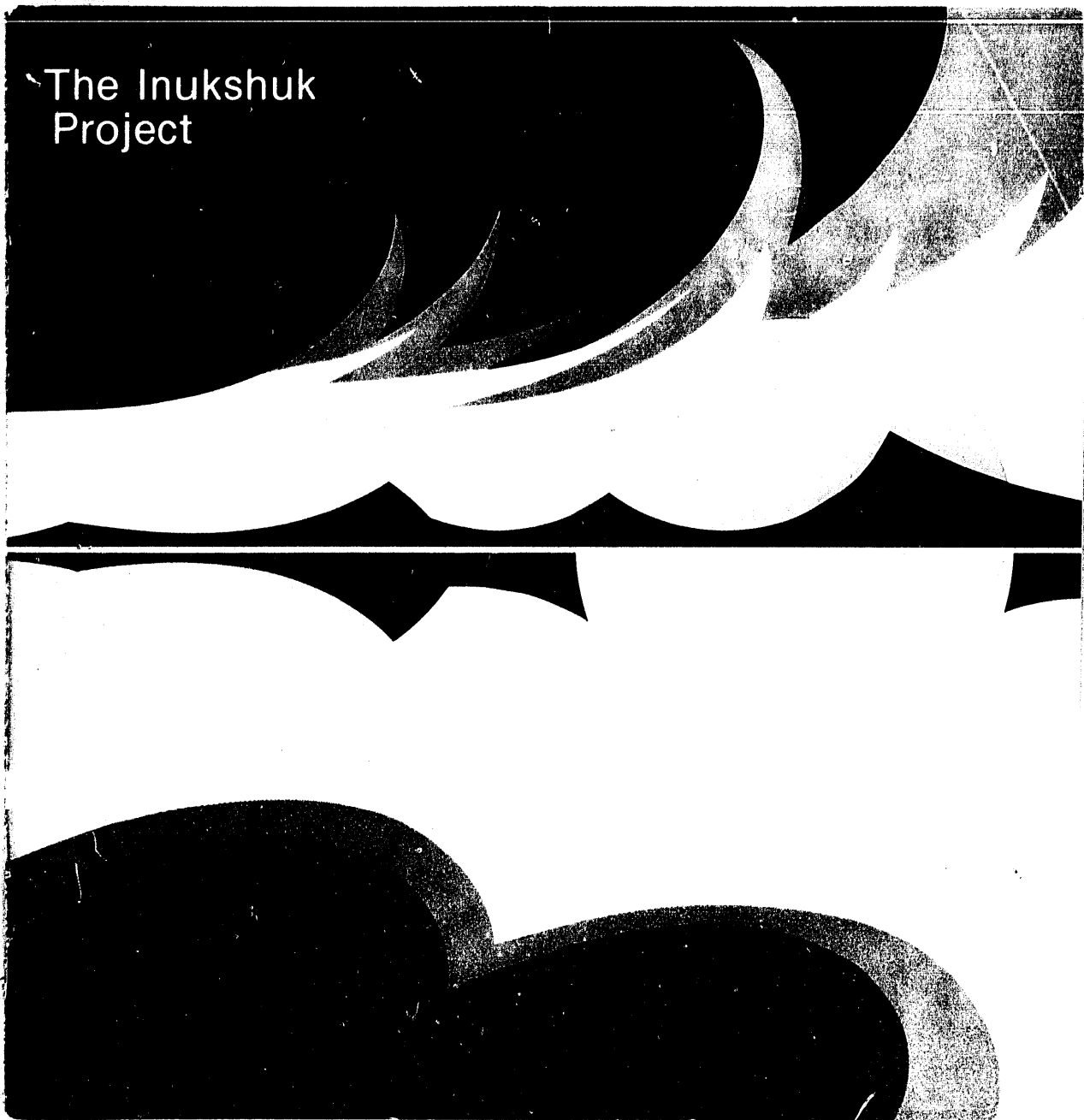


LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
9<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY, 4<sup>TH</sup> SESSION

TABLED DOCUMENT NO. 21-81 (1)

