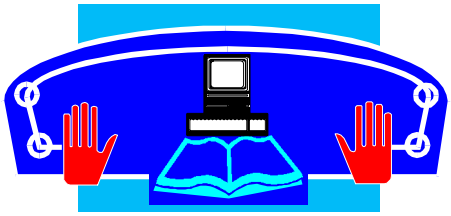

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM
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OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY MINISTER

The Honourable Gordon Wray,
Minister
Department of Economic Development and Tourism
Government of the Northwest Territories
P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories XIA 2L9

Dear GoldOn,

Here, as I premised, is a copy of a paper I recently delivered regarding development in Northern Ablerta. I think it has applicability to the N.W.T. situation. I also am including the critique I did of Stabler's presentation to the MacDonald Royal Commission in case you haven't seen it.

I quite enjoyed the meeting and seeing you again. Hope we keep in touch.

Sincerely,

Michael Asch,
Professor

APR 19 1989

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Send copy of this OK Done L.
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keep one for me.
GO

APR 19 1989

THE FUTURE OF HUNTING AND TRAPPING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN ALBERTA'S NORTH: SOME FACTS AND MYTHS ABOUT INEVITABLILITY

By Michael Asch, Professor
Department of Anthropology
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta

1. INTRODUCTION

There is a view held by many that the hunting-trapping economy of Native people is dead or dying; that history has passed it by. It is a belief, I suspect, that creates the sense of moral superiority one finds associated with the anti-trapping movement. It is found as well among those who plan northern development. It is a viewpoint which, for example, I believe underlies the opinion rendered by the Honorable Mr. Justice Forsyth regarding the the temporary injunction filed by the Lubicon Lake Cree to halt exploration on their traditional lands. It was an injunction that this band filed primarily because of a fear that continued expiration would completely destroy their traditional hunting-trapping economy. In rejecting this position, the learned judge said (Forsyth 1983):

> "One thing is clear however. This is not a case of an isolated band in the remote north where access is only available by air on rare occasions and whose way of life independent to a great" extent on living off the land itself. The 20th Century forgetter or for worse has been part of the applicants' lives for a considerable period of time."

There are some regions where this belief has been countered. For example, in the Northwest Territories, one could hear government and industry personnel remark on the immanent death of this economic adaptation until the mid 1970s. Since that time, due in no small measure to the findings of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Commission (Berger 1977), the results of various land claims negotiations in the N.W.T., statements of Native MLAs

(who make up a majority in the Legistive Assembly of the NWT) and the research of scholars such as Freeman (1981), Rushforth (1977), Usher (1977) and myself (Asch 1988), the evidence has made it transparent that this belief is erroneous. And, except for occasional archaic commentaries, it has all but disappeared from discourse in the Northwest Territories.

The new orientation is reflected in the following two statements made by government and industry in recent years. The first is from the Honorable Dennis Patterson, then Minister for Aboriginal Rights in the N.W.T. and now Government Leader. He said at the 1984 First Ministers' Conference on Aboriginal Issues that (Patterson 1984):

> The aboriginal peoples of the NWT have to this day an economy which centres largely on the wildlife of land and sea. Visitors to our small communities are always surprised by the extent to which this ancient livelihood is intact, albeit modernized in many particulars through the use of new equipment, transportation means, etc. Dependent on ranging widely over large areas, and on species migrating far and wide, it is easy to see why the renewable resource economy clashes with other industrial uses and processes from shipping to road-building, aircraft noise to chemical wastes.

The second is from an industry sponsored study undertaken for Interprovincial Pipe Lines Ltd. in respect to the latter's submission to the National Energy Board hearings into the Norman Wells pipeline. It said (Resource Management Consultants 1980):

> What is certain is that southern analysts have often underestimated the economic significance of native renewable resource use and too easily have jumped to the conclusion that it was dead or dying as a means of livelihood. A number of

> intangible and unquantifiable factors such as taste preferences, traditional food preparation and eating practices, the esteem in which a successful hunter is held in a native community, and the simple satisfaction of being in control of one's means of livelihood, combine to make any dollar estimate of the value of the native renewable resource harvest totally inadequate from a native person's perspective. Its loss or diminishment cannot be compensated for because there are no real substitutes. This only serves to make it harder for southerners and non-natives to understand and appreciate its value.

