A Broken History:
Examining the Events, Experiences, and Narratives of the High Arctic Relocations, 1950-2010

by

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The following served on the Examining Committee for this thesis. The decision of the Examining Committee is by majority vote.

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

In 1953, the Canadian government moved thirty-five Inuit from Inukjuak in Northern Québec to the High Arctic with promises of better hunting opportunities and the ability to return to their communities within two years if conditions were not to their liking. Two years later, twenty-nine additional Inuit were sent to join them. Since these High Arctic Relocations, government officials, lawyers, and academics have questioned the federal government's motivations for and responses to the relocations, focusing on the question of whether the government was justified in undertaking an ill-fated humanitarian mission or if the government coerced Inuit into staking Canadian claims to the Arctic.

This dissertation explores the legacy and ongoing influence of the relocations in Canadian history by tracing the documentary, experiential, and political narratives surrounding the High Arctic Relocations from the 1950s to the 2010s. This includes critically re-examining the archival evidence from the 1950s; analyzing Inuit testimony of experiences and contemporary storytelling about the relocations; and examining Inuit, government, and academic political narratives from the 1980s through the 2010s. By examining the narratives of the High Arctic Relocations and framing these narratives using the event, experiences, and memory of relocation over the course of seven decades, this study parses the evolving themes and foci as Inuit struggled to secure recognition and compensation for their suffering. This dissertation re-assesses the government's motivations for relocating Inuit in the early 1950s and includes analysis of the complexities and limits of government decision-making. It also explores the effects of those decisions on Inuit relocatees through an examination of remembered experiences in the 1990s. Finally, this dissertation analyzes the academic and government framing of the narratives of relocation since the 1990s, investigating how these narratives affect contemporary perceptions of government actions.

This dissertation demonstrates that the intentions of government officials in the 1950s (the event) and vigorous debate about the perceived motivations of government have superseded the outcomes (experience) of the relocations. This evolving discourse has produced generally-accepted conclusions in Canadian history about the alleged motivations for the

relocations that find little grounding in the archival record but which have become a key part of the meta-narrative about state sovereignty, deceit, and coercion in the twentieth century Canadian Arctic.

Acknowledgements

This dissertation could not have been completed without the support and encouragement as well as excellent feedback and guidance of my supervisor, Dr. Whitney Lackenbauer. Dr. Lackenbauer challenged me to expand the breadth and depth of my scholarship and to pursue my own lines of critical inquiry, even when he knew they were rabbit holes. My advisory committee members, Dr. Susan Roy and Dr. Ryan Touhey, provided excellent ideas and new perspectives throughout my dissertation journey. Examiners Dr. Tina Loo and Dr. Robert Park asked provocative questions and provided an engaging discussion on challenging issues within this work that will certainly continue to inspire my thinking and approach to scholarship. Thank you all for your thoughtful guidance.

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who warmly welcomed me to the Archives Reading Room and provided crucial assistance in accessing records and identifying related materials. I am also enormously grateful to friends and family in Ottawa and Yellowknife for supporting me during my archival stays.

Finally, thank you to my friends and family for encouraging and supporting me throughout my graduate studies. Your contributions to my mental wellness and personal growth – and to childcare – are deeply appreciated.

To Willem and Mieke, thank you for all your love and unwavering support.

Land Acknowledgement

This dissertation is about the people of Nunavik and Nunavut. The historical relationship between the people of these lands and the Government of Canada is of critical importance to understanding the history of the High Arctic Relocations and the lasting effects of separation from land and community.

I acknowledge that my doctoral studies at the University of Waterloo took place on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. I studied and lived for many years on the Haldimand Tract, the land granted to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River. My research for this dissertation took me to Ottawa, the traditional territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation, and to Yellowknife, the traditional land of the Yellowknives Dene Nation and home to many First Nations and Inuit communities.