TABLED ON FEBRUARY 23, 1981

The Inukshuk  
Project



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Project**

**Tabled Document No. 21-81(1)**  
**Tabled 23-2-81**

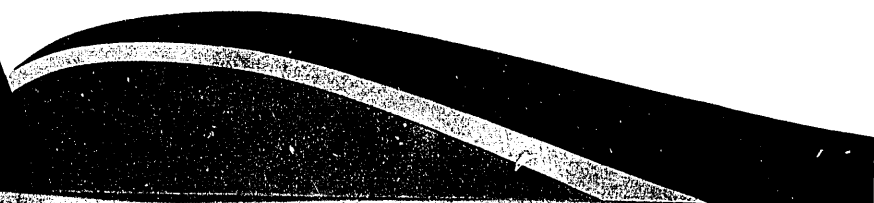
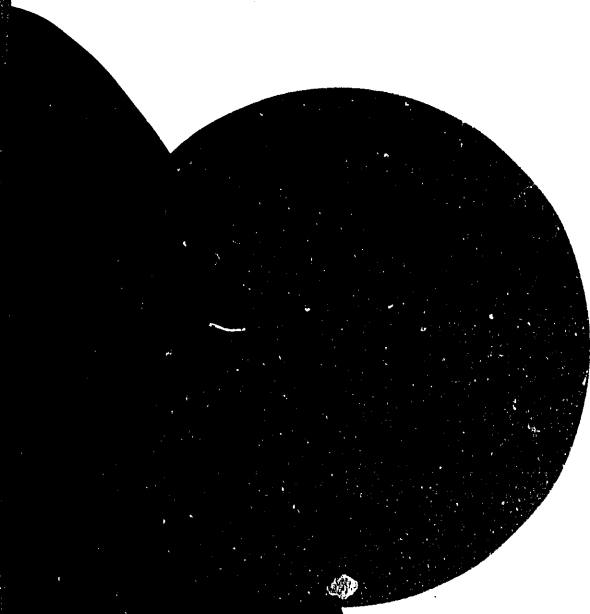
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# Introduction



Our dream is an Inuit communications system stretching all across the North that will enhance the strength and dignity of our people.

We want to have an Inuit broadcasting system that would allow us to produce our own dramas, documentaries, entertainment and news programs.

The Inuit message must be seen and heard in a way that is comfortable and exciting to us.

Our dream means we must grab hold of this technology in the North, and learn how we can expand and improve the present broadcasting network. We want to see the day when many of the television programs shown in Inuit communities will be produced by northern Inuit centres.

The Inukshuk Project is a step by Inuit Tapirisat of Canada towards turning these dreams into reality.

For years we have been concerned about the social, cultural and linguistic impact of television programming in the North. Television has been provided to Inuit communities over the last ten years, at a time when we faced immense cultural changes. We are being exposed to a massive assault on our language and culture. The subject matter has nothing to do with Inuit life or interests and we are worried it is making our children forget their language and past.

Inukshuk is an experimental communications program that gives us the opportunity to provide new production facilities, equipment and training for Inuit staff. We will produce Inuit language programming and make use of Inuit personnel who are anxious to use their skills in film and television production.

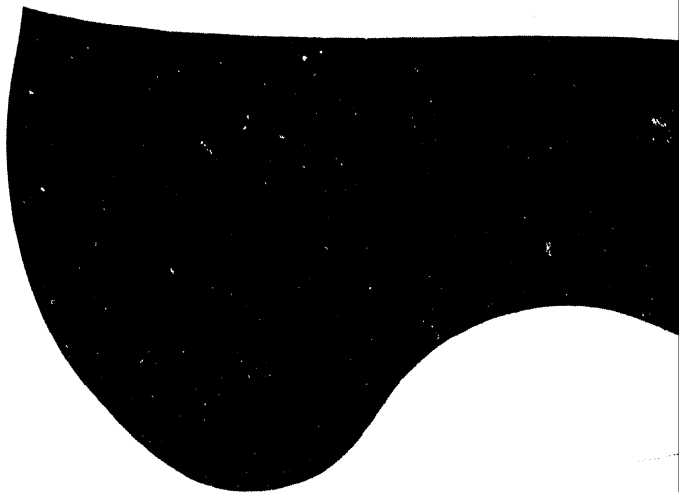
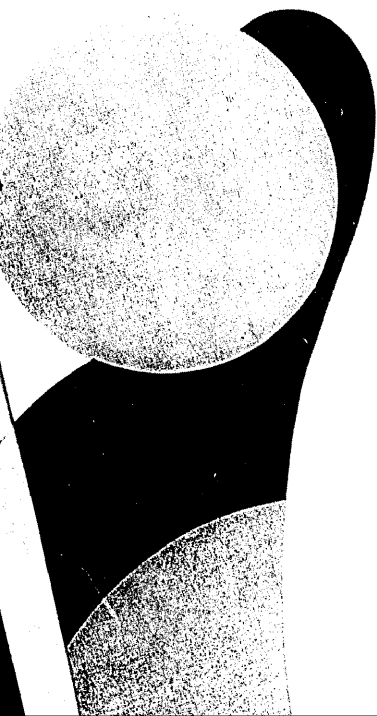
From this project, Inuit Tapirisat of Canada will learn how to develop an Inuit broadcasting system and a communications network that meets the needs and aspirations of our people.

