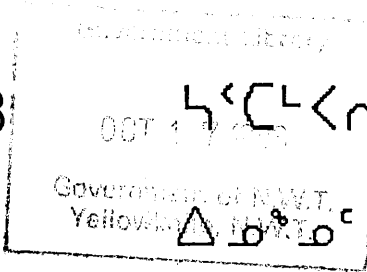


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LORDS OF THE ARCTIC : WARDS OF THE STATE

THE GROWING INUIT POPULATION, ARCTIC RESETTLEMENT AND THEIR EFFECTS ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE

A SUMMARY REPORT PREPARED BY

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FOR

THE REVIEW OF DEMOGRAPHY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY HEALTH AND WELFARE CANADA

INTRODUCTION

On May 26, 1986, the Minister of National Health and Welfare, the Honourable Jake Epp, announced the creation of the Review of Demography and its Implications for Economic and Social Policy. The Review was directed to report by March 31, 1989, on possible changes in the size, structure and distribution of the population of Canada to 2025, and on how these changes might affect Canada's economic and social life.

As part of this research effort scholars from across Canada were invited to submit research proposals to the Review Secretariat in 1986. In 1987 I participated in a 3 day work shop to discuss regional issues and later that year 21 of a possible 96 proposals were accepted for funding. This proposal, that attempts to describe the social and economic changes brought about by the resettlement of the Inuit into villages and the growth of the Inuit population in the Canadian Arctic, was included.

Since the Inuit were moved into permanent settlements in the late 50's and early 60's a new generation has now grown up in the social and cultural environment of houses, villages, schools, hospitals, jobs and television etc. Some of the changes brought about by resettlement have been neutral with respect to demographic, social and economic change, others have had positive effects (e.g. lower death rates) and yet others may have been detrimental (e.g. higher unemployment). In the absence of a reversal of this resettlement process the Inuit living in Arctic communities in the year 2025 will be made up of individuals that have almost no personal recollections of a life lived independently "out on the land". Given the almost compelling certainty of this conclusion a sense of the direction in which social and economic change is moving is essential if the social and economic expectations, desired by the Inuit, are to be realized.

Looking almost half a century into the future is very difficult. This is probably especially true of the Arctic, where resettlement and a clash of cultures has produced very rapid social, cultural and economic change. During the past half century this change has been marked most notably by an abandonment of the aboriginal life style. At best this research can only attempt to predict the directions of change into the future by working from the assumption that there will be no change in current government policies for regional development in the Arctic. Inevitably this assumption will be false, but hopefully, by making this assumption, a picture of some future existence for the Inuit will emerge that will stand as a bench mark from which desired futures might be better drawn and systematically planned.

If it is found that Inuit hopes and expectations closely match the social and economic reality, that is emergent in their communities, then there may be little cause for concern, or need for new government policies. However, if it is found that the most modest expectations, particularly for the young, are not in keeping with the emergent reality then hopefully this research will be able to identify the specific areas of policy that may require revision.

RESEARCH PROGRAM

Although structured interviews were the main source of the new data required for this project open ended discussion and my continued living in the Arctic were also important elements of the research. I first moved to the Arctic in 1971 and completed research for my masters and doctoral degrees in the Keewatin region of the Northwest Territories in 1981 and 1984. In 1986 I completed a study in Chesterfield Inlet for the Hamlet Council entitled Chesterfield Inlet: A Discussion Paper On Some Demographic, Social and Economic Problems Facing The New Generation. This research surveyed 229 individuals out of a possible 278 on 63 topics. In September of 1987, at meetings of the Hamlet Councils of Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet, I was given permission to conduct further research in these two municipalities for the Review Secretariat. Many surveys are completed by sending out questionnaires. Unfortunately the low return rate of these kinds of surveys can render their results unreliable. This problem is made more difficult in the Arctic where many elderly people only read and write Inuktitut and certain segments of the population, such as those who are employed and formally educated, are more likely to respond to the questionnaire than others, thereby introducing biases into the data. This problem was overcome by using face to face interviews which were completed in Chesterfield Inlet at the end of 1987 and in Rankin Inlet in the spring of 1988.

The Inuit Economy: Present

Hunting is still an important part of the Inuit economy although the fur trade and sale of fish does not provide very much income to those engaged in these activities. When asked 88% of all the Inuit in Chesterfield Inlet said they had eaten Inuit food (meat or fish) the previous day. As food costs approximately twice as much to buy in Chesterfield Inlet as it does in southern Canada the value of this food is considerable. Meat and fish is still shared through the network established by the extended family. This is particularly important for the elderly. Unfortunately the high capital and operating costs of mechanized hunting (about \$10,000 per year for the fully outfitted active hunter) seriously restricts hunting to those with a cash income so that those Inuit who do have a job, and hence an income, can afford to go hunting in the little spare time that they have, and they do. On the other hand many Inuit who do not have a job and income can not afford to go hunting, although they have plenty of time to do so. I had expected Inuit in the larger more urban community of Rankin Inlet to hunt less than the Inuit of Chesterfield Inlet but this did not prove to be the case as Rankin Inlet is the wealthiest community in the region and the Inuit there can afford to hunt. The Inuit of Rankin Inlet rely as much on meat and fish as the Inuit in Chesterfield Inlet and

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Approximately 100 interviews were completed in Chesterfield Inlet where the total population is about 294 living in 55 households. In Rankin Inlet 383 interviews were completed of which 42 interviews were from the grade 11 and grade 12 classes at the Rankin Inlet High School. These students came from all over the Keewatin Region. The total population of Rankin Inlet is probably in excess of 1,374 made up of about 330 households (Statistics Canada 1987).