Much of this dissertation was written in Calgary, the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprised of the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda (including Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations) and which is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta (Districts 5 and 6), where I have lived most of my life and now again make my home.

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List of Abbreviations

ACND Advisory Committee on Northern Development.

CARC Canadian Arctic Resources Committee.

CBC Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

CHRC Canadian Human Rights Commission.

CWS Canadian Wildlife Service.

DCASS Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security.

DCI Department of Citizenship and Immigration.

DEXAF Department of External Affairs.

DIAND Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Department responsible for Northern Affairs from 3 October 1966 to 17 May 2011.

DMR Department of Mines and Resources. Department responsible for Northern Affairs from 1 December 1936 to 11 June 1949.

DNANR Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. Department responsible for Northern Affairs from 16 December 1953 to 1 October 1966.

DND Department of National Defence.

DNHW Department of National Health and Welfare.

DOT Department of Transportation.

DPW Department of Public Works.

DRB Defence Research Board.

DRD Department of Resources and Development. Department responsible for Northern Affairs from 18 January 1950 to 15 December 1953.

EAC Eskimo Affairs Committee.

EAP Eastern Arctic Patrol.

ELF Eskimo Loan Fund.

HBC Hudson's Bay Company.

House of Commons .

IEA Indian-Eskimo Association.

INAC Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

INAN Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs.

ITC Inuit Tapirisat of Canada.

LAC Library and Archives Canada (LAC) (formerly the National Archives of Canada).

MIAND Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

MNANR Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources.

MRD Minister of Resources and Development.

NALB Northern Administration & Lands Branch.

NANR Northern Affairs and National Resources.

NFB National Film Board.

NIB National Indian Brotherhood.

NTI Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated.

NWT Northwest Territories.

PCIJ Permanent Court of International Justice (1922-1946).

Qikqtani Inuit Association Qikqtani Inuit Association.

RCAF Royal Canadian Air Force.

RCAP Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

RCMP Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

SCAA Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs.

SCC Supreme Court of Canada.

TRC Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

UNDRIP United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

UNGA United Nations General Assembly.

Statement of Positionality

As a *Qallunaat* (Inuktitut for white person) viewing the High Arctic Relocations from Southern Canada and the twenty-first century, I recognize that my analysis is necessarily limited. My limited Northern experiences and connections to Inuit communities do not give me the license to speak on behalf of Inuit. Instead, the focus of this dissertation is on government action and academic storytelling, which contributes to a deeper understanding of the roles of government officials and academics in relocating Inuit and in telling the histories of the event.

I have chosen to respect Inuit who have previously shared their experiences and trauma related to the High Arctic Relocations in their own words and in Inuit-led projects, rather than requesting another retelling that may re-traumatize survivors and exploit their stories for academic gain. In future work, I hope to partner with Inuit to respectfully explore Inuit perspectives on the histories of the High Arctic Relocations.

Introduction

On 18 August 2010, then-Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (IAND) John Duncan visited Inukjuak, Québec to apologize on behalf of the Government of Canada for the relocation of Inuit to the High Arctic in the 1950s. The apology acknowledged and accepted the government's "mistakes and broken promises" made nearly sixty years prior. While a welcome step in that direction, the apology came more than twenty years after Inuit, sharing how the relocations had caused irreparable and inter-generational harm to individuals and communities, first requested it in the late 1980s. This history of the apology is highly politicized and shrouded in narrative tensions about the history of the High Arctic Relocations.

The fifty-three Inuit relocated from Inukjuak in Northern Québec to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord in the High Arctic in 1953 and the further twenty-nine relocated in 1955[1] were not the first or the last Inuit to be relocated to and within the High Arctic in the twentieth century.[2] Yet, the stories of these families captured the attention of a contemporary,

[1]There is some debate about the actual number of Inuit relocated as different organizations counted children, and particularly infants, differently. Furthermore, last-minute changes to destinations, both within the High Arctic and to southern sanitoria, resulted in changes to numbers that were recorded in different ways. These numbers reflect those reported by Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) in 1994. See Appendix A3.

