# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES 8<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY, 67<sup>TH</sup> SESSION

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TABLED ON Feb.6, 1979

# **メレイントン**

# What we plan



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It is this disappointing portion to which we are mainly addressing unlessives. We believe the reason for the variance in the quality of claims is a last of knowledge of southern market requirements.

We believe that if scal functors and their wives know what is required by scaltern markets they will prepare better skins to suit those markets.

We plan to see many funters and their wives personally. We plan to show them what they can do to make more money.

We plan to look into other jurisdictions to see how the quality of the skins differs from the quality of ours. If their skins are better, we will find out why and pass that information on to hunter.

We will work with the Hudson's Bay Company which has already hoped us considerably. We will work with all the people who buy skins. We will work with marketing experts. We will work with the manufactures of seates in products. We will work with fashion designers.

We intend to highly this industry up to a point where we can all be proud of it.

We are Krastingeet - the ones who deal with sealskins

# For more information:

Contact any member of the committee, including Thomas Tiktak, c/o Keewatin Inuit Association, Rankin Inlet, or Ron Milligan. Department of Economic Development and fourism. Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknite.



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# How we began

In August of this year a conference on the sealing industry was held in Yellowkinite. It was attended by fur traders, Inuit hunters, politicians and government officials. They shared ideas on problems in the shallown trade and came up with proposals that may ultimately impreve the declining sealskin market.

The conference was proposed and planned by Peter Ernerk, executive member responsible for the Territorial government's department of economic development and tourism, because the survival of the sealing industry seemed at stake

Mr. Errierk brought people together from all over the N.W.T., and my other parts of Canada, to concentrate on improving the sealskin industry.

Out of the conference a five man committee developed. Composed of a fruit majority, it was commissioned to delve into sealing problems in the Northwest Territories and, if possible, find answers.

The committee is calling itself Kissilinyeet, the ones who deal with scalishins. Its aim is to weed out the problems in the sealskin trade and improve both the market for sealskins and the quality of the skins themselves.

To this end Kissifiriyeet was invited by the Hudson's Bay Company to attend its September für auction in Montreal. This publication is a documentation of that event. If infroduces the committee, highlights some of their experiences and offers suggestions that could lead to greater financial rewards for seal hunters.

In the months to come Kissilitriyeel will become more involved in the N.W.T. sealskin trade, attempting to uncover ways that hunters may make more money from the sale of sealskins. The long hours and hard work put into seal hunting will pay off as both sealskin quality and the market bicks up.

Kissiliriyeet needs the coloperation of everyone involved to rebuild the ailing industry.

As Kissilinyeel succeeds, everyone prospers



# What we learned

If searskins are to bring better prices, many of them must be cleaned more carefully. In Montreal, the committee inspected seatskins from allower the N.W.T. The quality ranged from very good to very bad.

Skins should be washed on both sides with seap and water. The hair sides should also be washed with a cleaning scivent such as Varsol to remove grease and oil that would otherwise oxidize on the hair. Once oxidation occurs, yellow stains form which are sometimes impossible to remove.

The accumulation of on on the skin may lead buyers to offer lower prodes on the basis of legy appeal." If was suggested that if skins are properly cleaned, buyers might be induced to pay more in the same way that consumers pay more — and writingly—for incely packaged goods.

Clean skins mean less tisk for buyers. It is difficult to estimate the worth of skins that aren't property prepared. Sometimes, a buyer doesn't know whether a skin is good or bad until after the tanning process. Sometimes skins bought with oil on them are found to be useless after landing.

Anti sealing publicity is still a factor affecting the sale of sealskins. One German buyer said that Europeans, who buy a lot of sealskin products, are still largely anaware of the difference in seals and hunting multiplic.

It may be recessary to send a delegation to the International Fur Fair in Frankfurf, Gormany next April. The delegation, to include fruit hunters, well explain what the seating industry means to the North, now it is carried out and how it differs from the Newtoundland seal hunt

Many Europeans are unaware that many seals taken in the North are taken primarily for their meat and would be shot whether their skins are sect or not If may be necessary to investigate howskins are prepared in Groenland, in the Gulf of ST Lawrence or in Labrador. Skins from these areas are generally of a better quality than N.W.T. skins.

Inuit women should help find an answer to the problem of faulty preparation. This is because women are largely responsible for preparing skins brought to them by hunters. Kissifriyeet hopes to add three women to its five man group — one each from the western, eastern and central regions.

Top quality skins bring more than \$30 a piece, while poor skins may average as little as a dollar each. Some skins won't make any money at all, Of the 12,540 skins at the Montrear auction, 85 per cent were sold. In the jar soal category, extra and extra extra targe skins in good condition sold for \$33,50 while damaged skins brought \$1,\$2 each.