While there are few hard statistical means to measure the economic value of this sector even in the NWT, some measures have been made. Research from such sources as the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Commission (Berger 1977) indicate that the hunting-trapping sector in the 1970s accounted for approximately 35-40% of total income. According to Ken Bodden (1981) who undertook a study in Fort Resolution in 1975-76, income from country food alone provided an imputed value (based on replacement Cost) of almost 37% of total income. This amount was higher than that obtained through wage employment (33%) or social assistance payments (13%). Recent research also indicates a high seasonal participation rate in activites associated with hunting and trapping (Smith, S. 1986). In short, the existing evidence indicates that hunting-trapping is a viable sector of the N.W.T. economy and is very significant in the economy of the Native people who live there.

According to Mathewson (1974), in 1970 trapping provided over 65% of the total employment in Fort Chipewyan and accounted for approximately 20% of total cash income.- Unfortunately, her statistics do not include hunting. Still, her data provide clear indication that hunting-trapping has

represented an important sector of the local economy in the recent past. This conference, I anticipate, will clearly reveal that the hunting-trapping economy remains significant in the lives of Native people living in Northern Alberta today and may, perhaps, also shed light on the importance of that sector to the economy of Northern Alberta as a whole. In this way, I expect that information will be provided to counter the idea that significant hunting-trapping does not exist today.

Given this finding, an obvious question to address in the context of Northern Alberta is how to maintain and strengthen this viable economic sector. Below, I intend to briefly outline some suggestions based on work undertaken in the NWT and in other northern locales.

But there is a prior issue that I wish to briefly discuss first. As those of us who have worked in the Northwest Territories, Northern Quebec and Yukon among other places have discovered, evidence alone will not necessarily convince those who would see hunting-trapping as a dying way of life. The fact is that many people seem to hold to the curious proposition that such economic sectors, despite clear evidence of their success in the modern world, must be dead or dying simply <u>because they are based on hunting and trapping</u>.

This is a viewpoint that must be dealt with for it is a powerful idea held by important people, such as, to reiterate, judges, politicians and economic planners and it is clear that those who hold it will believe, despite contrary evidence, that supporting and sustaining the

hunting-trapping economy is a futile exercise. Thus, it is a very real matter with which Native hunter-trappers must contend if their economy isto thrive and, given the strength of the anti-trapping lobby that peddles a similar idea although in a more subtle form, even survive. I therefore wish to briefly identify one central proposition that underlies this viewpoint and provide one way I believe it can be countered. I will then return to the question of how to support this sector.

2. HUNTING-TRAPPING AND EVOLUTIONARY MYTHOLOGY

The central proposition I wish to identify is a myth or as anthropologists would put it an ethnocentric assumption (Asch 1982). The central theme of this myth is that of technological and economic evolution. The basic story line says that the human race has progressed by *stages* from hunting-gathering, to nomadic pastoralism, and then to horticulture and agriculture, and finally to industrial society. It is a plot we believeto be so true that we take it as "common sense:" hence it is a basic cultural theme which biases how those who hold it view the world.

Following from this myth, it is clear that hunting-trapping cannot be taken seriously because it is seen as an economic form that has been historically superseded. As "proof" some will point to it as a self-described "harsh" lifeway and hence one that no rational person would want to continue in the 20th Century. Therefore, economic planners, for example, will seek alternatives fortheg will wish to enable Native people, perceived to be trapped in this evolutionary backwater, to move into the more progressive, modern wag of life. To move as it were "from the Stone

Age to the Space Age." Or, if you will, into the 20th Century. And, since it is an evolutionary backwater, evidence to show that it is successful in contemporary times is often viewed either as an aberration or as an indication that the economy of the region is "backward."

One way to counter this myth is to demand that it be subjected to careful and rigourous examination. Let us examine the proposition that farming must supercede hunting (and now trapping). The fact is that farming cannot replace hunting as the food producing sector in many parts of the Canadian North. Indeed, it could be well-argued that agriculture is not necessarily the most secure primary food industry even in Northern Alberta. In short, agriculture in these areas has not replaced hunting, but not because the regions are "backward." Rather, it is because hunting is the more reliable adaptation. Farming, then, probably does not represent the most appropriate solution to satisfy their needs.