[2]Inuit were moved in 1934 to Dundas Harbour, in the mid-1950s throughout the Keewatin region, and throughout the period from 1940 to 1970 to receive health care and be closer to jobs. For further reading on these relocations, see Frank James Tester and Peter Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63* (Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press, 1994); Tina Loo, *Moved by the State: Forced Relocation and Making a Good Life in Postwar Canada* (Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press, 2019); Qikiqtani Inuit Association, *Qikiqtani Truth Commission Final Report: Achieving Saimaqatigiingniq: Thematic Reports and Special Studies, 1950-1975* (Iqaluit, NU, 2013).

Southern Canadian audience in the 1990s and have been the subject of continued interest by scholars, government, and the general public in the decades since. The circumstances surrounding the High Arctic Relocations and tragic results of both government action and inaction have been well documented. As John Amagoalik – relocated from Inukjuak to Resolute Bay in 1953 at five years old – remembers: "my father agreed to the relocation, but only if two conditions were met. One was that we could return to Inukjuak if we decided that we didn't like the new place, and that the whole group would stay together."[3] As he goes on to explain, the government and its officers broke both promises. Several government departments, and agencies throughout the 1950s left an extensive bureaucratic record, though the relatively small scale of the High Arctic Relocations and minimal Inuit and Arctic policy at the time precluded discussion of the relocations as part of any larger policy.[4] Inuit were not consulted and their voices are absent from the documentary record of the 1950s. As a result, the government, Inuit, and researchers have developed a series of arguments in the decades since about the rationales for the relocations.[5]

Despite an extensive primary record and substantial secondary analysis of the High Arctic Relocations, there remains a debate about the Government of Canada's intentions in relocating Inuit in the 1950s, aptly summarized by historian Whitney Lackenbauer's *Human Flagpoles or Humanitarian Intervention*.[6] The nexus of this conflict in the early 1990s reflects, on the one side, arguments about an underlying sovereignty objective, advanced by historians Shelagh Grant and Alan Marcus and embraced by Inuit political leadership. On the other side, government reports (including political scientist Marcus Gunther's doc-

[3]John Amagoalik, *Changing the Face of Canada: The Life Story of John Amagoalik*, ed. Louis McComber, Life Stories of Northern Leaders: Vol. 2 (Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College, 2007), 18-19.

[4]See Diamond Jenness, *Eskimo Administration: Vol. 2: Technical Paper No. 14* (Montreal, QC: Arctic Institute of North America, 1964); Peter Clancy, "The Making of Eskimo Policy in Canada, 1952-62: The Life and Times of the Eskimo Affairs Committee," *Arctic* 40, no. 3 (1987); P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Peter Clancy, "Introduction," in *Shaping Inuit Policy: The Minutes of the Eskimo Affairs Committee, 1952-62*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security 14 (Calgary, AB: Centre for Military; Strategic Studies, 2019).

[5]For an extensive discussion of these arguments, see Chapter 6

[6]P. Whitney Lackenbauer, ed., *Human Flagpoles or Humanitarian Action?: Discerning Government Motives behind the Inuit Relocations to the High Arctic, 1953-1960*, Publication Title: Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security, vol. 16 (Calgary, AB: Centre for Military; Strategic Studies, 2020).



Figure 1: Map showing the location of Inuit communities, RCAF Resolute, and RCMP Craig Harbour in Northern Québec and the High Arctic. Courtesy of W. Klumpenhouwer.

umentary analysis) indicate an intention to improve the socio-economic condition of Northern Québec Inuit. This debate, framed as a dichotomy reflecting the morality of historical government decision-making, forms a crucial element of the narrative of the High Arctic Relocations and is explored in both the Introduction's Historiography and in Chapter 6.[7]

