the woods . for the purpose of hunting and trapping in order to make a living. Opportunities of obtaining work from white people are very much reduced. To insist upon the Indian families staying in the village (which has been suggested) would mean that some of them would have to receive help in the way of provisions. It appears to be a much wiser policy to keep them independent, earning their own living, and they are less liable to get into bad habits [Public Archives of Canada 19331.

The government's concern rested on parsimony as much as interest in Indian "habits," but had ensured the continuation, for half a century, of a policy of actively discouraging relief payments.

Few Indians had required government assistance. From the early days of the fur trade, the Indians had linked occasional work for non-Native employers with trapping and subsistence hunting. They particularly valued seasonal

[1]Note that most other Indians in Canada (except those in the Northwest Territories) received their allowances by cheque.

activities, such as wood-cutting, big-game guiding, and packing, which provided a source of. cash income but did not unduly disrupt mobility. This pattern continued through the building of the Alaska Highway (Coates 1985). Indians typically worked during the summer months — a slow time for harvesting but the key construction period — and returned to their hunting camps for the fall and winter. The seasonal round at Champagne in 1949 was typical. The Indians continued to trap and fish, moving as resources dictated. A few, mostly young men, found occasional work with the highway maintenance crews, but stayed only during the summer months (Yukon Territorial Archives 1949). For the Natives of the Yukon Territory, the resulting "mixed economy," a juxtaposition of subsistence harvesting and work for wages, represented the best response to territorial economic realities and their own cultural needs.[1]

The delicate balance of harvesting and wage employment collapsed in the late 1940s. A catastrophic decline in the fur trade undermined the foundation of the Indian economy. In both 1944 and 1945, Yukon fur trappers collected over $650,000 worth of pelts. Although the number of pelts traded increased dramatically over the next five years (from 87,000 in 1944-45 to 153,000 in 1949-1950), fur returns plummeted to less than a third of their earlier values. Yukon fur returns dropped to $144,000 in 1948-49, the lowest level in fifteen years (Rea 1968). The problem lay outside the Yukon Territory, as the increased catch figures attest. Declining prices and reduced demand wreaked havoc with the formerly stable trade, forcing Indians to seek other sources of income.[2] And this was not the end of the Indians' problems. Almost simultaneously, the termination of riverboat travel between Whitehorse and Dawson City — the last ship ran in 1955 — eliminated the need for Indian woodcutters along the river (Bennett 1978:146). For over fifty years, Natives had supplemented their earnings by cutting wood, an activity that blended well with their seasonal movements. But this too now ended, the victim of the new roads linking Whitehorse, Mayo and Dawson.

The timing of the economic collapse was auspicious, for it coincided with the expansion of the government's pension and welfare programs. The Indians needed money to supplement their declining returns and subsistence hunting; the government was prepared to offer the necessary support. The purse-strings, closely guarded for decades, had been loosened. New procedures permitted traders and missionaries in isolated districts to provide food and other supplies to needy Indians. Between 1940 and 1944, annual expenditures on relief averaged under $12,000. By 1949, that figure had jumped to over $30,000, and welfare spending tripled again to over $90,00 in 1954-1955. (Ten years later, the federal government spent over $200,000 on welfare Payments to Yukon Indians) (Indian Affairs Branch 1939-1970).

The option of securing income from other sources did exist, and federal agents encouraged Indians to seek employment with non-Native companies. Worried that Natives would become dependent upon the relief payments, the local Indian agent attempted to assist "the Indians to be self-supporting and reliant." As a result, financial assistance was provided 'to Indians to assist them in possible worthwhile fields of endeavour, in preference to direct relief" (Department of Indian Affairs 1949:200). Ignoring that Indians in the Yukon Territory had been "self-supporting and reliant" for generations, federal officials sought to use the relief system to integrate the Natives into the broader territorial economy. The Department of Indian Affairs hired men to work on reserve housing projects and at the new experimental farm at Haines Junction. Money was loaned to Indians seeking to exploit commercial wood-cutting opportunities or to find work driving dog teams. The local Indian Agents believed that

[1] On the idea of the mixed economy, see Asch (1979, 1976). On the economy of the Yukon Indians, see Coates (1984).

[2] The collapse of the fur trade coincided with the introduction of the trap-line registration system. The Indians vigorously protested the $10 annual fee, claiming that it cut deeply into their already diminished returns. Their protests were ignored (McCandless 1985:142-148).

such subsidies would eliminate the need for welfare payments, help break down discriminatory barriers facing the Yukon Indians, and undercut the Natives' continued seasonal movements. To many government officials, economic integration was the key to cultural change, and would encourage the rapid assimilation of Yukon Indians into the non-Native territorial society (Indian Affairs Branch 1949-1952). Those who tried to enter the industrial labour force, however, had little success. Prejudicial hiring practices ensured there were few jobs for those Indians trying to find more permanent positions.

By the mid-195os, the Yukon Indians had come to depend on the pensions, Mother's Allowance, welfare grants and other forms of federal assistance now available. Reliance on government payments did not signify an acceptance of federal assimi]ationist policies. Despite the Department of Indian Affairs' best efforts to encourage industrial labour patterns, the Indians continued to prefer hunting and trapping. Government subsidies had become, in effect, a support payment for their nomadic lifestyle, replacing casual wage labour and allowing a continuing of seasonal mobility. The irony was obvious. Programs designed to integrate, educate and settle the Indians were instead providing the financial basis for the maintenance of the Natives' preferred subsistence lifestyle.

Federal officials noted the contradiction between intentions and the results. The Indians were not moving into the mainstream of the territorial society and economy, and showed little willingness to follow the federal government's assimilationist lead. More direct intervention was necessary if the Indians were to be 'modernized" and trained for the realities of the "new North." The transition from offering assistance programs to Indians to taking a more active role in encouraging a restructuring of the Native lifestyle occurred in the mid-1 950s. The government increased the financial resources available to the Yukon Indian agency, but even more importantly began to use the coercive powers at its disposal to ensure Indian compliance with federal plans.

The primary effort was directed at the children. In 1920, the federal government had given itself the legal authority to force Native attendance in schools (Coates 1985). This provision had not been enforced in the North, largely because the government had no desire to build and maintain a network of Indian day schools among the widely scattered nomadic bands. Officials similarly ignored the provision in the Mother's Allowance Act that required attendance at school. Signs of changing priorities in education first emerged in the late 1940s. The Department of Indian Affairs decided that the old policy of segregating Native children in Indian day and residential schools did not encourage proper educational development. A new policy called for the integration of Native and white children in provincial and territorial schools wherever possible. White residents in the Yukon Territory resisted this change, and urged the government to maintain a separate Indian school system. For children from isolated bands, such integration was impossible. These children would be required to attend residential school. The new national priorities were applied in the Yukon Territory by the mid-1950s. The Mother's Allowance regulations were rigorously enforced. Parents unable to deliver their children to a day school on a regular basis were required to send them to either the Anglican residential school at CarCross or the Catholic school at Lower Post. Any families failing to comply faced a quick termination of Mother's Allowance payments (Indian Affairs Branch 1946:212; Department of Indian Affairs 1950; Yukon Territorial Archives 1945).

The Yukon Indians now faced a difficult choice. Nomadic patterns could be maintained if children were sent to residential school, but this required the very painful splintering of families. Conversely, families could remain together if at least one parent moved with the children to a village and remained there year-round. The father could continue to hunt and trap — albeit without the important assistance provided by his wife and children — but the rest of the family would have to remain near the

school for the duration of the academic year.[1]

The Yukon Indians had resisted the pressure to move to sedentary villages. Without a viable fur trade and unable to find other methods of supplementing their subsistence harvests, however, they required the allowances, pensions and welfare payments the government now offered. Reluctantly, and with many family and group adaptations which permitted a continuation of harvesting activities, they began to move more permanently into the villages.[2]

Increased school attendance provides the best indication of the pace of this microurbanization. The number of students enrolled in Yukon Indian day schools tripled between 1940 and 1955. In 1950, the first year Native students entered the Yukon territorial school system, 21 children occupied desks in the predominantly white classrooms. Five years later, 110 Native children were in the system. Altogether, combining Indian day schools, residential schools and territorial public schools, the number of children enrolled jumped from 181 in 1945 to 387 in 1955. Equally important, attendance at these schools, as required by law, became increasingly regular. In 1940, 40% of those on the school lists missed each day; by 1955, almost 95% of registered students attended class (Coates 1985).

The content of the schooling these children received also changed. Before 1945, the government left responsibility for Indian education to the church, and expressed little interest in school programming. The missionary system proved very disruptive, offering little of benefit to the Indians and preparing them poorly for the life awaiting them in their villages. As the Indian children entered the day, residential and public schools in the 1950s, however, they discovered an even more aggressively assimilationist education system. The increasingly secular teaching corps assailed Native languages, taught "practical" industrial skills, and attempted to give the students a grounding in southern Canadian curricula. The effort offered little real preparation for the world the children would discover upon returning to their communities (King 1967).[3]

Education was, understandably, the foundation of official attempts to reconstitute Native life in the Yukon Territory, but the federal government did not limit its efforts to this single program. Residential reserves had been established near the main towns early in the century. Most had been unused, or resorted to spasmodically, over the next four decades. The reserve question assumed new currency in the 1950s. The Territorial Indian Agent was asked to investigate the need for new reserves in areas facing development pressure. R.J. Meek requested a reserve for Ross River because "Recent mining discoveries in the area will probably create a change in the economic set-up of the Indians which up to this year (1953) has been based entirely on trapping and hunting" (Indian Affairs and Northern Development 1953, Meek to Arneil, 21 October 1953). Meek also requested a new reserve for Snag, recommended that the Fort Selkirk site be maintained and observed that the Indians did not need a reserve at Stewart River (Indian Affairs and Northern Development 1953, Meek to Arneil, 21 October 1953). Through the 1950s, additional reserves were surveyed at Burwash, Old Crow, Upper Liard Bridge and Marsh Lake (The claim to several dormant reserve sites was re-established in this decade as well) (Indian Affairs and Northern Development 1953, Bethune to Supt. of Reserves and Trusts, 14 May 1958).

[1] In remote areas, local schools were not provided until the 1960s. Sending children away permitted families to continue their harvesting activities. When the schools were eventually established, parents had to move into the towns. For an excellent discussion of thie process in Ross River, see McDonnell (1975) and Dimitrov and Weinstein (1984).

[2] This process has, erroneously, I believe, often been ascribed to the construction of the Alaska Highway. The Indians in the southern Yukon remained as mobile and as reluctant to settle on the reserves as did the Indians elsewhere in the district. The timing of their move to the villages was similar to that of Indian groups away from the highway. For the contrary view see Cruikshank (1985). See also Duerden (1971).

[3] For the historical background on residential school education in the Yukon, see Coates (1984-85).

A 1958 overview of the status of Yukon Indian reserves revealed that the reserve program had still not worked and that many of the Yukon bands remained semi-nomadic into the late 1950s. 'The report also spelled out the government's continuing intent to alter the residential patterns of the isolated bands. Regarding the Aishihik Band, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs noted 'We will investigate the possibilities of these Indians moving from this remote area to the parcel of land reserved at Haines Junction." The Burwash Indians lived on private land, not the government reserve. It was hoped that they too could be moved. The members of the Champagne band faced similar pressure: "Some of the younger Indians are being encouraged to locate on the Haines Junction Reserve to improve employment opportunities and to be closer to services." Indians in the Dawson area, formerly of the Moosehide reserve, were moved into Dawson City and provided with government housing. Superintendent Jutras suggested that the Indians at White River and Ross River be consulted before their reserves were moved. The White River reserve was to be "close to the highway and services." The recommendation for the Ross River band noted, "These Indians derive their livelihood from trapping. They make their headquarters at Ross River, where they are at the mercy of one trader who charges high prices for food and gives low returns for furs. After consultation with the Indians, stake a few acres at Ross River as a village site and proceed with limited housing. This Ross River area is a welfare problem and the younger Indians are to be encouraged to move to Upper Liard Bridge permanently and transfer to that Band" (Indian Affairs and Northern Development 1953, Jutras, 9 June 1958).[1]

The government's priorities were quite clear. Officials discouraged the Indians from pursuing a trapping and hunting lifestyle. Every effort was made to ensure permanent residence on a reserve, preferably one near schools and other services. Here was the essence of the federal attempt to upset the rhythm of Native life in the Yukon Territory. The reserve would become the work site, welfare and other support payments the controlling mechanisms, education and business programs the tools, and the Indians of the Yukon Territory the clay. Under the control of Department of Indian Affairs officials, Native society would be dismantled and reconstructed along suitable "Canadian" lines.

The new and artificial communities that followed became the basis for subsequent government programming, and eventually for Native activism. The communities were not, however, the spontaneous or logical creation of their Indian members. As the Indians moved into the villages in the late 1950s and 1960s, they entered an alien environment, one that followed a different seasonal pattern, had different standards of leadership and unique mechanisms of social control. Traditional means of social control, which emphasized consensus and the avoidance of conflict, were not suited to the demands of sedentary communities. But the government had a solution here too, in the form of the band chief and council structure. As was noted in the Hawthorn Report, the imposition of institutional structures was not unique to the Yukon Indians: "[T]he band council device was not a spontaneous creation of the Indians, but one which was introduced from the outside; . . . the system was not congruent with Indian precedent or social organization in most cases" (Hawthorn 1968:178).

Although the band councils created the image of Native involvement, the reality was much different. A band-by-band study of management practices, conducted on behalf of the Council of Yukon Indians in 1971, revealed that only a few of the band managers had the training necessary to handle the tasks assigned to them. In most communities, including those where the managers fulfilled the functions expected of

[1] On the government's subsequent programs at Ross River, see Dimitrov and Weinstein (1984).

[2] Most northern communities were, of course, both new and artificial. Non-Natives coming north, however, carried widely-shared expectations about the nature of community life and a general acceptance of the official mechanisms of social control.

them, the Indian leaders had little authority (Bredin 1971). The council system had not been intended to leave real power in the hands of Indian leaders. Instead, it provided an agency through which the government could deal with the whole group. Rather than serving as leaders in the Indian sense of the term, band chiefs and councils functioned as intermediaries, implementing government programs on occasion and representing the group's interests to the Department of Indian Affairs. Even in this one apparent gesture toward Indian autonomy, the government had in fact limited and even co-opted Native leadership, imposed yet another artificial structure, and reduced even further the power of traditional Indian means of social control.[1]

Since both the physical Indian village and the political structures designed to control the resultant "community" were created by non-Indian forces, it is not surprising that the communities had difficulty responding to the problems that followed. From the mid-1950s to the present, the standard indicators of social and economic distress all point to a serious crisis within the Yukon Indian communities. Unemployment rates are shockingly high (even if the returns from the non-wage economy are taken into consideration), alcohol and *drug* problems plague entire villages and political tensions remain (Coates 1986).

The transition to a sedentary lifestyle had not proceeded as the government had hoped. The move to the villages rested on the collapse of the fur trade and the availability of government financial aid programs; it was not predicated on an acceptance of the acculturative processes advocated by the government. The process of assimilation had run up against two impressive barriers: the discriminatory attitudes of the non-Native community, which limited the Indians' integration into the broader society, and the Natives' unwillingness to conform to the model set out by the government. Natives in the Yukon Territory remained culturally and economically segregated, and the process of assimilation moved slowly.

Government coercion generated much resentment. Much of the frustration has been vented internally, as evidenced in reports of domestic and community violence, drinking problems and other forms of self-destructive behaviour. In the late 1960s, however, Indian leaders turned their protests toward the government and the non-Native people of Canada. In a speech delivered in 1971, Chief Elijah Smith of the Yukon Native Brotherhood declared his desire to end "the welfare thinking of Indian Affairs and our people." Since the formation of the Yukon Native Brotherhood in 1968, and particularly through the land claims processes of the Yukon Native Brotherhood and the Council of Yukon Indians, Native people have repeatedly stated their intention to regain control over their lives and to eliminate the still-lingering residue of paternalism and assimilationism of government officials. Native elders remember only too well how recent the transition has been, and how different the community lifestyle of 1980s is from the seasonal rhythms of the 1940s.

For the Council of Yukon Indians, community-level decision making is held out as the best hope of addressing the Natives' serious economic and social difficulties. Requests for Native social workers, economic development officers, and specially trained teachers reflect the interest in shifting the locus of power from civil servants' offices in Whitehorse and Ottawa to the communities themselves. The efforts at empowering Natives on a local level continue in other forums as well. The work of the Yukon Native Languages Project, which is helping to revitalize Indian languages through classroom instruction, the increased use of Native elders in instructional settings, and an Indian communication network (newspaper, radio and television) to enhance contact among Indian groups throughout the territory, all seek to give Natives the knowledge and skills necessary to sustain and protect their culture. The community

[1] A 1973 government report indicated that all Yukon chiefs and councils were selected by 'traditional" (as opposed to elected) means. They were not, however, performing traditional functions. The selection procedures have now changed, and chief and council elections now form part of Indian political life in the territory.

empowerment is most noticeable in the current land claims negotiations. After the 1984 tentative accord was rejected by several bands, the federal government and the Council of Yukon Indians implemented a new process, which requires continuous consultation with the various communities, and mandates a land claims settlement that will address separately the specific concerns of each community (Coates 1986).

There is, ultimately, a great irony in the Indians' acceptance of the community as the basic unit of politics, culture and law in the new North. The forces of education, health care, work and government services brought the Indians into the settlements and gradually broke the rhythms of Native life. The altering of those rhythms, particularly without offering the Indians a culturally or economically viable alternative, created permanent settlements but also contributed significantly toward the many problems faced by the Natives in the post-war period. The emphasis on community decision-making and administration represents an acceptance by the Indians, however grudging, of the post-war realities of life in the North. Indian leaders are not, however, seeking to recapture the past, or to resurrect the lifeways of the pre-World War II period, when seasonal mobility and residential flexibility allowed individuals and groups to adjust to changing social and economic conditions. Increased development, improved roads, Native migration within the territory and other changes in Yukon society have rendered recourse to old techniques largely ineffectual. As they plan for the future of their people, Native leaders face the reality that their options are limited by the changes of the past forty years, and that the agenda they must deal with is, similarly, very much a creation of the post-war period.

References


Asch, Michael

1976 Some effects of the late nineteenth century modernization of the fur trade on the economy of the Slavey Indians. Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology 4:7-15.

1979 The ecological-evolutionary model and the concept of the mode of production. *In* Challenging Anthropology. D. Turner and G. Smith, eds. Pp. 81-99. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

1979 The economics of Dene self-determination. *In* Challenging Anthropology. D. Turner and G. Smith, eds. Pp. 339-352. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

Bennett, Gordon

1978 Yukon Transportation: A History. Canadian Historic Sites, Occasional Papers in Archeology and History, No. 19.

Bredin, H.J.

1971 The Indian Bands of Yukon Territory.

Coates, Ken

1984-85 Betwixt and between: the Anglican Church and the children of the Carcross (Chouttla) Residential School, 1910-1955. BC Studies 62.

1984 Best left as Indians: the federal government and the Indians of the Yukon, 1894-1950. Canadian Journal of Native Studies, Vol. 4, No. 2.

1985a The Alaska Highway and the Indians of the southern Yukon, 1942-1950: a study of Native adaptation to northern development. *In* The Alaska Highway: Papers of the 40th Anniversary Symposium. Ken Coates, ed. Pp. 151-171. Vancouver: UBC Press.

1985b A very imperfect means of education: Indian day schools in the Yukon Territory, 1890-1955. *In* Indian Education in Canada: Vol. 1: The Legacy. Jean Barman, Y. Hebert and D. McCaskill, eds. Vancouver: UBC Press.

1986 Indian participation in the economy. Draft discussion paper prepared for the Yukon 200 conference, September 1986.

Coates, Ken and W.R. Morrison
1986a Treaty Five (1875-1908). Ottawa: Treaties and Historical Research Centre.
1986b Treaty Ten (1906). Ottawa: Treaties and Historical Research.
1986c Treaty Eleven (1921). Ottawa: Treaties and Historical Research.

Cruikshank, Julie
1965 The gravel magnet some social impacts of the Alaska Highway on Yukon Indians. *In* The Alaska Highway: Papers of the 40th Anniversary Symposium. Ken Coates, ed. Pp. 172-187. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Dacks, Gurston
1981 A Choice of Futures: Politics in the Canadian North. Toronto: Methuen.

Department of Indian Affairs
1950 RG 10, vol. 8762, file 906/25-1-005, pt. 1, R.J. Meek to Indian Affairs Branch, 8 February 1950.

Dimitrov, Peter and Martin Weinstein
1984 So That the Future Will be Ours. Ross River: 1984.

Duerden, Frank
1971 The Evolution and Nature of the Contemporary Settlement Pattern in a Selected Area of the Yukon Territory. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Centre for Settlement Studies.

Fumoleau, R.
1975 As Long as This Land Shall Last: A History of Treaty 9 and Treaty 11, 1870-1939. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

Guest, Denis
1980 The Emergence of Social Security in Canada. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Hawthorn, H.B. (cd.)
1968 A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada: Economic, Political, Education Needs and Policies, Part II. Ottawa.

Indian Affairs and Northern Development
1953 file 801-30-0-1, Meek to Arneil, 21 October 1953.
1958 Bethune to Supt. of Reserves and Trusts, Schedule of Lands Reserves for Indians, Yukon Territory, 14 May 1958.
1958 Jutras, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Reserves — Yukon, 9 June 1958.

Indian Affairs Branch
1939-1970 Annual Reports.
19451948 Annual Report.
1946 Annual Report.
1948 Annual Report.
1949-1952 Annual Reports.

King, Richard
1967 The School at Mopass: A Problem of Identity. Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

McCandless, Robert
1985 Yukon Wildlife: A Social History. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press.

Public Archives of Canada
1933 Yukon Territorial Records, RG91, Vol. 9, file 1491, John Hawksley to A.F. Mackenzie, 29 August 1933.
1950 Department of Indian Affairs, RG 10, vol. 6761, file 420-12 -1-RT-1, Meek to Kjar, 15 March 1950

McDonnell, R.F.
1975 Kasini society: some aspects of the social organization of an Athabaskan culture between 1900-1950. Ph.D. Thesis, University of British Columbia.

Rea, Kenneth
1968 The Political Economy of the Canadian North. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Stone, Thomas
1983 Flux and authority in a subarctic society: The Yukon miners in the nineteenth century. Ethnohistory 30(4):216.

Tobias, John
1983a Canada's subjugation of the Plains Cree. Canadian Historical Review LXIV:4.
1983b Protection, civilization, assimilation: an outline history of Canada's Indian policy. *In* As Long as the Sun Shines and the Water Flows: A Reader in Canadian Native Studies. Ian Getty and A.S. Lussier, eds. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Yukon Native Brotherhood
1973 Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow. Whitehorse: Yukon Native Brotherhood.

Yukon Territorial Archives
1945 Series 4, vol. 33, file 689, Rowat to Jeckell, 4 June 1945.
1949 Anglican Church Records, Champagne File, Report to the Diocese of Yukon upon the present state of the Champagne (Y.T.) Mission Field, Summer 1949, by Anthony Guscoyne.

# The Changing Situation of Dene Elders, and of Marriage, in the Context of Colonialism: The Experience of Fort Franklin 1945-1985

by Lynda Lange
Boreal Institute for Northern Studies
University of Alberta

This paper[1] concerns a process of interrelated change between the situation of Dene elders, and the status of women and men, particularly in connection with marriage and the means of obtaining a livelihood. These topics are considered from the point of view of Dene people in a local community, in the context of internal colonialism.[2]

The traditions of the Dene are built on the means of livelihood of hunter-gatherers. In view of the fact that hunter-gatherer peoples have so often been treated by anthropologists and others as the stereotype of alleged 'natural" gender roles (Dahlberg 1981), it is important to emphasize that the approach taken here treats gender roles and family forms as largely historically determined.[3] Another feature of the approach taken here is the view that gender roles and family forms are as fundamental to a particular culture as the means of production of life's necessities. If intervention alters either one of these features, a people have suffered significant 'cultural impact." Much may be discovered by looking for the interaction between the means by which a people have their livelihood, and gender and family relations. In thinking about cultural change, it may be presumed that impact on one will always eventually impact on the other.

These questions are especially relevant for a people such as the Dene, for whom the structure of the family was historically virtually the sum of the social structure. This means that the organization of work which is the daily experience of members of "families," as opposed to other sorts of economic units, is fundamentally structured by the different expectations for performance of women, men, elders, and youth. The economic structure of the traditional Dene community, therefore, was inextricably bound up with gender and age work roles.

It will be argued in this essay that a crucial

[1]This paper is part of a larger project called *The Impact of Government of Canada Administration and Social Programs, and of Economic Development, North of the 60th Parallel, on the Situation of Dene Women and Their Work (1945.1985).* I am grateful to the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada for a research grant for this project.

[2]"Internal colonialism can be understood from a variety of perspectives. Coates (1985:5) emphasizes the low constitutional status of Canada's northern internal colonies, and the continuing fiscal dependence of local administration on the federal government. Chartrand and Prattis (1986), drawing on Frideres, Watkins and Hechter, characterize it as a situation in which a formerly autonomous population finds itself incorporated within a nation state, losing control of both the means of production and local government. The economy and administration of the indigenous territory is then structured by the needs of the 'core," and the indigenous territory becomes "peripheral."

[3]Unlike some, however, my approach does not uphold a dichotomy between biology and the historical/material conditions of life. It seems to me, rather, that the biological differences between the sexes are one aspect of the material conditions shaping human societies.

factor holding together the elements of this situation was the respect traditionally accorded the Dene elders, and further that the tradition of arranged marriage was a major social mechanism by means of which the influence of the elders was put into action. Profound changes have occurred since the mid-1940s as a result of the establishment since then of a federal day school system, housing programs, and the introduction of various social welfare programs available to other Canadians (for example, family allowance and welfare assistance). All of these things together, but most especially compulsory schooling, comprise a process whereby a highly mobile people living and working on the land have been largely converted into dwellers in a permanent village.

These changes are a complicating factor when it comes to the question of increased empowerment of the Dene community to direct its own affairs. In addition to economic problems and unemployment, the basic requirements of a self-determining group for norms of leadership and means of effective and coherent decision-making have also become problems.[1] This essay is focused mainly on some of the details of the way in which traditional leadership and social organization have been profoundly undermined, and does not attempt to deal with all aspects of leadership and self-government.

The colonial context, which has denied the Dene the power to make decisions for their own community, has greatly hampered the development of new forms of leadership and effective decision-making that are outgrowths of their own past and therefore coherent and satisfactory to them. This situation tends in the direction of assimilation, since decisions must be made somehow on an ongoing basis. In the absence of sufficient empowerment of the Dene community to make its own decisions in its own way, these decisions are taken within the forms of administration set up by internal colonialism. But even more fundamentally, a change such as the world wide movement for the equality of women impacts on their social organization even more than it does on mainstream Canadian society, because the colonial context also prevents them from grappling with this issue on their own terms. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that this is not an argument against the women's movement. All societies change, and it must be conceded that Dene women have the same right as any other women to seek improvements in their situation. "Cultural preservation" considered as "cultural continuity" (rather than lack of change), cannot preclude any particular type of change. What is important for the continuity of cultural identity is the power to deal with change, and even to struggle over change internally, and this requires meaningful levels of self-government.

What follows is about the people of Fort Franklin and the Great Bear Lake area of the Northwest Territories, Canada. However, the issues under discussion concern the status of women in any minority ethnic group where there, is tension between the advancement of women and traditional ways. The Dene are a small population of people with a profoundly different culture from that of non-Native Canada, who have been forced to cope with extremely rapid change since World War II. This work has a dual purpose — first, to record and understand the experience of the Dene during this period from their own point of view, and second, to contribute to a general understanding of women and social change. For the second purpose, the Dene are a microcosm of a process that has affected people all over the world. The study is multi-disciplinary, attempting to integrate into one picture whatever appears on investigation to be relevant to a socio-economic and political understanding.

In addition to the very small amount of documented information which is available in this area, this analysis is based on information and insight gained from discussions and interviews with people of Fort Franklin in 1986. The

[1] These requirements for self-detennination are not considered essential to a cultural nation, or universal. The evidence suggests that in aboriginal times the Dene lived with slight and sporadic leadership, with highly fluid social groupings (Helm MacNeish 1956). What is required now is the power to negotiate effectively with a powerful dominant culture, and it is this which requires leadership and coherent decision-making.

method employed in the field research was simply that of directly consulting the Dene, and especially the elders, for their memory of events as well as their knowledge and understanding about the situation of their people. These conversations, which were held with the assistance of interpreters,[1] were structured around questions concerning livelihood, men's and women's work, and family living arrangements.

Some background: the people of Great Bear Lake are a somewhat mixed group of Dene people who have been drawn together over approximately the last century. In the 1940s, Fort Franklin was still considered to be more or less an "outpost" of Fort Norman, which is a community on the Mackenzie River. There was no trader, no store, no school, and no permanent church at the site of Fort Franklin. At the same time, there were, and are to this day, close links with Lac La Martre and Fort Rae, which are Dogrib communities to the south. The Bear Lake people are therefore composed of Slavey, Hare, and Dogrib Indians, and the descendants of a small band who had always hunted around Great Bear Lake. In this paper they are called the Sahtudene.