The people in these regions, then, are faced with a real choice: either continue to hunt, fish and trap or import food from the south. There are at least two problems with the second option. First, the people live in rural areas where the animals they wish to harvest are in ready supply and hence they would be required to ignore the obvious source of food in order to fulfill the objectives of a myth. Second, generally these people live in low density areas and far removed from major transportation routes. Therefore, adoption of the second option will mean ignoring low cost locally produced food in return for high cost imports. Under these conditions, it is only rational to devote labour to hunting and trapping in

order to secure low cost subsistence and some cash incomefrom the local region; and thus it irrational for them to desire the development of rather than the reduction of hunting-trapping economic activities.

Take the supposed stage of evolution from agriculture to industrial society. The obvious fact is that agriculture has not itself been superseded in this process. Rather, it existsas a sector within industrial society. Otherwise, there would be no food produced. What has happened is that farming has become, at least in the minds of some, more efficient end better organized through time. In short, merely because some adaptation like hunting or even farming began thousands or millions of years ago does not mean it is a relic of the past - as our ability to speak, which must have been among our first human achievements - amply attests.

Nor can the proposition that the hunting and trapping way of life is inherently so harsh as to not merit preservation stand close examination. Hunters and trappers do often expound on the harshness of their work. In that, in my view, they talk very much as farmers often do. However, unlike farming, little thought is given by the larger society to how to make what is an important economic component less burdensome. Indeed, I do not consider it hyperbole to state that were farmers disadvantaged in terms of taxation provisions and special benefits, among other things, to the extent that Northern Native hunters are, there would be no food on the table for want of producers. In short, given the disadvantages hunter-trappers face, it is a "harsh'" adapation, but it is so primarily in

relationship to the obvious advantages given to other similar ones.

Some people, in developing this myth, will point to the use of modern technology as an indication that hunting-trapping is now dead or dying. But again this does not stand up to the evidence. Like farmers and the rest of us, people who hunt and trap have needs that derive from the industrial system. The use of modern capital goods merelghelps tomake the work of hunting and trapping more efficient and enjoyable (Smith, D. 1975). To use the farming analogy again: one would not argue that farming is dying out because the plow replaced the digging stick. Thus, it is inappropriate to argue that merely because hunter-trappers use rifles now rather than rely exclusively on dead-falls, they have abandoned their economic mode.

In sum, I believe that it is in basing ideas on pure ideology rather than on an examination of the relationship between these ideas and real world experiences that leads to the false conclusion that the hunting-trapping economy is inevitably going to pass away. Thus, it is in looking at the suppositions carefully against experience that one may find a means to counter the argument.

3. SUGGESTIONS FOR SUSTAINING THE HUNTING-TRAPPING ECONOMY

Now let me turn to the second question: how to support this demonstrably viable economic sector in a manner that will maintain and sustain it? There have been many over the past few years who have addressed this issue, especially in the context of the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Northern Quebec and a number of ideas have emerged. Here is a sample.

1) There is the Income Security Program that has been developed with the Cree of James Bay, Quebec. Through this program government pays Crees an income based on the time they spent in hunting-trapping activities. While small, this income is secure and thus helps these people to plan their economic round. It has resulted in a massive increase in the participation rate of Crees in the hunting-trapping sector (see Feit 1982 and Salisbury 1986).

2) There are work-rotation programs that government and industry have introduced. These programs ensure that hunter-trappers who seek wage employment are not required to spend eight hours a day, five days a week at their jobs, but rather work for a period such as three weeks in a wage-labour setting and then for a similar period on the land. This provision seems to have resulted in higher participation and satisfaction rates among Native workers.

3) The Berger Commission which examined the socio-economic and environmental impact of the proposed Mackenzie Valley Pipepline recommended, among other possibilities, increased processing of raw materials in the north itself seas to add wage-labour components related to primary production into the economic mix of the region.