[7]Shelagh D Grant, "A Case of Compounded Error: The Inuit Resettlement Project, 1953, and the Government Response, 1990," *Northern Perspectives* 19, no. 1 (1991); Alan Marcus, "Out in the Cold: Canada's Experimental Inuit Relocation to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay," *Polar Record* 27, no. 163

The conflation of academic research and political manoeuvring resulted in the sovereignty thesis gaining the most traction in the public view, and ultimately being adopted by most academics and other commentators.[8] Yet, the federal government did not embrace this explanation of its historical motivations, and has only recently formally accepted a connection.[9] Furthermore, academic literature that pre-dates the wide-spread acceptance of this argument suggests alternative interpretations of primary evidence.[10]

This academic debate and the development and embrace of the sovereignty argument since 1990 are understudied.[11] The development of this historiographical trend is crucial to understanding contemporary Arctic history and the relationships between Inuit and the Canadian state. Furthermore, the intensity of the historiographical debate has centred the federal government in a story that should centre Inuit and their experiences of relocation, resilience and survival, and the development of Inuit political power to confront the government over documented broken promises and a failure to acknowledge its colonial past. The High Arctic Relocations are part of a history of government paternalism and broken promises. They are also part of a fragmented historical narrative that seeks to explain historical events for political purposes. This dissertation examines the history of the narratives of the High Arctic Relocations, seeking to illuminate the motivations, experiences, and legacy of the relocations.

(1991); Magnus Gunther, *The 1953 Relocations of the Inukjuak Inuit to the High Arctic: A Documentary Analysis and Evaluation (Second Edition)*, 1993.

[8]See, for example, Lyle Dick, *Muskox Land: Ellesmere Island in the Age of Contact* (Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press, 2001); Melanie McGrath, *The Long Exile: A Tale of Inuit Betrayal and Survival in the High Arctic* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2006); Pauline Wakeham, "At the Intersection of Apology and Sovereignty: The Arctic Exile Monument Project," *Cultural Critique* 87 (2014); Mark B. Salter, "Arctic Security, Territory, Population: Canadian Sovereignty and the International," *International Political Sociology* 13, no. 4 (2019): 358–374.

[9]See, for example Government of Canada, *Arctic Security Under Threat: Urgent Needs in a Changing Geopolitical and Environmental Landscape* (Ottawa, ON, 2023).

[10]Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*.

[11]Lackenbauer provides the only examination of this debate in P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "Introduction," in *Human Flagpoles or Humanitarian Action?: Discerning Government Motives behind the Inuit Relocations to the High Arctic, 1953-1960*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security (DCASS) 16 (Calgary, AB: University of Calgary, 2020).

Historiography

The history of Canada's Arctic has largely focused on the Western, sub-Arctic regions of colonialist economic and population growth. While the lives of Inuit have become increasingly centred within the literature in the twenty-first century, the dominant themes of economic development and national sovereignty persist. In this section, I review the general historiography of Arctic Canada, and the specific historiography of the High Arctic Relocations.

Canadian Arctic Literature

Canadian Arctic history is dominated by the historiographical trends of Canadian regionalism. As the final 'colonial' frontier, its scholarship is similarly lagging behind the histories of other regions. In 2008, historians Ken Coates and William Morrison lamented the lack of scholarship on Canadian Arctic history, noting the paucity of literature on modern historical topics (e.g. women and gender, and Indigenous peoples) related to the Arctic and a continuing focus on economic and sovereignty/defence questions.[12] While recent scholarship has begun to fill some of these gaps, including histories of the Arctic that have narrowed their geographic scope to specific administrative territories and/or regions,[13] the literature remains focused on questions of political and legal history, emphasizing the challenges of a complex regional geography.[14]

Although historical discussion of Northern development[15] and the relationship between

[12]Kenneth S. Coates and William R. Morrison, "The New North in Canadian History and Historiography," *History Compass* 6 (2008): 639–658.