We want to see our own actors and actresses playing dramatic roles on film and television. We want to have our own writers, musicians, producers and technicians behind the camera.

We can imagine our communities being linked across thousands of miles with a broadcast system that would deliver instant news and information using satellite communication.

We can imagine our children learning the history and culture of our people and land through material prepared by Inuit educators and fed to schools by satellite communication.

ground





The Inukshuk project is the most advanced communications experiment Canadian Inuit have ever undertaken. The new Anik B satellite gives us the chance to carry out a number of tests that will help us design communications systems adapted to Inuit needs.

Owned and operated by Telesat Canada, the new satellite is said to be one of the most sophisticated communication links in the world.

Inukshuk is the result of many years work by Inuit Tapirisat of Canada. Work that unquestionably had to be done when the first Anik satellite launched in 1972, brought television for the first time to many Inuit homes. Inuit expressed a great deal of concern about the impact of television in the North. Television came to the Arctic through CBC's \$75 million plan which brought the national broadcasting network to all communities of 500 people or more.

Frobisher Bay and Inuvik were the first Inuit communities to receive television service under this plan, and three years later a total of 14 Inuit communities were plugged into a mainly English language network.

Television had a detrimental impact on Inuit culture and we proposed that television could be a very valuable tool if we could use this medium to better reflect our needs and aspirations.

Almost no programming produced in the North is presently carried by the CBC Television Service and only thirty minutes of programming is broadcast in Inuktitut.

Pressed by our criticism, CBC admitted failure in not providing the means of producing northern native language programming in a vast region where seven different languages and numerous dialects are spoken. There was no provision for local and regional input to balance the overwhelming content of national and international affairs and programs designed with the southern Canadian population in mind.

It was apparent that no amount of lobbying or appeals to the CBC or government would bring improvement in the quality of television programs received in Inuit communities.