There were 495 people on the Fort Franklin Band list in 1986. Of these, only 272 (about 55%) are 18 years of age or over. There were 30 elders born in 1920 or before. The interviews on which this paper is based consist of 52 hours of taped conversations, speaking with 38 individuals, in Slavey language with English interpretation.[2] There were 16 men and 22 women, of various ages. Of the 30 elders, 21 were interviewed.[3] There were 12 women elders, of whom 11 were interviewed, and 18 men elders, of whom 10 were interviewed.

As a point of method, as many elders as possible were interviewed, avoiding the temptation of spending most of the time with articulate individuals who have become used to conversing with non-Native people. Only in this way is it possible to distinguish between the interpretation of an individual, and what is really the shared or accumulated perception of the community. This is the first time ever that a virtual "total sample" of the elders of a Dene community have been interviewed systematically. The percentage size of the sample is the chief objective mark of the reliability of the information. However, there were additional marks as well. There was the frank and open manner of the speakers, and the calm way in which people spoke, regardless of who might be listening, or coming and going. Although the use of interpretation has inevitable limitations, it enabled the study to go far beyond what it could have done by means of interviewing people who speak English, or relying on more indirect accounts of the elders' point of view.[4]

To begin then, respect for elders is a fundamental feature of Sahtudene traditional life. Of the elders interviewed, a pervasive theme was the importance that was traditionally given to

[1] The care and enthusiasm of the individual who did most of the interpreting, Michael Neyelle of Fort Franklin, was greatly appreciated. Sincere thanks also for the able work of Marie Therese Vital, also of Fort Franklin, and all others who assisted.

[2] Transcripts of the English interpretation of these tapes till be placed in the library of the Boreal Institute for Northern Studies, University of Alberta. These transcripts are attributed anonymous y to the people of Fort Franklin, with individuals identified only by approximate age. The originals of the tapes will eventually go to the Northern Heritage Museum in Yellowknife, NWT, and copies will go to the school in Fort Franklin.

[3] Five were sick or too hard of hearing, two were out on the land, one was missed, and only one refused.

[4] The candour of the persons being interviewed never seemed to be a problem — they qualified questions, spoke as long as they wanted to, and occasionally disregarded questions and announced the subject they wished to discuss. Most of the time, elders gave very full and complete answers to questions about the subject of the study. Interpreters the same sex as the person being interviewed were used whenever possible. As it happened, all of the male elders were interviewed with a male interpreter, which probably helped to balance out any effect which may be speculated to result from the fact that the researcher was female. Many, many factors which entered into the conduct of the interviews cannot be discussed here for lack of space.

respecting and obeying one's elders, and the change that has occurred recently. The exact nature of the respect for elders, as it has been practised traditionally, is not easily appreciated by others, as it appears to be profoundly different from anything in Euro-Canadian cultural experience. This relation of respect is called in English "listening." However, this word, which recurred many times in the interpretation of the interviews, seems to be a translation for something that means more than attending politely when the elders speak. It means placing oneself in the position of a learner or a follower (Christian and Gardner 1977). As one woman elder puts it: *'in the past when our mom talks to us, or our granny would talk to us, we would listen and obey everything that they say, because it was the truth. That meant that they were your teachers, they knew what they were talking about so we listened and obeyed."* (q)[1]

This in turn implies a suppression of one's own will which is very different from the individualism of Euro-Canadian culture. Respect for elders is important to such an extent that it blends with Sahtudene spirituality. While there are always some individual elders who are recognized as having special spiritual powers, it appears to be ultimately a difference of degree, rather than like the rigid Christian difference between priest and people. All elders are spiritual leaders to some extent, and in this connection there do not appear to be important differences between men and women. Elders, including one's own parents, have the power to confer what is translated as "a blessing." A blessing may be part praise or part prophecy in the form of a pronouncement about the future course of one's life, or it may be an aphoristic piece of wisdom meant to be a special guide to the one who receives it. When asked about Dene spirituality, one elder said: 'The most *important thing in Dene spirituality is to obey the father and mother. If you obey them, you listen to them. That's all you need. That's the Dene way."* (d)

Setting aside one's own inclinations in order to listen to one's elders is most striking in connection with arranged marriage. Children born after 1945 are the first generation who have not invariably married according to parental direction. This is the generation which attended the first federal day school built in Fort Franklin in 1950. Every elder person who was asked to recount the story of how they married explained how their parenta or other guardians made the decision. Virtually nothing was said about meeting or noticing their future spouses to begin with. It occasionally happened that marriages were arranged while the children were still infants, although more frequently an arrangement was made by a young woman's parents when it was felt to be time for her to marry. There were some differences between the men and women. Women married while still in their teens when their parents informed them that a suitable husband had been found, or had asked to marry them. One woman born in the mid-40s (Y) explained how she returned from boarding school near the end of the 1950s, and found that her family had chosen a husband for her. She had not met him before, but she got to know him during a long engagement. She said: *"My Dad was the boss in the house, because once he says something you know he won't go back on his word. Once when I came back from school, he told me that they found a husband for me. I was surprised, . . . I was just shaking my head, and he said you have to marry him whether you like it or not." (y)*

Men married at a somewhat older age, sometimes quite a bit older. While some men had the same experience of having a spouse announced to them by their parents, some were able to take the initiative of choosing the young woman they would like to marry. A man (a) born in the early 30s said: *"My parents decided, they told me it was about time that I should find myself a wife. Therefore, I and my parents asked for the hand in marriage of (his future wife). Everybody was in agreement, so that's how we got married."* A man born at the beginning of the century recounted: *'My father told me that I had a choice of two women, but then I found out that my first choice was already married. So, this is the woman I married, even though before I was going to Fort*

[1] The notation following each quote identifies the interview transcript in which the quoted comment appears.

*Norman, and had lots of girl friends. I wished . . . I wouldn't have minded . . . but I had to respect my father's wishes. " (j)* If a man took the initiative, which often occurred with his second or third marriage (an alarming death rate from disease meant individuals often lost their spouses), it still appears to have been no easy task to persuade the parents of a girl, sometimes taking as long as two or three years, in the cases where the suit was successful. What the suitor had to do, among other things, was convince the parents that he could provide for a family by means of hunting and trapping. Persistence was also important, perhaps being considered a mark of character that would stand him in good stead in the struggle for a livelihood.

Several elder women remarked that they did not particularly want to get married when they did, or to marry the person whom they did, but that their parents insisted they do so. Nevertheless, this did not seem to be traumatic, as evidenced by the fact that the story was most often told with considerable amusement, and unself-consciously mentioned in the presence of other family members. The amusement seemed to derive from the perception of youthful foolishness, and the implication was always present that in fact things had worked out all right. Nevertheless, young Dene women are presently as appalled by the thought of arranged marriage as most other young Canadian women. The marriage situation in the 1940s, by comparison with the 1980s, will be returned to below.

While respect for the elders may seem to be something of a truism concerning the Dene, there is very little treatment, or even mention of it in the literature. In fact, Helm in her early work seems to refute the idea. "Old age in itself," she writes, "brings no prestige or status in Slavey society" (Helm 1961 :77). Helm observes that elder parents have no authority over physically mature children. However, it may be noted from the context of these remarks that she describes a lack of aid to parents only with respect to cash income, and passes rather lightly over the question of provision of meat, fish, and hides to elder parents. For the Dene, however, these provisions continue to be vehicles of traditional responsibilities in a way that cash is not (Lange 1984). Furthermore, cash, like guns, traps and other equipment, seems to be individual, rather than communal, property, especially for the men. In other words, although these things are often shared or loaned, it is not taken for granted that other family members have a right to them, as is the case with meat. In addition, among the Dene there is really nothing that brings prestige or status to individuals in the form of material privilege. "Respect" is an intangible thing, and even the most respected spiritual leaders and elders may be seen toiling about house and tepee, cutting wood, cleaning fish, etc., just like everybody else. Even the revered Dene prophet, Louis Ayha (who was the father of one of the elder informants), lived off the land by his own efforts, exactly like his relatives. Traditionally, no one was exempt from manual labour, which is fundamental material evidence of equality, but not of lack of respect for certain persons.

The underpinning of respect for the elders was the fact that the land-based activities of both men and women were universal. Everyone of the same sex had the same occupation, so age and experience meant skill and wisdom. In this situation listening to one's elders was undoubtedly beneficial, so that those who did so were better off than those who did not. "Living a long time" was often mentioned as the consequence of listening to the elders. One elder said: *'My father told me, if you marry this women you will live a long time. That's why it's so important to listen to your fathers and mothers. I've been married over 65 years, and I don't think there could be another one like her. I don't know anyone that's like her. "* (j) Several elders state that the values of the Dene were quite compatible with those of Christianity. Certainly there could be no more accurate statement of Dene traditional values than the Biblical injunction to "honour your father and mother, that your days may be long in the land,"

What was the relative situation of women and men in the 1940s, by comparison to the 1980s?

Although the work of women was always important for the welfare of the family (being invariably complementary to the work of men), the provision of meat and hides was the crucial means of survival in aboriginal times, and this

was the work of men. One can get by for a time on fish, small animals, and birds, which women were proficient in gathering, but not indefinitely. The animal fat in meat was essential for physical survival, and the hides of caribou and moose were the materials for clothing and shelter. In the 20th century, up to the 1940s, the returns from trapping had gradually shouldered aside the produce of hunting to fill the most fundamental economic role, since cash obtained is of course a universal means to fill other needs. Furthermore, needs had changed over time, transforming certain trade goods into necessities, and as a result, cash became the crucial means of survival for individuals, as it has become in every other society. In both cases, however, the item of fundamental importance was perceived as the produce of men's work.

This does not in itself imply the social dominance of men over women, however. The fact that ethnographers have almost always perceived it in that way is a combination of sexism and preconceptions about property. In my view it is questionable that gender dominance and oppression can be accounted for by a situation where women as a group are dependent for some important material support on men as a group. This is because, when considered purely as sexual groups, women and men of all societies are obviously interdependent. In the most general terms, while men may produce certain material necessities, women materially reproduce the society, by birthing the new generation and providing crucial socialization and nurturance in the period of total helplessness. Over the long run, there can be no absolute ranking of importance between these two contributions. However, because of the short-run exigency of dependence for women in connection with reproduction, female oppression and male dominance occur when individual women are dependent on individual men, and this occurs when property is individual and not communal. It may be noted that this gradual deterioration of status for women since the development of the fur trade occurred even though the actual organization of their daily labours was little changed.

In spite of the crucial nature of the contribution of men, women worked long and hard for the welfare of the family. Elders of both sexes fell into one of two points of view on the question or" women's work. Most felt that both men and women worked very hard, to an equal degree. Some thought that the women worked harder because their work often went on for more hours. It was generally understood that the male hunter-trapper could not manage for an extended period without a female co-worker.

Both men and women did heavy physical labour. Women hauled water and firewood, checked fishnets set under thick ice, cut and dried meat and fish, tanned large heavy hides, gathered evergreen boughs for flooring, and many other things, often packing their small children as they did so. Virtually everything required constant care and renewal, and sewing filled every niche of time not filled by other work. Meanwhile the men were gone for varying periods of time, hunting and trapping, and also maintaining themselves and their gear. Yet this life of ceaseless labour represented a certain freedom which is now viewed with nostalgia by women just as much as by men. The equal nostalgia of the women contrasts directly with the stereotypical view that aboriginal women must always be glad of modernization, because of the lessening of their labours. This is at least questionable, and must be considered in relation to other factors, such as the sense of autonomy and usefulness that is strongly associated with a life of hard work by the Dene.

The essence of the freedom both women and men miss is that one was not dependent on the dictates of others, such as employers, government officials, or social workers. The connection between the expenditure of effort and the meeting of fundamental needs was not mediated by implacable authority and restrictions. Although the result of effort was inevitably chancy in the hunter-gatherer way of life, there was a very high degree of personal autonomy. One had the satisfaction of being one's own boss. While nostalgia for a past full of relentless hard work may be viewed by others with some skepticism, the concern over dependence and powerlessness — the pervasive theme of the elders' conversation — may not. For example, almost all the elders express worry and regret

that people are now locked into payments for oil for the furnace, whereas in the past one had only to work to get wood for fuel. In this connection, there is general concern on the part of the elders that the old form of independence is no longer an option for most young people, yet other options have not appeared to take its place.

By the 1940s the life which revolved around trapping had long been established at Great Bear Lake, and so had the influence of the Catholic church. The seeds of individualism and a more sedentary way of life had been planted, even though they were not to grow and bloom until the process of settlement. Everyone reports that men made the major decisions in those days as to where the family would travel and camp. Many women said things which suggested that they did not find this troublesome, perhaps because they understood the reasons for the decisions, which had to do with the success of hunting and trapping, and usually concurred with what their husbands decided. However, every one conceded that "the men were the boss."

Some other developments reinforced the gender roles which were consistent with the fur trade, that is, the control by men of the fundamental means of subsistence. In the 1930s, silver and pitchblende were discovered on the eastern side of Great Bear Lake. By the mid-1930s, several mines were in operation, and a barge service between Fort Norman and Port Radium was set up. Seasonal wage employment became available to the Sahtudene, but exclusively for the men. The cash obtained from this work would usually be used by the individual wage earner in the first instance to supply trapping and hunting gear. Furthermore, in the 1940s women had many fewer occasions than men to deal with Euro-Canadian society, or to learn to speak English or French. Men had always been primarily the ones to deal with traders and make purchases of trade goods. With wage employment at the mines and on the barge service, the interaction of Sahtudene men with non-Dene society increased greatly compared to that of the women. Women could have little or no practical independence in this overall situation.

After the war ended, successful dealing with non-Dene institutions gradually had more and more impact on daily life, and in the early part of this period the men had much greater access to useful information and skills in that regard. The role for men of "head of the family," so well institutionalized by Canadian society at large at that time, would have been reinforced for Dene men by these circumstances. Regardless of what may have been true of aboriginal life (cf. Leacock 1981), by the 1940s, the Sahtudene were a male dominant society. However, this situation has begun to change for reasons which will be considered below.

Respect for elders is a relation generated within the family in a situation of mutual support and interdependence of all members. However, the family is in a process of change as a result of the events of the last forty years, and as with other peoples everywhere, a rapid pace of change may render the skills and experience of the elders obsolete. This process is showing itself at present in a variety of ways, including the lessening incidence of satisfactory young marriages set up in the traditional manner. This change with marriage is not superficial, but linked in a complex way with pervasive social change.

The old universal land-based livelihood, divided only by sex and age, was portable. It gave both individuals and families great mobility and flexibility. According to Osgood, among a people known for flexible social arrangements, the Sahtudene are the most flexible and unstructured of all the Dene (Osgood 1931). When it came to marriage, there was a whole range of groups in different areas, from among which suitable marriage partners could be found. Relocating was a straightforward and normal part of life's changes. This was all the more necessary since, because of the small size of groupings, one was bound to be related to a high percentage of persons of the opposite sex of the right age to marry. Even if one was not biologically related, however, as one woman presently in her forties puts it, *'In the small community, you grow up knowing everyone so well that the boys are like your brothers. You don't get interested in them as boyfriends." (w)* Traditionally, it was the norm to marry someone from another group, with one partner or the other leaving the group they had been raised in. According to one: *'The*

*elders say when a man travels a long distance to find a wife, it's a good sign, it's a healthy sign. It's encouraging for men to do that."* (d) *Yet* these other groups were of course not strangers to the elders.' There was a far flung web of relationships, knitting people together in essentially the same way of life.

The fact that everyone lived in about the same way most likely also helps to explain why arranged marriages were by and large satisfactory. One knew what to expect from a husband or a wife, regardless of who they were. Also, women always had close same-sex relationships with the relatives they lived and work with. One simply did not have to depend on one's spouse for every sort of companionship, as is the case with the modem, nuclear family.

The change from a situation in which the means of livelihood are universal to one in which they are specialized has many important effects. One is a differentiation of potential marriage partners which makes common-sense arranged marriages virtually impossible. There are simply too many variables and unpredictable eventualities to consider. Another effect is the generation of inequality, and a loss of communality, as people differentiate themselves by occupation and level of prosperity.

Another effect, particular to the Dene, is to exacerbate the loss of mobility. The tying of livelihood to a specialized occupation, added to the ties to a particular place, with a wage job, or the bureaucracy of children in school, welfare payments, subsidized rental housing, etc., must affect the traditional mode of finding life partners. Traditionally, one no more thought of not marrying than of not hunting, fishing, tanning hides, sewing clothing, etc. Now, however, many young people remain unmarried through their twenties, whether or not they have children, and some even contemplate not marrying at all. The abnormal stability of the community breeds within itself some of the sources of deterioration of the community. To remain may preclude marriage, but the path away tends to be an irreversible one away from the traditional way of life.

It is sometimes remarked in Fort Franklin that the government is paying single young women to have babies. This remark points to an underlying truth, since it is social assistance programs which make such a phenomenon even possible. However, it is not the giving of assistance by itself which does this — it is its delivery in the form of individual benefits rather than community resources. The elders are critical of the school system for encouraging young people to believe that they can make it on their own without family and community support, yet various social programs seem to make this a sort of half-truth. The half that is true is that unmarried mothers can in fact survive now more or less without significant family support, a thing which would have been literally impossible in the past. The falsehood which goes hand in hand with this is that dependence is simply transferred to the availability of state welfare. Nevertheless, if women do not find it necessary to marry in order to survive, family forms will inevitably begin to change, and women will advance their individual autonomy or equality in relation to men. It appears that no matter what the source of support, if women are able to live without direct dependence on a particular man, their individual autonomy and status begins to rise. The cause of this change has many negative features — a state welfare system, only partly filling the gap left by the loss of traditional means of livelihood.

If the present trend continues, the Dene will soon be in the same boat as other Canadians, who have set out on the exciting but precarious voyage of marriage by personal inclination. It is not for others to say if these effects are positive or not for Dene culture.

The effect of this situation is compounded by the introduction of compulsory day schooling, which happened in Fort Franklin in 1950. Females seem to have a more friendly relationship with the school system, and are more likely to go on to seek such occupations as office work. The very dominance under which they lived in the family may cause them to adapt more easily to the restrictions of the school system. By contrast, the male role of hunter and trapper, with its high degree of personal freedom of movement and accompanying individual responsibility and risk, is highly incompatible with the

restrictions of the school situation, and also with routine, supervised work situations. Cruikshank (1971 :43) formed a similar impression concerning the Indians of Yukon. The young women now seem to be absorbing new skills and behaviour to a greater extent than the men, which is slowly transforming the relative advantage of the sexes in relation to the dominant Canadian culture. However, as recently as the beginning of the Norman Wells Project in 1982, many Dene women in Mackenzie Valley communities did not realize that community information meetings about employment were for women as well as men (Lange 1984).

The phenomenon of unemployment also affects women and men somewhat differently. Traditionally, of course, there was no such things as 'unemployment" for women or men. Everyone found the same work cut out for them. The gradual loosening of ties to the land and corresponding dependence on availability of cash created "unemployment," which for the Dene is one of the most bitter artifacts of colonialism. However, the women's work with household and children continues to be necessary, whereas the men are much more likely to be left idle. Many people remarked, with some amusement, that women are now "the boss." One may speculate as to whether this enhances the self-esteem of women relative to men, or whether their continuing obligations arouse resentment in the face of male idleness. Cruikshank (1971 :42) speculates that the greater continuity of the women's work in child-care and "home-making," compared to the disruption of traditional male work, has made it easier for women to adjust to change.

The important thing to recognize is that dependence on a man may well not be an option for many Dene women, as it is not for many other Canadian women. The woman becomes the centre of the household whether she will or no, and it is then that she finds herself in need of more "rights."

The underlying reality of the colonial situation in which the Dene find themselves is always a factor in particular processes of change. When asked about the changing roles of men and women, one male elder observed that men no longer make decisions for their families simply because nobody can make any decisions anyway. Intervention has been so great that traditional gender roles no longer play a determining role in many areas of life. Yet it is a testimony to the high degree of egalitarianism of Dene culture compared to European culture that loss of male authority, such as it may have been, is no great preoccupation. In spite of the fact that men are alleged to have been "the boss" in the past, not a single male elder lamented the changed state of affairs in that particular respect. Loss of independence for the family considered as a whole was of far greater concern, along with associated social problems such as alcoholism. In all cases, concerns tended to be pragmatic and communal. All of this lent credibility to the shared nostalgia of women and men for past ways, yet clearly there are questions left unanswered.

To sum up and conclude, although changes in gender roles have significant impact on any culture where there is a colonial relation to a dominant culture these changes will affect the indigenous culture more than the dominant culture. This occurs because whenever an individual pulls away from indigenous communality, he or she inevitably becomes correspondingly more oriented as an individual toward the dominant culture. Only a significant level of self-determination would enable an indigenous population to take control of this issue, since this would quite naturally encourage those who want social change to orient their struggles toward their own people or nation. Individuals can do this, however, only if their own people or nation have the power to effect legislative, economic, or other change in the areas of their concern. If their own cultural nation does not have these powers, they will inevitably turn to the "mainstream" system. One result of the greater personal freedom of women has been that women now often play important roles in the drive for cultural renewal. It is clear that these women do not want to pay for their rise in status with the loss of their culture. It has been argued in this essay that the essential thing for maintenance of cultural identity is not

avoidance of change, which in any case is impossible, but rather a continuity of change arising from an internal dynamic, as opposed to change. which is imposed from outside.

The traditional role played by the elders in the family was the means by which traditional marriages were established. At the same time, traditional family life based on the land reproduced the relation of respect for new generations of elders. This self-perpetuating cultural process has now suffered significant intervention.

Dene elders now face an educated young generation, both men and women, who want a share of influence and leadership. However, the lack of meaningful levels of power for the Dene community to make its own decisions has hampered the development of new, indigenous forms of decision making. This not only creates internal stress around questions of leadership in the community, but in a manner analogous to the changes in the status of women and men, tends in the direction of assimilation. Capable young people often find they can only take action by adopting Euro-Canadian means, which can easily place them in conflict with the elders they are supposed to listen to and respect. The fluid form of leadership of the past, based primarily on the general recognition of special ability on the part of a few individuals from among the ranks of respected elders, can seldom be made "operational" in the actual decision-making process the community faces. The lack of meaningful levels of self-government often compels a harsh trade-off between economic and other advances by individuals or the whole community, on the one hand, and cultural continuity, on the other.

## References


Chartrand, Jean-Philippe and J. Iain Prattis
1986 The Cultural Division of Labour in the Canadian North: The Implications for Multiculturalism Policy and the Inuit. Available from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University, Ottawa, K1S 5B6.

Christian, Jane and Peter M. Gardner
1977 The Individual in Northern Dene Thought and communication: A Study in Sharing and Diversity. National Museum of Man, Mercury Series. Canadian Ethnology Service Paper No. 35. Ottawa: National Museum of Man.

Coates, Kenneth
1966 Canada's Colonies: A History of the Yukon and Northwest Territories. Toronto: James Lorimer.

Cruikshank, Julie
1971 Matrifocal families in the Canadian North. *In* The Canadian Family. K. Ishwaren, ed. Toronto/Montreal: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Dahlberg, F., ed.
1981 Woman the Gatherer. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Helm, June
1961 The Lynx Point People: The Dynamics of a Northern Athapaskan Band. Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, Bulletin No. 176.

Helm-MacNeish, June
1956 Leadership among the northeastern Athapascans. Anthropologic 2:131-163.

Lange, Lynda
1984 Employment of Native Women at the Norman Wells Project: Goals and Problems. Ottawa: Canada Employment and Immigration Commission.

Leacock, Eleanor Burke
1961 Myths of Male Dominance: Collected Articles on Women Cross-Culturally. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Osgood, Cornelius
1931 The Ethnography of the Great Bear Lake Indians. Ottawa: National Museum of Canada Bulletin, No. 70:31-97.

# Self-determination, Medical Ideology and Health Services in Inuit Communities

By John D. O'Neil
Department of Social and Preventive Medicine
University of Manitoba

## Introduction

This paper[1] will examine the development of health institutions in Inuit communities in historical, political and cultural perspective. The evolution of health institutions can be examined in both the local cultural context and from the wider perspective of historical trends in health policy and the ideology of health professions. This integration of perspectives provides insight into the nature of both medical encounters in Inuit communities and the structure of the health service institutions.

The paper is based on observation of 75 clinical encounters between Inuit patients, medical interpreters, and nurses and doctors in the Keewatin district of the Northwest Territories during 1985 and 1986. These encounters were videotaped, transcribed and back-translated. Follow-up interviews were conducted with the participants to the encounter and with Inuit political representatives, government officials and health care professionals. Observation, video recording, transcription and analysis of community meetings over a three year period involving health care personnel provide additional data. Current research is further grounded in ten years of ethnographic research into northern community health issues.

The paper is guided theoretically by the emerging "critical" perspective in medical anthropology (Taussig 1980, Young 1982, Baer 1982). This perspective examines the "social relations of sickness" in order to understand both the meaning of illness and to explore the structure of society. Crandon (1986:464) describes this approach:

> Medical dialogues in a medically pluralistic environment reflect, involve, and construct political, economic, ideological and social relations. Through medical dialogue, ethnic groups negotiate the meaning of ethnic identity and affiliation and therefore of ethnic relations. Consequently, medical dialogue is a window through which we can see political and economic processes as they pertain to the nature of interethnic relations. At the same time, medical dialogue is an arena in which interethnic relations are negotiated and played out. Hence, medical dialogue is both an arena for change and a window on the politico-economic relationship between medicine and ethnicity (and class).

Crandon uses "medical dialogue" to refer to

[1]The author acknowledges the support of the National Health Research and Development Program, Health and Welfare, Canada through a Health Scholar Award (6607-1379-48) and research grants (6607-1364-46) and (6607-141 9-19). I would also like to thank Drs. Joseph and Patricia Kaufert who contributed significantly to the development of ideas in this paper, and our northern research staff, John Patterk, Chariot te St. John and Suzanna Iyago, who guided my interpretation of the role that health institutions play in the everyday lives of their people. I am also grateful to Charlene Ball for her capable assistance in managing the data base for this project and providing editorial assistance. Needless to Say, all remaining errors of interpretation are solely my responsibility.

the ongoing negotiation of the meaning of an illness event involving patients, families, healers and the wider community. This paper adopts . a similar frame of reference for examining medical dialogue over four decades in northern Inuit communities. Related concepts such as ideology (to refer to the world view of various parties to the dialogue) and discourse (to refer to the public discussions of ideology) are employed. The paper will argue that northern medical dialogue is a discourse on colonialism, influenced heavily by the medical and nursing ideologies of control and surveillance (cf. Foucault 1975, 1980) and an emerging feminist political discourse in Inuit communities.

## A Critical Approach to Northern Medical History

Northern medicalhistoryis typically described in glowing terms as a process of increasing medical technology and health care personnel to gain control over infectious diseases and other threats inherent in a dangerous and changing northern environment (Graham-Cummings 1969). While medical historians often bemoan the negative health impacts of "acculturation" brought about by the intrusion of other southern institutions (i. e., schools, churches, and commercial enterprises) into Native communities, medical institutions are generally exempt from critical attention (Schaefer 1977). The construction of medical facilities and the influx of southern non-Native health care personnel into northern communities is usually considered solely in terms of their impact on disease (Brett 1969).

However, as Brown (1979) has shown for the role of Western medicine in African history, medical institutions are powerful colonial forces, both in and of themselves and in concert with political economic domination. If colonialism[1] can be held accountable for producing environmental and psycho-social conditions responsible for high levels of morbidity and mortality in a population, then medicine as an institution must understand its role in this process. In particular, the medicalization of social problems and the ideology of dependency are actively promoted by the presence of Western medical institutions in Native communities.

Since a significant proportion of the data for this paper is based on Inuit ideas about health and illness and their perception of health services, some comment is necessary on the methodological exercise of interpreting Inuit understandings. First of all, we never asked questions such as "Do you strongly agree or disagree with the statement that medical institutions create a feeling of dependency?" or Was your recent contact with the Nursing Station very satisfactory or very unsatisfactory?" In fact, no two people were asked the same sets of questions. Instead, we adopted a line of inquiry grounded in the anthropological tradition of naturalistic observation: we allowed people to describe their experience in their *own* terms (Turner and Bruner 1986). We designated medical encounters between Inuit patients and Western nurses and doctors as "expressive events" where interactions are guided by values, expectations and attitudes grounded in the respective cultures or ideologies of the participants.[2] Subsequent "accounts" of these events were elicited in an open-ended fashion. Accounts extended into unpredictable sociological and historical space. One woman talked about her fifteen year old tubal ligation (sterilization) after seeking help for chronic depression. An old man described a religious vision experienced as a child in relation to his cancer. After a particularly difficult encounter, a doctor discussed a summer job as an English language interpreter in a French hospital. A nurse compared behavioral

[1] Colonialism is used here as a general rubric for situations where one society is dominated economically, politically, and ideologically by another. Such variations as internal colonialism, neocolonialism and imperialism, while perhaps significant from a political perspective, do not affect the central argument of this paper. For a discussion of these variations in terms of northern Canada, see Dacks (1981).