[13]Mallory Schwartz, "Securing the North: Building the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Northern Service," *Canadian Journal of History* 51, no. 1 (2016); Kenn Harper, *Thou Shalt Do No Murder: Inuit, Injustice, and the Canadian Arctic* (Iqaluit, NU: Nunavut Arctic College Media, 2017); Olivia Michiko Gagnon, "Singing with Nanook of the North: On Tanya Tagaq, Feeling Entangled, and Colonial Archives of Indigeneity"," *ASAP/Journal* 5, no. 1 (2020): 45–78.

[14]Jessica Shadian, "From States to Polities: Reconceptualizing Sovereignty through Inuit Governance," *European Journal of International Relations* 16, no. 3 (2010); Salter, "Arctic Security, Territory, Population"; Scott McLean, "Beyond Neglect: Building Colonial Rule in the Kitikmeot, 1916–52," *Canadian Historical Review* 101, no. 1 (2020): 49–75.

[15]FG Vallee, *Kabloona and Eskimo in the Central Keewatin* (Ottawa, ON: The Canadian Research

government and Inuit[16] were present in the scholarship, historian Morris Zaslow's 1988 *The Northward Expansion of Canada* was the first overarching and accepted-as-definitive narrative of the Canadian North.[17] Written as part of the Centenary Series (though the last written), *The Northward Expansion of Canada* contributed to the resource extraction and frontier governance narrative of Canada that defined mid-twentieth century historiography. Zaslow's narrative emphasizes a settler-colonial expansion approach to the "last frontier" and provides a foundation for an ongoing examination of bureaucratic uncertainty in a geographically complex region within Arctic scholarship.

These themes are also present in Coates' 1985 analysis of "Canada's colonies" in the Western Arctic, which typifies the intersection of colonial bureaucracy, economic resource operations, and militarism that continues to dominate the Arctic literature into the twenty-first century.[18] Coates' emphasis on the limited local power held by territorial bureaucracies through the twentieth century as the predominant administrative challenge to Arctic communities' prosperity is an important theme in Arctic scholarship, reflected in both broad overviews[19] and specialized studies. Morrison's 1985 account of the Mounted Police in sovereignty operations and political scientist Peter Clancy's 1987 discussion of the Eskimo Affairs Committee both reflect this interest in the administrative institutions of Canada's

Centre for Anthropology Saint Pual University, 1967); Peter A Cumming, "Canada, Native Land Rights and Northern Development," in *IWGIA Document Series* (Copenhagen, DK: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 1977).

[16]Jenness, *Eskimo Administration: Vol. 2: Technical Paper No. 14*; R.J. Richard J. Diubaldo, "The Absurd Little Mouse: When Eskimos Became Indians," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 16, no. 2 (1981); K.S. Coates, *Best Left as Indian: Native-White Relations in the Yukon Territory, 1840-1973* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991).

[17]Morris Zaslow, *The Northward Expansion of Canada, 1914-1967* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1988).

[18]Ken S. Coates, *Canada's Colonies: A History of the Yukon and Northwest Territories* (Toronto, ON: James Lorimer; Company, 1985); Shelagh Grant, *Sovereignty or Security: Government Policy in the Canadian North 1936-1950* (Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press, 1988); P.G. Nixon, "The Welfare State North: Early Developments in Inuit Income Security," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 25, no. 2 (1990); M.O. Dickerson, *Whose North? Political Change, Political Development, and Self-Government in the Northwest Territories* (Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press, 1992); David Damas, "Shifting Relations in the Administration of Inuit: The Hudson's Bay Company and the Canadian Government," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 17, no. 2 (1993); Ailsa Henderson, *Nunavut: Rethinking Political Culture* (Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press, 2007).

[19]R. Quinn Duffy, *The Road to Nunavut: The Progress of the Eastern Arctic Inuit since the Second World War* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988).