In an effort to get up to date background information from agencies working in the Arctic I met with representatives of Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (I.T.C.), The Tungavik Federation of Nunavut (T.F.N.), The Inuit Broadcasting Corporation (I.B.C.), Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (D.I.A.N.D.), Department of Communications, the Inuit Women's Association, and Health and Welfare Canada, in Ottawa, and the Inuit Cultural Institute (I.C.I.) in Eskimo Point, in February. I then met with representatives of different Government of the Northwest Territories (G.N.W.T.) departments in Rankin Inlet and Yellowknife in April.

In May I wrote a brief report on AIDS which has been translated and sent to the Councils of Rankin Inlet and Chesterfield Inlet, the G.N.W.T., Federal Government, Keewatin Regional Council (K.R.C.), Keewatin Regional Health Board and Inuit organizations including The Keewatin Inuit Association (K.I.A.), I.T.C. and the Inuit Women's Association. I wrote this report in Chesterfield Inlet in July. After revisions the final report will be sent to the Federal Government, Rankin Inlet Council, Chesterfield Inlet Council, the G.N.W.T., K.R.C. and Inuit organizations at the end of October 1988.

INUIT DEMOGRAPHICS

The Inuit Population: Past

The fundamental unit of traditional Inuit social structure was the nuclear family comprised of parents and children (perhaps 5 or 6 individuals). Depending on seasonal hunting activities a number of nuclear families, representing one or more extended families (parents, children, grandparents and relatives by marriage), made up a hunting camp or band (perhaps 25 individuals). These groups shared relatives with other members of the same dialect group, or tribe, that would typically number some 500 individuals. These Inuit were often spread across thousands of square miles of land, sea and ice with population densities as low as 1 person per 200 square miles. Change in the fortunes and misfortunes of groups were sometimes accompanied by distant migrations. For example the Netsilingmiut, who now dominate the population of Chesterfield Inlet, moved there in the 1920's from their traditional hunting grounds some 500 miles to the north. Part of the reasons for this migration were the new opportunities for fur trade, with the Hudson Bay Company, which had been established in Chesterfield Inlet in the early nineteenth hundreds, along with an R.C.M.P. post and Mission. In the 1950's two events encouraged many Inuit in the region to move off the land and into settlements, illness (principally polio and tuberculosis) and the opening of a nickel mine in Rankin Inlet. In an effort to avoid the high death rates of the early 1950's this resettlement process was completed in the 1960's with promises of health care, free housing, welfare and education.

The Inuit Population: Present

The settlements established across the Arctic in the 1960's have steadily grown. In 1981 the total Inuit population of Canada was 25,871 having doubled in the previous 20 years (Robitaille and Choinière 1986). This high growth rate is a product of both lowered rates of infant mortality brought about by resettlement, and associated health and social services, and traditional values that favoured large families. As a consequence of these factors the present Inuit population is, on average, much younger than the traditional population in which many more children died.

Although there is very little migration of Inuit in and out of the Arctic there is considerable migration north of the tree line. Between the communities of the Keewatin many young people migrate when they get married and the migration of families to Rankin Inlet, in search of better economic and educational opportunities, is probably only limited by the acute housing shortage. Although the older Inuit identify with the tribe or dialect group they and their parents came from the younger Inuit tend to identify with their community. In Rankin Inlet a new dialect (Keevaliqmiutitut) is emerging that is a mixture of perhaps 5 dialects from other parts of the region.

Inuit in the Arctic are unemployed after the employed white population are removed from the calculation.

Some Inuit have become successful business men. It should be noted that they tend to employ more Inuit than businesses owned and operated by non-Inuit. However, for the many Inuit without jobs, the different forms of social security available to them have become the dominant element in their economy. In Chesterfield Inlet welfare payments are the preferred form of social support. Many of the Inuit there do not receive unemployment benefits, although they may be eligible for them, as the poor mail service, the difficulty in resolving administrative errors (there is no Manpower office in Chesterfield Inlet) and the complexity of the forms written in a foreign language (English not Inuktitut) discourage many from even applying for unemployment insurance benefits. Welfare, on the other hand, can be obtained through a simple interview with an Inuk representative of the Government of the Northwest Territories. In Rankin Inlet (where there is a Manpower office that can sort out problems) more Inuit do receive unemployment insurance benefits. In practice many Inuit use unemployment insurance benefits and welfare payments to subsidize their hunting/subsistence economy activities. Some administrators turn a blind eye to this practice in the belief that such activities are probably of more benefit to the welfare recipient than simply waiting at home for a job opportunity that will not come. Unfortunately some administrators interpret the welfare rules very strictly and will not allow payments for cloths to be used for purchasing hunting supplies with the logical argument that skins from the animals killed will be used to make cloths and they may also insist that the recipient be in town on "welfare day" when hunting activities require the recipient to be out on the land. Other counterproductive quirks of the social security system in the Arctic would include the withdrawal of some benefits from individuals who enter an educational program even when that program can not sponsor the recipient and a drop in disposable income if a recipient takes a job at minimum wage and then has to pay a higher rent and/or babysitter. As a consequence many Inuit take welfare even when they would prefer to be in a job, particularly if that job is part time at minimum wage, or would prefer to be out on the land actively involved in the subsistence economy, or would prefer to be in a program of education.