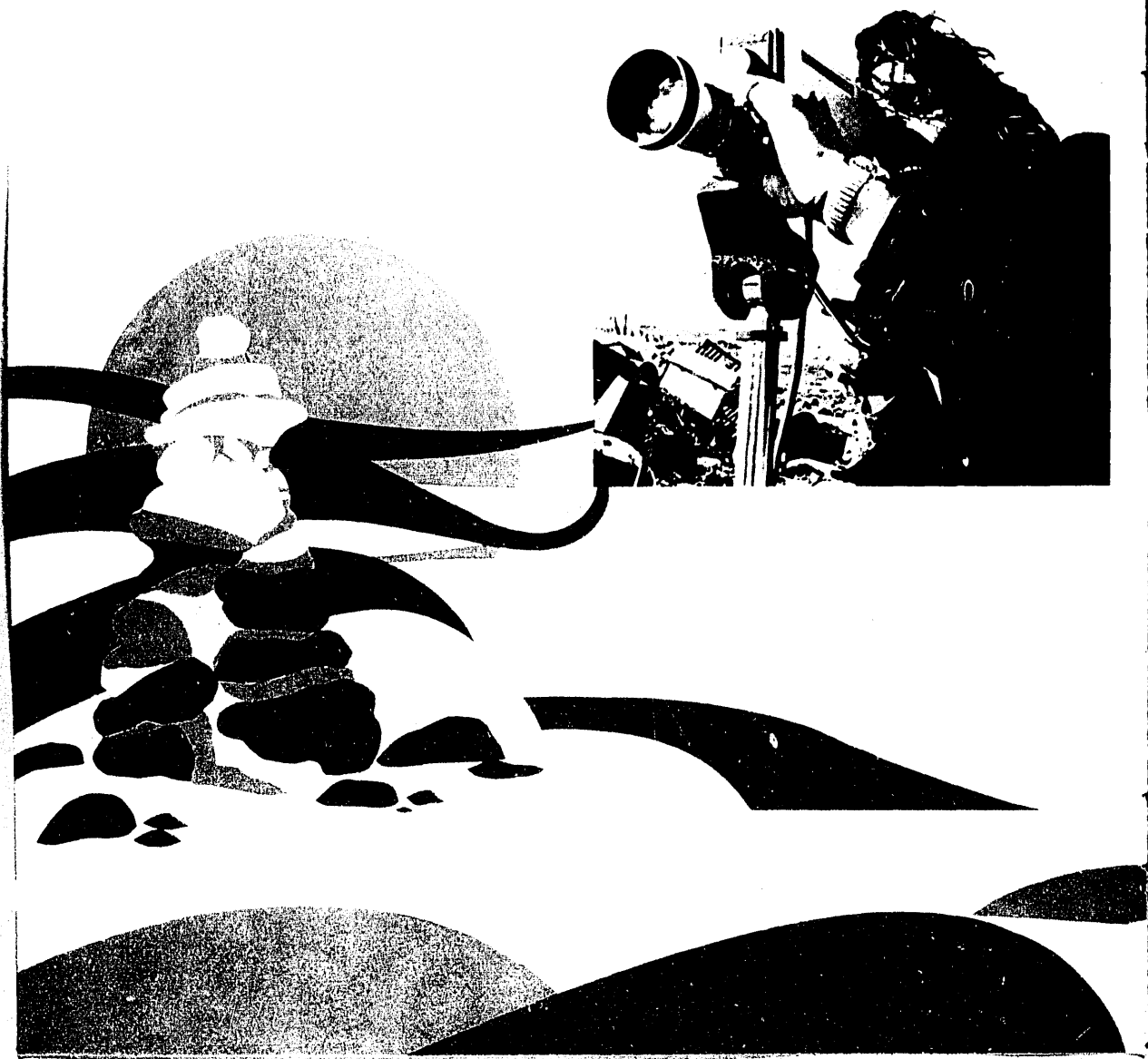
When the government made known its plans to launch the Anik B satellite, Inuit Tapirisat saw an opportunity of using the satellite for a special project. We decided to make use of the program offered by the Department of Communications which allows different groups and organizations across the country to experiment with satellite communication projects. DOC is leasing the satellite from Telesat Canada for this two-year communications program.

We submitted a proposal in January, 1978 after joint discussions with the CBC and the federal government.

On May 5, 1978, DOC announced the ITC project was accepted for use of the Anik B satellite for six months beginning in September 1980. In September 1978, the Treasury Board approved Department of Northern Affairs funding of \$1.9 million for the project.

The project will run for three years, but we hope the benefits to Inuit will last forever.

# Inukshuk



"Inukshuks are found in many areas of the North. These traditional routemarkers were used by the nomadic Inuit to assist them with the hunt and direct them home, and therefore use them for communication aid in their own way. Please consider this traditionally meaningful name."

David Audlakiak  
Frobisher Bay

We chose the name Inukshuk for our project because it is designed to communicate the strength of our culture and way of life in a meaningful, lasting way.

To find a suitable Inuktitut name, ITC held a northern-wide contest. Inukshuk was chosen from 39 submissions sent from all across the North.

It was suggested by David Audlakiak of Frobisher Bay and Larry Ussak of Rankin Inlet. Both men travelled to Cape Canaveral, Florida in December at the expense of ITC and Telesat Canada, to watch the rocket launch of the new satellite.