North and how these institutions were ill-equipped to manage the incomprehensibly large tasks assigned to them.[20] Coates and Morrison's 1989 collection of essays on the Arctic also reflect an ongoing academic concern with administrative systems in the North, with a focus on the colonial centres of the Western Arctic.[21] Historian Shelagh Grant's 1990 biography of H.L. Keenleyside further reflects this theme of discrepancy between bureaucratic/government goals and capacity, further entrenching Zaslow's frontier argument of geographic expansion and government uncertainty.[22]

In the 1990s, the focus of Arctic administration historiography shifted to the administration of Inuit, expanding the argument of colonial expansion to include government uncertainty in governance, welfare, and relief.[23] The RCAP hearings resulted in a deluge of new evidence and public interest in the North, reinvigorating discussion of government-Inuit relationships.[24] These discussions, rarely including Inuit voices and focusing instead on government policies, attempted to contextualize government actions by examining the rationale for policy-making, typically within the framework of colonial paternalism in an unforgiving geographic region. This focus persisted throughout the 2000s and 2010s, alongside a generalized movement toward including marginalized and individualized stories in Canadian historiography. Reflective of this trend, histories of the Canadian Arctic be-

[20]William R Morrison, *Showing the Flag: The Mounted Police and Canadian Sovereignty in the North, 1894-1925* (Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press, 1985); Clancy, "The Making of Eskimo Policy in Canada, 1952-62: The Life and Times of the Eskimo Affairs Committee," 191–197.

[21]Kenneth S Coates and William R. Morrison, eds., *For Purposes of Dominion: Essays in honour of Morris Zaslow* (North York, ON: Captus Press, 1989).

[22]Shelagh D Grant, "Hugh Llewellyn Keenleyside Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, 1947-1950," *Arctic* 43, no. 1 (1990): 80–82.

[23]Dickerson, *Whose North? Political Change, Political Development, and Self-Government in the Northwest Territories*; Damas, "Shifting Relations in the Administration of Inuit"; Frank James Tester, "Serializing Inuit Culture: The Administration of "Relief" in the Eastern Arctic, 1940-1953," *Canadian Social Work Review* 10, no. 1 (1993): 109–123.

[24]Gerard I. Kenney, *Arctic Smoke and Mirrors* (Prescott, Ont: Voyageur Publishing, 1994); Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*; Alan Rudolph Marcus, *Relocating Eden: The Image and Politics of Inuit Exile in the Canadian Arctic* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1995); Allyson Domanski, "Arctic Displacement (compensation Agreement Regarding the Relocation of Inuit Families from Inukjuak, Quebec to Resolute Bay, Nwt by the Federal Government in 1953)," *New City Magazine, Winnipeg* 17, no. 1 (1996): 39–41.

gan centring Inuit experiences,[25]as well as including more Indigenous voices and authors.[26] These histories provided a new context for government policies, recognizing the human experience and effects of decisions made in Ottawa. As the scholarship of individual stories and experiences proliferated, contemporary governments began recognizing their culpability in the human side of Arctic history with an apology for High Arctic Relocations in 2010, the Qikiqtani Truth Commission in 2015, and an apology to Qikiqtani Inuit in 2019.[27]

Alongside the development of frontier administration, a strong historiography of Arctic sovereignty has developed, responding to the history of military and police institutions responsible for carrying out government policies in the North. Historians William Morrison and Keith Lowther centre this history by emphasizing the ongoing and overarching importance of sovereignty operations in Canadian Northern planning, while Shelagh Grant emphasized a connection between sovereignty and security in the post-Second World War Canadian North.[28] The discourse on the history of Arctic sovereignty continued to develop in the 1990s, but gained greater traction in the 2000s as Canadian government policy once again shifted its focus North.[29] Many of the arguments about Arctic sovereignty and

[25]McGrath, *The Long Exile*.