4) A number of people, including Peter Usher, NigelBanks and myself, have recommended various changes in the current legal definition of ownership in what is known as "wildlife" so that Native hunter-trappers would have

rights to these animals prior to capture. One consequence of such a change of importance, for example, to the Lubicon Lake people and many other Native people living in Northern Alberta would be that the impact of proposed developments upon their ability to succeed in hunting and trapping would need to be taken into account in the planning process even where no reserve or land claim settlement was now in place (see Asch In Press and Usher and Bankes1986).

To these, I would like to add some thoughts based on the agricultural analogy I have used above. This analogy, in my view, is apt both because, like hunting-trapping, farming is a significant primary production sector and because in some ways the economic adaptation of hunter-trappers resembles that of small family farms based on mixed agriculture. In particular, I see that in both economic adaptations there is production for subsistence matched with the commoditization of certain produce for the purpose of generating cash income.

1) Were hunting end trapping considered to be a sector equivelent in importance to the agriculture sector for people living in Northern Alberta, it would follow first of all that there would be no thought of easing all people out of it and into "mainstream" life." That in itself would be a benefit.

2) Were hunting-trapping considered an economic activity which, like agriculture, was to be organized for the benefit of that economy and not as part of an "environmental"' regime that would have a great positive impact

for can one imagine how agriculture would be hobbled were every species we now call a weed to redefined for the purposes of planning as having an equal right to exist with the grains we eat?

3) Were hunting and trapping considered like agriculture, one could argue that special benefits available to farmers in the area of taxation such as, for example, the use of untaxed gas, should be extended to hunter-trappers, Provisions such as these would reduce the costs of production.

4)Stability in income obtained by trapping could be enhanced perhaps by extending to this sector schemes now developed for marketing certain farm products.

5) Funding, similar to that now provided to agricultural research stations, universities and agricultural colleges, might be provided to ensure that the latest and best techniques for hunting and trapping are developed.

6) Planning by government, as in agriculture, would clearly differentiate between primary producers and those who pursue the activity as a '*hobby" and develop policies to advantage the one over the other.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In the Northwest Territories, where Native people form a majority and where the lobby in favour of unbridled development is less powerful, they are just beginning to test and implement some of these suggestions. I fear it will be a long time before the same stage is reached in Northern

Alberta. Meanwhile, despite some successes, such 8s the Fort Chipewyan claims' settlement terms with respect to security of supply of bush resources and the management of wildlife, the circumstance now confronted by the Lubicon remains a prospected likely to extend to others as the push for rapid development continues.

Certainly, crass material interest drives this development orientation in Northern Alberta. But it is re-enforced by the self-serving belief in inevitability discussed here and it is this theme that provides a comforting balm for those who oversee the destruction of the landscape.

Of course, it is not true, as the myth suggests, that hunting-trapping can only continue until modern development takes place. Nor is it true that all development is incompatible with it; that to maintain hunting-trapping will require the creation of a "museum." What is true is that unbridled, uninformed andrapid resource development will destroy hunting-trapping, just as it would farming or any other activity that depends on a fertile landscape. The future of hunting-trapping in Northern Alberta, "then, depends very crucially on the ability to halt wild development. In this paper, I have explored one possible step on this path. It is to counter the myth that gives comfort to such development with its own internal inconsistencies and, through using an analogy to farming, to provide a framework for understanding facts within which the hunting-trapping sector is seen not as an evolutionary backwater to be steam rollered in favour of progress, but as an economic sector to be respected as an integral part of the 20th Century.

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(* indicates that the reference is incomplete at this time)