The Inuit Economy: Future

The present economic prospects for the Inuit may well be one of the worst in Canada marked as it is by poor levels of education and high unemployment that is further aggravated by the proximity of a white population that is well educated and enjoys

The G.N.W.T. have produced growth figures for individual Inuit communities based on zero migration (N.W.T. Bureau of Statistics 1988.06.08). For Chesterfield Inlet the growth for the 20 year period from 1986 to 2006 is from a population of 294 to 509 and in Rankin Inlet the same calculation produces a growth from 1,374 to 2,057. However, when effects of in-migration are taken into account, due to the establishment of a CF-18 operating base, college campus, cottage hospital, more tourist and administrative facilities, then Rankin Inlet is expected to grow from 1,374 to 2383 during the same 20 year period (Uma Engineering 1988). Conversely, Chesterfield Inlet, due to out-migration, may not grow as fast as predicted, but it will still grow and, all other things being equal, double in size long before the year 2025. As for Rankin Inlet, it can be expected to become a small town, like Iqaluit (Frobisher Bay).

As the size of Inuit families is on the decline a doubling of the population will produce more than a doubling of the number of Inuit households. This fact will in turn create greater need for expanded housing construction and community services than a simple doubling of the population would at first indicate. Although extended families still exist they are increasingly spread out across the Keewatin Region as a result of increased migration. This fact, and the increase in the importance of the wage economy and social services, will continue to undermine the importance of the extended family as a unit of social action. Increasingly nuclear families, particularly unmarried mothers and their children, will come to rely on the state for social support.

However this description of Arctic communities growing and becoming more regionally centralized is dependent on several important assumptions. Firstly, it is assumed that AIDS will not have a devastating effect on the Inuit population. Although the Inuit are a sexually active and partially isolated population no special policies or programs have been developed to either prevent this disease from reaching the Arctic or for monitoring the progress of this disease in the Arctic. Given this situation and lack of reliable epidemiological data I am not able to say, with any confidence, that AIDS will not have a devastating effect on the Inuit population. Secondly, I have assumed that government policies will not be changed so that those Inuit who wish to establish new communities, away from current population centers, will continue to find it very difficult to do so as housing, social assistance, health care and education are, for most practical purposes, only available in the established communities.

Thirdly, more Inuit may migrate to southern Canadian cities or Yellowknife. But I am inclined to believe such a trend will not have a significant effect on the size of the Inuit population in the Arctic because Inuit migration out of the Arctic is and always has been low. Well educated Inuit will probably continue to be able to get a better job in the Arctic than in the south and the migration of poorly educated Inuit will only transport social problems from the Arctic to "Main Street - Big Southern Canadian City" where the social problems will become more acute.

almost no unemployment. In the short term this situation could be improved if the Inuit replaced the white people who came to the Arctic to take the trade, technical and professional positions the Inuit are not considered to be qualified for. But even if this goal were completely achieved, within a single generation, more Inuit will still be unemployed in the future as the growth in the Inuit work force over the next 20 years is much larger than the total number of white people working in the Arctic today. Without the out-migration of the Inuit in their thousands, which is very unlikely, the number of jobs in the Arctic will have to be doubled, and then doubled again, if levels of employment, comparable with the rest of Canada, are to be achieved. Even this unrealistically optimistic prospect would require no in-migration of skilled workers from the south. High Inuit unemployment, it would seem, is quite unavoidable in the kind of wage economy that has been introduced to the Arctic during the past 30 years. If current trends continue most of the Inuit living in the Arctic in the year 2025 will be second generation wards of the state whose society, economy and culture may have more in common with an urban slum than with the life their grand parents knew.

INUIT EDUCATION AND ENCULTURATION

Inuit Education and Enculturation: Past

Traditional Inuit education can not be separated from Inuit enculturation, learning their culture. This "education" began when the children started to copy the activities of their older brothers, sisters and parents. Given the strong division of labour by sex in traditional Inuit society the girls would learn how to prepare, cut and sew skins from their mothers while the boys learnt how to make hunting tools and hunting techniques from their fathers. Appropriate work ethics associated with quality control and stoic persistence were taught, as the seams of Arctic clothing could not split or allow wind to pass through, and a hunter could never be a quitter. The survival of the Inuit depended on the successful teaching of these values. The equivalent of tests of competence were celebrated when a girl successfully made her first mitts and boots and when a boy killed the first of each kind of animal relied upon for food. Young men and women were expected to be fully qualified in their respective skills before they were married in their early teens.

Formal education came to the Arctic in the 40's and 50's when Mission schools were established to teach Christianity and the "3 Rs", reading, writing and arithmetic. These schools were residential and strict. Inuit children, with no previous formal education, were generally taken away from their families a few years before they reached puberty. They spent the winters in school and the summers out on the land with their parents. Only English could be spoken in school, their native language, Inuktitut, was forbidden. In practice then these children spent their school years alternating between a "white" immersion education and enculturation experience and an Inuit immersion education and enculturation experience. Many of the children who attended the Mission school in Chesterfield Inlet went on to attend the Churchill Vocational Center and from there the most promising students were sent to schools across southern Canada. With the establishment of the settlements in the 1960's Inuit children were able to live at home while they attended grade school up to grade 9 and young Inuit men and women who went on to high school were able to stay in the north amongst their peers at schools in Yellowknife, Frobisher Bay and most recently in Rankin Inlet.