[2] Similar to Geertz (1973) I use ideology and culture somewhat interchangeably to refer to shared world views. Although ideology has other meanings, it is a useful synonym for culture when examining relations between institutions and communities.

. differences between Indian and Inuit people in terms of her own sense of personal security.

Subsequent analysis of seemingly unrelated accounts is embedded in wider ethnographic understandings of Inuit social, economic and political life. Common themes are identified and the "meaning" of a hysterectomy (or depression), a religious vision (or fear of cancer), career choices (or performance anxiety), and a locked door policy (or racist attitudes) emerges.

Analysis of this material suggests that Inuit are highly ambivalent about their dependence on contemporary medical institutions. Many people expressed a feeling of profound anxiety about being in a situation where their only recourse when sick was to seek assistance through the Nursing Station. Some people found their medical encounters to be stressful and humiliating. In response, many expressed anger and resentment both during the encounter and in subsequent interviews.[1]

Ironically, nurses and doctors who work with Inuit expressed comparable sentiments. Frustration at being unable to communicate effectively was a common theme. Nurses and doctors who have gone north instilled with egalitarian ideals and cross-cultural interests were surprised and hurt to discover that people were responding to them as "The Nurse" or "The Doctor;" and this response was more often negative than positive. At the field level, filtration with the inertia of the medical system was also expressed. Nurses often received the brunt of critical sentiment when patient information was lost in the system. Unfavorable comparisons of nurses' abilities with hospital experiences were frequent.

The following excerpts from a follow-up interview after a visit to the Nursing Station illustrate this. The case involves a middle-aged woman whose husband and sister have recently died of cancer. She is experiencing a loss of appetite and has contacted the nurses on several occasions to seek assistance. Their advice "to get out and exercise more" has left her frustrated and angry.

> I don't feel sick, just that my stomach is not hungry. It feels like my stomach is rejecting food. I feel like I have heartburn. My throat hurts when I swallow.

The woman seems to be describing "loss of appetite" symptoms associated with depression. However, she is also concerned about the somatic dimensions of the problem (i.e., the heartburn and sore throat) and resents the medical suggestion that it is "all in her mind." In the context of interethnic relations in Inuit communities, medical advice of this nature is interpreted as paternalistic as it suggests that the patient is not competent to recognize and describe her own problems. In light of her concerns about cancer in the family, she expects the somatic complaints to be most relevant to the medical encounter, and is dismayed and humiliated when they are ignored.

> When my husband was sick his pulse got weak about 9:00 a.m. I called the nurses, but they did not come until after 10:00 a.m. He was dead when they arrived. I was very angry.
>
> An Inuk is easily frightened by something abnormal happening to their body, or to someone else, because they don't understand. Sometimes they panic easily. I know the nurses like to analyze things before they panic. But the nurses should consider the Inuk's feelings and see them anyway and tell them it's not something to worry about, not just"1 don't want to see you. "
>
> My husband had been on medication for some time. No one told us what it was for. They only told me he had cancer three days before he died. I think they knew he had cancer but didn't bother to tell me.
>
> Doctors have a lot of skills and can help a sick person. But sometimes they don't react the way they should and I

[1] "Most" and "many" are used in a quantitative sense. Since samples were entirely opportunistic, it would be a mistake to describe the data in statements such as "sixty-three percent were unhappy. " "Most" means our overwhelming impression was that nearly everyone felt this way. "Many" means that a significant number (i.e., worthy of note) felt this way.

think this is because of racial discrimination.

The woman's anger about the seeming indifference of the medical system is a common problem. Interviews with health care personnel indicate that while attempts are made to inform people about the medical dimensions of their problems, nurses and doctors are frustrated that either the system gives up this information too slowly, or the message is lost in translation. Again, this communication event must be understood in the larger context of a colonial history where information was rarely available concerning policy changes which affected people's everyday lives. Given the alienation that most people have experienced in their contacts with the external world, a medical dialogue which fails to empower people through a consultative process will continue to be interpreted as further evidence of a colonial attitude.

> When I was a child I had a lot of nosebleeds. A shaman (an old woman) used her power to stop the nosebleeds. I'm not sure how it connects but whatever the shaman did is part of me now.
>
> I was very close to my sister. She lived with us [with respondent and husband]. We spent a lot of time together and we really knew each other. With both of them gone, I don't know where I should live or who should take care of me.
>
> I go to the Catholic church but I can't talk to them. They don't seem to talk about emotional problems. They just deal with sin, like when people are misbehaving or whatever.

These references to a traditional healer and kinship relations are highly significant. Inuit shamans were the primary victims of colonial oppression as the secularizing effects of the fur trade, the devastation of unknown infectious diseases, and the "charity" of Christian missionaries served to undermine their status in Inuit society. While shamans continue to "exist" in the sense that men and women who once practised shamanism are still alive in Inuit communities, they no longer function as healers or Spiritual guides.[1]

While there does not appear to be the same revitalization of traditional medicine in Inuit communities as is apparent in Indian society (O'Neil 1988), comparisons are made between the shaman's (and indeed, the priest's) commitment to the welfare of the community, and the nurse or doctor's seeming lack of involvement. Again, the medical practitioner's relationship appears to typify the colonial structure where decisions are made about people's lives by powerful individuals outside the community. The woman's use of the metaphor "...whatever the shaman did is part of me now" symbolizes her expectations of a healer's attitude and practice which is embedded in traditional values concerning power and interpersonal behavior. The reference to the sister's cohabitation and the reference to the Catholic preoccupation with sin again are suggestive of a traditional value system in conflict with colonial structures. Although it was not institutionalized in traditional Inuit society, polygamy together with spouse exchange occurred on occasion (and still does) in response to survival needs. Despite the pragmatic rationale however, these practices became a central target of Christian missionaries preaching European morality. Together with the reference to the shaman, these statements clearly suggest this woman is interpreting her medical encounters in terms of traditional values and colonial domination.

> My husband had T.B. [tuberculosis]. His lungs were never good after that and I think it probably caused his cancer. I had T.B. myself, and I worry about that.
>
> The only other time I was sad like this was when I found out I couldn't have any more children. They did a hysterectomy in Churchill, but I didn't know about it. I am still angry about that.

These final statements underline the importance of prior medical experience in

[1] A caveat to this conclusion is the situation where young shamans adopted Christianity and became leaders and faith healers in the local churches, a phenomenon that appears to have occurred with some frequency.

understanding patient discourse on the meaning of illness. Although Inuit had experienced massive mortality and morbidity associated with other infectious diseases introduced by Europeans, the tuberculosis epidemic was their first experience with southern medical institutions. Their memories of this experience are profound (and horrible) and continue to influence their understanding of medical dialogue.

The final comment is perhaps the most revealing. Inuit have experienced several decades of medical control but the most oppressive experiences occurred in the early seventies when many women were sterilized, apparently without their fully informed consent (see Cohen and Baskett 1978 and Lechat 1976/7 for a discussion of this issue). This procedure apparently occurred more as a response to gynecological problems than in the context of family planning but communication problems meant that many women never fully understood what was occurring. These experiences continue to be relevant to contemporary interpretations of medical encounters and clearly underlie the ambivalence many Inuit express towards medical services.

## Historical Context of Health Services in Northern Canada

Dacks (1981) argues that northern political history must be understood as the history of colonialism. Specifically, northern Canada is an internal colony as defined by Hechter (1975) where the original inhabitants of remote regions have been disenfranchised economically and politically by the nation state which surrounds them. Colonialism in the North, however, has been challenged and modified in various institutional sectors. With the emergence of Inuit political organizations in the early 1970s, institutions such as local government, education, housing, renewable resource use, and economic development have increasingly lost their colonial character and have become more responsive to community needs and priorities.

However, health services remain a powerful colonial force in the North. Irrespective of whatever positive impact medicine may have had on morbidity and mortality rates among northern people, it is nevertheless an agent of social control for the dominant society. The symbolism of subordination and dependency that characterizes this relationship has both reinforced the general structure of relations between indigenous communities and the nation state, and perpetuated institutional control over peoples' lives (cf. Brown 1979 and Comaroff and Comaroff 1986 for a discussion of colonial medicine in other contexts). Health care institutions in the North have functioned historically with less local accountability than any other institutional sector. Both medical and nursing ideologies have emphasized paternalism and dependency; the clinical expressions of these ideologies have had profound impact on Inuit self-perceptions and understandings of health.

Traditional Inuit ideas about sickness and health have been described as continuous in contrast to the disassociative model of Western biomedicine (Wenzel 1981). Inuit sought explanations for illness and misfortune in terms of the individual's relationship with his physical, social and spiritual environment. These explanations were both sociological and historical in the sense that misfortune brought about a critical examination of the social order. The healer's role was to facilitate this examination and assist in the construction of new social understandings. The ideology that validated the healer's role and activities emerged through community consensus rather than being imposed to support the interests of a dominant elite. In contrast, Western biomedicine explains misfortune or illness as an individual attribute in isolation from wider social and historical factors. As many critics have suggested, Western healers are primarily expected to rationalize and support the status quo, and medical explanations are embedded in an ideology which reinforces the political and economic interests of elite minorities in a capitalist society (Waitzkin 1979).

The transition from a consensual to a colonial ideology, however, did not occur all at once. Northern medical history can best be understood as occurring in four phases: (1) commodification; (2) social destruction; (3)

materialism; and (4) victim-blaming. These phases are described below.

*Phase One: Commodification*

With the arrival of missionaries and fur traders in most parts of the Canadian Arctic in the 1940s and 50s, illness and health emerged as commodities which could be traded for the spiritual and economic loyalties of the Inuit Population. Early missionaries and traders made their meagre medical resources available in exchange for either conversion to Christianity, or monopolistic control over the fur trade. Scheffel's (1983) work in Labrador with the Moravian mission demonstrates clearly that the Moravians selectively withheld medical assistance when members of the surrounding Inuit communities were slow to convert.

Our current archival research on the Hudson's Bay Company's role in northern health also provides clear evidence that traders responded to infectious disease epidemics and periods of starvation according to a policy of preferential favor for those trappers who traded exclusively with the Company and who abandoned other traditional pursuits in favor of the fur trade. For example, in a letter from a regional factor to the London Head Office, it was suggested that "doles [i. e., H.B. C. handouts of food] have killed all initiative in the Native. He must be made to work. It was folly to abolish the penalty of starvation for laziness and incompetence" (Hudson's Bay Company 1926).

This evidence suggests that the treatment of illness became a factor in the negotiations surrounding the spiritual and economic orientations of Inuit and Indian peoples. As was the case for food supplies and hunting equipment, health care emerged as a commodity to be exchanged in the commercialization of the northern economy. This process had a secularizing impact on Inuit understandings about illness which resulted in less attention to the maintenance of interpersonal codes for social behavior. In many traditional societies such as the Inuit, sickness and its prevention and cure functioned as a form of social control (Hallowell 1941). Under the secularizing conditions of colonialism, people are no longer subject to the moral authority of elders and spiritual leaders in the community when they no longer fear sickness as retribution for breaches of moral conduct. The long term implication of this process for Inuit communities was an increase in social pathology until new religious and legal institutions could develop to the stage where social control is once again community-based. The self-determination philosophy which characterizes community development in the North today is grounded in this principle.

*Phase Two: Social Destruction*

Formal Western medicine was first introduced in the Canadian North in the 1950s when physicians began to accompany the various ships supplying the missions and trading posts scattered across the arctic coast (Brett 1969). The standard response to infectious disease epidemics such as tuberculosis was to remove infected individuals from their communities and relocate them to southern hospitals and sanatoria for extended periods of time. Other options such as encouraging the population to redistribute itself into smaller traditional groups were proposed but were rejected by southern, authorities. The result was that the health care system exacerbated the social damage already incurred through infectious disease mortality by separating survivors from their families and dependents (Hodgson 1982).

Inuit recall this experience with great emotional strain. Families were separated for years at a time and sometimes permanently. People hid from the supply ships and had to be forcibly coerced into receiving tests or treatment. Patients sent south sometimes spent years in social and linguistic isolation, unable to communicate with other patients or staff. Estimates suggest that for the Keewatin Region, seventy percent of the total population spent at least some time in southern sanatoria (Williamson 1974).

The message implicit in this treatment approach was that responsibility for decisions regarding the type and location of treatment for diseases was now entirely in the hands of the colonial power. Furthermore, medicine had the authority to disrupt family life and traditional patterns of social organization. This demon-

stration of power had far reaching ramifications in shaping Inuit expectations. Instead of sickness being viewed as an event which, with the help of a healer, resulted in increased social harmony and integration, illness now facilitated intrusion of the colonial power into the intimacies of family life. Illness was to be feared not only as a threat to life but also as a threat to social continuity and autonomy. Paternalism as a fundamental characteristic of external domination of a society was reproduced continuously in the highly emotional context of medical encounters throughout this period.

*Phase Three: Materialism*

The third phase of northern health care delivery began with the construction of nursing stations in each Inuit community during the 1960s. Nursing stations were staffed largely by foreign trained nurse-midwives (predominantly British) who provided primary care and emergency services and arranged to send people with serious illnesses to southern hospitals for treatment (O'Neil 1986a, Scott 1978).

Although nurses constitute a separate profession and associated professional ideology, I have tended here to consider nursing and medicine together. In the early history of northern health care those features of nursing ideology that distinguish it from medicine were less noticeable and influential than the overriding colonial ideology of external control and authority. Although trained and socialized as nurses, northern nurses functioned essentially as doctors and, in the process, expressed the characteristics of colonial medicine. However, I have also argued elsewhere that a nurse-based approach to primary health care in the North has resulted in a more community oriented model with more emphasis on prevention and health promotion (O'Neil 1986a). While these arguments appear contradictory, they rely on different dimensions of northern nursing praxis for analysis. On the one hand, nurses attempted to promote a public health model in their practice, but the political and ideological context in which they work has resulted in a system of increased surveillance and control (O'Neil 1986b).

Furthermore, the public health emphasis relied on knowledge of individuals and families that was constructed ahistorically and without consideration for broader structural conditions. Individuals and families were labelled as "good" and "bad" in terms of personal hygiene, morality and industriousness. These attributes were generally evaluated in terms of an assimilationist model or a romantic vision of traditionalism with little regard for the conditions of colonialism.

In some cases, this knowledge was used not only to monitor the physical well-being of clients, but also to affirm a dominant role in community life where personal knowledge became a source of power. For example, on one occasion I witnessed a community nurse inform her superior about the aberrant sexual behavior of a local politician in an effort to undermine his credibility during a meeting to discuss local health service problems. This phase of northern medical history is also characteristic of Paine's (1977) description of the tutelary relationship between whites and Inuit society.

*Phase Four: Victim-Blaming*

In the mid-seventies, northern nursing stations were staffed increasingly by Canadian nurses trained in the emerging theoretical paradigms of a school of nursing which emphasized the collaborative role of the health care practitioner in encouraging people to engage in self-help activities (Cardenas and Lucarz 1985). This training, combined with a more professional attitude (i. e., as contrasted with the missionary motivation of earlier nurses), contributed to conflict between both the two nursing traditions in the North and the Inuit communities with the new nursing staff (o'Neil 1986a).

The new self-help emphasis in nursing theory brought by young Canadian professionals to Inuit communities in the late seventies and eighties, has contributed to problems on several levels. First of all, misunderstandings and hostility have arisen among a client population that had developed a range of expectations about medical care based on an historical ideology of medical authority and dominance. When

nurses attempt to redress these failures by returning some autonomy and decision-making authority to patients, the distressing result has sometimes been to provoke patient suspicions that they are receiving medical care from poorly trained people.

This conflict is a result of more than changes in expectations, however. The self-help emphasis in current northern health care ideology lacks serious political theory and is distinctly victim-blaming. Many northern health care personnel argue that prior to the transfer of responsibility for the administration of health services to communities, people must first demonstrate responsibility for their own well-being on a personal level. This decontextualized self-help attitude has contributed to growing frustration on the part of Inuit clients who have achieved a degree of independence and authority in other institutional sectors.

Health care until very recently has remained outside the jurisdiction of Inuit communities, or indeed the regional and territorial levels of political organization, and individual health care practitioners fiction independent of any systematic client accountability. The expectation that individuals will assume more personal responsibility for their well-being without a corresponding or indeed preceding change in the political structure of health institutions in northern communities is unreasonable.

With this brief historical overview as background, the paper will now examine current issues surrounding health services in Inuit communities.

## Health as a Women's Issue

Perhaps the most destructive aspect of the colonizing influence of health care institutions in northern society is that women were the principal victims. In all societies, the majority of sickness episodes involve women and/or children, and as the primary care givers, women have the highest frequency of contact with health care institutions and professionals (Lewin and Olesen 1985).

As the foregoing historical review suggests, some women were criticized by the local nurses for their apparent failure to maintain a hygienic and nutritious environment for their families. Furthermore, younger nurses ignored the rules of deportment that pertain to relations between younger and older women in Inuit culture, and often humiliated elder Inuit women by criticizing their capabilities as women and mothers. There was little understanding of the tremendous uprooting and readaptation required in the process of resettlement, nor was there understanding of the extremely poor environmental conditions within which women had to adapt. Until very recently, few Inuit houses had running water or sewage facilities, and it was a rare household that had access to a washing machine.

Unfortunately, women continue to be victims as the following encounter illustrates. The patient is a 56 year old mother of seven children ranging in age from twenty-five to thirty-nine. The nurse is 26 years old, single and new to the North. The patient's statements are exact translations of Inuktitut spoken. Where the medical interpreter has added her own comments, her statements are included. The material here is excerpted from the actual transcript but care was taken not to alter the logic or the meaning of the encounter. The commentary in italics is taken from a follow-up interview in the patient's home where the encounter and her health problem were discussed in detail.

NURSE (N): Okay, what can I do for Mary?

PATIENT (P): I was really sick yesterday and called here. Now that it's not Sunday, I am here.

N: Did she take a Tylenol like she was told to take?

P: Yes, I took two and then some more later. Now I have just a little pain.

N: Okay, so she had pain in her right arm?

P: It started here in my hand, then my arm felt like pins and needles. I was just sitting in a chair, then the pain was under my arm, then

to my chest and it was really painful right through to the back.

N: Did the pain come and go or was it all right there?

INTERPRETER (I): Something like sharp pain right through to the back.

N: Back to the chest.

P: Together from my back and pressing to the front and was really, really painful.

N: Does she stay away from greasy food?

P: I never had any greasy food. They don't like me to have greasy food, so I try not to. Even though I didn't have greasy food I got sick yesterday.

N: Her doctor said she was not to eat anything fatty. What did she eat yesterday?

P: I had dry cereal and there wasn't much else. I had some raw caribou meat, not even frozen, with nothing at all.

N: See, if they have it uncooked, all oil is still in it, so fat is still in it. In meat, if you broiled or baked it, all the fat drains from it okay. Otherwise, if it's left uncooked or fried, all the fat stays inside. Same with that stuff she got at the Bay. It's filled with lard. Like that bannock, it's really bad 'cause it's got lard in it. I know that they have a lot of lard in them and lard is fat and lard is grease.

P: What then, am I never going to eat anymore, and I get really sick and I am hardly eating, and I still get sick?

N: Okay, can you tell her that gall bladder is irritated by fatty food, spicy food, strong tea and coffee and caffeinated things like that. Gall bladder is irritated by that.

P: It sort of started, the second time I think, under the arm, more like under the shoulder blade back there, like needles and pain, and then the arm felt like it lost circulation, felt cold, felt pins and needles and like back to the chest and I just put pressure on my arm, like sort of gone over it and it felt like it lost a lot of circulation, and once it was getting better, then the pain was more in the chest. It was either one and a half or two hours, and I fell asleep after that, like I wasn't really watching the time. My eyes felt like they were blurry or not focusing right and I was laying mostly — when I got up, I was dizzy.

When I had gallstone pains, it had to do with heartburn and pain like all around the diaphragm or stomach area, and stabbing pain in that area. Nothing like this. I know myself that it was not from food that I had eaten because the day before I hardly ate anything, I mostly drink tea and that sort of thing and milk or whatever, mostly. So I know it wasn't from food and if the nurses suggest it's one thing I'll just sometimes just go along with them, because what I try to tell them, they don't understand anyway.

N: They had her on [name of medication] five years ago and I'll check it to see what it says and we'll check her in 10 days and [keep] her off greasy foods, fried food, bannock, strong tea, strong coffee.

P: My kids cook fried meat a lot and I sometimes eat a few pieces.

I: She said when some of her kids make or cook and fry meat, sometimes she'll have one.

N: No, no, no, Janet. Ah, ah, ah, you'll get sick.

P: What am I going to do if I have to continue this way forever. I would really lose weight?

N: Yeah, she has to choose — get skinny or get sick.

P: Do I want to get sick?! I'll probably just be sick because I can't do what they want me to do when we go inland. I like it there and I would just start doing things like I've always done in the land. I can't follow that instructions, not to eat fatty food all the time. I really like meat cooked in open pit.

N: Tell her to bake it. Well, only thing I can tell her is stay away from it, and if she doesn't stay away from it she's going to get sick.

P: If I' listen to what you tell me will my sickness go away [meaning gallstones] or are they always going to be like that now?

1: If she tries to stay away from fatty food will she be alright and or will it always come back when she eats fatty foods?

N: You are always going to get sick when you eat fatty food.

P: I find it very, very hard to stick to a diet because of my traditional form of food being caribou, fish. I will try not to eat fatty foods but it's part of my cultural food and it's very, very hard to stay away from it, especially when I'm not feeling sick.

It's extremely impolite not to eat what's put in front of you, especially when my kids are cooking. They're trying to take care of me. Of course I'll eat when they cook.

We just usually eat what's there, like most of us we'd eat what's there, however it's cooked, but I do understand about draining most of the fat.

P: If I had stones I would have pain down here, but I am having pains up here. If I had stones I would have stomach aches.

1: What's bothering her is not down here, but the pain's up here.

P: It's here that hurts inside [mid chest] it really, really hurts.

1: Pain is up here.

N: That's a change from wherever the pain was before, the pain was here Betty [upper abdomen]. Didn't she say that? You did say that, didn't you?

P: Is that where they have stones?

N: It sounds like gall bladder and all her other times it's been gall bladder.

P: 1 thought they get stomach ache.

N: She's just going to have to stay away from fatty foods. There's not much else we can do.

1: You just going to have to stay away from fatty food and take care of yourself. They tell you what to do and they can't do anything else.

P: I just know this would happen. I don't even like to go to the nursing station anymore. I only came because I was feeling really sick before. I also thought that my cold was making it worse, that's why I came.

1: She knows what nurse is going to tell her, she don't even like to come here much any more when she has problem. But she thought it might be from her lungs.

N: No, she's breathing fine.

P: Now they are fine but yesterday I couldn't even breathe hardly my chest was in such pain.

1: But the pain was so much she couldn't even take a breath.

N: Yeah, that doesn't solve the problem at all, but 1'11 check her chest but I am sure it's her gall bladder.

*Sometimes too, I come to the point where I don't trust the diagnosis then I'll think about that, and the attack would come if it really is what the nurses think so, I do my own testing to make sure if what the nurses say is wrong with me, is really what's wrong with me. I think for myself and try to understand my own mind..*

*I feel mostly the nurses don't listen and also another bad thing I have noticed is that sometimes they don't write down in their charts what medications are being administered because they're always asking you what pills you are on and what are you taking and then you tell them and then they usually can't find anything that's written — and especially too, when you refer to a doctor if it's an incomplete report, there goes the whole reason for seeing the doctor and that's a real lack of*

*communication, especially in referral — because everything is written down.*

*If I can't stand it any more, then maybe I will get enough* ***gumption*** *to go and tell the Health Committee what I want if it's really bothering* ***me.*** *But I am totally discouraged.*

*There was even an incident last year where I just* ***left*** *the clinic because they were just telling me something terrible "You always get* ***sick*** *or why are you sick all the time," just scolding me and the* ***attitude*** *was not right. And both the nurse and the interpreter were attacking me and I* ***just*** *left, so that occurs.*

Throughout this encounter, the woman is not taken seriously either on a personal or a cultural level. The systematic disrespect shown for her interpretation of her symptoms, and her values regarding social obligations and traditional dietary practices, is demoralizing and has resulted in a situation where she no longer has trust in the health services available to her.

One of the unfortunate products of women's experience of **maternalism** in their relationship with nurses over the past several decades has been a devaluation of core cultural values associated with women's identity and roles. Values relating to child birth, child care, housekeeping, home economics, and home nursing have been undermined by an approach to nursing that assumes clients are "empty vessels" requiring education and control.

This devaluation is particularly apparent in the arena of childbirth. Central to all cultures are the events and rituals surrounding childbirth and the core values associated, such as naming ceremonies, social relationships with birth attendants and assistants, and the bonding rituals involved in accepting new members of the society. The **medicalization** of childbirth in **Inuit** communities has also profoundly affected women's culture.

In the short span of thirty years, **Inuit** childbirth has undergone a transition from a natural event in a snowhouse assisted by midwives and female relatives to a medical procedure occurring in urban hospitals, thousands of miles away from family and community. Justification for this transition has been declining maternal and infant mortality rates. However, even medical experts are equivocal about whether this decline is entirely due to increased **medicalization** or largely dependent on improved living conditions (**Baskett** 1978, Bradford **n.d.**)

While **Inuit** women have submitted passively, they are nonetheless aware of and concerned about the costs of **medicalization.**[1] The following excerpts from meetings with Keewatin Health Committees describe one important dimension of these concerns — the changes in women's roles within the family.

> In **our** town, the mother-in-law, the mother, the grandmother, or other relatives give advice to the younger one even before she got pregnant and more so during her pregnancy.
>
> When I was young myself, when we had our first pregnancies we were almost always with our mother or mother-in-law who taught us birth positions and things like that. I would like to see an older person who knows about this **to** educate young women about problems of the child during pregnancy.
>
> One way we could do this would be **to** approach the mother or the **mother-in-law**, give her all of this information and then maybe quietly or nicely ask her to try to relay the message across to the person who is pregnant. That way that person may not be as shy and she will probably take the message more openly than from a complete stranger.
>
> I think that the younger women should be taught also the traditional ways. The young pregnant woman should be taught how to behave when the first baby is born, how they should present themselves.

These comments reflect deep-seated

1 The medicalization process has also included such 'innovations" as bottle-feeding, family planning (including sterilization), and child development instruction. In all cases, introduction of these changes by the health care system has directly challenged some aspect of Inuit women's culture.

concerns about the loss of traditional values affecting relations among women and expectations regarding behavior. These concerns emerged during discussions of family life and problems experienced in the marital relationship and child care. These discussions clearly identified the link between problems in women's self-perceptions and esteem, and their experience with a colonial health care system (cf. Etienne and Leacock 1980 for a general discussion of colonization and women).

Western medicine's colonization of women's culture in the Canadian North has implications in terms of the contemporary politicization of health issues. The general feeling among health professionals is that health institutions have remained outside the political process because Inuit put low priority on health care and perceive health institutions to be highly technical and beyond the grasp of local control. Instead, I would argue that health has always been a priority for northern women and the relatively late emergence of political interest in health care reflects women's domination by medical institutions. It is therefore not surprising that the most significant challenge to the hegemony of Western medicine comes from the increasing politicization of women's culture in the Canadian North. With the formation of women's political organizations, such as the Inuit Women's Association (IWA), women are increasingly involved in the politicization of health issues.

At the local level, women have restructured Health Committees to provide a forum for the development of critical health policy. Health committees have assumed responsibility both for improving general communication and public health in the community, but also for advocating systemic change in health institutions to reflect increased community input and responsibility (Eskimo Point Health Committee Minutes 1986).

This process is particularly evident in the area of childbirth. The Inuit Women's Association has passed resolutions at both of their previous annual general meetings which call for the drastic restructuring of a system which presently removes all women from their communities for purposes of childbirth. The IWA has also advocated the revitalization of traditional midwifery as a component of community based childbirth systems as the following statements from community meetings in the Keewatin attest:

> We're going to continue to push in order to have midwives deliver babies in their communities, because they had practised it and done it before the doctors started coming into the North, and they had done it with pride and they've done it successfully in the past, and they'll continue to fight for what they think should be given to them. So before we lose all these midwives who have experience, they would like to be able to continue to see them going into practice again so that the younger ladies will be able to know how it has been done.
>
> Midwives are not just anybody, but are people with the knowledge of caring for people who are pregnant. When your wife is coming to the time of childbirth, when the child is going to be born very shortly, we cannot be in isolation, you have to be with other knowledgeable people to help you out. I realize the amount of knowledge that the midwives have that . I took for granted would be very beneficial to the pregnant women today.
>
> Nowadays we are told, like to forget about our Inuit traditional ways and my concern is that even when there's a healthy pregnancy couldn't the mother have her child in her home town with the older Inuit women who have been midwives to be the midwife and be with a younger person who has never had experience in delivering babies to help her along to watch, to observe because that would teach the younger generation of what our ancestors used to do like, act as, to deliver babies.