[26]Zebedee Nungak, "Experimental Eskimos," *Inuktitut Magazine* 87 (2000); Aqqaluk Lynge, *The Right to Return: Fifty Years of Struggle by Relocated Inughuit in Greenland* (Nuuk, Greenland: Atuagkat Publishers, 2002); Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*; Larry Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know: The Life of a High Arctic Exile* (Toronto, ON: Inhabit Media Inc. 2020).

[27]Government of Canada, *Apology for the Inuit High Arctic Relocation* (Inukjuak, NU: Queen's Printer of Canada, 2010); Association, *Qikiqtani Truth Commission Final Report: Achieving Saimaqatigiingniq: Thematic Reports and Special Studies, 1950-1975*; Government of Canada, *Statement of Apology for the Relocation of the Ahiarmiut* (Arviat, Nunavut: Queen's Printer of Canada, 2019), accessed June 29, 2022, `https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1548170252259/1548170273272`.

[28]William R Morrison, *Showing the Flag: The Mounted Police and Canadian Sovereignty in the North, 1894-1925*; Keith Lowther, "An Exercise in Sovereignty: The Government of Canada and the Inuit Relocation of 1953" (University of Calgary Press, Calgary, AB, 1989); S. Grant, *Sovereignty or Security: Government Policy in the Canadian North 1936-1950*.

[29]Ken S. Coates et al., *Arctic Front: Defending Canada in the Far North* (Toronto, ON: Thomas Allen Publishers, 2008); Janice Cavell and Jeff Noakes, *Acts of Occupation: Canada and Arctic Sovereignty, 1918-25* (Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press, 2010); Peter Kikkert and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "Introduction," in *Legal Appraisals of Canada's Arctic Sovereignty: Key Documents, 1905-56*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security (DCASS) 2 (Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press, 2014); Peter Kikkert, "Grasping for the Ends of the Earth: Framing and Contesting Polar Sovereignty, 1900-1955" (PhD Dissertation, The University of Western Ontario, London, ON, 2015); P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Ryan Dean, "Introduction," in *Canada's Northern Strategy under Prime Minister Stephen Harper: Key*

security have become more nuanced in recent years, including examinations of economic development,[30] Inuit self-governance,,[31] government institutions,[32] justice systems,[33] and philosophical international relations,[34] suggesting a deeper engagement with the history of the Arctic as a Canadian administrative territory.

The historiography of the Canadian Arctic has grown substantially over the past four decades, with an increasing focus on specific topics and the telling of marginalized stories. Although concerns with bureaucratic capacity in the Arctic still dominate the literature, the focus has shifted from generic regional histories to include more histories of the people of the Arctic – colonists and Inuit – slowly bringing Arctic history into alignment with Canadian historiographical trends. There remains substantial work to be done on gender, labour, environmental, and Indigenous history in the Arctic, as well as better analysis of the administration of the Arctic in the context of policy-making outside the Western Arctic and colonial population centres.

High Arctic Relocation Literature

Studies specific to the High Arctic Relocations developed in the early 1990s in the context of a political push for compensation and apology by Inuit leaders. As a result, the literature largely focused on the intentions of government. Individual academic studies of the High Arctic Relocations, including a dissertation by historian Keith Lowther and studies by Shelagh Grant and Alan Marcus in 1991, were accompanied by government-sponsored reports by researcher Bud Neville (on behalf of the Hickling Corporation) and Magnus Gunther.[35] A study by independent researcher Gerard Kenney and a book by Marcus also

Speeches and Documents on Sovereignty, Security, and Governance 2006-15, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security 6 (Calgary, AB: Centre for Military, Security; Strategic Studies, 2016).

[30]Matthew Farish and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "High Modernism in the Arctic: Planning Frobisher Bay and Inuvik," *Journal of Historical Geography* 35, no. 3 (2009): 517–544.

[31]Shadian, "From States to Polities."

[32]Schwartz, "Securing the North."

[33]K. Harper, *Thou Shalt Do No Murder*.

[34]Salter, "Arctic Security, Territory, Population."