Inuit Education and Enculturation: Present

The Inuit who went through the residential school system in the late 40's, 50's and early 60's believe they have received a better education than the Inuit in the modern G.N.W.T. school system. They believe their success in becoming the native leaders in the Arctic of today is largely attributable to their rigorous education. One native leader I interviewed was so sure of the truth of this situation he took a T.A.B.E. test and scored above the grade he had been awarded in school while most school children in the Arctic today score below their recorded school grade. The Inuit who spent their school holidays out on the land with their parents also have a good command of the Inuit language as well as their land skills, hunting skills and sewing skills. Most young Inuit do not possess these skills. Many young men can not build an igloo or make hunting tools and most young women can not make cloths from skins. When the young speak amongst themselves they often prefer to use a broken form of English with a shortened vocabulary and their Inuktitut possesses but a fraction of the richness that their language possessed for their parents and grand parents who were often

accomplished poets. The generation of Inuit who were born, grew up and went to school in the settlements established in the 60's have acquired neither the traditional or formal education possessed by their older brothers and sisters. They find it very difficult to live on the land, develop a career, or complete a program of higher education. They are a lost generation whose education and enculturation provides most of them with little more than the skills required to live out their lives as wards of the state. If filling out a form is considered to be an essential skill for living in such a society then many Inuit would fail to meet even this most modest of expectations.

Some statistics and observations from my interviews may help illustrate the extent of this human tragedy. Robitaille and Choinière (1985) note that 72% of the Inuit in the Territories reach grade 1 compared to 96% of the total Canadian population, 34% of the Inuit in the Territories reach grade 9 compared to 80% of the total Canadian population, 15% of the Inuit in the Territories graduate from High School compared to 52% of the total Canadian population and 1% of the Inuit in the Territories attend a university compared to 16% of the total Canadian population. These statistics improve for the younger population who have grown up with schools in their communities. Of the Inuit in the age group 20 to 24 years old 55% have reached grade 9 compared to 80% of all Canadians. Unfortunately this apparent improvement is distorted by the fact that these grades more closely correlate with the classes Inuit have been placed in as opposed to their level of academic achievement. T.A.B.E. tests completed on Inuit entering adult education programs in the Keewatin tested, on average, 2.4 grades lower than their grade achieved in school (G.N.W.T. Dept. of Education 1984). One grade 7 student tested out at grade 1.5. Similar short falls were found amongst the Inuit students entering the new High School in Rankin Inlet. Not surprisingly, as the students came in to the High School with academic abilities closer to grade 7 than grade 9 the few Inuit who have received their high school diplomas all received general diplomas that do not prepare the student for a university education and profession. It should also be noted that none of the Rankin Inlet High School graduates who are Inuit came from Rankin Inlet. The only Inuit to graduate came from other communities in the region as they had to stay in a residence where their study habits were carefully monitored. I have been told that the same has happened in Iqaluit (Frobisher Bay) so that having a high school in a community in the Arctic actually reduces the chances of local residents graduating with their diploma. Many white people with children of junior high and high school age try to transfer to Yellowknife, if they work for the Government of the Northwest Territories, or move south so that their childrens' education will not suffer during these critical years. As a consequence the children of white parents often receive a much better education than their Inuit counterparts so that they are able to successfully complete a program of higher education in southern Canada. Although the Inuit greatly outnumber the white population only 70 Inuit from the Northwest Territories attended university, college or technical school in southern Canada in 1986/87 as compared to 537 non-natives who were nearly all from Yellowknife (G.N.W.T. Dept. of Education, Undated).

As would be expected poor levels of education produce high rates of failure in all training programs in the Arctic. Both instructors and Inuit students have told me that Inuit quit their courses when they can not comprehend the text books they are expected to learn, or fail to perform basic measurements that may require an understanding of fractions. Even Inuit students who pass a T.A.B.E. test at an average level of grade 10 may fail for these reasons as their English comprehension and math will be below grade 10. As with the devaluation of the grades given to students in northern schools one solution to this problem, from the point of view of the bureaucracy, is to drop standards. For example, when applicants for jobs with the Government of the Northwest Territories requiring grade 10 or grade 12 kept failing to pass T.A.B.E. tests, T.A.B.E. tests were dropped and many diplomas and certificates given out by the Government of the Northwest Territories do not meet southern Canadian standards and are not recognized outside the Northwest Territories.

In institutional terms this lowering of standards has thwarted the efforts of the Equal Employment Directorate as they require about another 1,300 natives with grade 12 if they are to reach their target levels of native employment in the Government of the Northwest Territories. The schools are not producing sufficient numbers of high school graduates to meet these goals. Even when Inuit get into a trainee position they frequently quit when they are required to take over the full responsibility of the job as they do not have the experience, training and hence confidence to hold down the job.

In personal terms the plight of one newly married Inuk, who I interviewed in Rankin Inlet, illustrates the danger of lowered standards. He quit school when he was about 15 when he was in grade 8. As he is now starting a family he decided to go to Adult Education for upgrading. With grade 10 he could get a Government job. But unlike the school, Adult Education use T.A.B.E. tests. He tested out at grade 4. Making it from grade 4 to grade 10 was too much for him to comprehend. He feels cheated. He has given up for the present and his family are on welfare. He told me he won't let his kids quit school.

The failure of formal education in the Arctic is surpassed only by the failure of the education system in the Northwest Territories to teach and preserve the Inuit language, history and culture. Bringing the Inuit into settlements and providing them with television, dominated with southern programming, may well have done the greatest harm in this area of deep concern to the Inuit. However, a curriculum has only been developed to teach the Inuit language up to grade 4 and not enough Inuit teachers have been trained to deliver even this limited Inuktitut program. Failing to teach English or French as a second language, beyond grade 4, would not be tolerated in southern Canada and a failure to teach Canadian history from the French perspective, in Quebec schools, contributed to the formation of the separatist movement in that province.