CC's to
- Denis
- DANW

THE ECONOMY OF NORTHERN NATIVE PEOPLE AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: A RESPONSE TO STABLER

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Canada

Prepared for the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada

Research Seminar Ottawa
July 5 & 6, 1984

As I understand it, my role at this research seminar is to respond to Dr Stabler's paper from the point of view of an anthropologist who has an interest in what is commonly referred to as the "native economy" of the north. It is a task that is impossible to do for Dr. Stabler's paper does not address the subsistence economy of northern native peoples or the hunting, fishing and trapping sectors which are the most crucial to it. Nor, except briefly and only with respect to a perceived gap in educational skills and mobility with respect to employment opportunities, does he discuss specifically the role of native peoples in the non-subsistence sectors of the northern economy. As a consequence, I have decided to limit my response to outlining some aspects of the subsistence economy and native participation in the non-subsistence sectors of the northern economy that may be of value to individuals interested in northern development, especially in the NWT. Given the limited time available and my inability in any case to cover all relevant points alone, what follows is a cursory overview. It will hopefully lead us to consider the possibility of holding a further symposium on the question of the native economy alone or some other means whereby the economic activities of the majority population in the Northwest Territories might be singled out for analysis. During the course of this discussion, I shall propose a few recommendations and, in passing, respond briefly to Dr. Stabler's assertion that gaps in educational skills and mobility are of primary import in understanding the place of native people within a developing northern economy.

The belief that the subsistence economy of northern native people was dead or dying and therefore had little significance for economic planning held sway among scholars perhaps until the mid 1970's. Since that time, due in so small measure to the findings of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Commission, of the James Bay Cree court case, of various land claims negotiations from the Yukon and the Northwest Territories to Northern Quebec, and the research of scholars often working in conjunction with native and/or governmental institutions (such as the Ministry of Renewable Resources of the Government of the Northwest Territories), it has become self-evident that the belief itself was erroneous. And, except for occasional archaic commentaries, has all but disappeared from discourse.

More contemporary is the notion found in such varied sources as statements by territorial leaders, native organizations, and industry that the subsistence economy of the native people - including particularly hunting, fishing and trapping, is of significance not only for self-perception but also for economic reasons. Two examples of this view will suffice to illustrate the point. The first is from Dennis Patterson who is current Minister for Aboriginal Rights in the Northwest Territories. He said in 1984 at the First Ministers' Conference on Aboriginal Rights that (Background paper p. 14):

> The aboriginal peoples of the NWT have to this day an economy which centres largely on the wildlife of land and sea. Visitors to our small communities are always surprised by the extent to which this ancient livelihood is intact, albeit modernized in many particulars through the use of new equipment, transportation means, etc. Dependent on ranging widely over large areas, and on species migrating far and wide, it is easy to see why the renewable resource economy clashes with other industrial uses and processes from shipping to road-building, aircraft noise to chemical wastes.

The second is from an industry sponsored study undertaken for Interprovincial Pipe Lines Ltd. in respect to the latter's submission to the National Energy Board hearings into the Norman Wells pipeline. They said (RMC p. 9):

> What is certain is that southern analysts have often underestimated the economic significance of native renewable resource use and too easily have jumped to the conclusion that it was dead or dying as a means of livelihood. A number of intangible and unquantifiable factors such as taste preferences, traditional food preparation and eating practices, the esteem in which a successful hunter is held in a native community, and the simple satisfaction of being in control of one's means of livelihood, combine to make any dollar estimate of the value of the native renewable resource harvest totally inadequate from the native person's perspective. Its loss or diminishment cannot be compensated for because there are no real substitutes. This only serves to make it harder for southerners and non-natives to understand and appreciate its value.

There are, as has been pointed out by many economists (including Stabler), few hard statistical ways in which to measure the economic value of the sector. Primary amongst these is the lack of a market alternative for most production with which to measure home consumption. As a result, there is no means to measure "opportunity costs" in a manner that exists in the agricultural sector. Furthermore, in the Northwest Territories, there are few accurate statistics concerning quantities (and quality) of production (except in the area of commercial fur activity) or participation rates.

Nonetheless, a few measures can be made. According to a study undertaken by Dr. Peter Usher for the Department of Education of the GNWT in 1977, a wide variety of species are taken in large numbers by native people. A quick count of two of these revealed that in 1974, 641 moose and 7167 caribou were taken by primarily Dene hunters (out of a total population of Dene of roughly 13,500). Other statistics such as those provided in the Report of the Mackenzie Valley

Pipeline Commission and communities studies undertaken at Fort Franklin and Fort Resolution indicate that the value generated in the hunting-trapping sector of the native economy ranged around 35-40% of total income. According to the geographer Ken Bodden who did a study in Fort Resolution in 1975-76, income from country food alone provided an imputed value (based on replacement cost) of 36.6% of their total income. This value, he continues (1981:vi) "ranked above both wage employment (32.6%) and social assistance payments (13.1%). The value of country food exceeded also the value of fur taken from the delta".