There is more at stake in this movement than the particular services available to women during the period of childbirth, and I will discuss the symbolism of this movement in terms of the wider devolution of health care systems later in the paper.

## **Devolution** and Community Participation

**Devolution** is intended to describe the process of transferring control of community services such as medical care, education, municipal services, housing, sanitation, etc., to administrative bodies within each community from more centralized regional and national structures. As **Dacks** (1981) has described, it is important to understand the structure of political development in the Northwest Terntories as a tripartite process involving both the federal and territorial levels of government as well as the **Inuit** or Indian political organizations that emerged in the 1970s. Of singular importance is the **Nunavut** issue, which entails the division of the Territories into an eastern **Inuit** political entity where legislative and judicial processes would be determined by **Inuit cultural** principles. Nunavut negotiations are occurring simultaneously with **devolutionary** developments between the federal and territorial governments where previously federally regulated responsibilities such as non-renewable resource use, highways, **and** particularly health care, are in the process of being turned over to territorial jurisdiction.

In order to understand how the political process impacts on the delivery of services — in this case, health care — this tripartite model must be expanded to include both health professionals and clients. Not only do these other sectors have interests which may be divergent from political interests, but competing interests exist within each sector. For example, the medical and nursing professions have different interests in devolution and class and ethnic interests in the community will be served differently by changes in the service administrative structure. These divergent interests can be diagramed as below.

This model suggests an equality and symmetry to the competition which of course is illusory. In fact, the interests of various groups within different nodes of the triangle are at times aligned and at other times opposed, and these alignments or their rationales are not always obvious to the respective players. 'I'he remainder of this section will discuss some of these alliances.

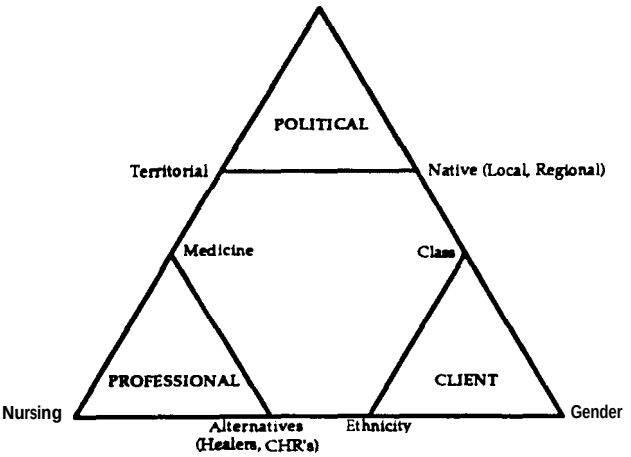



*Figure 1*

The issue of transference of health services from the federal to the territorial level of **government** first arose in the mid-seventies when discussions were being held regarding the relocation of the Medical Services regional office from Edmonton to **Yellowknife**. Transfer discussions dissolved for two reasons: external evaluation indicated that the infrastructure for administering health services within the Territorial jurisdiction was not sufficiently developed, and the newly formed Native organizations, including **Inuit** Tapirisat, indicated they were against transferring responsibility for health services to the **GNWT** until the land claim was settled. At that time the legislative assembly of the GNWT was predominantly non-Native in representation. The ideological gap between **Inuit** organizations and the territorial government was much larger than it is in the present context where **Inuit** and Native representation in the legislative assembly is the majority.

Interim measures were taken instead. The regional office of Medical Services for the Northwest Territories was relocated from Edmonton to **Yellowknife** and a Department of Health was established within the government of the Northwest Territories. This department was given the mandate to develop non-insured services and assume responsibility for the return of patients and their escorts from southern hospitals to their home communities. The

Department of Health was a component of the Department of Social Services where the GNWT had jurisdiction in the area of welfare and social development.

The devolution of health services did not re-emerge as an issue until 1982 when the Baffin Inuit lobbied the federal government for the transfer of responsibility for the Baffin Regional Hospital to a regional health board with majority Inuit representation. This transfer was completed in 1984 and negotiations began for the transfer of all other health facilities in the NWT to the GNWT. The Inuit position on this transfer process has been somewhat confusing in that Inuit representative bodies have been unanimously opposed to further devolution prior to the settlement of land claims and the creation of Nunavut.

In November 1985, representatives of the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut, the Inuit Committee on National Issues, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, and the Nunavut Constitutional Forum met and concluded that land claims negotiations, the move to divide the NWT, and the national constitutional talks on Native self-government were all threatened by further devolution, particularly in the area of resource development. Although the Inuit leadership were opposed to devolution in general, devolution of responsibilities for health care were approved. Leaders were quoted as indicating that approval of devolution in health care was a response to popular request (Bell and Pool 1985).

For example, in April 1984, the Gjoa Haven Hamlet Council petitioned the GNWT and Medical Services for the right to "implement the take over of the Nursing Station in the community of Gjoa Haven, " citing chronic understaffing and a decline in the quality of community services as a rationale (Gjoa Haven Hamlet Council 1984). The Hamlet Council was responding in part to pressure from both the Health Committee and local nurses who argued that working conditions were creating a dangerous situation for people requiring attention. Members of the Health Committee had heard numerous complaints from people in the community regarding their dissatisfaction with medical care. Realizing that the nurses' behaviour and attitudes were largely a product of the structural conditions in which they worked, key members of the Health Committee lobbied Hamlet Council for a resolution to take over the administration of the Station. Further representation was made and obtained from the Regional Inuit Association for support. The GNWT's response to this petition was to acknowledge that problems existed but to recommend that Gjoa Haven wait until global transfer processes could be implemented.

As a result of these initiatives, the GNWT has proceeded with discussions with the federal government for the transfer of all medical services. Baffin Region transfer was complete by September 1, 1986, and current timetabling indicates that transfer of the remaining health services in the Keewatin and Kitikmeot Regions will be undertaken in 1987. Although approval has been given, Native organizations, and particularly the Dene, continue to express concerns about the effect the transfer will have on the federal government's constitutionally guaranteed responsibility for providing health care to status Indians (Holmes 1986).

Despite the apparent comprehensiveness of Canadian health insurance, there are historically-based special rights that Native people take for granted (such as ambulance services, prescription medications, eye glasses, and various other non-insured services) which may be put at risk by the devolutionary process. The willingness of Native organizations to proceed with devolution of health services despite overriding anxiety about the impact this might have on other political concerns is indicative of the growing dissatisfaction that presently exists with a colonial medical system that continues to operate independently of client involvement.

Problems have also arisen in the area of Inuit representation in the transfer process. At a recent Keewatin Inuit Association annual general meeting held in Rankin Inlet late in 1986, the KIA passed resolutions opposing the appointment of a Keewatin Health Board by the GNWT. GNWT appointments apparently reflect executive level decisions and the KIA was concerned that valid Inuit representation would

not be forthcoming. The KIA resolution argued that each Inuit community in the Keewatin should have the opportunity to elect representation to the Keewatin Health Board, which is ultimately to assume responsibility for the transfer of administrative control over health services.

The impact of devolution on the relationship between nursing and medicine and their respective ideologies remains to be seen. At this point I can offer only speculative comment on the issues that may arise. It would appear that the devolution of health services threatens to upset the historical relationship between the nursing and medical professions in the North. The provision of health services in northern communities has historically been the primary responsibility of nurses with physicians occupying subordinate roles. This structure has evolved generally due to the political economy of Western medicine where political and economic power is concentrated in urban areas. Within the profession, success is measured by the influence a physician has in this power structure (Starr 1982). Rural and remote medicine is considered the domain of fringe players — including recent graduates, ethnic minorities, immigrants and eccentrics.

Nursing, on the other hand, is more difficult to describe. While high risk nursing in the technically elite areas of urban hospitals confers high status, nurse-practitioners and nurse-midwives with remote community health experience also have considerable clout in the profession. Particularly as nursing evolves through the painful process of role redefinition, remote community nursing has had and is continuing to have important ideological influence on the profession's self-image.

The symbiotic relationship between the professions in the North is however, increasingly undermined by the growing interest of medicine in community health. As the profession moves to maintain its dominance in the health care arena against competition from increasing numbers of alternative healers and government regulation, social and community medicine is emerging as an important new field. Together with manpower issues, these changes mean that medicine is increasingly interested in dominating remote health care delivery, both politically and ideologically.

Furthermore, in the struggle between the medical profession and representative government for ultimate control over health policy and planning, devolution would appear to enhance the interests of the medical profession. It is potentially easier to negotiate with a regional or community Native organization than it is with provincial or federal governments. Indeed, as devolution negotiations unfold, medicine has increasingly aligned itself in an "advisory" *role* with Native organizations, occasionally in conflict with federal or provincial (territorial) interests.

Perhaps the most unfortunate casualty of these trends is that nursing has become the scapegoat for anti-colonial feeling in northern communities. While this paper has described northern nursing in critical terms, I have tried to show that the system has been historically and ideologically produced and reproduced according to wider themes in the relationship of Native communities to Canadian society. Where failures have occurred, they derive more from these contextual relationships and less from the clinical or social failures of a particular profession or practitioner. Indeed, it is more than likely that had medicine dominated northern health care for the past several decades, the colonial structure of the system would be even more deeply ingrained.

## Conclusions

This paper has described the evolution of health care institutions in Inuit communities and has discussed some of the broad historical, structural and cultural reasons why self-determination in health care has been slow to develop. The case for local control should be obvious. Health services remain one of the most powerful symbols of a colonial relationship between northern peoples and the nation state, and the pervasiveness of this symbol in the intimacies of everyday life undermine further development in other institutional areas. Local control is also an essential pre-condition if the current epidemic of misunderstandings and

resentments that are afflicting relations between health care staff and Inuit in many northern communities are to be resolved.

The polemic tone of the paper is intentional. While it may seem I have been unfairly critical of health care personnel who have often accepted hardship in order to save lives in the North, the fact of the matter is that the institution as a whole is having serious negative effects on the perceptions of Inuit clientele. This paper is intended for those nurses and doctors who are presently "fleeing" self-determination in health care by transferring out of communities or regions that are coming under Inuit and Indian control. Self-determination in Native health care is a public health movement of historic proportions and the effective delivery of the full range of preventive, curative and educational health services in the North will not progress until the transfer is complete.

The paper also suggests that tension in medical encounters is due in large part to Inuit understandings of illness and well-being that continue to reflect a critical examination of the social order which now includes the colonial structure of western medicine. Others have argued that conflicts exist between health care providers and Inuit clients because of inherently different value systems (Wenzel 1981). The difference here is subtle but. important. The "culture differences" argument suggests that if nurses and doctors could learn to ask questions about family and community and treat their patients accordingly, then the tension would be resolved. This paper argues instead that cultural sensitivity will not contribute to a radical examination of the Western healer's role in northern society, nor will it result in the ideological and political changes necessary to decolonize northern health services. Inuit will continue to articulate their experience of dependency and subordination in illness episodes, much to the confusion and chagrin of health care providers, until this change occurs.

References


Baer, H.
1982 On the political economy of health. Medical Anthropology Newsletter 14(1):1-2, 13-17.

Baskett, T.
1978 Obstetric care in the central Canadian Arctic. British Medical Journal 2:1001-1004.

Bell, Jim and Annelies Pool
1885 No more transfer of powers — Inuit. New#North, Nov. 22.

Bradford,
n.d. A decade of Inuit obstetrics. Unpublished manuscript.

Brett, H.
1969 A synopsis of northern medical history. Canadian Medical Association Journal 100:521-525.

Brown, E.R.
1979 Rockefeller Medicine Men. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cardenas, B. and J. Lucarz
1985 Canadian Indian health care: A model for service. *In* community Health Nursing in Canada. Stewart et al., eds. Toronto: Gage.

Cohen J. and T. Baskett
1978 Sterilization patterns in a northern Canadian population. Canadian Journal of Public Health 69:222-224.

Comaroff, Jean and John Comaroff
1986 Christianity and colonialism in South Africa. American Ethnologist 13(1):1-22.

Crandon, Libbet
1986 Medical dialogue and the political economy of medical pluralism: A case from rural highland Bolivia. American Ethnologist 13(3):463-476.

**Dacks,** Gurston
1$%1 A Choice of Futures — Politics in the Canadian North. Toronto: Methuen.

Eskimo Point Health Committee
1986 Minutes from hi-monthly meetings.

Etienne, M. and E. **Leacock,** (eds.)
**1980** Women and Colonization: Anthropological Perspectives. New York: Praeger

**Foucault,** M.
1975 The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception. New York: Vintage.
1980 Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings. New York: Pantheon.

Geertz, C.
1973 The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books.

Graham-Cummings
1968 Northern health services. Canadian Medical Association Journal **100:526-531.**

**Hallowell, A.I.**
1941 The social function of anxiety in a primitive society. American Sociological Review 7:869-881.

Hechter, M.
**1975** Internal Colonialism: The **Celtic** Fringe in British National Development. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Hodgson, Corinne
1982 The social and political implications of tuberculosis among Native Canadians. Canadian Review of Sociology and **Anthropology** 19(4):502-512.

Holmes, Doug
1986 Negotiations on medical transfers. News/North, Feb. 7.

Hudson's Bay Company
1926 Letter from Winnipeg Fur Trade Commission to London Head Office. **F.T.** No. 5375, November 10.

**Lechat,** R
**1976/7** Intensive sterilization for the **Inuit.** Eskimo **12:5.**

Lewin, Ellen and Virginia **Olesen**
1985 Women, Health and Healing Toward a New Perspective. New York: Tavistock Publications.

O'Neil, John D.
1986a Health care in the central Canadian Arctic: Continuities and change. Z ***n*** Health and Canadian Society: A Sociological Perspective (2nd cd.). D. Coburn et al., **eds.** Toronto: **Fitzhenry** and Whiteside.
**1986b** The politics of health in the Fourth World: A northern Canadian example. Human Organization **45(2):119-128.**
1988 Referrals to traditional healers: The role of medical interpreters. ***In*** Health Care Issues in the Canadian North. David E. Young (cd.). Edmonton: Boreal Institute for Northern Studies.

Paine, Robert
**1977** The White Arctic Anthropological Essays on Tutelage and Ethnicity. St. John's: Memorial University.

Schaefer, O.
**1977** Changing dietary patterns in the Canadian North: Health, social and economic consequences. Journal of the Canadian Dietetic Association 38(l): 1725.

**Scheffel,** David.
1983 Modernization, mortality, and Christianity in northern Labrador. Current Anthropology 24(4):523-524.

Scott, Cora L.
1978 Canada's "barefoot" midwives. The Canadian Nurse 74(9):41-42.

Starr, P.
1982 The Social Transformation of American Medicine. New York: Basic Books, Inc.

Taussig, M.T.
1960 Reification and the consciousness of the patient. Social Science and Medicine B14:3-13.

Turner, V.W. and E.M. Bruner
1966 The Anthropology of Experience. University of Illinois Press.

Waitzkin, H.
1979 Medicine, superstructure and micro-politics. Social Science and Medicine A13:601-609.

Wenzel, G.
1961 Inuit health and the health care system: Change and status quo. Perspectives on Health 15(1):7-15.

Williamson, Robert G.
1974 Eskimo Underground Socio-Cultural Change in the Canadian Central Arctic. Uppsala, Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksell.

Young, Allan
1982 The anthropologies of illness and sickness. Annual Review of Anthropology 11:257-285.

# Community Participation in Socio-Legal Control: The Northern Context

by Harald W. Finkler
Circumpolar and Scientific Affairs Directorate
Indian and Northern Affairs
Government of Canada

## Introduction

This paper is based primarily on the findings emanating from the author's socio-legal field research in the Northwest Territories (Finkler 1976 and 1981) and related writings on the subject (Finkler 1982a, 1982b, 1983a, 1983b, 1985a and 1985b). In addressing the issue of community participation in socio-legal control, within the northern context and focus on Inuit, the paper begins with an examination of modernization or the process of micro-urbanization in terms of its consequences on traditional mechanisms for social control. Within this framework of social change, the evolution of community participation in social control is traced to contemporary times, concluding with an assessment of current initiatives and prognosis for increased involvement.

## 1. Modernization and its Effects on Socio-Legal Control

Post WW II development of the North caused a dramatic transformation of aboriginal society traditionally characterized by its primary group relationships, dependency and homogeneity. The resulting invasion of Euro-Canadian society and the proliferation of its socio-economic, medical, political, legal, and education infrastructures, administration and policy initiatives had extremely far-reaching consequences on the fabric of northern society. By the 1950s and 1960s an unprecedented number of Inuit from small isolated camps were enticed to migrate to semi-urban communities to benefit from greater opportunities for wage employment and newly established educational, medical and social services. Ironically, however, in many respects northern development was occurring at the expense of aboriginal society which came to suffer a state of socio-economic and political underdevelopment in combination with a general deterioration in the quality of life.

Specifically, the social dislocation resulting from modernization and accelerated social change had disastrous effects on the maintenance of traditional mechanisms for social control within the family and community. For example, the erosion of primary group relationships, family solidarity, parental authority, traditional male/female roles and close ties between generations, and the emergence of changing value orientations, in combination with a growing sense of frustration and alienation emanating from a relegated inferior socio-economic status in a white dominated society, significantly undermined the traditional framework for community social control. The resulting breakdown in aboriginal society has culminated in a rising and currently disproportionate incidence of crime among Native peoples, predominantly entailing assaultive behaviour, break and enter, theft, and alcohol and drug abuse, with the latter occurring independently as well as frequently constituting the context or precipitating factor in the commission of the other offences.

In tracing the evolution of community participation in social control, I begin by

examining the period during the 1960s to mid 1970s — a timeframe characterized by the proliferation of formal agencies for socio-legal control which had displaced the pivotal role of the traditional community in this regard — which must be understood within the aforementioned context of modernization and its effects on reducing the community's capacity to participate in this process.

## II. Evolution of Community Participation in Social Control

Initially, community participation in socio-legal control was limited due to the breakdown in traditional control mechanisms and the community's increasing reliance on intervention by the formal agencies which also eroded the coordinating basis for community response to threatening behaviour. One obstacle to the community's willingness to accept its responsibility to participate in the control process may be its diminishing tolerance toward crime and the resulting increased social distance from offenders in its midst. Moreover, additional constraints on community participation have been linked to the following:

> . ..a neglect of adequate communication with Inuit, or an information gap, impeding their understanding of the concepts and mechanisms inherent in our Canadian law and formal agencies of socio-legal control; . . . and a limited success of the existing programs or service in the Northwest Territories . . . for the resocialization of Inuit offenders, based on southern oriented social work concepts and techniques, and administered by non-Inuit [Finkler 1976:2].

While it would be inaccurate to portray developments during this period as being totally devoid of community initiatives in the control process, the extent of its involvement was limited primarily for the above reasons. However, factors influencing change in this process only really began to emerge and gain momentum as a result of the Law Reform Commission's 1974 report on the disproportionate number or over-representation of Natives in the criminal justice system which prompted the convening in 1975 of a national, as well as federal-provincial conference in Edmonton on Natives and the criminal justice system. The far-reaching implications of this conference toward ameliorating the plight of Native peoples in conflict with the law, at a territorial as well as national level, have a bearing on our discussion and merit a summation of issues raised and conference recommendations.

The Edmonton conference must be considered a landmark in providing the baseline and overview of the problems, issues, concerns and mitigative responses entailed in addressing the dilemma of Natives and the law. Specifically, the conference focused on the following: the inability of Euro-Canadian oriented socio-legal services to respond to Native needs; the gaps in services for Natives; the lack of involvement of Natives in the planning, policy formulation and delivery of justice services; the need to sensitize those non-Natives involved in the delivery of criminal justice services for Natives; the disproportionate number of Natives coming to the attention of the criminal justice system; concern over the differential treatment of Natives; and the lack of understanding among Natives about the law and the criminal justice system.

Mitigative measures advocated during the conference were embodied in two major recommendations calling for a general focus on the increased need for Native involvement in policy formulation and delivery of justice services for Natives; and for increased culturally grounded and innovative models more responsive to Natives. The thrust of the conference recommendations, apart from their provision of a policy framework vis-a-vis Natives and the justice system, rested in the indigenization of the Euro-Canadian based criminal justice system. The issues and recommendations addressed during the conference were apropos to the northern context, particularly given the demographic reality of the NWT with its majority Native, yet small, culturally diverse population on the threshold of modernization and accelerated social change.

Within the NWT momentum for action generated by the conference has stimulated an

increasing sensitivity and recognition by those responsible for the criminal justice system of the need for changes and interventions to be more culturally grounded and relevant. This initiative, primarily entailing indigenization of the justice system, has been conducive to facilitating community participation in social control. However, additional factors have enhanced this process.

Specifically, community action has materialized in part as a consequence of increasing doubts about the effectiveness of the interventions and control strategies exercised by the formal justice system in arresting the increasing tide of unacceptable and disruptive behaviour within the community. This development has combined with the emergence of a Native majority in the Legislative Assembly, the influence of its northern cultural perspective during debates on the direction of socio-legal programs, policies and allocation of resources, and the consciousness-raising efforts by Native organizations vis-a-vis aboriginal rights and issues to increase culturally focused initiatives in the North. The resulting context has stimulated confidence in operating within a cultural framework as the basis for direction and action, and heightened community awareness as to the pivotal role and responsibility of communities in the control process — ever so critical to the success of any crime control strategy.

## III. Current Initiatives and Prognosis for Increased Involvement

Presently community participation in social control is evident on many fronts including a long-standing involvement in controlling alcohol abuse, and more recently, in the area of spousal assault. These areas constitute concrete examples of the successful efforts by the justice system to foster community ownership of the problem and to share the responsibility for social control through its delivery of locally determined remedial programs.

In regard to alcohol control, communities have utilized the legal restraints available in the Liquor Ordinance enabling them to determine the desired level of restrictions on the purchase, sale or consumption of alcohol. These restraints, monitored by community alcohol education committees, have significantly reduced the hazardous and excessive consumption of alcohol with a resulting decline in the incidence of liquor-precipitated criminality, especially interpersonal violence. The aforementioned committees have also taken on counseling, treatment and educational roles in their communities. During 1986 the federal and territorial governments, with their mandate to provide needed preventive services at the local level, supported 36 community operated alcohol and drug projects throughout the NWT.

Success has been achieved in cases where the communities have identified the problem, looked for solutions within themselves and organized to address the problem, for example the Baffin Region Alcohol and Drug Information Centre. However, limited resources have precluded the necessary development work required in some other communities for them to take ownership of the problem, or to prod the collective consciousness of yet other communities that do not have a project looking at themselves or lack the inclination to develop a needed project proposal.

However, the territorial government has encouraged greater local autonomy in the provision of alcohol and drug programs, and moreover, recently increased its funding of these programs in recognition of their priority.

With respect to spousal assault, community participation in mitigative measures has witnessed the formation of a northern network of community based action groups to address the problem. Out of this development have emerged community based and operated shelters as well as community initiated research to further identify the extent of the problem and local needs. Such initiatives have been supported by the government in its response to a recent task force report on spousal assault and its implementation in 1986 of a three-year action plan entailing funding for programs for victims, batterers, workshops, conferences, planning of transition homes, researchers, crisis centres, therapy, information booklets and community counselors (GNWT 1986).

The success in achieving community

ownership of the problem was evident in a speech by the Honorable Red Pedersen, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, during a recent debate in the territorial Legislative Assembly on the spousal assault three year action plan:

> First, the communities made it very clear to the task force that they do not want primarily government initiated and new programs and services. They want the responsibility and they want to be involved in working with government to deal with the problems. Second, no amount of government buildings and staff will change people's attitude and behaviour if they do not want to change themselves. Like other social problems spousal assault lies with the individual, with couples, with families and eventually with the community [Government of NWT, Legislative 'Assembly, February 14,19861.

Finally, the recent establishment of youth justice committees, constituted under the Young Offenders Ordinance, to deal with young offenders reflects another area where the community has responded in the belief that solutions to problems must come from within. This initiative permits the diversion of consenting young offenders who have admitted their guilt from processing by the formal justice system into the hands of a local youth justice committee to deal with them within the community and in a way the community feels is appropriate. Approximately *20* such committees exist throughout the NWT with their intervention primarily effective with minor and first offenders rather than serious or chronic offenders.

In part, current initiatives in community involvement in diversion programs, aside from responding to the demographic reality of a dominant Native population, arise in reaction to the scarcity of socio-legal resources in the North which dictates the optimal utilization of existing resources through privatization and regionalization. This is especially pertinent in regard to renewed efforts aimed at the development of alternative community based non-institutional means to address the dilemma posed by the gap in non-institutional sentencing options in this vital area.

To date community based alternatives comprise such initiatives as community service orders entailing various community work projects implemented and supervised by local people; victim reconciliation programs enabling sentenced offenders to work for the victim rather than go to jail; and the fine option program which provides a person sentenced to pay a fine the option of doing community work to earn the money to pay the fine. During 1986 fine option programs existed in over 15 communities with particularly successful programs comprising those supported by band or village councils. In regard to services to the addicted, initiatives are presently under way that call for increased decentralization of training and consultation to local projects and self help groups aimed at encouraging greater citizen involvement at the region and community level in the design of local programming. Such regionalization of alcohol and drug programming will enable them to become more proactive than reactive in focus. Finally, the government is approaching established groups in the communities that have a capacity to supervise people and run programs to purchase rehabilitative services or bed space in the community for offenders as an alternative to their institutionalization.

However, as I have summarized elsewhere (Finkler 1985a:149) the specific focus of contemporary initiatives primarily constitutes the following:

> ...the major thrusts in current or proposed remedies in regard to the situation of native peoples and the delivery of socio-legal services in the NWT, as elsewhere, comprise the indigenization of the justice system and initiatives in cross-cultural and public legal education. Specifically, examples of indigenization, that is, the utilization of indigenous persons and organizations in the delivery of existing socio-legal services and programs, are ongoing efforts to recruit natives as R. C.M.P. special constables or regular

> members, Justices of the Peace, social workers, and corrections staff, along with indigenous involvement in community-based alternatives to institutionalization . . . Secondly, a greater emphasis is being placed on public legal education initiatives by such agencies as the Legal Services Board of the NWT, Native Court-workers, and Frobisher Bay Legal Services, etc., and on cross-cultural education courses to sensitize non-native staff throughout the justice system.

Despite the aforementioned improvements in this situation of Natives vis-a-vis the justice system and its provision of an enhanced framework for community participation in social control, in my opinion, the system falls short of resolving the problem. Specifically, while socio-legal services are increasingly sensitive to meeting Native needs and encouraging community ownership of the problem, the implementation of responsive policies and programs throughout the system is required to reflect this commitment. Moreover, much remains to be accomplished in facilitating indigenous access to the justice system and the resulting involvement of indigenous people in the conceptualization and delivery of culturally relevant alternatives to institutionalization.

These comments may be better understood if we recognize the fact that the above initiatives represent refinements purely at the micro-level of the system. Consequently, they are limited by virtue of "their conceptualization and implementation within the context of an imposed framework for socio-legal services and programs" (Finkler 1985a:1 50). They are also limited in that they continue to view the situation of Natives in conflict with law from a narrow micro-perspective: "to focus attention exclusively on the application of current criminal justice prevention and treatment models to Native communities is to ignore the real issue of the effects of modernization and what these mean for the social, economic and cultural life of the community and the behaviour of its inhabitants" (LaPrairie 1986:6).

With reference to Havemann et al. (1984), the majority of the above initiatives emanate from an order/assimilationist perspective. This view focuses on the amelioration of the plight of a disadvantaged and culturally vulnerable group through indigenizing the system as opposed to examining the system itself which maintains and perpetuates the status quo of aboriginal socio-economic development through modernization and its resulting social dislocation. The fact remains that the application of indigenization, the predominant thrust in current initiatives dealing with Natives before the law, is restrictive in focus and merely constitutes a tinkering with the system. As LaPrairie (1986:16) points out, "our efforts may be piecemeal as we are limited by the way in which we have conceptualized indigenization and measure its success more in terms of the number of aboriginal people employed in the system than on how concepts inherent in the policies are operationalized and how these interact with the existing procedures and practices of the criminal justice system." Significantly, the literature fails to confirm that the recruitment of aboriginal people "will result in their ultimately having control over their own treatment within these institutions" (Havemann et al. 1984:XV).

Consequently, any discussion of the prognosis for increased community involvement must be approached within a macro-level framework,

> ...one that recognizes the need for changes in the structures of existing power relationships which restore to indigenous people the authority to exercise control over their political, socio-economic and cultural affairs, including socio-legal and in the making of laws. Such changes would facilitate the development of autonomous, indigenous controlled structures for the delivery of justice services and programs which hold greater promise for reducing indigenous involvement with the justice system than modifications to the existing, yet imposed system, embodied in such initiatives as indigenization [Finkler 1985a:150].

Within the present political framework in the NWT devolution of programs and services

holds some promise for facilitating increased indigenous access to the justice system and level of community involvement. The NWT Regional and Tribal Council Ordinance gives the option for those communities which want to undertake the responsibility for social services and to provide alternate direction to service delivery. For example, Iqaluit has already contracted to provide social services. On another front, it is felt that by strengthening the law reform function in the NWT "to incorporate the customary and traditional law of the aboriginal people into the present day system of law, there would be much greater incentive for communities to participate in the criminal justice process" (Lal 1985:3.7).