Inuit Education and Enculturation: Future

The individuals who benefit most from any education system are those that are able to take the greatest advantage of it. In the Northwest Territories these people are the sons and daughters of the non-native Canadians who went north to help the native people of the region. Many of these sons and daughters are returning to the Territories, after they complete their university education, to take the professional positions that their parents may have hoped to see filled by natives. This perpetuation of higher education in a small and racially distinct segment of the northern population will sew the seeds of what is technically termed "structural racism". In the long term this is a recipe for social discord and possibly even social upheaval as the native people in this region of Canada are, and will remain, a majority.

The Inuit language, culture and traditional land skills are being lost at an alarming rate. If all this is forgotten the Inuit, like other native peoples in Canada, will, whatever the truth of the matter, blame the white man for their loss. When combined with the social inequalities of "structural racism" the demise of the Inuit culture will probably mark the end of a healthy and constructive white/Inuit relationship in the Canadian Arctic.

INUIT SOCIALIZATION AND SOCIAL CONTROL

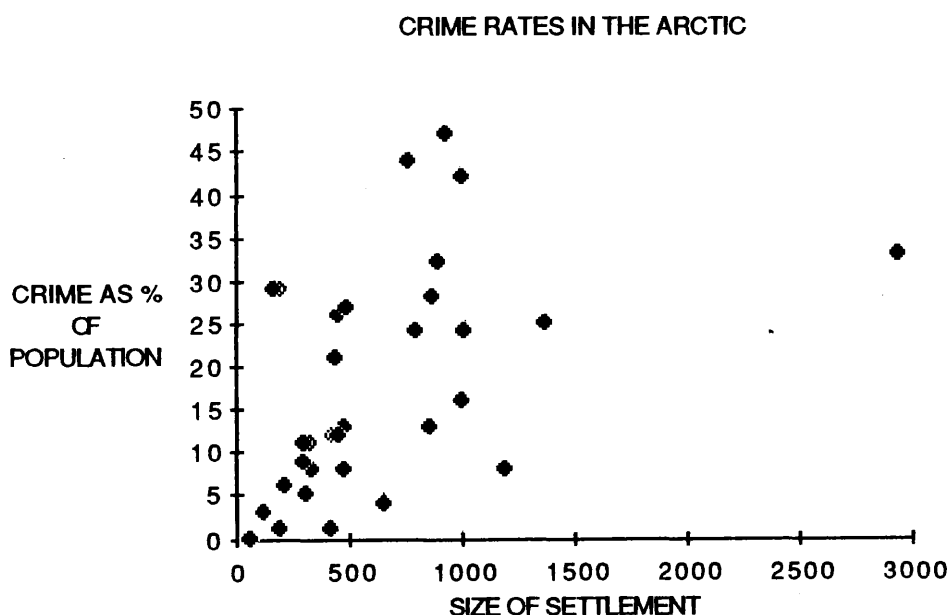
Inuit Sociality: Past

In traditional Inuit society authority rested squarely in the hands of elder relatives. From this simple premise every one knew who had authority over them and who they had authority over in networks of extended families that could sometimes number hundreds of individuals. In practice this system of social control was made more complex by male/female relationships, the loss of authority by the senile and incompetent and ambiguities in the elaborate system of Inuit kinship. In general, however, elder relatives had to be listened to. When this form of social control failed, because two disputants could not resolve their differences with an appeal to the authority of an elder, they could attempt to settle their argument in a forum of rhetoric using the Inuit "song dual" or in a forum of strength that involved carefully regulated forms of wrestling and boxing. If all this failed then murder and possibly a family feud might result. Disruptive individuals could be brought under the control of their community with gossip, ridicule, a withdrawal of the welfare of the community (being left out of patterns of food sharing), ostracism, abandonment and when all else failed, if an individual was a danger to the community, execution. The introduction of the R.C.M.P. to the Arctic was welcomed by most of the elderly Inuit I have discussed this subject with as the R.C.M.P. reduced the rate of violent crime, particularly murder and when the R.C.M.P. and courts dispensed justice there was no need to start a feud.

Inuit Sociality: Present

Although the traditional lines of authority still exist they are not as strong as they used to be. Several reasons are given for this decline, for example, due to the generation

gap and culture gap, between the elders and the young, the sanctions of ridicule and gossip do not have the biting effect they once did. The threat of withdrawing the welfare of the community no longer exists as welfare can now be obtained from the state. Respect was once given to the elders as they possessed the knowledge required to live in the Arctic. White teachers are now the primary source of the knowledge needed to live in the new Arctic and although they may not have gained the respect of the young the elders lost their respect when schools and settlements were established. In a like manner the authority of the elders has been eroded as the R.C.M.P., judges, missionaries and public administrators took over traditional roles of authority that had once been the exclusive right of the elders. This problem is further aggravated by the fact that most of these new authority figures are not Inuit. Although there is a great deal of variation between individual families in which some families maintain traditional values while others do not there seems to be a growing subculture amongst the young who have created a way of life almost separate to the society and culture of their parents. This was most noticeable in the larger community of Rankin Inlet where some parents complained that their children slept all day, and were out all night with people they did not know. "Not knowing" everyone is a very new experience for the Inuit as they used to live in communities where they not only knew everyone but they also knew all their business. As a consequence of this radical change in Inuit social relationships social dislocation and antisocial behavior has increased at rates that exceed the growth in the size of Arctic communities. This fact is illustrated in the graph that plots the number of actual offences committed under the criminal code as a percentage of the population for each Arctic community in the Northwest Territories (Statistics Canada 1987 and R.C.M.P. 1988).