I can add to these an indication of participation rate. It is based on the field work of Shirleen Smith, a graduate student in Anthropology at the University of Alberta, who is undertaking field research among the Fort Good Hope Dene on the subject of valuing country food. She has found that this very spring roughly 50% of the population of that community went out on the land for "Spring Hunt". And it is anticipated that roughly an equal number will go to summer fish camp. These activities, combined, span about three months in the summer. Clearly, in terms of participation rate, at least in some Dene communities, subsistence activities do provide many persons with a focus for labour for at least part of the year.

That the hunting, fishing and trapping economy of native people in the North remains significant is clear. Its enhancement and development, therefore, ought to be one concern of economic planners. Yet, in my view, despite admirable efforts by individuals and native organizations, as well as some personnel within the GNWT, solid, inventive thinking on the subject still lags. Among the various factors inhibiting such thought I consider one for discussion here. It is the dominance in western thought of the notion of technological and economic evolution. We all seem to take it as "common sense" that the human

race has progressed through stages from hunting-gathering, to agriculture, and finally to industrial society. In this view, hunting-gathering based economies are not taken seriously because they are thought to represent an economic form that has been historically superceded and because we believe that it represented a "harsh" lifeway that no one would want to continue in the 20th century. Therefore, western thinking tends to seek alternatives to enable native people perceived to be trapped in this evolutionary backwater to move into the more progressive, modern way of life. To move "from the Stone Age to the Space Age".

These ideas are wrong. Take the proposition that hunting-gathering has been superceded by farming. The fact is that agriculture cannot replace hunting as the food producing sector in the north. Therefore, unless food is to be imported from the south, without hunting there will be no local sustenance. Given transportation costs alone, it may therefore be precisely within the economic interests of northerners to develop rather than reduce this sector. Take the central thesis itself. The fact is that agriculture has not itself been evolutionarily superceded by industrial society. Rather, it exists as a sector within industrial society. Otherwise, there would be no food produced. What has happened is that farming has become more efficient and better organized through time. In short, merely because something began thousands or millions of years ago, does not mean it is only a relic of the past - as our ability to speak, which must have been among the first human achievements, amply attests.

Nor is the proposition that the way of life is inherently so harsh as to not merit preservation worthy of further consideration. Hunters do often complain about the harshness of their lifestyle. In that, in my view, they act very much like farmers. However, unlike farmers, little thought is given to how to make what is an essential component of an economy less burdensome. Indeed, I

do not consider it hyperbole to state that were farmers disadvantaged in terms of taxation and special benefits to the extent that northern native hunters are there would be no food on our tables for want of producers.

But are native northerners hunting because there is *no alternative*? In part or at least for some the answer is yes. However, it does not tell very much of the story. There was a time when anthropologists believed that hunting-gathering lifeways were intrinsically harsh and hence it was in the self-interest of these peoples to adopt agriculture (and by extension now adept wage labour over hunting). Recent studies suggest the opposite. It has been found that contemporary hunter-gatherers who use little western technology or the fruits of western science and who live in environments such as the southern African desert which are apparently equally inhospitable to the Arctic and especially the sub-Arctic need invest only two or three days of work a week in order to procure their subsistence needs. It seems somewhat similarly the case, where we have some information, in the north. Thus, for example, while on the land people are often engaged in social activities that are of tremendous value and are not struggling full-time to obtain the food they need. In other words, hunters still hunt in the north even when alternatives are available.

That this is the case has been discovered by northern employers both in government and industry. Today, many of these provide means by which native employees can be given the opportunity to both work for wages and to hunt. Of these the most common is to work rotation system.