However, current initiatives linked to aboriginal demands for self-government, entrenchment of aboriginal rights in the Constitution, land claims settlement and the proposed division of the NWT constitute the means with the greatest potential for aboriginal society to achieve this socio-economic, political, cultural, and legal self-determination. With respect to the sphere of justice, progress on the above points entailing the acquisition of legislative power over socio-legal services will result in the evolution of an autonomous regionally or community controlled justice system.

To conclude, aboriginal people recognize the need to accept ownership of the problems of anti-social behaviour in their midst, and that solutions must come from within. Notwithstanding, I am convinced that long-term solutions to the tragedy of Natives in conflict with the law and the enhancement of increased community involvement in the control process will only emerge through success on the aforementioned political fronts that provide the macro-framework for development of an autonomous, indigenous controlled justice system.

References

Finkler, H.
1976 Inuit and the Administration of Criminal Justice in the Northwest Territories: The Case of Frobisher Bay. Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs.

1981 The Baffin Correctional Centre: A Review of Current Programs and Alternatives. Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs.

1982a Corrections in the Northwest Territories 1967-1981, with a focus on the incarceration of Inuit offenders. Canadian Legal Aid Bulletin 5:27-38.

1982b Policy Issues in the Delivery of Correctional Services in the Northwest Territories. Paper presented to the American Society of Criminology's 34th Annual Meeting in Toronto, November 4-6,1982.

198% Violence and the administration of criminal justice in northern Canada. *In* Insights and Strategies for Confronting Violence: Conference Proceedings. K. Johnson, ed. Pp. 233-246. Anchorage: School of Justice, University of Alaska.

1983b Legal Anthropology in the Formulation of Correctional Policy in the Northwest Territories, Canada. Paper presented to the Symposia on Folk Law and Legal Pluralism, XIth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Vancouver, August 19-23,1983.

1985a Inuit and the criminal justice system: future strategies for socio-legal control and prevention. Etudes Inuit Studies 9:141-152.

1985b The role of traditional Inuit measures for social control in correctional policy and administration. *In* People's Law and State Law: The Bellagio Papers. A.N. Allott and G.R. Woodman, eds. Pp. 321-325. Dordrecht: Foris Publications.

Government of the Northwest Territories
1986 Choices . . . Yellowknife: Women's Secretariat.

Government of the Northwest Territories, Legislative Assembly
1986 Debates, 7th Session, 10th Assembly, February 14,1986.

**Havemann,** P. et al.
1984 Law and Order for Canada's Indigenous People. Ottawa: **Ministry** of the Solicitor General of Canada.

**Lal,** S.
1985 Community **involvement** in justice service delivery in the Northwest Territories. ***In*** Circuit and Rural Court Justice in the North. **C.T. Griffiths,** ed. Pp. 3.6-3.7. **Burnaby:** Simon Fraser University for the Northern Conference.

LaPrairie, C.
**1986** Aboriginal Criminal Justice in Canada: Some Theoretical Considerations. Draft paper prepared for Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada.

# Stable Community Development in the North: Properties and Requirements
## An Econo-Ecological Approach

William E. Rees
School of Community and Regional Planning
The University of British Columbia

## Introduction

*Purpose and Assumptions*

This paper outlines a novel conception of the northern economy and advances elements of a strategy for community development in the North. It is not intended as a "how to" handbook, but rather as a framework for thinking about the social, economic, and biophysical environments peculiar to northern communities. The central question is, what do these special conditions imply about the potential success of alternative approaches to development? My starting point is that "good" development will always be sensitively tuned to the special needs and characteristics of the communities concerned.

In advancing my model, I make certain assumptions and premises about development in the North. The main assumption is that residents of northern communities, whatever their race, want the same basic things from development as people anywhere else: the opportunity for personal growth, a decent standard of living, adequate services, reasonable control over the factors most significantly affecting their lives, and some sense of social stability and economic security.

My central premise may be more controversial: namely, that for all the discussion and debate we've had about northern development in Canada in the past two decades, we've never really had a coherent northern development policy. This is not to deny we have had numerous policies that seriously impinge on the North. Rather, the point is that no matter how much these policies have been advanced in the name of northern development, their primary objectives lay elsewhere on the national political agenda.[1,2] They were not intended primarily for the North, nor development, and therefore did not reflect the unique structural properties and developmental requirements of the northern economy.

[1] Since the late 1960s the most significant "northern" policy initiatives of the federal government, particularly in the western Arctic, have been designed to promote large-scale industrial activity associated with hydrocarbon and, to a lesser extent, mineral extraction (Stabler and Olfert 1980, Abele and Dosman 1981, Dacks 1981, Rees 1978, 1982). Initially, the major motivation seemed to be to protect Canadian access to US oil markets (seemingly threatened after the Alaska oil finds of 1968) and to assert our national sovereignty over arctic lands and waters (seemingly threatened by possible US tanker shipment of crude through the Northwest Passage) (Dosman 1975). However, by the early 1970s, with the OPEC oil embargo and escalating prices, energy policy *per se* came to the fore, and energy development was hailed as the primary engine for economic growth throughout Canada in the 1980s and 90s (Canada 1980, 1981).

[2] For example, Ottawa felt that Canada's sovereignty could be protected through an increased administrative and infra-structural presence in the North. Former Prime Minister Trudeau noted that "foreign companies carrying out exploration activities . . . in Canada's Arctic areas operate under Canadian permit and licence and in so doing expressly recognize Canada's sovereign rights" (Trudeau 1969).

*The Northern Development Record*

To elaborate somewhat, in the past 20 years so-called "northern development" has ridden on the coat-tails of energy policy and been equated almost exclusively with non-renewable resource megaprojects. The rationale has been that massive capital investment would provide the stimulus for socio-economic development at the community level through the "trickle down" of benefits (mostly through backward linkages), and special training and employment programs to ensure the involvement, at least as workers, of Native and other northerners (Chretien 1972, Rees 1978, Canada 1981).

From the beginning, there were serious theoretical flaws with this concept, including inherent structural weaknesses in the northern economy, that prevented many affected communities from taking advantage of development opportunities. Recently, the whole approach has crumbled, with the slow-down of exploration and development activities throughout the western arctic in response to deteriorating world oil prices, and the attendant major layoffs of semi- and unskilled workers. Communities in the Beaufort Sea- Mackenzie Delta region have been particularly hard hit.

The eastern arctic has not been as badly affected as the west by boom and bust in the petroleum sector, but is grappling with a downturn of another kind (also shared by western communities). In the Baffin region, perhaps as much as 50-75% of economic activity takes place in the so-called "informal" economy. This non-monetized system of hunting, fishing, trapping, and other subsistence activities, of inter-community trade and other mutual support mechanisms, is largely responsible for the maintenance of cultural tradition, and the generally more stable social environment of the eastern arctic.

Since the early 1950s, however, even the subsistence way of life has become increasingly dependent on cash infusions from the sale of seal and other furs to pay for such modern implements as guns and ammunition, snowmobiles and fuel. The worldwide anti-sealing and anti-wildlife harvesting campaigns have therefore had a critical impact on the cash flow required to support the informal economy. Indeed, the loss of North American and European markets for animal products seriously threatens the mixed economy of many Inuit communities.

A major consequence of these converging trends is that many people across the North do not yet enjoy the basic benefits of stable socio-economic development, and some are arguably worse off than before the most recent northern "development" push. Many predominantly Native communities are still characterized by substandard housing, low levels of education and technical skills, high underemployment, and a variety of attendant social problems — in short, all the usual indicators of poverty and underdevelopment. Clearly, if this chronic situation is to be changed for the better, we need new approaches to northern development that have an explicit northern orientation and community development goals. This in turn requires a profounder understanding of certain unique properties of the northern economy.

## The Northern Economy An Ecological Metaphor

In this section I suggest that we can learn something useful about the structure and function of the northern economy by analogy with the corresponding properties of northern ecosystems. There are dangers in reasoning from analogy, but in one sense, what I propose may not be analogy at all. Ecology is the study of relationships between living organisms and their environment, often described in terms of the flow of energy and matter among the different species in an ecosystem. Similarly, economics is the study of the relationships that determine the distribution of capital and material resources among different sectors of human society. Indeed it is sometimes called the study of the allocation of scarce resources. One could argue, therefore, that economics is really a highly specialized (if somewhat truncated) branch of ecology that focuses on a single species.[1] Thus, rather than advancing an analogy, perhaps I am simply advocating the

[1] Conversely, the title of a popular textbook in ecology is The Economy of Nature (Ricklefs 1976).

application of theory from one branch of systems ecology to another!

Some *Basics* .

*Two* features common to both ecosystems and economics underpin the argument that follows. First, ecosystems are driven by the "investment" of solar energy and characterized by the the accumulation of biomass within a hierarchy of connected trophic levels (the food chain or web). Similarly, economic systems are driven by investments of money and characterized by the accumulation of capital within connected sectors of the economy. In both ecosystems and economic systems, there is a reciprocal relationship between this investment and the structure of the system (e.g., the multiplier effect). Investment affects the structure of the system, but the modified system in turn affects the impact of future investment.

Second, we can understand the structure of any ecosystem by determining the role or "niche" of each species in the system. This is done by analyzing the flow of biomass (and associated energy) between that species and all others to which it is connected either as a consumer or producer. A quantitative analysis of niche relationships thus defines a network of exchanges among all significant species in the ecosystem. This network reveals the distribution and accumulation of ecological capital (biomass) within the ecosystem, and shows the pathways by which loss or "leakage" to other systems occurs.

Similarly, we can determine the role of a given enterprise or sector of the economy by quantifying both its sources of supply (purchases or inputs) and its markets (sales or outputs). Like niche analysis, comprehensive "input/output analysis" defines a network of flows among significant sectors of the economy. This network reveals the distribution and accumulation of economic capital within the local economy, and shows the extent of leakage resulting from purchases outside the region.

These basic parallels provide the framework for a more detailed analysis of analogous properties of eco- and economic systems.

*Systems Structure and Function*

*On Tropical Ecosystems*

Wet tropical ecosystems are characterized by high productivity, great species diversity,[1] and enormous throughput or accumulation of biomass. Since the number of possible interactions among species increases much more rapidly than the numbers of species, tropical ecosystems also have the potential for enormous internal complexity.

One of the most striking related characteristics of tropical ecosystems is their apparent long-term stability.[2] It was once an article of faith among ecologists, that this stability was a property of tropical ecosystems' diversity and complexity. The theory was that large numbers of abundant species resulted in numerous redundant pathways for biomass and energy transfer within complex food-webs, so that a particular species would not be overly dependent on any other single species. For example, if prey species "b" declined because of some shock or perturbation to the system, then predator "a" could switch to prey "c" or "d." This way "a" would survive, "b" would recover, and the system's overall structural integrity and functional stability would be preserved.

Such mechanisms do apply in some situations, but we now realize that things are much more complicated than previously suspected (see Ricklefs 1987). For example, it is probable that the stable climate of the tropics is a necessary condition for tropical species diversification (May 1975, 1981; Whittaker 1975). The theory is that in the tropics the relative constancy, dependability, and sheer quantity of energy flow (ecological investment) permits the extreme subdivision of available niche space at relatively little risk to the species involved.

[1] Species diversity is defined by various indices that usually incorporate numbers of species and their relative abundance in the community.

[2] Stability has numerous dimensions and definitions In the literature (see for example, Helling 1973, 1978; Orians 1975; Whittaker 1975; Goldsmith 1978). Here we refer to a system characterized by only small (population) fluctuations and a marked ability to return to equilibrium after a disturbance.

Under stable conditions, natural selection favours the competitive superiority conferred by specialized habitat and dietary requirements, so in an environment of plenty many tropical species evolve extremely narrow or closely-packed niches. Consequently, tropical ecosystems generally have larger numbers of relatively rarer species than do temperate or more extreme ecosystems (Orians 1975).

However, species with very specialized niches are unable to withstand or adapt to unaccustomed environmental shock. Thus, an important corollary of this "niche diversification" hypothesis is that some apparently complex natural systems are actually less stable and resilient in the face of severe environmental disturbance than are seemingly simple ones.

This paradox and other variants, seem to turn the conventional diversity-leads-to-stability wisdom on its head.[1] Rather than diversity fostering stability, climatic stability leads to diversity. The key to our expanded perception is to distinguish between the effects of "external" factors (climate, weather, etc.) that operate independently of the resident biological community, and internal factors that reflect inherent properties of particular species interactions. This distinction will be particularly helpful in understanding the behaviour of the arctic environment and economy.

*Arctic Ecology*

Relative to their tropical counterparts, north temperate and arctic ecosystems are much less productive, and have a fraction of the species diversity. With their much-reduced potential for inter-species exchanges, northern ecosystems are seemingly less complex than tropical ones. Superficially, because of seasonal extremes, they also appear to be much less stable.

These characteristics provide the other half of the conventional diversity-stability hypothesis. Theoretically, with fewer species connected in relatively simple food-chains, northern ecosystems would be expected to be less stable and less resistant to shock. In fact, some northern populations (particularly predators) seem to support the hypothesis. The arctic fox and the Canada lynx, for example, go through dramatic cycles of abundance and scarcity tied to wide fluctuations in the availability of their few food species.

As before, however, it appears the plot is not as simple as first reading would suggest. We now know of many kinds of simple ecosystems (e.g., *Spartina* marshes and *Sphagnum* bogs) that are remarkably persistent in the face of fluctuating environmental extremes. Once again evolution provides an explanation for the apparent paradox. In an unstable and unpredictable environment, natural selection favours those individuals with the greatest tolerance for change.

In contrast to their tropical counterparts, therefore, many northern species have evolved extremely broad or generalized niches. Consequently, temperate and arctic ecosystems necessarily have fewer species, but these are often more abundant than are corresponding tropical forms. The important corollary here is that, when perturbed, some simple systems are more robust and stable (are more likely to survive and to recover quickly) than more complex ones. Before turning to economic systems, some additional aspects of northern

[1] One other variation is particularly relevant to another dimension in our econo-ecological analogy. The "intermediate disturbance" hypothesis proposes that in a stable, uniform environment, competition among similar species will eventually lead to the elimination of the competitively inferior species and thus to a reduction in diversity. According to this hypothesis, periodic moderate disturbances are required to maintain the diversity of tropical systems by opening up new niche opportunities or reversing the direction of competition (Connell 1978, 1979; see also Lewin 1987). Similarly, in a mature economy, there is a tendency for successful firms to grow by merger, or acquisition of competitors, rather than through the creation of new enterprise. This simplifies the overall economy, and exposes it to the possibility of destabilizing manipulation by a decreasing number of ever larger firms. Thus, moderate intervention (e.g., antitrust legislation) may be required to maintain reasonable diversity. It seems that in a mature economy, as in a mature ecosystem, some external disturbance (instability) is a prerequisite for the maintenance of systems diversity!

ecosystems' behaviour are worth exploring.

Climate, particularly the annual solar cycle, is the major external source of fluctuation confronting the Arctic. To return to our initial analogy, the Arctic experiences a burst of solar investment each summer, followed, in some places, by none at all for half the year. As the sun moves north in the spring, primary productivity at higher latitudes increases; given the longer day, it even approaches that of the tropics.

As might be expected, different organisms have different 'strategies" for adapting to this annual bounty. For example, the northward migration of the sun is accompanied by the northward migration of millions of birds in dozens of species, and many kinds of mammals. [1] Even the hardy caribou extends its range hundreds of kilometers north to its calving grounds. The migrants' strategy, in effect, is to temper the environmental extremes to which they are exposed (they travel with the sun), and to exploit the temporary burst of productivity in the North for fattening and breeding. Indeed, as the sun departs, these temporary residents are not far behind.

Naturally, permanent residents and many of the marginal migrants have an adaptive strategy of their own. As noted earlier, many of these species are generalists whose ecology encompasses what would be several niches in more benign climes. For example, among these "jacks-of-all-trades" are many passerine birds that are able to eat winter berries in the spring, shift to insects when available in summer, and subsist on seeds in the fall. All northern species routinely endure climatic variation even in the most favorable season that would destroy a tropical system, and many use totally different habitats at different times of the year.

In this sense, there is considerable diversity/complexity in northern ecosystems but here it is within, rather than between species, as is the case in the tropics. Since intra-species diversity clearly contributes to species stability and persistence, it seems an appropriate survival strategy for permanent residents of the North.

However, the fact that the majority of species in the North in summer are temporary invaders from the South reveals major weaknesses at the higher trophic levels of northern ecosystems: the structure of the permanent community is incomplete. With many available niche spaces not occupied by resident species, the permanent community in itself is too simple to capture the bulk of the summer's productivity for local use and recycling. From the local perspective, therefore, the fall migration represents a massive 'leakage" southward of biomass (ecological capital) accumulated during the growing season. This lost production is not available for resident populations or further diversification in the North.

How can we explain this structural flaw? It seems likely that the extreme environmental rigors created by the cyclical "boom" and "bust" of solar investment presents a difficult evolutionary barrier that only a few highly adaptive species are able to cross. As noted respecting tropical diversity, a more constant and reliable pattern of energy flow may be necessary for internal diversification to occur over any reasonable period of time. Thus, to reiterate our central point concerning diversity in ecosystems: the potential diversity of an ecosystem, and the appropriate 'strategy" for achieving it, is partly a function of the quantity, quality, and periodicity of energy investment (see Odum 1975).

*The Mainstream Economy*

Like a tropical ecosystem, the mainstream economy in Canada is characterized by high levels of resource through-put and productivity, and a wide variety of economic activities.[2] With numerous productive sectors, there is great potential for internal diversity and complexity.

[1] Significantly, among the migrants during this temporary burst of northern diversity are many with relatively specialized feeding and habitat requirements.

[2] There is reason for concern that the Canadian economy is actually becoming less diverse and increasingly unstable as a result of overdependence on few (mainly US) markets, internal agglomeration, and restructuring of the world economy (resulting, for example, in the erosion of the domestic heavy manufacturing sector).

While most people think of economic diversity first in terms of the variety of goods and services produced (number of sectors), a diversified economy is also characterized by variety in such elements as imports and exports, markets, types of business tenure, credit sources, modes of production and exchange, size of economic units, resources and technology.

Such an economy tends to be stable, and again the conventional economic wisdom holds that this stability is largely a product of the system's internal diversity (see Jacobs 1969, Hoover 1975:268). Indeed, from numerous examples, this seems to be an indisputable hypothesis. However, by analogy with tropical ecosystems, the reciprocal relationship may also be important.

Under this inverse "sectoral diversification" hypothesis, a stable economic environment (e.g., one that has attained certain thresholds of capital, investment, and growth) is a necessary condition for the proliferation of additional diversity. Such an economy constitutes the low risk environment required by certain kinds of enterprise. Reasonably assured of adequate sales, reliable supply, and suitable infrastructure, specialized products and services are more likely to be attracted to, or evolve within, a stable economy than an uncertain one. Thus, large cities support a higher proportion of specialized activities and occupations than do smaller ones.[1]

*Northern Economies*

Compared to its southern counterpart, the formal or cash economy of the North has a fraction of the diversity, and is much less productive. The rate of investment is chronically low (or wildly cyclic) and the accumulation of capital in many communities is negligible. With so little internal complexity, the simplest northern economies are easily destabilized by external shocks. Whole communities may shut down with the closure of a mine in the face of deteriorating global mineral prices. Extreme economic specialization is clearly a high risk proposition.

From time to time northern communities or whole regions experience a "boom" of investment in the industrial sector, stimulated by policy changes or rising prices on world commodities markets. The most recent, associated with hydrocarbon development and affecting much of the western arctic, lasted about 15 years. Unfortunately, like the arctic ecosystem, the formal economy of the North is structurally incompetent to benefit fully from the burst of new activity. There are many unoccupied economic niches, and the existing network of input/output linkages is too frail to capture much of the new investment. Local firms, especially early in a boom, simply cannot offer the products, capacity, or services required by large-scale industrial activity. Industry, therefore, makes the bulk of its major purchases outside the region. From the perspective of the permanent community, this represents a massive leakage of capital that otherwise might be invested in new economic activity in the North.

Similarly, since the unspecialized skills of residents are only useful for low-end jobs, the northward migration of investment is accompanied by the northward migration of highly-skilled workers who take the high-paying positions. This certainly increases local exchange, but most of the goods and many of the services demanded by the newcomers must also be brought in from 'outside." Ultimately, when the "bust" phase comes and the migrants leave, they take their wages and savings with them. All this represents additional leakages from the formal sector of local economy.

But not all northerners are equally buffeted by external economic forces. Like their counterparts in the arctic ecosystem, human "jacks-of-all-trades" occupy broadly unspecialized economic niches. For example, many Native northerners will hunt, trap, or fish part of the year, take simple wage employment for another (often necessary to support their subsistence activities), and receive UIC benefits

[1] It is interesting to speculate on whether economies characterized by a large number of narrow] y specialized activities are more sensitive to major systems perturbations (e.g. a depression, or a radical change of government philosophy or trading relationships) than more basic economies.

for some of the rest. Personal flexibility is a highly adaptive characteristic when infrequent economic opportunities present themselves randomly or, at best, in a seasonal cycle.

Such internal diversity is equally important for the survival of whole Native communities. The community-based economy is a mixed economy which, unlike the industrial variety, is largely based on renewable resources. Incorporating elements of both the formal and informal sectors, this "village" economy includes subsistence production for domestic consumption, and an exchange component producing goods for sale or trade. The latter sometimes evolves into an important system of inter-community exchange. In addition to as much as 50% or more of productive economic activity (DIAND 1980), the informal component also provides the cement for social coherence in many communities.

In effect, the village economy is a system of economic **mutualism** characterized by cooperative production and shared consumption. Internal redundancy and diversity serve to spread both the risks and the unreliable natural bounty of the northern environment. Thus, contrary to southern perceptions, it is actually a sophisticated cultural adaptation to a hostile and unpredictable environment, both ecological and economic. In the face of enormous change, this modern derivative of the original socio-economic system of the North has proved remarkably robust and persistent.

By contrast, the leakage of investment and jobs from the industrial sector suggests serious structural flaws. Insufficiently diverse to capture significant benefits, the northern formal economy is as much the victim as the beneficiary of periodic massive investment. While a resource boom may bring a temporary surge in economic growth, true development does not take place. There will be little permanent increase in local opportunities, usable skills of permanent residents, or the quality of local services.

To the extent that local enterprises do become involved in a boom, they may actually be left worse off than before by the bust. Northern suppliers may be tempted to expand or diversify in response to a mine or oil-field development, only to find themselves over-capitalized and heavily in debt when the downturn comes. Similarly, permanent residents may take specialized training to earn higher wages, shortly to find their new skills unemployable. In the worst cases, Native people will have abandoned their subsistence activities during the boom, and wind up alienated from both mainstream society and their traditional culture after the bust.

Most important, without significant capital accumulation at the community or regional level, the threshold for sustainable diversification may never be reached (cf. the arctic ecosystem). The region is trapped in a "catch-22." Correctly perceived as dependent and unstable, the North cannot attract the sort of secondary investment that might help to stabilize it. It is hardly surprising that every northern boom so far has been followed by a bust.

All this allows us to restate our central premise concerning the structural diversity of the economy: as is the case for ecosystems, the potential diversity of an economic system, and the appropriate strategy for achieving it, is partly a **function** of the quantity, quality, and **periodicity** of investment. Most important, to the extent that a steady rate above a certain threshold would foster diversity, the historic pattern of investment in the North is precisely the wrong strategy for true economic development. Major changes in the policy environment for northern development are required or the formal economy is doomed to repeat its debilitating cycle indefinitely.

## Discussions and Conclusions: What Does it all Mean?

### *Structural Realities*

The following generalizations summarize the key structural properties of the northern economy that can be teased and elaborated from our comparative systems analysis:

1. Like the arctic ecosystem, the northern economy has two components: a transient or temporary component oriented to the southern mainstream, and a permanent or resident component. The former resides wholly in the formal (monetized) economic system, while the latter is

a mixture of formal and informal activity.

2. A transient phenomenon to date, the industrial sector of the North remains rooted in and sustained by the mainstream Canadian and global economies. In no way dependent on maintaining northern community and institutional integrity (and in some ways hampered by them), it is essentially free to pursue its primary motivation of profit and its first loyalty to non-resident shareholders. This places much industrial activity in the North in actual conflict with northern development priorities.

3. a) To the extent that world commodities markets continue to fluctuate, the North will continue to be subjected to boom/bust cycles of variable intensity and duration. Most of the capital required to fuel these cycles will necessarily come from external sources. The resources produced and profit accumulated will therefore continue to "leak" from the region.

b) To the extent that the policy framework for non-renewable resource development continues to be set by corporate executives and southern politicians, it will continue to reflect mainly external interests.

4. While profitability is important anywhere, economic efficiency is an inadequate criterion for northern community development. Here the emphasis must be on local objectives such as job creation, skills development, capital reinvestment, and improved community services. Since serious attention to these matters would erode profits against the interest of shareholders, it is unlikely to come voluntarily from the industrial sector.

5. Without local ownership, novel mechanisms for revenue sharing, or creative planning by territorial and local authorities, non-renewable resource development is unlikely to be any more effective as a tool for stable northern development in the future than in the past.

*Implications for Northern Policy*

We can now examine some of the policy implications for future northern development that flow from the foregoing analysis. Consistent with the original purpose, the discussion focuses on the special strengths and requirements of the North, and not on how the region can best be developed in "the national interest." In short, we are interested in development of a truly northern development policy.

It also concentrates on economic diversity and stability, and how they might be fostered in the permanent communities of the North. In the wake of the most recent hydrocarbon bust, and the continuing decline of the fur trade, both Yukon and the Northwest Terntory governments are engaged in a search for appropriate diversity-stability strategies.

1. The small, widely dispersed populations, small local markets, rigorous climate, difficult physical environment, and the extraordinary costs all this imposes on northern business, severely limit capital accumulation and reinvestment by locally-controlled elements of the formal economy. Future northern development policy should be designed to assist local private investment to overcome these structural realities and their inhibiting effect on diversification of the northern economy.

2. It is unlikely that a local business sector based on the southern model will achieve the critical mass required for spontaneous diversification or self-generated stability on its own in the foreseeable future. Similarly, resource megaprojects cannot be counted on as the primary vehicle for permanent development. Central governments and communities should therefore investigate hybrid models of economic development. A truly northern approach would include strategies to build on the internal diversity and other inherent strengths of the existing mixed economy.

3. Academics and governments generally accept that various kinds of diversity contribute to economic stability (e.g., the on-going "Yukon 2000" program; Boothroyd and Davis 1986). But far less emphasis is placed on the reciprocal role of stability in fostering diversity. Governments have a major responsibility to create a positive, stable environment for northern developmental

[1] Arguably, the hydrocarbon-based boom and bust of the 1970s and 1980s was more the result of an unstable policy cycle than of any economic imperatives! (See Note 1.)

An open and visible policy process, clear policy direction, dependable (long-term) incentive programs, equitable subsidy schemes, and fair and predictable regulatory procedures all contribute to the stable, low-risk environment most favorable to local entrepreneurs.

4. Sectoral and occupational specialization contributes to diversification in the mainstream formal economy. It is made possible by the accumulation of capital and is necessitated by the need to maintain competitive superiority (e.g., through new products and technologies). By contrast, specialization by permanent residents of the North in response to temporary opportunities may prove wasteful of human resources and training, and maladaptive to the individuals involved.

5. It follows that unless Native workers are prepared to follow their jobs out of their communities (even out of the North), they should be very circumspect about the sorts of skills they acquire. For northern development, specialized training should be confined to those sectors and occupations that are permanent components of the northern economy (i.e., steady and reliable sources of employment income), or to skills that are readily transferable among several sectors of the local formal economy.

6. Many northerners have a range of general skills that enable them to take part in an annual sequence of both formal and subsistence activities. This is a highly adaptive strategy for an uncertain economic environment. It provides a degree of personal income stability and security by diversifying the individual, rather than the economy. Governments should acknowledge and support this strategy through creative adaptation of specific northern training, employment, and economic support programs.

7. In contrast to the formal industrial sector, the village economy is by definition community-oriented, and based on such values as cooperation, mutualism, solidarity, and egalitarianism. "Much distribution is based on kinship, friendship, alliance, need or some convention other than purchasing power. Much exchange is based on generalized and balanced reciprocity, rather than on specific and quantified cash transactions" (Ross and Usher 1986:146). Governments should recognize this system as a socio-cultural adaptation to an unpredictable environment that both enhances individual security and ensures community coherence and survival.

8. Southern-based policy makers have tended to see the mainstream and traditional economies as mutually exclusive polar extremes. Hence policy to date (e.g., resource megaprojects) has been implicitly assimilationist and was expected to lead to the demise of the informal sector. This has not occurred for excellent reasons (see 6. and 7. above). In future, rather than treating the mixed economy as a barrier to progress, development policy for the North should protect and enhance it. Indeed, the special attributes of this pre-adapted social system should be studied so that key structural elements can be incorporated into the organization and operation of new social institutions and business enterprises.