There are several different aspects of the Inukshuk Project and the potential for Inuit is tremendous. The project has been underway since November, 1978, when we hired David Simailak as the Project Director. We are training regional co-ordinators in the skills of film and videotape production and how these can be used for community and cultural development. Headquarters have been established at Baker Lake in the Keewatin Region of the Northwest Territories, where we are also setting up an Inuit film and video production centre.

Our staff is talking to Inuit communities about the issues and interests they would like to see covered, and we are helping different groups to get their ideas on tape or film. These videotapes will be circulated among all of the Inuit communities. People can watch these programs in the community hall, in the school or wherever they can put the equipment.

Inukshuk is sharing the cost of playback units with Inuit communities who don't already have equipment.

We hope we can sell some of these films and tapes to CBC so they can be broadcast on television, and put more Inuktitut programming on the CBC Service.

These steps will set the foundation for an information network among Inuit communities, and add more skilled people to the growing number of Inuit involved in media and film production.

We also plan to carry out a number of experiments using the Anik B satellite such as holding meetings by teleconference, and teaching courses in Inuit history and culture to adults and children. For example, an Inuk teacher in one community could talk to people in several communities at once using the satellite.

Using the satellite, we can save time and money spent on travelling long distances to attend meetings, participate in workshops or attend special events. Through these experiments, ITC will learn more about the possible benefits of satellite communication and give us more experience and knowledge on which to build a communications system adapted to Inuit needs.

# Training Program and Community Participation



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The Inukshuk team began work in Frobisher Bay early in 1979 with the help of Nunatsiakmiut, the first Inuit film production centre in Canada. Their first job was to produce three colour videotapes for community distribution and discussion. The three films include a documentary about land claims in the eastern Arctic, a drama involving a young Inuit man who is sent to jail and an information film about the Inukshuk project.

These films were chosen as examples of the different types of videotapes that can be produced to give the staff a range of experience in writing, filming, acting and technical aspects of production.

Now that the first three videotapes are completed, all communities will be asked to fully participate and get involved in the project. Community councils and local organizations will be asked about the kind of programs they would like to have made and will be helped to get those programs produced.

The regional co-ordinators will travel to every community in their region to discuss the project and get ideas about tapes the community would like to have made. From these discussions, the Project Director and the staff will make a list of program ideas that are a priority and get to work on production.

At the same time the regional co-ordinators will be looking for people experienced in video taping or film production and making a list of those who would be available for contract work. They will make a list of available equipment in the region and under what conditions it would be available to the Inukshuk Project. Trainees will be hired for the new production centre at Baker Lake.

This part of our project will last until September 1980 when Inukshuk will begin using the Anik B satellite for six months.

# Inukshuk and Anik B



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In September 1980, Inukshuk will use the Anik B satellite for tests involving six Inuit communities. These tests will involve workshops, teaching and meetings. The reason our project is limited to six communities is because it is necessary to use special ground stations for Anik B.

The ground stations are expensive, and the government has only 20 which must be shared by all organizations taking part in DOC's Communications Program. ITC is allowed to use six stations in the North for the six month duration of the project.

The communities that will have ground stations are Frobisher Bay, Pond Inlet, Igloodik, Baker Lake, Eskimo Point and Cambridge Bay.

These communities will only be able to use these ground stations for the length of the project and will only be able to use them to communicate with the other five communities with the same special Anik B ground stations. The ground stations will be returned to the government once the project has ended.

Here are some of the things we want to try out on the satellite:

- We want to find out what it's like for people in one community to give a workshop to people in other communities. Resource people can sit in a room in Frobisher Bay and say what they have to say to a camera. People in the other 5 communities can sit in the community hall and watch and listen to these resource people on a television set. The people in these communities will have microphones, and will be able to ask questions back to the resource people. They will be heard

by the resource people and they will be able to have a conversation with the people in the communities over the satellite.

- We want to see what it would be like for school children to be taught a class in Inuit culture and history by teachers who are in another community. Instead of the children having the teacher in the same room, they would watch and listen to him/her over a television set. There would be microphones in the room so the teacher could hear the children and answer their questions.
- We want to see what it is like for people in two different communities to hold a meeting via satellite. People in one community could watch and listen to people in another community over a television set. They could discuss common problems and arrive at decisions over the satellite.
- Other Inuit organizations want to participate in these experiments. The Inuit Cultural Institute would like the Inuit Language Commission to try using the satellite to teach language classes.
- The Qunnuayooaq Society, a senior citizen society in Frobisher Bay, may try out culture and tradition classes for the children in different communities.