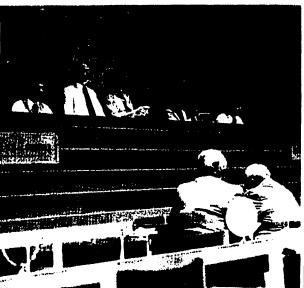
More uses for sealskins might mean less fluctuation in price and more money for hunters. Manufacturers need to be encouraged to create more items using sealskin. An item similar to the ookpik, but made of sealskin, might help the sealing industry.

Fresh skins sell faster and for higher prices than old ones. Skins that are not sold at one auction are held over till the lock although deterioration over a long period occurs. However, the Hudson's Bay Company will not sell skins unless the price is reasonable.

Nowadays, only about 40,000 sea/skins a year arrive at the Hudson's Bay Company auction compared to 70,000 a year a few years ago

In the photographs on these pages 1. Kissitiryeet learns about sealskins from a Hudson's Bay Company official 2. Louis Tapprofulk (left) and Ron Miligan examine damaged skins 3. At a Quebec City fannery, Kissifiriyeet sees how skins are stretched and dried. 4. And auctioneers keep a sharp eye out for buyers indicating their interest in skins.





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# Who we are

### Louis Tapardjuk

Mr. Tapardjuk is president of the Canadian Arctic Coloperative Federation Limited, a post he has held for three years. He lives in Igloolis.



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**Bob Hunter** 

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Mr. Hunter is a wildlife officer

with the Territorial government's

department of natural and cul-

tural affairs' wildlife service. He

has lived in the North 21 years

and is now stationed with the

government in Frohisher Bay



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Mr. Tiktak is president of the Keewatin Inuit Association for which he has worked for more than five years. Prior to that, he worked with the Territorial government's former department of social development Born at Eskimo Point, he now lives at Rankin Inlet.

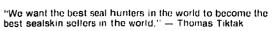


Mr. Milligan is co-ordinator of business development in the Ter ritorial government's department of economic development and tourism. His career spans more than 25 years in the business field most of it in the North, He lives in Yellowknifu.



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"The Inuit of the N.W.T. are the best seal hunters, That's not the problem. The problem is, with some of them, that they know too little about selling skins, what the market wants

prices possible. -- Louis Tapardiuk

"It isn't the seal you shoot that brings top dollar, not alone. It's also the way the skin is prepared for market." -Ron Milligan

and how to prepare skins for market so they get the best



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# Javpatee Qappig

Mr. Qappio is a director of the Pangnirlung Hunters and Trappers' Association An experi enced hunter, he is a carver and fishing guide as well.



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# The right way

Kissiliriyeet studied carefully reasons for decline in the sealskin industry during its recent trip to Montreal. After looking over hundreds of skins that were up for sale at the Hudson's Bay Company auction, they formulated the following principles for good sealskin production.

If these general rules are followed, the quality of poor skins should improve considerably and the prices people get for skins should go up. Market conditions for inferior and poor quality skins are presently in a very depressed condition. Some buyers are contemplating compulsory grading of all skins, so hunters are urged to take extra time and care to ensure better quality skins.

The co-operation of everyone involved is requested in trying for better quality. If will be to the advantage of all concerned.

### 1 Don't shoot seals in the body

Shooting a seal in the body soriously damages the skin and renders it almost worthless.

### 2. Take care when using boat hooks on seals.

When using a gaff, boal hook or harpoon to retrieve a seal from the water or an ice pan, apply it to the hoad to avoid damage to the main skin.

### 3 Bleed seals properly before skinning.

When returning home with a seal, be sure blood does not drain on the skin. If possible, hang the head over the side of the boat so the seal does not bleed into the bottom and damage other sealskins. Complete bleeding before skinning.

# 4. Skin seals as soon as possible.

To avoid damage and ensure production of a better quality meat product, skinning should be carried out as soon as possible after killing. Rinse the skin with water right away.

### 5 Use a good, sharp knife.

With a good knife, make an even cut from the lower jaw of a seal to the tail. Take great care to avoid making cuts or holes in skins.

## 6. Wash both sides of skins with soap and water.

Once a skin has been scraped, grease that remains should be washed off at once with soap and water. Soap will not harm the skin.

## 7. Wash with a cleaning solvent.

Grease that accumulates on the hair of the seal can be washed off with a cleaning solvent such as Varsol, an Imperial Oil petroleum derivative. Such a solvent, applied with a brush, will not damage a skin.

### 8. Stretch skins so flipper holes are small.

Flipper holes should be small and even in size. Making a skin too taut during stretching may enlarge flipper holes too much and lower the price. Poor and uneven pelling could reduce the value by as much as 90 per cent.

# 9. Dry in open air.

A skin should never be dried near a fire or flame, especially if Varsol is used to clean them.

# Cover skins for storage.

Sun and light causes discoloration and permanent damage, so a skin should be covered for storing.

# 11. Store in a clean area.

Keep the skins from contact with steel, iron, gasotine, fuel and any other ditty substances.

# 12. Sell skins as soon as possible.

To prevent deterioration through long storage, the skin should be sold as soon as possible  $% \left\{ 1,2,\ldots,n\right\}$