## Specific Strategies for Northern Community development

### *The Federal and Territorial Roles*

During the hiatus between the current bust and the next boom, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) should, for the first time, commit itself to developing a coherent policy framework for northern economic development. This should have development for the North, rather than development in the North, as its principal objective. This process should frankly admit the failure of the "megaproject trickle-down" approach which, in any event, never had northern development per se as its primary goal. The new policy framework should reflect the development principles outlined above, and advance a new vision of the North oriented to increased self-reliance, and reduced dependency.

DIAND should involve the territorial governments as full partners in this process. This will ensure that overlapping activities at the two levels of government are coordinated and integrated for efficiency. Indeed, it may be sensible from the perspective of diversity and stability for the two governments to divide (and

thereby diversify) the economic development territory.

In addition, the territorial governments and northern communities should develop their own economic policies and strategies independent of national and corporate objectives. Of course, one element of this effort should focus on how to tap into externally controlled development projects in ways that will capture significant economic rents without jeopardizing the structure or stability of permanent community institutions. (Yukon Territorial Government's 'Yukon 2000" economic development program, initiated in June 1986, is a step in this direction.)

The goal of achieving a self-directed stable mode of socio-economic development in the North depends on four broad categories of action:

i ) Doing whatever can be done to smooth the profile of investment from all sources. This includes developing long-term, reliable sources of government support, and decoupling the permanent component of the northern economy from the destabilizing impacts of cyclical non-renewable *resource* development. Stabilizing the economic climate will encourage diversification.

ii) Identifying and supporting development of potentially viable new forms of economic activity. Diversifying the economy will foster stability.

iii) Identifying those permanent economic activities which might be able to capitalize on the boom phases of commodity cycles, without being seriously damaged by the downturn (a maximum benefits/minimum damage strategy).

iv) Nurturing those components of the northern economy and society that have proved their stability and resilience through several decades of sustained cultural and economic shock.

Acquiring ownership of or access to resources is also a critical objective for northerners, and is being approached through the claims process and gradual devolution of federal powers.

Some specific elements of such a "True North" policy, oriented to these objectives and drawing on our systems generalities, might cover the following ground:

**Employment Strategy:** Many northerners want permanent full-time jobs (i. e., stable employment). Most of the long-term employment in the North is in the public *sector* (for example, 4868 jobs in public administration and 6656 in the mixed private/public transportation and communication sector, for a total of 61% of all industrial employment in the NWT [GNWT Statistical Quarterly, September 19841), yet many of these positions are filled by relatively transient workers from the South. Systematic efforts should therefore be made to ensure that permanent jobs are filled by qualified permanent residents.[1]

Training **Strategy:** Clearly, the emphasis in northern job-training should be on providing skills to permanent residents for those kinds of employment that are a permanent component of the northern economy. Conversely, it makes little sense to provide northerners with special training in occupations for which there is only irregular or temporary employment.

Business Education Programs: Many Native and other northerners want instruction in setting up and managing small businesses. Small business is the major generator of new employment, so the identification and training of northern entrepreneurs is an essential component of any stability-oriented northern development policy. However, serious thought must be given to the nature and emphasis of instructional programs and course design in this area. For example, instruction in business management should cover the range of

[1] This most obvious step to socio-economic stability is not now commonplace. For example, the recently-implemented Northern Land Use Planning Program has created 20-25 new positions at the federal and territorial levels in the North since 1985, many of which have been filled by newly arrived southerners, and none by Natives. This program was six years in development, which provide d adequate time to identify and educate suitable northern candidates for many of these positions. Only now that the central bureaucracy is in place and planning is underway is attention being paid to minimal training for a few community-based planners for the program's first major exercise (Lancaster Sound Region).

ownership, organization, and administrative patterns most compatible with the northern business climate and existing community and cultural institutions. This includes both private and cooperative forms of free enterprise.

The Quality of **Investment:** The nature of investment and the character of the recipient community interact to determine the ultimate effect on community economic stability. Presently, particularly in the NWT, there seems to be much interest in the virtues of the individual capitalist, competitive free enterprise mode of small business development. This may be an important mode of development in some communities. However, northerners should also be aware of the potential social disruption and economic waste of, for example, competition among similar enterprises in small communities.

The Nature of Community Enterprise: In a similar vein, government development agencies should be sensitive to community structure and needs in their encouragement of local enterprise. What is appropriate to the highly competitive, specialized mainstream economy may not work in the simpler communities of the North. Alternative forms of commercial enterprise such as community-based worker and consumer co-ops may be more compatible with income stability and other social objectives particularly in Native communities. Government policy should therefore support all potentially viable forms of business investment in the North, thereby contributing to diversity of opportunity and life-style.

Economic Development Agreements: The federal and territorial agencies responsible for negotiating and administering economic development agreements should develop and publicize "True North" criteria for project funding. Rather than merely meeting southern business criteria, successful applicants for government support should be able to demonstrate how the proposed development will contribute to northern economic diversity and stability.

Plugging the Leaks: Government research capacity (e.g., local input/output studies) should be mobilized to assist northern businessmen and communities to identify flows of goods and services that are mainly imported from the South but could be produced competitively in the North. Simple steps such as helping suppliers and buyers to be aware of each other, and publishing government purchasing data for the information of northern businesses, will also assist in local networking, reduced leakage, and local capital accumulation.

**Diversifiable** Sectors: Certain sectors of the northern economy may be particularly responsive to diversification efforts. Senior government agencies should cooperate to identify those economic activities that produce the most "spin-offs" within the economy through their linkages (purchases and sales) to other sectors. Greater stability is more likely to result from support and expansion of these strongly-linked sectors than from weakly-linked ones.

Resilient Enterprises: Certain businesses with diverse markets may be able to tap into non-renewable resource projects with minimal risk of failure during a downturn. Enterprises in this category should be identified and supported preferentially to those with more dependent linkages to the heavy industrial sector.

An Expanded Role for Funded Programs: Many regularly-funded government programs represent missed opportunities for development. Unlike megaproject investment, these are relatively constant and reliable capital flows into northern communities. Every opportunity must be developed to allow communities to capture the benefits of this public investment. The best results will be achieved when planning and administrative arrangements for program delivery are designed to support multiple objectives, and responsibility for key elements of program implementation is held by community-based institutions.

Housing as Example: In addition to providing more and better housing to northern residents, the role of housing programs in the social and economic development of recipient communities can be greatly enhanced. "Housing" has many characteristics that enable it to contribute significantly to community social and economic well-being: compared to resource investment, the flow of housing program dollars at both the federal and territorial government

levels has been steady and reliable in recent years; the implementation of locally-controlled housing programs could be a valuable training ground for local administrators; housing construction provides a variety of semi-skilled and skilled jobs, as well as experience and on-the-job training that can be applied in other types of construction as the opportunities arise; construction in the North is part-time or seasonal activity of the kind desired by many Native northerners (it provides both the cash and time necessary for pursuit of subsistence activities); local purchase of building materials, and wages locally spent would support existing businesses and therefore have a multiplier effect in the community economy.

Financial Institutions: Business development in the North is impeded by the lack of local financial institutions. Senior governments should cooperate in the necessary steps to facilitate the establishment of a northern financial sector. This in itself would represent a diversification of the economy, expand opportunities and choice for depositors and borrowers, and possibly lead to greater reinvestment and capital accumulation in the local economy. With these benefits in mind, the September 1986 Baffin Regional Economic Development Conference recommended that the appropriate government agencies consider preparing the enabling legislation necessary to permit the operation of community-level financial operations (e.g., local credit unions).

Financial Support for the Village Economy: For many communities, hunting, fishing, trapping and the activities and relationships maintained through these traditional pursuits are the socio-economic mainstay. As noted, this informal sector is seriously threatened by the downturn in the northern cash economy, loss of markets and the anti-harvesting lobby. Governments have found it easy to provide subsidy support in the billions of dollars for the petroleum and mineral sectors which have not provided anything like the economic return and stability of the informal sector to northern communities. They should now develop ways of extending financial assistance to the traditional economy to enable it to maintain or expand productivity.

**and the Small Business Sector:** Similarly, support programs (subsidies, grants, tax incentives and low-cost loans) should be available to community co-ops and other businesses that are experiencing financial difficulty to prevent the material waste and human tragedy of blameless failure, and to preserve existing jobs and economic diversity. The total costs of all such support programs would be trivial compared to the subsidies that have been available to the industrial sector, but the payoff in jobs and community health vastly greater. This approach is also likely to be much more efficient and cost effective than permitting widespread collapse of present economic activity, considering the likely welfare, public health and social costs that would follow.

**Access to Renewable Resources:** Renewable resources are essential to the village economy. With the decline of the fur industry, expanded fisheries represent a potentially viable alternative form of subsistence and commercial economic activity. Unfortunately, the federal Fisheries Act does not anticipate development of an indigenous northern commercial fishery, and considers eastern arctic and Hudson Bay waters as an extension of the "traditional" Atlantic fishery. Ottawa should proceed as quickly as possible to coordinate development of an Arctic Ocean Policy including full access by northern residents to northern fish stocks for subsistence and commercial purposes. The GNWT should recognize this as a priority and press for timely negotiations. In the meantime, the federal government should move now to implement the TFN Wildlife Agreement, in order to minimize the inevitable conflicts that would occur with the extension of the Atlantic fishery.

*The Community and Individual Levels*

Local organizations and ordinary people also have a major role to play in the stabilization and development of their own communities. Indeed, with the restructuring of the global and national economies, there has been renewed interest in the potential of locally-based development initiatives in recent years.

The general objective of community-based development is to increase local competence and self-confidence and to decrease community dependence on central governments and external private corporations. Any community group that comes together to conceive and implement its own project, whether for profit or to enhance some aspect of the quality of community life, can be said to be engaged in community development.

The leadership and interested residents of northern communities should consider implementing a community-based development approach to local socio-economic stability, building on the experiences of other people from direct contact and readily available case studies.[1] Some of the possible components are:

Community Development Planning: Some kind of community-oriented planning process is essential for successful community development. A self-conscious planning process forces the community to identify its resources and weaknesses, articulate its needs and objectives, order its development priorities, and investigate alternative means to achieve community ends.

In addition, an open development planning process can also serve a valuable social learning function. It will: help participants understand the problems confronting them; help develop a sense of community unity and purpose; reinforce community traditions and values; identify community leaders and entrepreneurs who will guide the development process; assist participants in deciding what mode of development best serves their individual and community interests; and provide a forum for sharing development-related knowledge and opportunities.

The ease of implementation and potential for success of community-based development can be greatly enhanced if participants take adequate time for planning, move cautiously to implementation, and start with small, manageable projects. In addition, experience has shown that successful community development efforts share the following common principles and characteristics:

1. The local community must have, or assume, the authority to control its own planning process. This ensures the direct relevance of perceived needs, aspirations, planning objectives, administrative arrangements and decision-making processes.

2. Community planning and development requires sufficient financial resources and technical expertise, as well as appropriate administrative arrangements to achieve stated objectives.

3. The community development planning exercise should begin with an assessment of the current situation. What are the community's perceived needs and aspirations? What expertise, capital and other resources are available both within the community and from external sources? What business opportunities are available and how might they best be exploited (e.g., individual or community-owned enterprise)? How well prepared is the local political leadership to oversee the planning and implementation processes? This information is essential for setting realistic planning objectives and shaping the development plan.

4. When essential expertise for planning or specific development activities is not available in the community, it should be acquired without hesitation from outside. However, this expertise should be under community control and a sub-objective of planning should be to train local people to acquire the necessary expertise whenever appropriate. (For some kinds of expertise, this training element can be built into consultants' contracts as part of the service provided.)

5. Senior levels of government should facilitate locally-based planning and development whenever feasible through creative funding, technical support, legal counseling, devolution of program responsibilities and resources, the removal of unnecessary bureaucratic impediments, etc. (See also the numerous policy options outlined in previous sections). Community development works best when the "bottom-up" initiative and participation by local

[1] See Sinclair (1985) and Wismer and Pen (1981) for an elaboration of community economic development and documentation of case studies.

groups is complemented by "top-down" decentralization.

6. Community development planning should be integrated and comprehensive. While it may have to build slowly, the scope of development activity should eventually incorporate a full range of social and cultural elements, as well as economic objectives. For example, such programs as alcohol and drug rehabilitation, family counseling services, and day-care for young children, may be corequisites for successful community-based economic development.

Recognizing the Contribution of the Volunteer **Sector:** Many legitimate community planning and development activities can involve a high **level** of volunteer labour. Participants are not paid money for their efforts, but work for the collective well-being of their community and share in the resultant improvement in services and community life. Although unaccounted for in the market-place or official statistics, it is important **to** recognize that such unpaid work has real economic value.

Native northerners, coming from a tradition of cooperative domestic production, may be culturally pre-adapted to understanding and participating in more formal community-based economic activities based in part on unpaid work. This can be a significant advantage for northern community development, particularly at early stages of implementation of a business or other development activity. This and similar cultural adaptations should be reflected in development policy and planning.

Planning and Managing New Enterprise: As implied above, a major component of community development planning is the identification and exploitation of new business opportunities. Starting a business requires the same sort of care and deliberation as the overall development planning process itself. For example, the enterprise must be of manageable size within the limits of the expertise and resources available to the individual entrepreneur or community in the case of cooperative businesses. (Later expansion or diversification to enhance stability should be based on cumulative experience and demonstrable success.) Where a product or service is involved the decision to proceed should be based on a market survey and the ability to provide a quality product in the target market at competitive prices.

Ideally, the business should be used for both employment and training purposes thereby ensuring management continuity and enhancing the level of community skills. However, the enterprise will usually have to operate by sound business principles and with an eye **to** the bottom line. In this respect, it is important at the outset **to** decide on the priorities among the economic, social, and cultural objectives of the enterprise, particularly in the case of community-owned businesses. Success of development planning and individual enterprises depends on community understanding and support for development goals.

**Strengthening Local and Regional Markets: With** the assistance of senior **governments** in conducting simple **input/output** studies, communities should identify their sources of supply and markets with a view toward displacing imports and expanding local business. In cases of small scattered communities, it might be necessary to develop a regional network to gain adequate economies of scale on **a** regional basis.

Evaluating Alternate Forms of Development: Different forms of enterprise have vastly different impacts on the form of community economic activity and local tradition. A major consideration is whether a potential new business should be left to individual enterprise or operated as cooperative or community-owned venture. Communities should therefore evaluate each new proposal carefully in terms of its contribution to community self-reliance and **socio-economic** stability, and assess the relative merits of alternative approaches before supporting any particular project or mode of development.

From the community perspective, some of the important questions in evaluating a new enterprise are as follows: Does the new development reflect individual or community values? Does it provide meaningful employment, paid or voluntary, to local people? To what

extent will it support or undermine the informal economy that is the economic backbone of many northern communities? Will it strengthen or weaken cultural traditions that have proved essential to social life in the uncertain environment of the North? Has it the potential for eventual independence from subsidies and other forms of government support? In the case of community-owned enterprise, should the proceeds of profitable operations be available to support marginal ones in order to preserve the jobs, experience, and services offered by the latter?

Culture as Development Template: Northern Native "communities" have survived for hundreds of years in one of the world's most uncertain environments because of a highly adaptive, cooperative, subsistence way of life. It is therefore ironic that as many communities in the capitalist industrial Western world rediscover the virtues of cooperative modes of production and consumption as a defense against growing economic uncertainty, many Native northerners, with the encouragement of government, are turning to the competitive free enterprise model.

Whether this is wisdom or folly may depend on the particular enterprise or situation, but in no case should it be done lightly. For example, would commercialization of the hunt lead to over-commitment of stocks to external markets, and jeopardize the local exchange economy and those who depend upon it for food? Northerners should insist that business training programs and government development agencies explore fully both the economic and stability merits of alternative development models. Native communities should consider what elements of their traditional way-of-life might be incorporated into a truly northern model for the ownership, management, and organization of new enterprise.

## A Final Word: Can the North Light the Way?

Even this brief discussion shows there are myriad actions that might contribute to northern community stability, but stable development is by no means assured under any particular set of development strategies. What does seem clear, however, is that different approaches have vastly different implications for the diversity, stability, equity, social effectiveness, and productivity of the northern economy. For this reason alone it would be irresponsible to let the future merely unfold through random ad *hocery*. But there is a more important reason for Canadians, and particularly resident northerners, to want to control the shape of northern development. With the restructuring of the global economy, Canada as a whole finds itself increasingly vulnerable to permanently declining commodities markets and the vagaries of international capital flows, and excessively exposed to the erratic trade policies of our largest customer, the United States. Ottawa's main response is to attempt to negotiate a trade deal with the US that may actually result in further simplification of the national economy and hence increased instability in the face of market fluctuations. Therefore, in the context of increasing uncertainty in the South, Canada's North represents a singular opportunity to experiment with new or innovative hybrid forms of social and economic organization in response to a common affliction. It is at least conceivable that the solutions found by northerners to their dependency problem will provide guidance to southerners, should we ever get serious about solving our own.

## References


Abele, F. and E. Dosman
1981 Interdepartmental coordination and northern development. Canadian Public Administration 24:3:428-451.

Boothroyd, P. and H. C. Davis
1986 Yukon Diversification: Benefits and Possibilities. Draft Discussion Paper prepared for the Yukon Economic Development Strategy Fall Conference. Vancouver: Conscribe Enterprises.

Canada
1980 The National Energy Program. Ottawa: Department of Energy, Mines and Resources (Supply and Services Canada).

1981 Economic Development for Canada in the 1980s. Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada.

Chretien, Hon. J., Minister, DIAND
1972 Canada's North: 1970-1980. Ottawa: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Connell, J.
1978 Diversity in tropical rain forests and coral reefs. Science 199:1302-1310.
1979 Tropical rain forests and coral reefs as open non-equilibrium systems. *In* Population Dynamics, (2nd cd), R. Anderson et al., eds. Blackwell Scientific.

Dacks, G.
1981 A Choice of Futures: Politics in the Canadian North. Toronto: Methuen.

DIAND
1880 Indian Conditions: A Survey. Ottawa: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Dosman, E.
1975 The National Interest. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

Goldsmith, E.
1978 Complexity and stability in the real world. The Ecologist Quarterly 4:304-316.

Helling, C.S.
1973 Resilience and stability of ecological systems. Annual Review of Ecology and Systematic, 4:1-23. Palo Alto: Annual Reviews, Inc.
1978 Myths of ecological stability: resilience and the problem of failure. *In* Studies on Crisis Management. C. Smart and W. Stansbury, eds. Pp. 97-109. Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy.

Lewin, R.
1987 Life thrives under breaking ocean waves. Science 235:1465-1466.

May, R.
1975 Stability in ecosystems: some comments. *In* Unifying Concepts in Ecology. W. van Dobben and R. Lowe-McConnell, eds. Report of the plenary sessions of the first International Congress of Ecology. The Hague: W. Junk B.V.

NWT
1885 Final Report of the Special Committee on Housing. Yellowknife: Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories.

Odum, E.
1875 Diversity as a function of energy flow. *In* Unifying Concepts in Ecology. W. van Dobben and R. Lowe-McConnell, eds. Report of the plenary sessions of the first International Congress of Ecology. The Hague: W. Junk B.V.

Orions, G.
1975 Diversity, stability and maturity in natural ecosystems. *In* Unifying Concepts in Ecology. W. van Dobben and R. Lowe-McConnell, eds. Report of the plenary sessions of the first International Congress of Ecology. The Hague: W. Junk B.V.

Ricklefs, R.
1976 The Economy of Nature. Portland (Oregon): Chiron Press.
1987 Community diversity: relative roles of local and regional processes. Science 235:167-171.

Rees, W.
1978 Development and planning north of 60°: past and future. Northern Transitions, Vol. II. Pp. 42-62. Ottawa: Canadian Arctic Resources Committee.

1982 Planning on our arctic frontier: setting the stage. Plan Canada 21:4:107-116.

Ross, D. and P. Usher.
1986 From the Roots Up: Economic Development as if Community Mattered. Croton-on-Hudson, N. Y.: The Bootstrap Press.

Sinclair, W.F. (cd.)
1985 Native Self-Reliance Through Resource Development. Proceedings of an international conference: Toward Native Self-Reliance, Renewal, and Development. Vancouver: Office of Native Claims, Dept. of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Stabler, J. and M. Olfert
1980 Gaslight follies: the political economy of the western arctic, Canadian Public Policy, 6:2:374-388.

Trudeau, Hon. P., Prime Minister of Canada
1969 House of Commons Debates, 15 May 1969. PP. 8720-21.

Whittaker, R.
1975 The design and stability of plant communities. *In* Unifying Concepts in Ecology. W. van Dobben and R. Lowe-McConnell, eds. Report of the plenary sessions of the first International Congress of Ecology. The Hague: W. Junk B.V.

Whittington, M.
1986 Native economic development corporations: political and economic change in Canada's North. CARC Policy Paper #4. Ottawa: Canadian Arctic Resources Committee.

Wismer, S. and D. Pen
1981 Community Profit: Community-Based Economic Development in Canada. Toronto: Is Five Press.

*Acknowledgements*

The background work for this paper was done while the author was the grateful recipient of a Dormer Canadian Foundation Grant on the policy and planning implications of northern megaprojects and, in part, while he enjoyed a Study Leave Fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

# Patterns of Transformations and Local Self-determination: Ethnopower and the Larger Society in the North: The Sami Case

Tom G. Svensson
Ethnographic Museum
University of Oslo

## Introductory statement

Native peoples in the North are presently facing severe pressure from the outside, the cultural implication of which is difficult to appraise. Over the years indigenous people have experienced a general process of transformation from a state of relative autonomy, both in cultural and political terms, to that of encapsulation. Closer ties to the larger society are thus established, resulting in de-autonomization of the ethnic group. The emerging ethnic minority situation has certain basic features in common, although its specific form may vary from case to case. Such features are 1) a low degree of *self-determination, i.e.* decision-making power in their own affairs, and 2) no, or very poorly developed, *negotiation power* vis-a-vis the larger society, particularly the Nation-State. Local community development is part of the adaptation to this new ecology, encompassing both environmental conditions and social circumstances, in which *ethno-political mobilization* appears as the primary factor. Due to an extensive land use pattern, native land is most vulnerable to encroachments by industrial exploiters. For this reason firm *rights to land and water* are crucial to any indigenous ethnic minority group in the arctic and subarctic region. The general process of change outlined above has recently been noticed by several anthropologists referring directly to the situation in the North. (See, for instance, Paine 1984, Dyck 1985, Brøsted et al. 1985.) Concerning the problem of aboriginal rights, as well as the issue of land rights and its diverse implications referring to two specific cases in boreal North America, Michael Asch and Thomas Berger have contributed with two substantial case studies (Asch 1984 and Berger . 1985) .

The following paper focuses on the same problems as do the works by the aforementioned scholars. Starting from a set of significant transformations, I hope to demonstrate how the Sami in northern Fenno-Scandia are trying to cope with their ethnic minority situation in order to maintain viability despite ever increasing adversities. The transformations point to the economic and political aspect of solving problems, as well as re-modelling the ecological adaptation. Furthermore, they connect to the strengthening of culture competence and ethnopolitics.

Basically the Sami are found in the northern parts of Finland, Norway and Sweden. The total population is currently estimated to be close to 60,000, but there is no accurate census available. Norway has by far the largest number, about 35,000. Sweden contains 17,000, Finland roughly 4,000, and a meager 2,000 live on the Kola peninsula in the USSR. Only a small part of the Sami population, about 7,000, are

reindeer pastoralists: far more are sedentary, obtaining their main means of livelihood from small-scale farming and inshore or lake fishing. In addition to pursuing these traditional forms of local economy, several Sámi have chosen various non-Sámi occupations, living in major towns in the North or in large cities or towns in the South. The following paper tries to uncover basic features of social and culture-political change related to the Sámi primary group, that is, those still carrying on Sámi-specific ways of production, regardless of the nation to which they belong. For obvious reasons the Sámi in the Soviet Union are omitted in this context.

## Transformations

A. In order to elucidate change on the community level, it is appropriate to start examining the *local community,* emphasizing the contrast between it and semi-urban settlements. Among the Sámi, and especially those engaged in reindeer pastoralism, the only genuine social unit of any size is the *sii'da.* Above all this group is a production unit, characterized by collaboration and individual ownership of reindeer. It is formed by diverse principles for recruitment, but its nucleus is usually made up of close kin, either of a sibling group or of those considered equivalent to siblings, for example, brothers-in-law or first cousins. Its size may vary according to seasonal changes; this bilateral grouping is dynamic and based on a regular oscillation between fusion and fission and also on shifting personnel. (For a more detailed and thorough account of the concept of *sii'da see* in particular Pehrson 1957, Whitaker 1955, and Svensson 1976:72-77.)

The *sii'da* unit can be traced back to the era when the economy of most Sámi was founded on hunting and trapping. When the Sámi became more specialized in their ecological adaptation, starting from about 1500, the *sii'da* remained as the basic social unit. Its local autonomy was substantial up until about the 1880s. Certainly the Sámi had become more and more subject to external pressure long before that time, a process of encapsulation which culminated in the 19th century, but it was not until a state-run reindeer herding administration was established that the Sámi lost a great deal of their local autonomy. The *sii'da* was then reduced to being a practical solution for making reindeer herding effective and stripped of any real influence. It was replaced by a new institution, a kind of Sámi community called *lappby,* constructed and instituted by the state in connection with a special Reindeer Pasture Law, offering rules and regulations concerning Sámi reindeer herding.

This new community was basically an administrative unit related to reindeer herding. As a result of legislation the Sámi population was formally divided into two distinct categories, a) reindeer pastoralist Sámi and b) non-reindeer Sámi. Since then only the former category has been entitled to particular rights *qua* Sámi, as specified below. The main reason for introducing this community, with rights of membership restricted to those Sámi still claiming reindeer herding rights, was in part to make reindeer herding more ordered and regulated, in part to facilitate the administration of the Sámi minority and its reindeer herding activities which are based on a highly extensive land use pattern.

In a sociological sense the Sámi community is an enlargement of the *sii'da.* Diverse co-operative efforts in reindeer herding and management and co-habitation form the cement on which locally defined belongingness is based, and its leadership is elected in a more formal way compared to the traditional *sii 'da* organization. (For further details see Svensson 1976.) By means of such de-autonomization, the Sámi came directly under non-Sámi jurisdiction, although they, as a special group of people with a particular occupation, were granted certain exclusive rights, such as monopoly rights to herding reindeer and favorable rights to hunting and fishing on their reindeer pasture land.

The *lappby* is a larger unit than the *sii'da,* consisting of several *siidat,* varying from 3 - 10. The Sami ethnic minority situation has been greatly influenced by a state of powerlessness in all cases of conflict of interests, where decision-making is controlled by officials of the regional administration. In this sense the Sami

experienced a high degree of tutelage, legally enforced by the larger society through its regional and national reindeer administration (cf. Paine 1977). For many years the Sámi quietly accepted this state of affairs, since there was a protective element built into the structure, but as the number and extent of industrial developments in Sámi core areas increased considerably, the Sámi judged the Sámi community in its original form to be insufficient for approaching these new problems concerning conflict about resource utilization, and they began to work towards an organizational change. After years of trying in vain, the Sámi as a united force finally succeeded in having the government conduct an inquiry leading to a revision of the entire structure of the reindeer herding administration, including the authority of the Sami community. In 1971 a new Reindeer Husbandry Law, RNL, was passed, which can be viewed as a step towards limited re-autonomization on the local level (RNL 1971). For the first time the Sámi community is now entitled to have its own meetings concerning all local affairs without active interference on the part of the authorities, also those having an impact on external administrative matters. This is a noticeable improvement, especially as it is accompanied by certain Sámi participation in decision making at both the regional and national levels of the reindeer administration.

The range of influence, however, is limited to issues connected to the reindeer economy and herding concerns, together with a restricted authority in questions of land use planning. The latter must be strengthened considerably by acquiring improved land rights, something the Sámi have been actively trying to achieve for a good many years now. As to other areas of local political concerns, such as in the field of education and health, the Sámi community has no legislative power. It should also be emphasized that the decisions reached by the Sámi community in the field of land use planning can be overruled by the central and regional authorities, if this is deemed necessary with regard to broader state-wide interests. Thus, any power the Sami community may have, apart from the field of reindeer industry, is most conditional indeed.

The transformation from the tiny *sii'da* to a rather non-influential Sámi community and finally to a rehabilitated local community with certain powers should be regarded as quite necessary when it comes to coping with new contextual conditions from a political point of view.

B. In approaching these new conditions from an economic point of view, the Sámi community may not suffice; in this case we have to look to semi-urban settlements of some kind. Such centres have a long history of evolution. As the state extended its control over territories earlier used primarily by the Sámi, *regional centers* of a certain size began to grow up in Swedish Lapland in the early 17th century, places like Jokkmokk, Gällivare, and Jukkasjärvi. In the wake of the encapsulation of the Sámi population these centers were traditional meeting places, serving institutional needs of the people in the fields of religion, economy and administration. In each center a church was erected to emphasize the importance of missionary activity related to the Lutheran state church, and local courts were established to resolve judicial matters as well as to be proper institutions from which official royal proclamations regarding the Sámi were decreed. This new community was also the market place where locally produced commodities, in particular meat and hides from the reindeer, were traded for diverse consumption goods, such as flour, sugar, salt and coffee brought in from the outside. In very concrete terms the court and the church functioned as the extended arm of the state, accelerating the process of encapsulation. In the Sámi traditional ecological adaption, these new local communities were only visited temporarily at irregular intervals, although there were certain recurring holidays during the year cycle where large gatherings took place.