The fact of the matter may well be that northern native peoples committed to hunting-gathering type economic activities enter the labour market because they have no alternative to obtaining the cash required to prosecute it. This cash is necessary because native people have both consumer and capital good

needs from the western industrial system. Among the latter are such technological devices as skidoos, rifles, traps, etc. In short, new technology is associated with "modernization" of the hunting sector and not, as some have previously argued, associated with the abandonment of that sector! The cash necessary to purchase these goods came exclusively from the value produced in the commodity sector of their economy - the fur trade - during a long period that ended with World War II. Since that time, the exchange value required has not come from that sector alone for it experienced a depression of major proportions. As a result, people had to rely on other sources of cash and among these was wage labour. Hence, for some native hunters the entry into the labour market is a means to preserve their hunting activities. Again, they appear to be responding to conditions in a manner similar to subsistence farmers.

In sum, in my view it is an ideology that instructs us to consider the subsistence economy of the native people as an evolutionarily superceded activity that has led us to false conclusions about its future. I would therefore suggest that, as a first step, it is necessary to reconsider the facts on their merit in order to properly begin to grapple with the very serious problems this economic sector faces and come up with reasonably realistic solutions.

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Over the past decade, individuals who have looked at this issue realistically have generated many ideas as to how the native subsistence economy can be strengthened. To mention a few there are, among others, the

recommendations of the Berger Commission that include methods to improve the efficiency of the capital goods needed for that sector; recommendations from many, including myself, on means to provide a secure cash basis for prosecuting that way of life without the necessity of massive labour imputs; recommendations on how to protect the physical environment upon which the economy depends from unbridled development of non-renewable resources; and those, originated by Dr. Usher and others, that would argue for a legal regime that would make compensation, should damage be done, conform more closely to the rights commercial users would have. Finally, northern native organizations through processes such as land claims have been working to ensure the creation of a regime in the north that would act to protect their subsistence economy. Unfortunately, none of these has met with much success, especially at the federal level.

To these I would like to add a couple of ideas based on the agricultural analogy I have used above. They are intended to indicate the kinds of thinking that might be appropriately extended and developed even by those who do not have a detailed background in the economics of hunting and trapping. As well, it is hoped they might be considered as ways to produce a more empathetic and reasoned response to practical suggestions on the part of the federal government.

Were hunting and trapping considered to be a sector equivalent to the agricultural sector for the north; it would follow, first of all, that there would be no thought of easing all people out of it and into "mainstream life". That in itself would be a benefit. Secondly, there would surely be a ministry or at least a minister responsible solely for that activity who would have a voice in the federal cabinet or policy related to it (as there is now for fisheries!). Thirdly, were benefits such as special taxation provisions, and

untaxed (or subsidized gas) available to hunters as they are to farmers, this would have enormous benefits in making the costs of outfitting more realistic. As well, were some proposals developed around schemes such as marketing boards in commerical furs, this would enable hunter-trappers to better predict what their results are likely to be in any one year and hence to plan rationally. Fourthly, were research commitments made to ensure that harvesting was done as productively as possible that too would be beneficial both directly to the producer and, as is the case with agricultural colleges associated with universities, indirectly by providing incentives to youngsters who wish to take up this activity to seek higher education. Finally, were hunting-trapping considered an economic activity - like agriculture - to be organized for the benefit of that economy and not as part of an "environmental" regime that would have a great impact, for can one imagine how agriculture would be hobbled were every species we now call a weed considered to have an equal right to exist with the grains we eat?

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I now wish to turn briefly to the question of economic development and native northerners in the non-subsistence sectors. I do this with the knowledge that, regardless of the incentives provided, large numbers of native people will not take up subsistence activities, especially as full-time work. Stabler suggests that the difficulties such people face now are related to mobility and educational level. Given the current framework of the northern political economy, I would expect that this is the case. However, as I see it, it is

inevitable that this framework will change. Hence rather than considering programmes to shape individuals to the current regime, I would argue that we examine how changes will affect the problems Stabler now describes.

The key changes in political economy I refer to are the political evolution of the north and particularly the two territories to be made self-governing regimes in the Northwest Territories and the resolution of the property aspects of outstanding land claims. As I see it, the effect of these factors on native peoples participation in decision-making in the North will be tremendous. Indeed, I believe it would be proper to suggest that, especially in the Northwest Territories, it is soon to be the case that native peoples will be major players both in the political structure of the region and in its economy.