Inuit Sociality: Future

If the trends described here continue then increases in the size of the Inuit population will lead to a growth in the size of Arctic settlements and with it a growth in the rate of crime in the Arctic. If the traditional social fabric continues to break down the need for more R.C.M.P., and associated legal and correctional services, will probably increase at a rate that will exceed the growth rate of the Inuit population.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE

The Emergent Reality

The reality that is emergent in the Arctic is a reality in which a growing Inuit population will come to live in larger and possibly more regionalized communities or towns. So long as current trends continue rates of unemployment will not improve even though the number of job opportunities may rise. Although the size of Inuit families will decline they will probably be more numerous requiring more housing and social services. If migration remains a socially undesirable and economically high risk strategy, for the members of this poorly educated population, then most of the Inuit can be expected to remain in the Arctic. They may do this although they will probably have lost more of their language, culture and land skills. If this description is correct then most of the Inuit living in the Arctic in the year 2025 will probably be second generation wards of

the state living out their lives in "Arctic ghettos" plagued by increasing rates of crime.

As long as current trends persist most of the people living in the Arctic with professional and university qualifications will be white and they will continue to dominate the higher levels of management in both the private and public sector. This racially distinct minority can be expected to be the focus of growing racial tensions between themselves and the majority Inuit population.

The Reality Desired

Needless to say no one I interviewed, either Inuit or white, desire such a future although I believe many thoughtful people realize the possibility of such a future and genuinely fear it. What future do the people now living in the Arctic want for themselves and their children? The overwhelming response to this question, from both the white and Inuit members of the community, in both Rankin Inlet and Chesterfield Inlet, was a good education and a good job. With an almost equally strong consensus the people wanted the Inuit language, culture and land skills to be preserved and passed on to future generations. The reasons for this were both sentimental and practical. People did not want thousands of years of Inuit tradition to be totally lost and although elder Inuit would prefer for their children to have a good job, as a life spent out on the land is so hard, they felt jobs could not always be relied upon. For this reason they wanted their children to learn both the old and new ways.

When I asked the Inuit in Chesterfield Inlet if they would like to move back onto the land only a few couples said yes explaining that the prices paid for fox and seal skins were too low. The Inuit are well aware that traditional subsistence activities are not viable in the modern Arctic economy. Jobs were the first priority in today's world for both young and old. With the exception of the elderly most Inuit would welcome more opportunities for further education and job training. However when I rephrased the question in Rankin Inlet with the suggestion that the price of furs could be subsidized and some assistance could be given to help in the move out of town then many of the Inuit said they would prefer to live in an outpost camp. The Inuit who had their land skills were the most enthusiastic to take advantage of such an opportunity if it ever came.

So some Inuit wanted more education, some wanted a better job, or any job, and some wanted to get back on to the land. All wanted their children to have a good education and the opportunity of a good job and nearly all wanted their children to retain the Inuit language and land skills. This list of desires poses several questions, are these desires realistic and compatible and even if they can be attained could this success avoid the social catastrophe of the emergent reality? I am inclined to think yes but not because I or anyone else is capable of weaving some master plan that will carefully avoid every social and economic obstacle that stands in the way of creating a productive and worthwhile future for the Inuit but rather because I believe the Inuit are a practical and resourceful people who, when given the opportunity to pursue the different options available to them, will create the best of possible futures for themselves and their people according to their individual talents and circumstances. Grand plans are destined to failure, giving people choices creates opportunities to avoid failure and in so doing come closer to success.

Choices in Education

Good choices can not be made without good knowledge. Two rather distinct forms of good knowledge are required to live successfully in the modern Arctic each of which require an appropriate good education. Firstly a formal education oriented to job skills and secondly a land skills education oriented to the subsistence economy.

There can be little doubt that the quality of formal education needs to be greatly improved so that the goals of the G.N.W.T. Equal Employment Directorate and the Inuit can be attained. As the residential education system of the 50's, with opportunities for further education in southern Canada, was replaced with a community based education system across the Northwest Territories the universal delivery of education seems to have been emphasized at some loss in the quality of education. Several steps can be taken to correct this problem. First and foremost the quality of formal education should be monitored. Failure to adequately monitor and maintain the quality of education in the Arctic is, in my view, an act of negligence that has contributed more than possibly any other single factor to the establishment of "structural racism." At the present time parents blame teachers and teachers blame parents for

educational failure. But testing identifies the good and poor student, the good and poor household and parents, the good and poor class and teacher, the good and poor school and principle, the good and poor community and region. When testing is done the failures can be corrected with knowledge gained from the successes.

T.A.B.E. tests used by adult education and the tests used by the high school principle in Rankin Inlet could be used throughout the Arctic today but the G.N.W.T. Department of Education and teachers I have discussed this matter with seem very reluctant to do so. This reluctance should be viewed with suspicion as not documenting the extent of the failure of education in the Arctic is in the self interest of the teachers and the department they work for.

Another counterproductive policy that may be self serving is the policy that does not allow sponsorship of residents of the N.W.T. to attend educational institutions outside the N.W.T. except when the Department of Education can not offer a particular program. Going "South" may not be the best educational strategy for all Inuit but those who are able to make the transition gain firstly by receiving a better education and secondly by experiencing and learning how to operate in mainstream Canadian society. The successful Inuit leaders of today owe much to this kind of experience. I was sponsored by the Canadian Government to go to the U.S.A. to study for my Ph.D. so I do not see why Inuit should not be sponsored to go South for their education when they and their parents wish. Choice in this matter should be taken away from the government and given to the Inuit. If the education system continues to fail the Inuit in the Arctic then at least some Inuit will continue to be well educated like the Inuit leaders who went through the old residential system.