These regional centers were gradually transformed into semi-urban settlements, following the industrial revolution and the growing interest in developing non-renewable resources also in the marginal regions of Lapland, i.e., in the period 1870-1880. It was especially the rich ore deposits, in particular

iron, that generated this change. To this new kind of resource development was later added hydro-electric power and industrial forestry. Over time industrial developments circumscribed the ecological niche of the Sámi; consequently, fewer people were able to subsist from their traditional means of livelihood. The Sámi communities began to suffer from compelled depopulation. A number of those living in a Sámi community were forced to break out and find other means of making a living. The new mining towns Kiruna, in Jukkasjärvi parish, and Gällivare absorbed many of the Sámi trying out alternative career forms. Due to its favorable location where two large rivers flow together, Jokkmokk became the most important place for receiving superfluous reindeer herding Sámi for the labor force which was constructing hydro-power dams.

The new semi-urban settlements with their rapidly growing populations became poly-ethnic, in which the Sámi appeared as a noticeable minority. In coping with new conditions the settlements offered new opportunities to the Sámi from an economic point of view. First they provided necessary social services in the fields of health and education for all citizens; second they offered differentiated spare time activities. Greater options when it comes to shopping, as well as a versatile labor market for cash income are other advantages connected to these newly transformed communities.

As the Sámi modified their reindeer pastoralism to a higher degree of product specialization, changing to a semi-nomadic way of life, these semi-urban settlements became attractive locations for their permanent dwellings. For instance, a large group of the local reindeer herding families are now living in Jokkmokk and Gällivare, a most suitable transformation as these communities are found in the middle of the winter pasture area. The active herders can easily commute back and forth from required herding activities, whereas living in such regional centers makes it feasible for other members of the family, e.g., wife and grown-up daughters, to engage in full or part-time jobs.

This process of change began on a small scale in the 1920s and 1930s but developed at full range first in the 1960s, and in many areas it has now become a common pattern of habitation.

C. *Reindeer pastoralism*, as well as *wildlife harvesting*, can be distinguished as separate transformations closely connected to ecology. Formerly reindeer pastoralism was characterized by intensive herding, i.e. watching the herd day and night, leading to a fairly high degree of domestication. The reindeer were then multi-purpose animals used for meat and for production, for milking, to make dairy products, especially cheese, for transportation in both winter and summer, quite necessary during the era of complete nomadism, and finally for the provision of raw materials for various craftswork and fur clothings. All capable members of a household unit participated intensively in the various herding activities.

Technological change, bringing about a form of selective mechanization of reindeer herding, initiated the process towards semi-nomadism. A higher degree of sedentanzation, although necessary mobility during seasonal variations is maintained, and a very definite specialization of meat production for cash, are the immediate results of modifying reindeer pastoralism as a way of life to meet new demands. An optimal division of labour mainly between the sexes, but also among brothers, completes this attempt at making reindeer pastoralism viable even in modem times. This change took place in the years following World War II.

Hunting, trapping and fishing from lakes and rivers have always been decisive factors in the Sámi economy. With technological change in reindeer herding, more time may be devoted to the utilization of wildlife resources. The introduction of new technology also in fishing, such as boat engines and airplane transport of large catches of fresh fish, creates new opportunities for the reindeer pastoralists. Before this change only salted or cured fish could be sold on the market, with limited earnings in return, whereas now the Sami are able to sell fresh fish in large quantities gaining considerably more income. Trapping ptarmigan and other fowl as

well as hunting moose are also activities which have become far more efficient as a result of new technological aids, both in making the hunting grounds accessible and in transporting the wildlife harvest to the market.

Thus, in reindeer pastoralism, as well as in wildlife harvesting, we can observe a general process of economic development, converting true subsistence into a kind of subsistence economy with a fairly large cash element built into it. It should be remembered, however, that an amount of cash is mandatory in upholding viable subsistence, i.e., an economy on which this particular ethnic group is based.

D. Two institutional alterations have a more indirect bearing on ecology, but both contribute in the reinforcement of cultural viability. The institutions consist of the elaboration of *culture competence* and ethnopolitical mobilization. In the field of education great changes have taken place, especially in the post World War II era. The educational system evolved is far more complex and well differentiated than the old, rather mediocre system and offers more real choices to the individual Sámi. Previously, local training in reindeer herding and management, giving substantial insight into such factors as environmental conditions and climatic variations, was combined with a very limited schooling, which placed greatest emphasis on religion in the spirit of missionary movements, eventually aiming at de-ethnicization. Schooling lacked most Sámi-specific subjects, including the Sámi language, and the assimilative effect, leading to Norwegianization and Swedenization, was apparent. Following upon Sami initiatives emanating from the organized Sámi, the Sámi schools were improved considerably in the 1960s. The Sami primary schools were elevated to a level comparable to primary schools in general with the addition of some Sámi-specific subjects. To this new organization of Sámi schools, renamed from the old, somewhat derogatory designation, "nomad schools," was added a junior high school focusing on subjects relevant for improving culture competence. These subjects include theoretical as well as practical training in reindeer herding and management, and, in addition, the Sámi language and diverse Sámi crafts. To meet the needs of Sámi youth and adults who suffered severely from the deficient standard of the old "nomad school," a Sámi folk high school was founded in Jokkmokk in the early 1940s. This boarding school has served as an important culture center, gathering young aspiring Sámi from all over Sámi land. In this school the significant revival of Sámi arts and crafts occurred, and one of its main objectives has always been to offer appropriate training in the various traditional Sámi crafts, both from a practical and theoretical, i.e., culture historical, point of view. The Sámi most skilled in crafts work are continuously engaged to give these courses. In this manner a sense of quality, as well as a feeling for traditional values, is secured and also transferred to ever wider circles of Sámi. Advanced courses in the Sámi language, in Sámi culture history and in resource management related to the traditional Sámi environment, are other subjects which give this folk high school its special profile. Training in organizational work and general courses in social science are supplements in furthering culture competence which belong to the body of knowledge common in any school of this type. Such blending of available courses and intellectual training becomes indispensable to handling the ethnic minority situation in the most successful way. To increase the potential force of Sámi relevant schools, a Sámi teachers' training college located in Alta, northern Norway, has also been established recently. Gradually the Sami will be able to exert greater control as to level and contents of the Sámi schools, a crucial issue from a minority political point of view.

A reasonably well educated and articulate elite of Sami was mainly responsible for this push for improvement regarding both standard and relevance of education. Many grassroot Sami took part in the process as well, as the problem of adequate education was a deep concern for all Sámi. In order to break the ice and penetrate the firm resistance vis-a-vis appropriate schooling for the Sámi, however, a sufficient number of skilled Sámi belonging to

the leading stratum was indispensable: all initiatives leading to favorable changes had to be taken by the Sámi themselves.

The great weight the Sámi have laid on teaching and research regarding their own language is reflected in the desire for a chair in Sámi language and culture connected to the University of Umeå. This well-founded demand was finally met in the early 1970s, and since then young Sámi have better opportunities to add Sámi language to their university degrees; they can also enter academic careers in Sámi linguistics. The first PhD by a Sámi at this department was granted in 1984. Previously, training in Sámi linguistics was only offered in more comprehensive departments in the main universities in the South, such as Uppsala, Oslo and Helsinki. This new specialization in universities located in the North represents a step away from an emphasis on comparative finno-ugric or even ural-altaic languages. Lately the University of Tromsø has followed this model, with a separate institute primarily manned by Sámi personnel and having a student body mainly consisting of Sámi. One should also notice that two Sámi scholars have been appointed to professorships in 1986, one in the History of Religion at University of Stockholm and one in Sámi Linguistics at University of Oslo. This development means a great deal in strengthening Sámi self respect, and the Sami have paid great attention to this advance in the academic arena.

To produce adequate support for education, such as text books, school materials on all levels, and to promote research relevant for Sámi interests, a special Nordic Sámi Institute, *Sámi Instituhtta*, was founded in 1973. This institute receives financial support from the five member nations of the Nordic Council, and it is manned entirely by academically trained Sámi personnel. Its present director holds the above mentioned PhD in Sami linguistics from Umeå University, a female Sami from Finland. The institute points out the most urgent problems which should be investigated to serve Sami interests in general; furthermore, it appoints the research personnel most opportune and qualified for each separate project. So far the greatest stress has been laid on Sámi legal history and Sámi history in a broad sense, and from such research activities improved means of education are emerging. The research conducted at the Nordic Sámi Institute is basically action oriented; in addition to the field of education it also has an impact on Sámi political argumentation in broad sectors of life.

E. In the process towards *ethnopolitical mobilization* social groupings in a more ordered form become apparent. This mobilization started with the forming of local Sámi associations on a small scale, partly as a reaction to de-autonomization caused by the new legal framework of the late 1800s and the firm grip of tutelage directed towards the Sámi, partly as a reflection of increasing cultural awareness among the Sámi. These associations were formed in spite of pronounced opposition by the authorities and played a limited political role until the Sámi succeeded in founding a nation-wide organization in 1950, the Swedish Sámi Union (SSR). The latter is based on collective membership, which consists of all local Sámi communities and Sámi associations. Another national organization, *SameAtnam*, with individual membership and with an action program restricted to cultural political matters, came at about the same time. To create a united front on the inter-Nordic level, the Nordic Sámi Council was formed in 1956, with conferences occurring every third year to which the two former organizations send delegates. The Sámi in Finland and Norway have developed similar patterns for engaging in minority politics in an organized form.

Furthermore, there is a clear relationship between local-level politics and the politics of these nation-wide organizations including the Nordic Sámi Council: those elected to the higher echelons emerge from local communities and associations and are urged to and have the capacity to promote local community interests. In this manner local concerns and crucial issues of certain magnitude are channeled to higher and more influential organs of Sámi politics. In other words, specific local matters, as well as politics of a more general nature

affecting the majority of Sámi, form the platform from which these nation-wide political bodies act.[1]

Many important decisions have been reached over the years concerning the status and well-being of the Sámi in the respective Nordic nation-states. A predominant feature has been a common Sámi political program functioning as an ideological guiding line for actions, which was first worked out in 1971, a revised version of which was finally adopted in 1982. To strengthen cultural awareness and a sense of community among the Sámi, certain symbols of their own must be created. After a few years of discussing various proposals, a Sámi flag was formally adopted by the Nordic Sámi Council during its last conference in July 1986. It consists of the four colors appearing in most traditional Sámi designs, blue, red, yellow, and green, with the first two as predominant features. All four colored fields are then united by a circle in blue and red. After its adoption in a plenary session, the flag was ceremoniously hoisted on a flag pole immediately to the side of the three Nordic flags, those of Finland, Norway and Sweden. A Sámi national anthem is also on its way. The text is already decided: it is a Sámi poem from the early part of the 20th century by a Sámi pioneer politician, Isac Saaba, who was the first Sámi to become a member of the Norwegian Parliament. The music, on the other hand, must be redone to be more in harmony with Sámi musical traditions.

In the endeavor to internationalize certain crucial and far-reaching political issues, the Nordic Sámi Council represents the direct link between the Sami and the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP), and ever since its founding in 1975 the Sami have been actively committed to the ideas of a world-wide community of indigenous minority populations.

In summing up the argument so far I wish to maintain that local *self-determination* among ethnic minorities cannot be achieved unless their ecological adaptation is modified to meet new conditions by certain *crucial transformations.* Such ethnopower, however, cannot be earned into effect if it is not associated with firm *land rights.* In modem times the Sámi, as well as most indigenous people in the arctic and subarctic regions, continuously living under severe pressure from the outside, have to fall back on land rights that really count, that is, absolute veto power against external exploitation when this is considered detrimental to the interest of the minority group. The actual land rights these people are able to refer to at present are far too limited to function as a basis to execute local self-determination. On the other hand, by means of the limited position of ethnopower already obtained, the Sámi have lately been actively pressing very hard to improve their land rights. Many court cases on matters of principle bear witness of that (see for example, the Taxed Mountains Case 1981, the Alta Case 1982).

The Sámi Rights Committees appointed by the respective parliaments with Sámi representation are presently preparing a complete renewal of the legal framework on which the cultural-political position of the Sámi will be based. Their most important task is to investigate questions relating to land rights in a broad sense. Moreover, they should present a model for a representative Sámi political organ, a kind of Sami Parliament. The Sámi language and its range of usage are to be secured by a special language law, and finally, as an amendment to the Constitution, a special Sámi clause is to be added, defining the Sami as a distinct people with certain aboriginal rights.

The first report of the Norwegian Committee, dealing with Sami rights, excluding those regarding land rights, was delivered in 1984 (NOU 1984:18). The first issue to be brought to Parliament for legislation was the one concerning a Sami Parliament *(Same ting)*, prepared by the Department of Justice and introduced in March 1987 (Ot prp nr 33 1986-87). The Swedish counterpart presented its first partial report in 1986 dealing with the legal position of the Sami according to international law (SOU 1986:36).

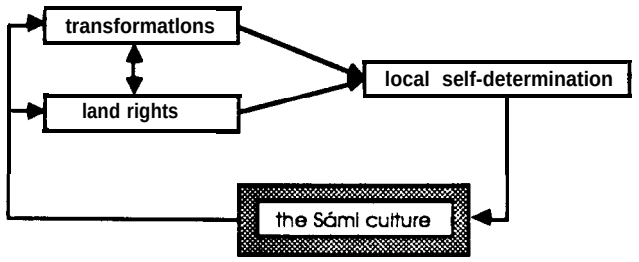
The weakness in this procedure which separates basic issues that are closely related is apparent. How is it possible, for example, to legislate on the question of Sami Parliament and

[1]For a more detailed account see Svensson 1986.

the actual power assigned to it when the controversy of rights to land and water remains unsolved? This dilemma causes both confusion and uncertainty among the Sámi who are to take a stand on these vital questions one by one. On the other hand, such a procedure is by no means uncommon in ethnic minority situations. Should the legal situation of the Sámi be improved by the work of the Sámi Rights Committees, the Sámi culture will be strengthened: its subsistence will thus be more diverse and improved, all of which will affirm cultural viability.

### Summary of the Sámi Situation before Chernobyl

Assuming that self-determination as an integral part of aboriginal rights is established, the growing vitality of the minority culture in essential sections of life, such as subsistence and symbolic expressions, will have an impact on future transformations deemed necessary in order to tackle new conditions that may come about. The process of integration may be outlined as follows:




Such a simplified flow chart may be operative for approaching most extensive as well as minor changes within a reasonably controlled ecosystem. Many encroachments by the dominant society have brought about drastic changes for the indigenous minority, partly in readjusting to its new ecological conditions, partly in reinforcing its self-determination, both pertinent factors concerning the maintenance of the Sámi way of life as a cultural force. Certain disasters may occur, however, which go far beyond the control of a delimited ecosystem and even a single nation-state. The Chernobyl disaster in the USSR in late April 1986 points to the dilemma of a new order, the total implication of which is hard to comprehend. The nuclear power fallout from Chernobyl is considered the single most demolishing event ever to come upon the Sámi: by means of the most advanced modern technology a catastrophe from real life has made the above model for readaptation entirely non-operative. The Chernobyl case raises the question whether the model for explanation introduced above has enough explanatory power to approach problems with such unpredictable consequences. Even at the risk of contradicting my own argument so far developed, I wish to devote the remaining part of this paper to the Chernobyl case, especially as it indicates problems containing new dimensions hitherto unknown to social science, but also because it relates intimately to northern conditions.

### The Chernobyl case

The Chernobyl disaster is the worst single event ever to have harmed Sámi life conditions. The effect of this catastrophe is confined to the South Sámi sub-culture which has experienced its greatest threat so far. Within only two days of the. explosion at Chernobyl, radioactive fallout hit certain parts of Sweden and Norway. The regions happened to be core areas for South Sámi habitation, which traditionally have upheld a fairly prosperous reindeer pastoralism due to favorable pasture conditions during the different seasons of the year. It is primarily the reindeer lichen, indispensable for winter grazing, which has the property of absorbing and retaining particularly high doses of cesium 137. As cesium 137 causes cancer, a ban on reindeer meat exceeding the limit of 300 bq was soon issued by the Swedish State Agency of Food Products (Statens Livsmedelsverk). By comparison, Norway followed the recommendations made by the E.C. countries of 600 bq, whereas Finland allowed 1,000 bq. (Compare the figure for the USA: 1,500 bq.) From measurements taken soon after the blow up of the reactor at Chernobyl, both reindeer and reindeer lichen showed extremely high figures. Consequently, reindeer meat from the three counties Jämtland, Vasterbotten and Vasternorrland, and comparable areas in

. Norway could not be approved as human food, for it showed measurements varying from 700 bq to 7,600 bq as average figures, with considerably higher results in extreme cases. The following are some examples:

| Bq | Sámi community |
|---|---|
| 11,027 | Umbyn |
| 15,434 | Vilhelmina Södra |
| 12,700 | Vilhelmina Norra |
| 10,390 | Frostviken Mellersta |
| 7,634 | Hotagen |
| 40,000 | Southern Norway |

Even fish from mountain lakes and rivers are affected. Up to 4,000 bq is not uncommon, and in Vasterbotten one salmon trout measured as high as 19,800 bq. It is not my intention to go deeper into the various technicalities relating to the effect of this disaster. The figures presented, however, serve as evidence concerning the range of consequences for the Sámi reindeer pastoralists. It will be readily understood that with such low permissible figures as 300 bq, for example, practically all reindeer in the area concerned have to be considered contaminated and the meat therefore not suitable for human consumption. In Frostviken N:a, for example, of 7,000 reindeer slaughtered on one occasion, as many as 6,995 animals had to be condemned.

The implications of this disastrous event for the Sámi are very complex and most intricate. In the following I would like to discuss briefly the full range of socio-cultural effects emerging from this incident. The extensive effects may be grouped under four headings: those which concern the *health situation,* the *economic consequences,* effects on the *demography,* and *emotional* effects.

As far as the health situation is concerned, the increased risks of such deplorable diseases as cancer will primarily cause depression and influence the psychic well-being of the people. Closely related to this medical aspect are the emotional effects. Insecurity regarding future opportunities will grow among the Sámi, and there will also be anxiety, for example an expressed feeling of sorrow and rage as well as dispiritedness. The psychic hardship will be even greater as the meaning of herding reindeer eventually will be lost entirely with the knowledge that all animals being slaughtered are inedible. Since the leading theme of conversation nowadays relates to radioactivity, bequerel and polluted food, the psychic health of the young Sámi, in particular, is heavily disturbed. It is also a great concern to the Sámi affected that they have not been able to have reindeer meat or lake fish for dinner for a long time, and such food items are staple food for everyday consumption in all Sámi households. Neither should the social costs be neglected: the recurring reindeer slaughtering represents a kind of social festivity bringing many people together for a common aim. It is probably the most important social event in the year cycle: it is the harvest time after a long period of hardship and strenuous work with no income. Both economically and from a social point of view this event normally generates prosperity as well as gaiety and contentment. Suddenly all this is replaced by a state of forlornness and utter desperation; the slaughter is totally void of attractive force. These social costs are most difficult to estimate, and right now a feeling of despair is rapidly spreading among reindeer pastoralist Sámi. "Look at this picture — and shudder!" says a recent issue of the Sámi journal SAMEFOLKET (1986:10), showing tons of newly slaughtered reindeer heaped in front of a factory which produces fodder for mink and other fur animals. This is a new sight, a new reality which undoubtedly appears frightening and oppressive.

The actual economic consequences are more readily ascertained. First of all the Sámi will acquire no cash from sale of reindeer, fish, moose and other available wildlife products. The mode of household consumption will also have to be changed markedly. Far more cash will be spent on consumption goods, violating the subsistence element of the household economy. The negative propaganda communicated through mass media will create a skeptical attitude among very many non-Sámi consumers towards reindeer food products. This resistance when it comes to buying reindeer meat may last for quite a long time, and include all reindeer meat regardless of where it originates. The Sami

in general, therefore, may for some time have difficulties in disposing of their reindeer products. Finally, the new arrangements brought' about by the Chernobyl disaster will occasion a great deal of extra work respecting herding activities.

The accident at Chernobyl may also have an effect on the demography. As a result of growing anxiety and pessimism for the future, problems will arise when it comes to recruitment: fewer capable young Sámi dare to take the chance of choosing reindeer herding as their occupation and primary means of livelihood. They are no longer motivated for such a career choice. This in turn may cause a decrease in the rate of establishing reindeer herding families, which eventually will give rise to a decline in nativity. Demographic disequilibrium, whether it is between the sexes or between different age categories, will assuredly make the Sámi culture, so vulnerable to defilements from the outside world, less viable in the future. To the Sámi the aspect of demography has been a dilemma for quite some time, partly due to increasing encroachments from the majority society constraining their ecological niche, partly as a response to the current of modern ideas emerging from developing culture contact.

**How to cope with the problem**

In general the Sámi are critically exposed to changes disrupting their ecological adaptation. In most instances, however, there are means of reacting to these changes: in modern times the Sámi have developed moderate influence concerning their own affairs. In the well-known Alta case in northern Norway a few years ago, for instance, the opponents were readily identified. They included, for example, the State Hydro-Power Company and the political authorities granting the former its right to construct a dam in the Alta river for hydro-power production. The Sámi protested against this exploitation in various ways: they went to court to have the application for hydro-power development ruled unlawful; and they set off diverse demonstrations. In Alta they tried to stop construction of the dam by blocking the access to the work site; in Oslo a symbolic but most explicit message of opposition to the project was given by means of a spectacular hunger strike conducted from a traditional Sámi tent placed right in front of the Parliament. Such activities make it possible to open a dialogue with the party responsible for the change; this pattern does not leave the Sámi entirely restrained in their action.

The Chernobyl disaster represents a completely different situation. In this case the opponent is basically invisible. Even though the party responsible can be identified, it remains beyond the reach of any direct Sámi counteraction. This new state of affairs makes any struggle for justice extremely difficult to bring about. This is to be regretted as the Alta case, in comparison with the accident at Chernobyl, has only to a limited extent influenced Sámi life conditions in a decisively negative way.

As expected, the Sámi have reacted firmly and unmistakably to the far-reaching damages caused by this incident. Soon after the immediate shock, leading Sámi organizations came out stating their demands for compensation. Individual Sámi expressed their views and worries; the Sámi media have for months been' devoted to extensive news coverage and debate concerning the Chernobyl accident. Sámi also join demonstrations against nuclear power, an opinion lately growing among people. In various meetings the Sámi communities directly involved expressed their great uncertainty as to household viability, because each Sámi community is dependent upon maintaining a sufficient number of viable household units. During the last conference of the Nordic Sámi Council at Åre last summer, pan-Sámi demands were worked out addressing the political authorities in the respective Nordic countries. By such joint demands the Sámi express their full solidarity with those suffering the most from these damages.

In extensive ecological crises the need for unification is apparent, and in this particular case the Sami emerged as a concerted force more firmly than ever before. Although the Chernobyl disaster was not on the agenda, it became a dominating issue throughout the conference, and

. the accident was considered a severe threat to the Sámi culture as a whole, because *Sápmi*, the Sámi land, would be harrowed for generations to come. The statement concluded by saying that in this particular case the Nordic countries should assume full responsibility so that the Sámi and their reindeer economy are indemnified.

The problems to be solved are 1) gaining full compensation and clarifying what is meant by that, and 2) determining how to dispose of slaughtered reindeer. Choosing from different alternatives, both the authorities and the Sámi finally agreed that the least damaging would be to convert reindeer meat to mink food. In this way at least the meat will come to some use. The question of full compensation is more complex. According to Sámi claims this must include: *full market value* of each slaughtered reindeer, i.e. 1,700 kr., or $375 Cdn (compare the price of 10 kr or $1.40 Cdn paid by the fodder factory), and *additional costs. The* problem remains, however, that all costs cannot be estimated in terms of cash.

The faulty propaganda resulting in "bequerel hysteria" must be corrected; 2/3 of all reindeer in Swedish Lapland are still unaffected by cesium 137, for instance. The spreading of such misleading information, almost in panic, has caused the sales curve for reindeer meat to decline drastically, by up to 80% compared to the normal rate. Currently there is little demand for reindeer meat, and the export to the USA is practically nil. The enforced change in Sámi consumption habits, with practically all food having to be bought and shopping tours for food provisions to town-like settlements having to be made more frequently, means that household expenditures will increase tremendously. This must be recompensed as must the devastation of fishing, a supplementary economy crucial for all reindeer pastoralists. The Swedish government has confirmed that the Sámi will be entitled to full compensation. What is being negotiated at present is the actual content of this concept.

An unsolved problem the Sámi keep coming back to is the lack of appropriate insight: 'We know too little," the Sámi maintain. To the Sami and their long experience with the industrial society and its various forms of exploitation, the Chernobyl disaster represents a unique occurrence. *The Sámi* definitely know too little and, therefore, are uncertain as to how to react. The authorities do not have enough experience with similar accidents to handle such catastrophes, either internally or from an international perspective. Finally, the scientists are still unable to offer authoritative and unimpeachable pronouncements. The diverging assertions emerging from various scientists and experts have caused great confusion among the Sámi. This emphasizes the feeling of insecurity and paralysis even further. The Sámi do not want to remain in complete darkness due to insufficient knowledge. To throw some light on certain socio-cultural consequences of this incident from a strict Sámi perspective, researchers at the *Sámi Instituhtta* are presently pondering their own Chernobyl project.

In order to elucidate the complexity of the problematic situation we are witnessing right now, allow me to offer one more example. In Nordland county in Norway a hydro-power construction has recently been completed in the river Saltdal. If this development is earned out, it will have detrimental effects on the winter pasture in the herding district. The radioactive - fallout from Chernobyl has already reduced the available alternatives of good winter pasture. As a rule, prosperous reindeer management is based on alternative seasonal pastures depending on climatic variations from year to year. The Sami feel they cannot permit another heavy exploitation constraining the vital winter pasture even more. This points to a need for new forms of decision making in which Sámi can enter as a real negotiation party. One experience which can be derived from the accident at Chernobyl is the undeniable urgency for a revised political form in which the Sámi minority will be able to act from a relevant basis of power.

It should be added that now, one year after the actual disaster, scientists and experts are able to provide more accurate and definite opinions about the effects than was possible immediately after the incident. Now there is a fairly general agreement that the figures for bequerel permissible per kg of meat were set far too low

immediately after the initial shock. The conclusion of the changing attitude is that far too many reindeer were slaughtered for mink food last season. It also means that the spreading of disinformation and the condemnation of large quantities of reindeer meat based on false, or highly disputable, premises caused unnecessarily great anxiety and uncertainty among many Sámi. Because of such misleading information, however, the Sámi are most hesitant in accepting the recent pronouncements uncritically. The situation is too serious to jump at new conclusions too hastily, and the process of restoring the viability of the reindeer economy must go on at the s1ow speed the Sámi consider necessary. The idea that this effort is worthwhile has in no way changed in the year passed.

New techniques for reducing the level of radioactivity in the reindeer have also been worked out, but how long it will take before the lichen pasture, in particular, is restored to its pre-Chernobyl condition is still very much disputed, both among experts and among Sámi.

## Summing up

Local self-determination is a vital feature for all indigenous minority groups. As has been demonstrated, such ethnopower falls back on 1) continuous transformations readapting to new circumstances, and 2) improved land rights. In facing new problems resulting in ecological crises, such as the recent Chernobyl disaster, local self-determination appears inadequate. In such cases a political form generally valid for the entire ethnic minority is required. Arctic and subarctic environments have for years been the target for diverse encroachments. The technologically very advanced nuclear power plants in the industrial world, which do not recognize any national boundaries if accidents occur, now appear as a new deadly threat to minority cultures in the Northern Fourth World. The idea of protecting enough land for future generations, necessary for cultural maintenance, is now confronted with a new dimension; or to paraphrase Robinson/ Ghostkeeper (1987) natives must learn how to adapt to the "next ecology. " I predict that the abolition of nuclear power on a world-wide basis most likely will be on the agenda of WCIP for years to come.

## References


Asch, M.
1984 Home and Native Land: Aboriginal Rights and the Canadian Constitution. Toronto: Methuen.

Berger, T.
1985 Village Journey: The Report of the Alaska Native Review Commission. New York: Hill and Wang.

Brøsted, J. et al.
1$94 Native Power: The Quest for Autonomy and Nationhood of Indigenous Peoples. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Dyck, N. (cd.)
1984 Indigenous Peoples and the Nation-State: Fourth World Politics in Canada, Australia and Norway. Social and Economic Papers No. 14. St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland.