On the one hand, through the claims resolution, there will be cash provided to Dene and Inuit in order to generate their own development through such vehicles as development corporations. Once on stream, these corporations will provide Dene and Inuit with advancement opportunities that range well beyond blue-collar positions. Furthermore, such development will provide contexts to enable educational and mobility requirements to fit more closely with Dene and Inuit regimes, rather than force native people to conform to regimes generates solely by and for the benefit of southern corporations and their workers. It is my view that, just as the existence of an "agricultural-zype" school of higher education will stimulate native interest in advanced degrees, so will the kinds of opportunities that arise from management and directorship *in* such Corporations.

On the other hand, through both claims and political development, the native people in the north (and here both in the Yukon and the NWT) will have increased opportunities to participate in governmental institutions that are

Controlled more by local and native people. As a result, opportunities in such varied areas as education, the administration of justice, and health are likely to be developed in a manner more amenable to the needs of native people as potential employees as well as service recipients. Again, this can only stimulate interest in education and, with decentralization, a decline in the demand for individuals willing to be highly mobile.

In short, it is my view that the economy of the Northwest Territories today is dominated by a framework that is organized to benefit non-native people who are short term residents. These people have, by and large, extremely high educational qualifications and, obviously, a willingness to be mobile. The result has been a short-run disadvantage to local, native people. Now, with native people rapidly become the major force that their numbers would warrent in any jurisdiction that was organized democratically and on the basis of majority rule, this will not long last, particularly in the NWT. After all, how many non-native people would prefer to remain, say, in a community like Fort Wrigley as a permanent location regardless of the pay? And, indeed, how many could pass language qualifications were they to become essential for some jobs?

In my view, the primary difficulty facing long-term development for native northerners stems not from individual gaps in achievement level, but rather from the structural framework that the non-subsistence sectors of the economy are likely to take. If one accepts that economics have institutional aspects as well as technical ones, then it is not hard to see that today all the sectors of the northern economy, save the subsistence one, are organized in relationship to the value system of westerners. Were this to remain precisely the same, in the long-run it could have the effect of undermining traditional native values, even if these were adaptable enough to survive under the right regime within the

modern, technological economic system. It is a difficulty that has been well-perceived by the Dene with respect to political institutions and lies behind their view that Denendeh - or the political jurisdiction which is to be the self-governing region in which the Dene find their homeland - should be institutionally organized in a manner that reflects the consensual decision-making system they have traditionally used. Were this not done, they fear an erosion of their way of life, regardless of their numerical standing in the total population. Were it done, they fear such erosion much less. And, it is a fact that at this moment there is a forum in the NWT dedicated to seeing whether such an adaptation can be made.

I am arguing that similar difficulties can be seen to arise even when native people become more major players in the economy. Research must be done to examine whether institutions regarding organization of labour, ownership, payment, etc. when a native person works for an oil rig or in a class room can remain faithful to the kinds of traditions found in the subsistence sector. Otherwise, in the long run, the way of life may be increasingly undermined, regardless of who is in control. Again, the necessity for this kind of research has been recognized by native groups and is reflected as well in the report on cultural development produced by the GNWT. It is one that needs to be addressed further.

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In conclusion, I am suggesting that it is issues such as the development of the hunting-trapping economy and the creation of structural accommodations

between native and western economies and not simply educational attainment, mobility and the need for jobs in the non-renewable sector that will determine the course of northern development in general and in particular, for the native people who represent such a major component of its population. Without detailed information on the myriad of topics that feed into these issues, I simply cannot see how the Commission can begin to grapple with the complex questions that face the future of the northern economy. To handle this properly requires much more than my brief presentation here. In my view, it requires a special research seminar (in which perhaps discussion of the economies of southern native peoples might be included) in which scholars with such divergent interests as modelling hunting societies, development in non-western, non-socialist economies (such as those in parts of Africa) and accurate data collection concerning such issues as "value" should be present. Only then and through discussion with native people, government officials and other interested and knowledgeable parties can the commission possess the baseline information and the interpretive frame essential to making an informed contribution to a discussion of economic prospects north of 60°.

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