# The Future





The Inukshuk Project as an experiment will end when ITC's six month test program using the new satellite is finished at the end of February in 1981.

From this program we will gain the knowledge and experience we require to build a broadcasting network linking Inuit communities that will be designed to meet the kinds of communications systems that should be developed in the future. ITC and other Inuit organizations will be able to decide which communications systems can best serve their needs.

The Inukshuk Project will also give ITC more influence with government in developing future communications systems that will use the best methods possible to aid the growth and development of Inuit society.

Throughout the project we'll be supporting existing Inuit film and videotape producers by purchasing and using their programs. By increasing the amount of northern programming available, we will be able to assist the CBC Northern Television Service to fulfill its mandate to serve regional needs.

These developments and the overall impact of the Inukshuk Project will greatly assist Inuit in our efforts to both preserve our language and culture, and determine our direction in a changing society.

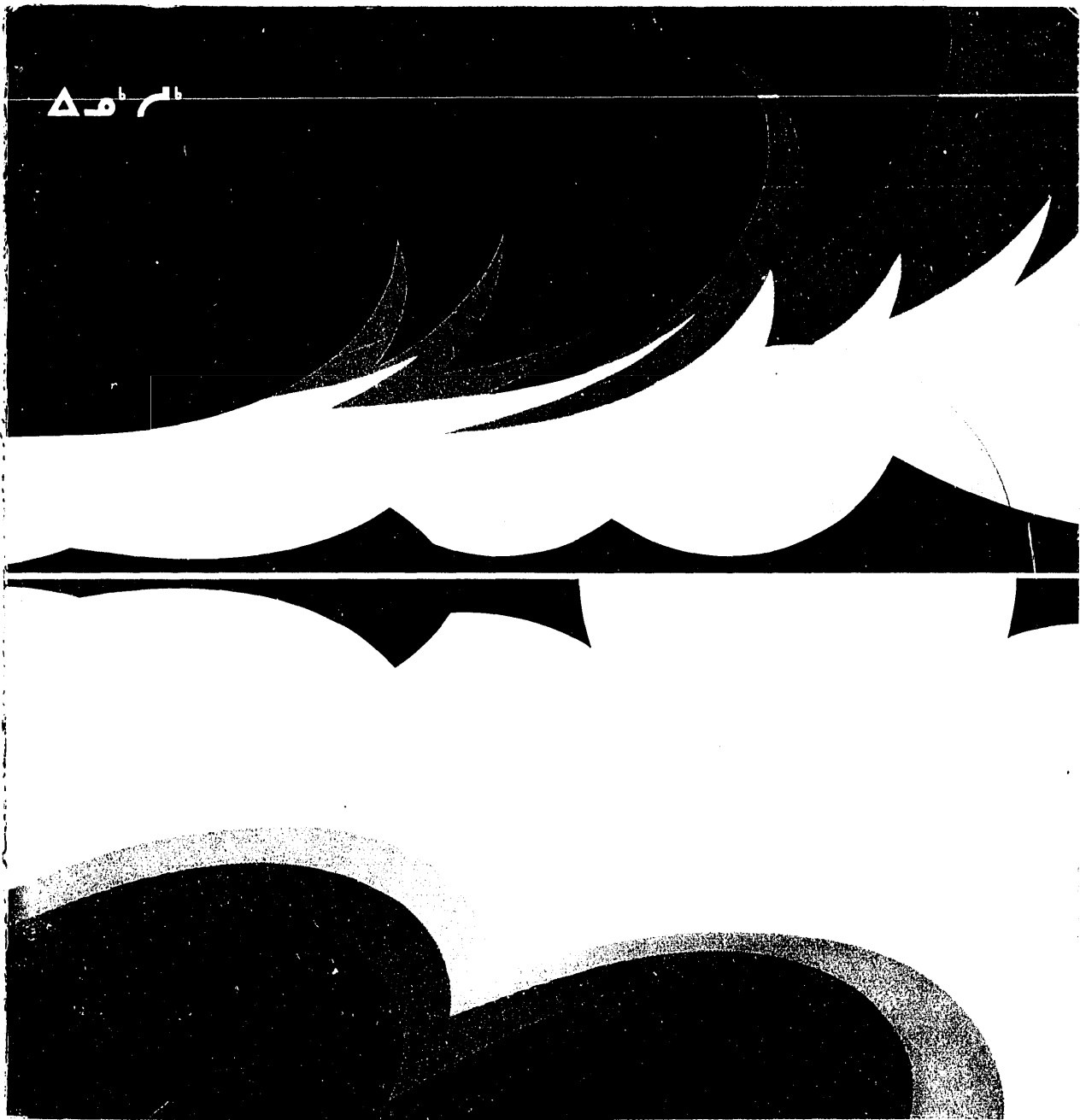
Published by:  
Inuit Tapirisat of Canada  
3-176 Gloucester Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K2P 0A6