There also seems to be fewer opportunities for further education for the Inuit in the Arctic than there are for the Micmac Indians I taught at Dalhousie University in Halifax. At Dalhousie a transition year program is offered that is designed to give Micmac an opportunity to adjust to university life and special programs have also been created to allow Micmac health workers and social workers to get their degrees and professional qualifications. Although many Inuit working for the G.N.W.T. would like to work toward their degrees there are few special programs in place that actively encourage them to do so. An exception is the Eastern Arctic Teacher Education Program but that program is underfunded and must turn away many willing students.

In regard to the education of Inuit language and culture the Inuit I interviewed thought these should be taught in the school and in the home. Some Inuit thought land skills should also be taught in the schools but most thought the best place for this kind of education was out on the land. I see no reason why Inuit language and culture (poetry, mythology, history etc.) should not be taught through all school grades in the Arctic in much the same way as other languages are taught across Canada. Failure to develop a curriculum and adequate numbers of Inuit teachers to do this, since the establishment of settlements and community schools some 20 years ago, is surely quite unacceptable. If the Inuit had been given a good formal education at the cost of not being able to keep the Inuit language and culture alive in all its richness then perhaps there would have been some grounds for forgiving this omission but the Inuit have received the worst of both worlds and the best of neither. As for land skills they probably are best taught out on the land so the appropriate solution here is probably not yet another school program but rather policies that will encourage those Inuit who wish to get out on the land to be out on the land actively involved in the subsistence segment of the Arctic economy.

Choices in Productive Activity

In the 1950's, when the Government of Canada began to make a concerted effort to extend the Canadian welfare system to the Arctic, a bureaucrat from Ottawa explained to a Missionary in Whale Cove that he would have to reject the modest suggestions of the Missionary, for a self help program for the Inuit, as some of the suggestions would cost less than his own salary (amongst other suggestions the Missionary had proposed the Government give the Inuit lumber, tools and some guidance in house construction instead of building houses for them). Perhaps the Government of the Northwest Territories, with its' annual budget fast approaching a billion dollars is, to a considerable degree, little more than the institutionalization of that bureaucrat and his philosophy. I am inclined to believe the Homeownership Assistance Plan introduced into the Arctic in the past few years more closely follows the philosophy recommended by the Missionary. Happily for the Government (and Canadian tax payer) houses built with the assistance of their Inuit owners cost little

more than half the price of houses constructed by the G.N.W.T. (approximately \$90,000 as compared to \$160,000 to \$170,000) in addition it should be noted that on going operating costs are also greatly reduced. Perhaps the time has come to apply this philosophy to other programs before welfare completely erodes traditional Inuit values of independence and individual industry.

In most of Canada the different forms of social assistance such as welfare and unemployment insurance benefits are designed to help the few citizens who are unable to work, to live without discomfort, and the citizens who temporarily find themselves out of work, to get by until they can find work. I do not believe these forms of social assistance were ever designed to be a substitute for work for large segments of the population who might be able bodied and willing to work. Yet that is exactly what these forms of social assistance are required to do in the Arctic and it should come as no surprise that they do it very badly. Various programs do exist to help some students attend educational programs, create a few summer jobs in the community and assist a limited number of hunters with the purchase of their equipment or gas. Those Inuit who do not have full time jobs try to piece their lives together with various mixtures of these different programs. But as the programs are limited in number and duration they may well create as much frustration as they do real help.

A number of social experiments and programs have been developed to deal with various aspects of this problem. The Mincome experiment in rural Manitoba, the subsidy on fur prices in Greenland and the hunters assistance program for the Cree in northern Quebec. Recently the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut (Inuit N.W.T. land claims) requested D.I.A.N.D. to consider a 10 million dollar per annum program to get the unemployed Inuit hunters back onto the land (the proposal was rejected). When it is noted that the proposed cash settlement for the Dene is 500 million and the current G.N.W.T. budget is over 800 million, 10 million does not seem very much. However a senior planner in the G.N.W.T. told me that he had been involved in designing a similar program some years ago and that his proposal would have cost nothing as it could have been funded by piecing together monies from other budgets that overlapped with the aims of a subsistence economy support program. Clearly money is not the problem. Perhaps the problem is a lack of political or institutional will? Perhaps no one wants to admit to the possibility that a normal wage economy can not solve all the social and economic problems of the Arctic? Anyway, whatever the reasons for the failure to create this program the fact remains that current programs leave many potentially productive Inuit idle when a redesigning of these programs to meet the needs of the Inuit in the Arctic could put them in school, in college, in community service or back on the land. But the Inuit must be given the opportunity to chose the career path or productive activity that they perceive to be best for them instead of having their options determined by the vagaries of budgetary decisions that are beyond their control. To achieve this end many programs that now deliver these different services will have to be coordinated or even combined and this in turn will require some institutional imagination and leadership. Given this kind of proposed flexibility the old and the young, those living in small or large communities, those living in regions rich in renewable or nonrenewable resources and those with traditional or modern skills, will be able to make the choices that will maximize their potential and with it the potential of their family and community while still taking advantage of economic development if and when it comes.