NOU
1984 Om Samenes rettstilling. Norges offentlige utredninger NOU 1984:18, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Ot prp
1987 Om 10V om Sametinget og andre samiske rettsforhold. Ot prp nr. 33, 1986-87, Justis depart., Oslo.

Paine, R. (cd.)
1977 The White Arctic: Anthropological Essays on Tutelage and Ethnicity. Social and Economic Papers No. 7. St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland.
1984 Norwegians and Saami: Nation-State and Fourth World. *In* Minorities and Mother Country Imagery. Gerald Gold, ed. Social and Economic Papers No. 13. St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Pehrson, R.
1957 Bilateral Network of Social Relations in Könkämä Lapp District. Bloomington: Indiana State University. (Reprinted Sámiske Samlinger VII, Oslo 1964).

RNL
1971 Rennaringslagen (The Reindeer Husbandry Law), Stockholm.

Robinson, M. and E. Ghostkeeper
1987 Native and local economics: A consideration of economic evolution and the next economy. Arctic 40(2).

SAMEFOLKET
1986 Samefolket 1986:10.

Sou
1986 Samenes Folkrättsliga Ställning, SOU 1986:36, Samerattsutredningen, Liber, Stockholm.

Svensson, T.
1976 Ethnicity and Mobilization in Sámi Politics. Stockholm Studies in Solid Anthropology No. 4. Stockholm: Stockholm University.
1976 Ethnopolitics among the Sámi in Scandinavia: A basic strategy toward local autonomy. Arctic 39(3).

Whitaker, J.
1955 Social Relations in a Nomadic Lappish Community. Sámiske Samlinger II, 0s10.

# Northern Resources Planning and Management Perspectives on Community Self-determination

by Robert F. Keith
Department of Environment and Resource Studies
University of Waterloo
and
David A. Neufeld
Legislative Research Service
Government of Ontario

## Introduction

In much the same way as the events of the early 1970s changed our ways of thinking about resources and the environment north of 60, so too did they alter the very nature of the communities of the North. Northern places and people marched onto the political, social and economic agendas of the North and the nation. Pre-eminent among those events which changed the future of communities was the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry or "Berger Commission" as it is better known. Through the mechanism of informal community hearings, the ordinary community resident was able to speak and be heard. For the several largely aboriginal communities of the Mackenzie Valley, this precedent-setting approach became a turning point in their relations with governments, business and industry, scientists and consultants, and amongst themselves as well.

At much the same time, public acknowledgement and acceptance of the legitimacy of aboriginal land claims gave rise to Native peoples' organizations for the purpose of negotiating and ultimately implementing comprehensive settlements. For both political and cultural reasons, communities are central to the land claims process and have been from the earliest stages. The importance of land claims to the future of northern aboriginal peoples means therefore, that the role of communities must also be central to that future.

In recent years the process of devolution has quickened. Federal policy in the 1980s has been to devolve powers and responsibilities from Ottawa to the territorial governments and through them to local areas. In addition, the land claims process has been linked to devolution via negotiations between the territorial governments and the Native organizations. Thus, through the linked processes of devolution and land claims negotiations the roles of Native communities in policy-making, planning and management, particularly for resources, environment and social programs, have grown in significance.

All of this is not to suggest that the role of northern communities has evolved to a position that is appropriate and satisfactory to all interests, especially those of the communities themselves. Fundamental difficulties confront the people of many northern communities. The ability to influence many of the events around them remains an elusive goal, especially in those instances where a comprehensive land claims agreement has not yet been reached. Land claims over Yukon and much of the Northwest Territories remain to be settled. Implementation brings a new round of challenges. Devolution is a slow process. Shared management, one of the types of arrangements which seems to be emerging from both land

claims and devolution is an idea for which much practice is needed. Constitutional debates that involve aboriginal peoples from across the country. are of special significance to the northern Natives. The very meaning of aboriginal rights cuts to the heart of land claims in the North and thus to community identity and activity.

Nor are the issues facing northern communities limited to political, constitutional and legal considerations. Profound problems involving the socio-economic and cultural fabric of the communities of the North are evident. The demographics of many northern communities are disturbing in the extreme. Typical of many communities is an age distribution in which fifty percent of the population in their mid-teens and younger. For these centres it is a scant few years until many of the youth will want to join, more fully, both the formal and informal economic life of the community or region. The prospects for opportunities in both these economies require very serious analysis and consideration by all concerned, but most especially by the communities themselves.

Typical, too, of many northern communities is a mix of social development issues including health care and well-being, unemployment and underemployment, alcoholism and drug abuse, family conflicts, housing inadequacies, and the sufficiency and appropriateness of educational and training opportunities.

There is little to suggest that the answers to these several issues are to be found in the policies and programs of the past. In fact, such approaches are widely acknowledged to be seriously wanting and counterproductive. Critiques of northern land use planning and management (Usher and Beakhust 1973, O'Reilly 1984), marine management (Mills 1984, Roots 1979, Beauchamp 1985), conservation areas policy (Theberge et al. 1980, Fenge 1982), northern mineral policy (Keith 1986), northern petroleum policy (Keith et al. 1976, Keith 1986), and environmental assessment systems (Rees 1981, Gibson and Patterson 1985) all show important limitations in our approaches to date. New approaches and fresh initiatives are required at all levels. Policies and programs must be rethought, redesigned and renewed. At the heart of the matter is the question of *control.* At issue is the relationship between community institutions and that control.

## Process, Structure and Self-Determination

While there is merit in case-by-case analyses of particular policy fields it is also instructive to take a somewhat wider view of the issues and their context, and in doing so, to consider the "ways in which we do things." As complex as the issues are, and as often as we acknowledge that complexity, there is often inadvertent oversight and in some cases conscious neglect of that complexity. The drive to simplify, with its roots in economic and political efficiency, is a significant force shaping our approaches to the processes of policy-making, planning and implementation. As Jantsch notes,

> The mythical nature of planning reveals itself in the widely shared expectation that planning will remove uncertainty and complexity. If planning is viewed as an essential aspect of the creative design process, it can only have the opposite . effect — uncertainty increases because . new options are generated along with honest chances for their realization, and complexity increases because planning widens our view of the infinite complexity of reality [Jantsch 1975:205].

Simplification of the policy, planning and management processes is suggested here to be a contributing factor to the emergence and persistence of the many issues mentioned above that face northern communities today. The breakdown of, and threat to ecological systems, the loss of economic viability in some communities, the oscillating processes of the formal economy, the diminution of social vitality and the absence of political efficacy — effective political structures and processes — characterize many northern communities (Lockhart 1984). Simplification, narrowness of view, and rigidity of approach are often linked. We tend to emphasize:

1. structure rather than process
2. stability rather than flexibility

**3. containment rather** than exchange (Jantsch 1975:xvii).

It is in these notions of structure, stability **and containment** that we find implications for "self-determination." The absence of legitimate actors (Keith 1976) from the systems of policy-making, planning and management precludes comprehensive views of problem and opportunity definition. In this sense we then **have** simplification by absence or exclusion. When the issues in question **cross** significant cultural and economic distinctions, inappropriate definitions and actions **often result.** Much of Canada's northern development policy **can be** characterized **as** designs based on containment and exclusion. The Territorial Lands Act and **its** regulations **can** be viewed as a mechanism **to** contain environmental criticism, while serving the process of industrial development (Usher and **Beakhust** 1973, **O'Reilly** 1984). Until recently the absence of a northern or arctic fisheries policy could be construed **as an effort to** contain the debate in such **a way as to allow** only federal and **east coast fishery interests access to** those resources in the North. Lack of recognition of, and support for, the informal northern economy is tantamount to containment by default and ignores not only the fundamental significance of that economy but its linkages to the formal economy. The history **of** conservation and wildlife policies also indicates exclusivity on the part of federal and southern interests (Usher 1986). The reluctance of the federal environment and fisheries agencies, for several years, to sign the wildlife agreement of Tungavik Federation of Nunavut, expressly to protect the powers of their ministers, is another example of containment rather than exchange, cooperation and interdependence.

As a consequence of policies that emphasize structure, stability and containment and their tendencies for exclusivity and simplification, pressures for community based self-determination have grown. There has been a sense of alienation and powerlessness which has characterized much of the discourse involving northern communities with regional and federal authorities as well as with industrial interests. These issues cut across several policy fields (Keith 1985) and collectively add up **to a** basic incapacity **to** deal with recurring problems and opportunities. What is called for is a reorientation which seeks:

1. to deal with "complete" actor systems, i.e., all the legitimate interests are involved meaningfully,

2. strategies which are flexible and adaptive as opposed to 'once and for all" solutions, and,

3. to promote the critical exchanges — perceptions, aspirations, values, information, goods, services, and responsibility and accountability.

In some quarters the issues of Native **self-**government, community empowerment, constitutional entrenchment of Native rights and **devolution** of federal powers to the North are thought **to** be strategies which will promote unwarranted levels of autonomy, independence, isolation and perhaps indifference among the various regions of the North and between the North and the nation. Such perceptions and attitudes are generally not characteristic of those held by northern communities. Rather theirs are ones of process, adaptation and exchange in which the community is one of several actors with a "controlling< interest. What is also clear, in light of recent events, is that the notion of control is not viewed so much as a corrective, cybernetic mechanism — **to reset** actions back on the right path — but rather **as a** role **to be** played in the "steering of a course of action" (**Jantsch** 1975:5). This view recognizes the world as fluid and evolving and not the place for rigid models of reality. Cooperation, coordination and integration **are** key concepts for planning and managing resources under such assumptions.

## Self-determination and Cooperative Planning and Management

With self-determination cast in a **multi-**actor framework in which there is established a balance of interests and the powers and responsibilities are shared fairly (Lockhart 1984), one may ask if there are initiatives in the North which suggest that there is progress toward self-organizing, self-regulating and therefore self-determining systems. In a number of cases

it can be said that some conditions have been established upon which further development of balanced, self-regulating and self-organizing systems can take place. Though such conditions have been created, their abilities to endure and promote more fundamental advances remain as open questions. Some examples are now examined.

## Northern Land Use Planning and Management

Land use planning and management in the North has a relatively recent history. With the petroleum exploration boom of the 1960s the federal government sought to manage northern land through the Territorial Lands Act and its regulations. As mentioned previously, this approach fell well short of being planning, in that it sought only to regulate industrial activities that were proposed. The Act did not permit an examination of alternative activities by which to accomplish certain goals. The Act and the purposes it served were predicated on the acceptance by government of industrial development and the need to minimize adverse effects to the land. It was therefore an after-the-fact arrangement in which there was no definition of need, nor were alternatives generated, considered, selected and acted upon, using certain resources in some reasonably defined period of time (Rees 1983). The limitations of that legislation have been widely discussed (Usher and Beakhust 1973, O'Reilly 1984). Rather than a planning device that dealt with future choices, it further entrenched the federal government's "management by impact containment" approach.

Pressed by genuine need for planning and almost a decade of criticism, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) circulated a draft discussion paper on land use planning in 1981 (DIAND 1981). The reviews were largely negative due to the centralist inclinations of DIAND, the structural rather than process orientation, the emphasis on non-renewable resource planning with too little regard for renewable resources, inadequate opportunity for local and regional involvement, too little concern for Native land claims and an overriding technical approach which ignored the knowledge and experience of northerners, particularly Native northerners (Fenge 1984, Rees 1983). DIAND then undertook a redrafting process which involved a workshop to which some of the key interests were party. The participants did not include Native northerners or industry personnel, or for that matter representatives of various government agencies with land responsibilities in the North (Fenge 1984). In June of 1981 a new version of the policy appeared. As Fenge noted, "The land use planning policy reflected little of the advice offered" (Fenge 1984). He went on to note:

> The policy would have imposed rigid, hierarchical and centrally directed structures on an ever changing situation. Instead, a flexible planning system was required to accommodate political, social and economic change [Fenge 1984:801.

Aa a consequence, DIAND had a policy which had at least some degree of cabinet recognition and virtually no support anywhere else, especially among northern interests.

These events were followed by yet another paper, this time an implementation strategy. It too, did little to gain the support of other organizations, for it continued to focus authority and responsibility in DIAND. Rees' critique noted major ideological, conceptual, institutional and process flaws (Rees 1983). Faced with a unanimous opposition DIAND at last offered intergovernmental negotiations to which the Dene Nation, the Metis Association of the NWT, Tungavik Federation of Nunavut and the Mackenzie Delta Dene Regional Council were ultimately parties. Containment and exclusivity began to give way to negotiations, cooperation and agreement. Land use planning in the NWT is now a joint territorial-federal undertaking with the ministers of Renewable Resources (NWT) and DIAND as co-signators. Two areas have been designated for priority attention, namely the Mackenzie Delta–Beaufort Sea Region and the Lancaster Sound Region. Commissions for each region are now in place, along with a technical staff.

While the foregoing is a considerable accomplishment and a necessary step in the evolution of a northern planning capability, important deficiencies continue to limit the potential of the initiative. There is to date no clear set of arrangements — structure or process — for community level involvement in a sustained and meaningful way in the planning and management of northern lands. While it is true that members of the various commissions do come from northern communities, and community consultations about harvest areas and preferred protected areas are taking place, more is needed if the community is to be a genuine actor in planning and management. A recent conference on the role of communities in resource decision-making (CARC 1986) underscored the significance of the community to the management of the land and the resources on it and in it. Participants at the conference, particularly those from the communities, emphasized the need to develop the capability in the community to work within the planning system. This was seen to entail much more than the techniques of planning and management. It means the creation of community institutions, some of which will come through land claims settlements and others through governmental approaches.

The land use planning and management agenda remains unfinished at this time. There are still legitimate interests which are not linked effectively to the system. Those interests — the communities — now call for involvement in terms they refer to as self-determination. That can be taken to mean that by effectively linking the community to the planning system, such that their voices carry both authority and responsibility in much the same way as do the other actors, the community becomes part of an integrated, self-organizing, self-regulating and thus self-determining system. Self-determination is therefore not isolation, autonomy or independence. It will mean that as a fully-functioning member of a land use planning and management system the community can expect to have new and important powers and responsibilities.

While progress is being made in planning, there is the danger of replacing exclusion with co-optation. The need to participate in scientific and technical exercises, and adherence to values and criteria inherent in them, may undermine the aspirations, preferences and positions of communities. Consultation without significant influence *or* control is not without precedent in the North. The important task of developing arrangements for genuine community influence in all aspects of community life has yet to be completed.

It is through land claim settlements that northern Native communities expect to acquire a more effective role in resource planning and decision-making. The legal, financial, resource and administrative arrangements are seen as the basis for real and effective control. In the case of the Inuvialuit of the western arctic, the establishment of such mechanisms as a Game Council, Environmental Screening and Review Boards, a land use planning committee and development corporations are viewed as the principle means by which the Inuvialuit will exert influence over many aspects of their life. To make these truly Inuvialuit organizations, it is recognized that the development of their people , to take on the many tasks is an essential . undertaking (CARC 1986). Similar situations are likely for both the Dene-Metis and the Inuit of the eastern and central arctic. Sub-agreements initialed to date suggest that a variety of boards, councils and committees will be established over which the Native people have either sole or joint control. Whether for lands owned by Native people or through lands on which they share management responsibilities, their interest is in controlling the ways in which resources are used. Assured and unassailable mechanisms for community influence are key features of a strategy which goes beyond consultation, avoids co-optation and gives rise to effective self-determining systems.

## Wildlife Management

The establishment of wildlife management boards on which harvesters, scientists and regulator-managers are seated is another example of efforts to create more broadly inclusive and balanced, self-regulating systems. The Beverly-

Kaminuriak Caribou Management Board is a case in point (Caribou News April 1986). Composed of community representatives from the Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan and Manitoba along with government representatives from those jurisdictions as well as the federal government, the board has recently prepared a draft management plan now being circulated for comment and suggestions from several individuals and organizations with an interest in the plan. This broadly based initiative, though still in its infancy, may well be a forerunner of future arrangements, and perhaps even the foundation of a process and structure which will evolve to encompass not only more actors but more functions and responsibilities. In a similar fashion, the evolving management arrangements for the Porcupine caribou herd involving users and governments in Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Alaska represent a similar effort (Caribou News December 1985). The signing of wildlife provisions by the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut and the federal government in May 1986 lays the basis for cooperative management (Nunavut 1986). In a wider jurisdictional context, the resolutions of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference at their meeting in Kotzebue, Alaska, August 1986, concerning circumpolar cooperation on several policy issues included the protection and management of wildlife species (Inuit Circumpolar Conference 1986).

While it is important to consider the various cooperative arrangements that have been established for wildlife planning and management, other important issues are likely to affect such arrangements in the future (Usher 1986). Growing interest in the development of commercial harvests may inject new forms of uncertainty and controversy into the processes of planning and management. International accords with respect not only to species and populations, but also to ecosystem management, may require institutional and organizational adaptation at the community level. The ultimate disposition of aboriginal rights in the constitution may also have significance for wildlife management. In the same way that initiatives, to date, for land use planning are best seen as a basis for more fundamental change, so it is for wildlife management.

## Conservation Lands

Some progress towards more effective community roles in the realm of planning and management for conservation lands is being made. In addition to the aforementioned TFN Wildlife Agreement and its recent acceptance by the Departments of Environment and Fisheries and Oceans, two relatively recent examples are the Ellesmere National Park Reserve and the Polar Bear Pass National Wildlife Area. Neufeld (1985) explored the nature of cooperative planning and management in both these cases. The intent was to develop a framework for assessing interorganizati onal relationships oriented to cooperative processes in contrast to independent or single actor strategies, and apply it in the two cases.

### *Polar Bear Pass National Wildlife Area*

Located on Bathurst Island, the area's ecological significance was recognized by the International Biological Programme in 1975 as an important site. It has the highest diversity of bird species of any comparably sized area in the high arctic and is an important calving and wintering ground for muskoxen and Peary caribou. In 1978 the area was withdrawn from further disposition under the Territorial Lands Act after continued efforts to apply *some* form of conservation protection to the region. Finally, in 1982 it was announced that the area would be designated a national wildlife area under the Canada Wildlife Act. A wildlife management agreement to be signed by the federal and territorial governments was called for, along with an area management advisory committee.

Amongst the three major actors, the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), the Department of Renewable Resources, GNWT, and the community of Resolute on nearby Cornwallis Island, there was general agreement on long term goals for the area: the unique combination of ecological resources should be protected and aboriginal harvesting rights in the area be respected. While there existed no formal

policies between the two government agencies for interorganizational cooperation, the wildlife provisions agreement-in-principle and conservation provisions sub-agreement of the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut (representing the community of Resolute) gave strong support to the principles of cooperation among the various interests.

There remained, however, important differences between the federal and territorial agencies involved as to arrangements for sharing and cooperating on matters of authority and responsibility. A "Memorandum of Understanding" was required of the two government agencies to establish their respective roles in the planning and management of the area. It is important to note that the memorandum did not include provisions for the involvement of the Native community. The Area Advisory Committee does have community membership; however, it is only to 'guide and review" plans.

Overall, only a very moderate degree of cooperative planning and management emerged out of this case. The initial reluctance of the Canadian Wildlife Service to use the Canada Wildlife Act in the North contributed to these conditions. The interest of that agency in protecting mandates along with the expansionary interests of the GNWT led to prolonged controversy and negotiations over the ultimate application of the legislation. Moreover the reluctance of Environment Canada to endorse the wildlife agreement of the Inuit negotiating body (TFN) meant that for the most part, only agreements-in-principle and preliminary arrangements were possible. It is to this extent that it could be claimed that a moderate level of cooperative planning and management was achieved. Rather than solid accomplishments, the case demonstrates the need for clarification of cooperative roles between such agencies.

*Ellesmere Island National Park Reserve*

The Ellesmere Island National Park Reserve is Canada's northernmost such reserve. The area consists of glaciers, mountains, the largest lake north of the Arctic Circle and small populations of muskoxen, caribou, polar bears, wolves and fox. Inuit archaeological sites are known there as well. This northern park reserve represents the most extensive participation to date of the GNWT and an Inuit community (Grise Fiord) with Parks Canada in its park development processes.

The principal actors in this case were Parks Canada, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism (GNWT) and the community of Grise Fiord. The Consultative Committee consisting of the federal and territorial agencies was empowered to develop cooperative agreements and undertake joint activities. The committee did not involve community representatives. The Grise Fiord Advisory Committee did just that — it advised. Nonetheless, all parties expressed satisfaction with their involvement in the discussions which led to the establishment of the reserve. An important consideration in this regard was the pacing of the discussions which took due consideration of the needs of the community for thorough discussions among the residents.

Cooperative links were forged between the two government agencies. Their objectives were complementary and the levels of development activity expected for that region were not seen as a threat to the ecological and cultural values on which the selection and designation of the reserve was based. The lack of involvement of community residents in the formal decision-making structures is evidence that full participation has yet to be achieved. The expressions of satisfaction by community members with the arrangements for consultation and the acceptance of their positions on harvesting rights and employment opportunities are indicative that in this case the operative arrangements were both acceptable and successful as far as they went. In other and more contentious cases, one would expect a greater degree of discord and a more complex and prolonged process. Such is the case at this time regarding the East Arm of Great Slave Lake national park initiative (Griffith 1987).

Again, the lesson from this case is not that a formula as such has been created which will ensure easy development of future plans and management regimes. Other candidate park

sites and other communities of interest will likely produce other configurations of issues and exchanges. The extent to which these experiences have carry-over value has yet to be determined.

## Communities, Self-determination and Public Policy

The processes of policy making, planning and management "...cannot be the task of the institution of government alone. It will have to engage the whole of society *in* ways about which we can only vaguely speculate today" (Jantsch 1975:221). The interests of government, as the few examples above suggest, are simply not diverse enough nor are the processes they have established, sufficiently inclusive. The dominance of governments in the past over life in the North, and in particular that in communities, has not provided for balanced exchanges and interplays between values and lifestyles at the community level and the prevailing ideologies of industrialism, growth and hinterland subordination to the centre. Reordering for process, flexibility and exchange is a necessary condition for community-based development. The centering of communities in the community development process is fundamental to the development of self-organizing and self-regulating systems for resources planning and management. It will be through such efforts that a greater number and variety of options will emerge for consideration. Complexity will increase and so will the chances for "honest realization" of viable futures.

The centering of communities should not be interpreted as setting aside federal or territorial interests. Rather it is another way in which to view them. Local well-being is in the territorial and federal interests. It is therefore in the national interest. One must not equate national with federal interests, for the narrowness of the federal interest is only too clear as are the consequences it brings.

In an effort to realign community roles and relationships in the development process, the community of Fort Good Hope on the Mackenzie River near the Arctic Circle, entered into negotiations, first with British Petroleum Corporation (B-P) and later with Chevron Corporation. These negotiations were to establish a joint petroleum exploration venture in the area surrounding the community. Partly in anticipation of land becoming available for exploration permits through the federal government, and partly because of a sense of inevitability about industrial development in the Delta Region to the north, and based *on* its aboriginal title to the lands, the community entered discussions with B-P with a view to equity participation and management of exploration and its impacts. Various decision-making arrangements were considered along with training and employment provisions. When, through the bidding processes for permit acreages, Chevron was awarded the opportunity to acquire permits, the company was advised by the federal government that it would now have to work out an agreement with the community. Such an arrangement is without precedent in the North and the consequences have yet to unfold fully.

In one way the combined community-industrial initiative is evidence of the actors' view of the limitations of prevailing policy. In these new initiatives self interest is not overlooked — quite the opposite. Self interests can now be seen to create alternatives to existing processes. Political, bureaucratic and corporate difficulties with these arrangements are substantial. While some suggest that the final agreement between Fort Good Hope and Chevron is precedent setting, others claim it will be a once-only arrangement. Whatever the longer term result the basic thrust was to develop fresh initiatives to community roles in resource development. In that, the partners have been successful. It remains to be seen whether implementation and subsequent community-industry relations build on these experiences.

The Fort Good Hope-Chevron experience illustrates another basic point. There is not only growing recognition of institutional and organizational limitations in policy, planning and management roles, but in addition, current arrangements are viewed as insufficient with respect to initiating new processes. Devolution and land claims negotiations recognize this point too. That a community and a corporation

together are able to create innovative approaches 'should be taken as a positive sign. These new arrangements should not be construed as a lessening of the community's interest in achieving a satisfactory claims settlement. The joint venture relationship is not a substitute for the claim. Instead, the relationship between the two could be seen as complementary and perhaps even reinforcing of each of them. Economic development will not await a final agreement. Effective planning and management systems are needed now. It may be that elements of the implementation of the joint venture could inform the claims and devolution processes. The processes that have, so far, failed to achieve a constitutional accord on aboriginal rights may also be better informed as the processes of community development, devolution and land claims become more effectively linked.

The thrust needs to be one of decentralizing the opportunities and the responsibilities for initiatives. Through such processes the actor system is widened, the procedures made more varied and the notion of exchange becomes central. A "steering" view of ways and means can emerge. Branching networks replace fixed pathways. Choice can reflect the unique as well as the shared perceptions. Options selected are made "right" as opposed to the 'right" options being selected. It is in this mode that the essence of self-determination emerges and, it is suggested, reaches a fuller meaning. The sense of community becomes a real force in the equations — not the only force, nor one of just a few, but a force nonetheless that is crucial to the "steering of a viable course of action. It is this collection of several actors — or publics — each of which is linked in various and flexible ways to each other, that could be the basis of innovation. Self-determination is then accomplished in a systemic sense — in approaches which accord to all interests authority and responsibility in keeping with sustainable well-being.

## References


Beauchamp, K
1985 A comprehensive policy for the arctic marine environment. A brief to the Task Force on Northern Conservation. Ottawa: Canadian Arctic Resource Committee, May 8.

Canadian Arctic Resource Committee
1986 Conference entitled The role of the northern community in the management of northern resources, June 16-17, Edmonton, Alberta. Part of the Committee's National Symposium on the North.

Caribou News
1985 Porcupine Caribou Management Board becomes a reality. Caribou News 4:1,4.
1986 A long term plan for the management of the Beverly and Kaminuriak caribou herds. Caribou News 6:4-15.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development
1981 Northern Land Use Planning Discussion Paper. Ottawa: Federal Government Publication.

Fenge, T.
1982 Towards comprehensive conservation of environmentally significant areas of the Northwest Territories of Canada. Environment Conservation 4:305-313.
1984 Environmental planning in northern Canada: musical chairs and other games. *In* Proceedings of the Kativik Environment Conference, Kuujjuaq, Quebec, December 10-12. P. Jacobs and H. Chatagnier, eds. Pp. 67-90.

Gibson, R.B. and G. Patterson
1985 Environment assessment in Canada. Environmental Education and Information 4:230-252.

Griffith, R.
1987 Northern park development: the case of snowdrift. Alternatives 1:26-30.

Inuit Circumpolar Conference
1986 Draft Principles for an Arctic Policy. Kotzebue, Alaska.

Jantsch, E.
1975 Design for Evolution. New York: Braziller.

Keith, R.F.
1986 Arctic policy: some Canadian perspectives. *In* Proceedings of the Arctic Policy Conference. M.S. Stenbaek, ed. Montreal: Centre for Northern Studies and Research, McGill University.

Keith, R.F., et al.
1976 Northern Development and Technology Assessment Systems, Background Study No. 34. Ottawa: Science Council of Canada.

Lockhart, R.A.
1984 Development policy and the Canadian North. A paper presented to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternative Conference, Toronto, March 22-25.

Mills, H.
1984 Ocean policy-making in the Canadian Arctic. *In* Canadian Arctic Resource Committee, Ocean Policy and Management in the Arctic. Ottawa.

Neufeld, D.A.
1985 Interorganizational Cooperation in Planning and Managing National Parks and National Wildlife Areas in the Northwest Territories. M.A. Thesis, School of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario.

Nunavut
1986 A summary of the wildlife provisions. Nunavut 7:1-3.

O'Reilly, K
1984 An Evaluation of the Territorial Land Use Regulations as a Management Tool in the Yukon. M.A. Thesis, School of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario.

Peterson, E.B. and J.B. Wright (eds.)
1978 Northern Transitions, Vol. 1, Northern Resource and Land Use Policy Study. Ottawa: Canadian Arctic Resource Committee.

Rees, W.E.
1981 Environmental assessment and the planning process in Canada. Paper presented at a workshop on Environmental Assessment, University of Melbourne, Australia, February.
1983 Northern land use planning: in search of a policy. *In* National and Regional Interests in the North. Proceedings of the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee's Third National Workshop on People, Resources and Environment North of 60, Yellowknife, NWT, June 1-3.

Roots, E.R. (cd.)
1979 Lancaster Sound: Issues and Responsibilities. Ottawa: Canadian Arctic Resource Committee.

Theberge, J. B., J.G. Nelson and T. Fenge
1980 Environmentally Significant Areas of the Yukon Territory. Ottawa: Canadian Arctic Resource Committee.

Usher. P.
1986 The Devolution of Wildlife Management and the Prospects for Wildlife Conservation in the Northwest Territories. Policy Paper No. 3. Ottawa: Canadian Arctic Resource Committee.

Usher, P. and G. Beakhust
1973 Land Regulation in the Canadian North, Canadian Arctic Resource Committee, Ottawa, November.