Tel: (613) 238-8181

Design: Jacques Charette and Associates Limited



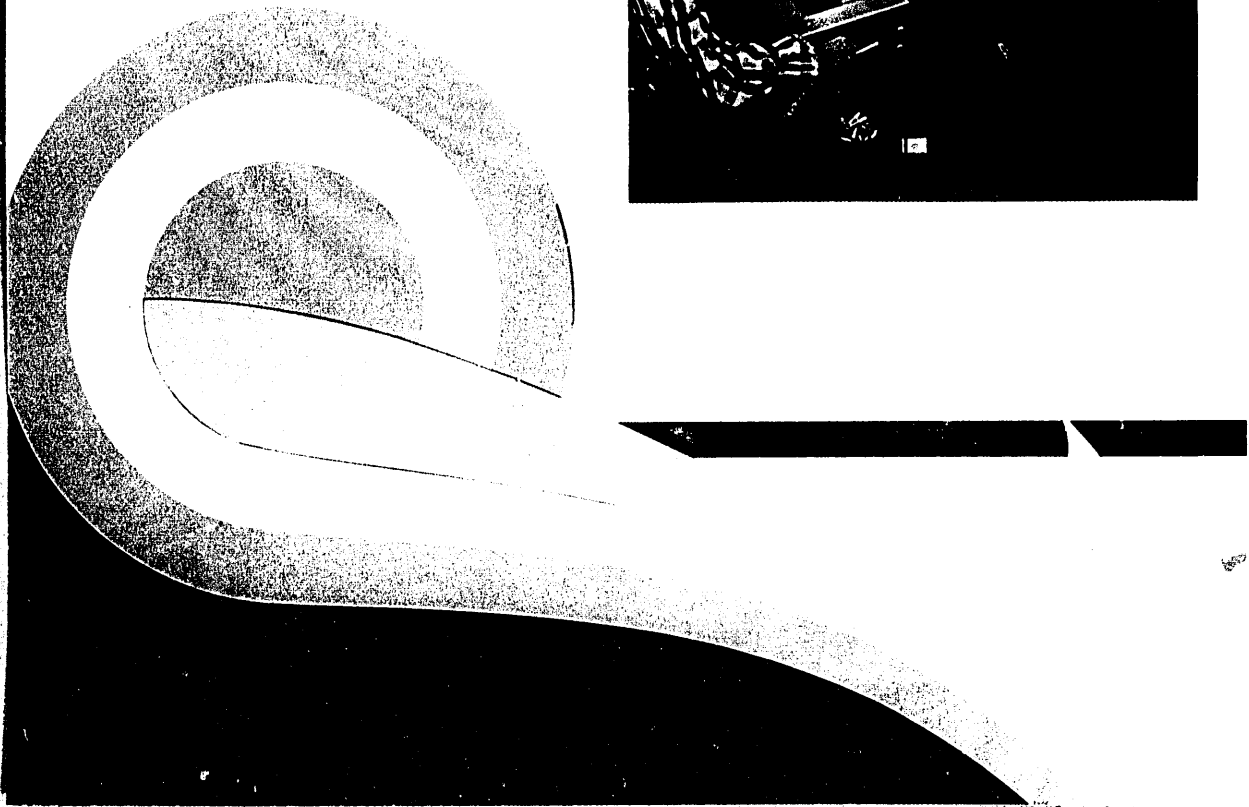
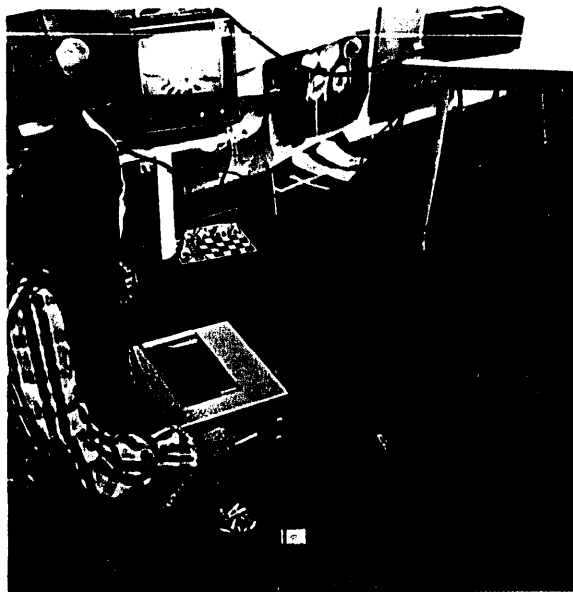
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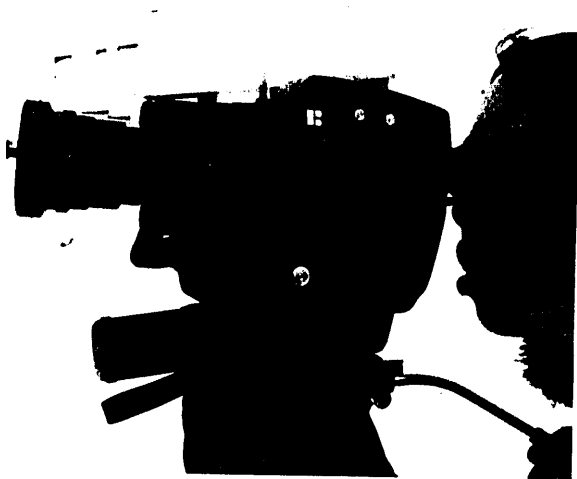