MAKING IT WORK

When I was given permission to do this research by the Inuit in Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet one of the most frequently expressed concerns was that this report should not just end up as yet another pile of paper collecting dust. A few Inuit refused to be interviewed for this very reason. This concern is undoubtedly valid. The problems faced by the Inuit, high population growth, high unemployment, poor education and poor economic prospects are problems that are well documented in recent reports (Robitaille and Choinière 1985) and reports written over 20 years ago (Brack and McIntosh 1963). To various degrees they are problems faced by all Inuit from the Yukon to Labrador and possibly all native people in northern Canada (Hawthorn 1966, Robitaille and Choinière 1985, Lithwick 1986). But these problems are probably most acute for the Inuit of the Arctic as they live in the most inaccessible and inhospitable region of Canada. Given the intransigence of these problems, and their possible national dimension, strong Federal leadership may be required to resolve

these problems as other options for creative policy development seem to offer little hope for success.

For example, one possibility for dealing with these problems could be through land claim settlements. The native people of Alaska won the right to have a high school in any community that requested it as part of their land claim settlement and the Cree of Northern Quebec received a hunters assistance program through their settlement with the Government of Quebec. At the present time D.I.A.N.D. will not negotiate social issues like these as a part of a land claim settlement with the Inuit in the Northwest Territories so using land claims, as a positive force for social change in the Arctic, is not a feasible option at the present time. Another possibility is for Territorial and Provincial Governments to deal with these problems. In the Northwest Territories efforts have been underway to create a hunters assistance program for several years. Unfortunately the program has never got going although similar programs already exist for the Cree in Northern Quebec and the Inuit in Greenland. As one of the largest segments of the population of the Northwest Territories are unemployed natives it is difficult to know why the G.N.W.T. have not taken a leadership role in the development of these kinds of policies. I should add that getting people off welfare and supporting the subsistence economy is a high priority for the present Government of the Northwest Territories (N.W.T. Culture and Communications 1988) but the problem is decades old (Brack and McIntosh 1963) and it has not been dealt with yet. A third possibility for bringing about social and economic change would be through the creation of regional or native governments that would presumably be more responsive to the needs of their electorate or, in the Arctic, the division of the Northwest Territories to create the new Territory of Nunavut. But these forms of government do not exist today and so, at least for the present, some Federal leadership would seem to be required.

Improving the quality of education is a complex and difficult problem but efforts can not be made to systematically solve the problem until the problem is recognized and the extent of the problem is known. The first step in this process is the monitoring of standards with a view to regulating and maintaining standards. Failing in this task wastes lives and adds to the costs of welfare and adult education. In an effort to come to terms with this problem the Federal Government should undertake an audit of standards of education throughout northern Canada.

There are probably as many different ways to assist students, create community service programs, and assist subsistence hunters, as there are government departments with imaginative civil servants. No one will know for sure what kind of program will work best in the Arctic until a few have been tried. By way of starting discussion of this problem I will make the following suggestion. Anyone who has left school and who is not retired and who does not have a job will have the opportunity to be employed in various community services at minimum wage. These make work projects could include working in a day care center, teaching traditional handicrafts, organizing recreation activities, helping out at a youth camp, teaching snowmobile repair, collecting Inuit oral histories, cleaning up the town, repairing fish nets, painting the community center, providing unskilled labour for the construction of a hockey rink or H.A.P. house, cleaning up the homes of the elderly, working on the community radio and regional newspaper etc. etc. etc. But if an individual wanted to improve themselves so they could aspire to get one of the better jobs available in the region then they could take their minimum wage and use it as a training or education allowance at the local adult education center, at Arctic College or even in the south. Finally for those interested in neither community service or further education they could take their minimum wage as a per diem subsidy for their subsistence hunting and fishing activities. I would expect hunters to pay their own operating and capital expenses as they generally work in small family groups who could pool their modest salaries when needed. Hunters can also make some additional cash from the sale of fur.

The cost of such a program, that has the potential to create full productive activity, turns out to be surprisingly low. In Chesterfield Inlet 52 members of the population wanted full time jobs but did not have jobs in the fall of 1986. If all these individuals "signed up" for one of the programs offered then the total cost in Chesterfield Inlet, at about \$10,000 per person, would be \$520,000. However a considerable amount of money would now be saved from existing programs including a large portion of current welfare payments, training allowances and day care costs, unemployment

insurance benefits, existing make work and summer job creation programs, youth programs, financial assistance to hunters and possibly even a large amount of the labour costs on community projects such as a hockey rink. Homeownership Assistance Program construction (H.A.P. houses) might also be included in the scheme and thereby reduce the cost of home construction in the Arctic. Some H.A.P. house clients have already used make work programs for this purpose. As there are about 300 individuals in Chesterfield Inlet the same program might cost about 30 million dollars for that half of the Northwest Territories known as Nunavut (population about 18,000). But this cost is still less than 3.75% of the annual budget of the G.N.W.T. and that is still with none of the savings suggested above taken out! Clearly a program of this magnitude needs to be carefully thought through and properly costed. However, if the Inuit so desire, the Minister of National Health and Welfare should fund a pilot project in the Arctic that would seek to achieve the objectives of the program outlined above.

There are many problems that I have not dealt with in this brief report but I am inclined to believe the Inuit are capable of solving most of their problems for themselves providing they are given the opportunity to do so. Giving the Inuit educational opportunities in the south, in the north and out on the land and giving them the opportunity to be productive, through the jobs that are available, through training programs, through community service and through participation in the subsistence economy will hopefully provide the Inuit with many of the opportunities they require to mend their own lives and create a better future for their children.

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- Note:** The views in this report are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the Review of Demography and its Implications for Economic and Social Policy, Health and Welfare Canada.