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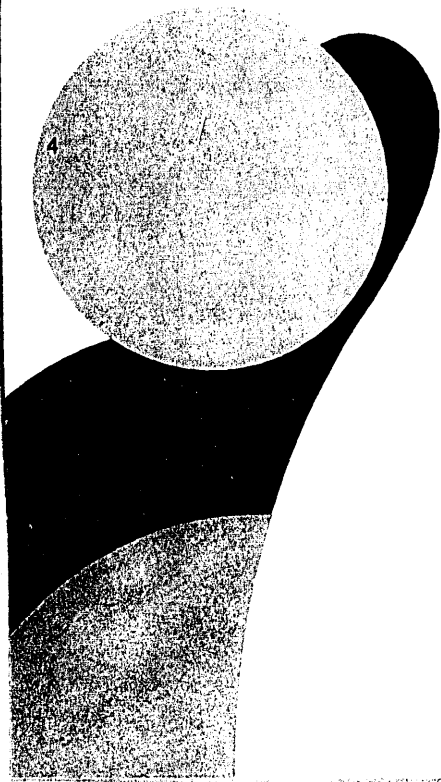
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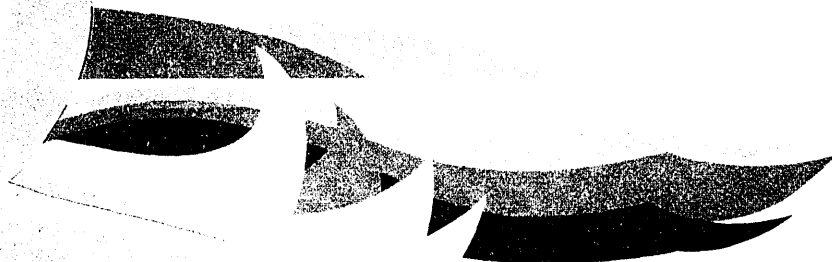
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