[35]Hickling Corporation, *Assessment of the factual basis of certain allegations made before the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs concerning the relocation of Inukjuak Inuit families in the 1950s: Report*

followed the investigation of the relocations by the RCAP Special Hearing in 1993.[36] Of these early studies, only the government-sponsored reports of Neville and Gunther rejected the sovereignty thesis, which suggested that the government was motivated to relocate Inuit to the High Arctic by broad sovereignty concerns developing at the beginning of the Cold War. Both Neville and Gunther concluded that the primary justification for the relocations was a desire by the government to move Inuit from areas with poor living conditions to areas of greater living and economic conditions.

In addition to these studies that focused on the High Arctic Relocations, geographer and social worker Frank Tester and professor of Native Studies Peter Kulchyski completed a monograph outlining the many *Tammarniit* (Mistakes) of government policy in the Eastern Arctic from 1939-1963, including an overview of the High Arctic Relocations. Tester and Kulchyski's argument situates the formulation of relocation in the context of government desire to provide economic and social welfare to Inuit in the North while also balancing other responsibilities and values of a predominantly southern government.[37]

This early literature emerged within the context of Inuit advocacy for compensation and apology, and therefore focused on government motivation and consulted archival documentary evidence. The literature that followed relied on established narratives of sovereignty/humanitarian action in building arguments about the effects of government policy. Public historian Lyle Dick's *Muskox Land* includes a chapter on the High Arctic Relocations, concluding that the motivations for relocation to Ellesmere Island in the 1950s were unclear, though sovereignty clearly had an effect on decision makers and was at least a contributing factor to the justification of continuing High Arctic settlements.[38] In contrast, anthropologist David Damas argued that the High Arctic Relocations, differing from previous relocations because of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC)'s lack of involvement, had as their primary objective a migration of Inuit from areas of lesser resources to areas

(S.l, 1990); Shelagh D Grant, "A Case of Compounded Error: The Inuit Resettlement Project, 1953, and the Government Response, 1990"; A. Marcus, "Out in the Cold"; Gunther, *The 1953 Relocations of the Inukjuak Inuit to the High Arctic: A Documentary Analysis and Evaluation (Second Edition)*.

[36]Kenney, *Arctic Smoke and Mirrors*; Alan Rudolph Marcus, *Relocating Eden*.

[37]Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*.

[38]Dick, *Muskox Land*.

of greater resources.[39]

The mid-2000s literature on the High Arctic Relocations was limited, exploring the personal stories of relocated Inuit in the context of government betrayal. Writer Melanie McGrath's 2006 *The Long Exile* explored themes of media influences on government decision making and media portrayal of Inuit. McGrath emphasizes the human element of relocation by using the story of Maggie Nujarluktuk and her son Josephie, who was fathered by Robert Flaherty during filming of *Nanook of the North* and was one of the Inuit relocated to Grise Fiord.[40] McGrath's acknowledgement of government officials' wide range of perceived problems with a common solution emphasizes the challenges of assessing the effects of the relocation. The range of perceived successes by government parallels the range of perceived problems which the relocation was to address. The human effects of the relocation, as McGrath argues, are clear from the mistreatment of Inuit throughout the relocation process and the ongoing betrayal of those exiled from Canadian life.

John Amagoalik's 2007 autobiography *Changing the Face of Canada* and Larry Audlaluk's 2020 autobiography *What I Remember, What I Know* also provide detailed accounts of Inuit experiences of relocation and the short- and long-term effects of the relocations on individuals and their communities.[41] Both Amagoalik and Audlaluk were relocated to the High Arctic as young children, and have lived for decades with the consequences of government decision-making. Amagoalik describes how the community at Resolute Bay became sick with grief,[42] while Audlaluk outlines in great detail how lonely Grise Fiord was for him as a child.[43] Both rely on now-established sovereignty narratives, which they helped construct in the early 1990s, to situate their personal narratives. As Audlaluk explains:

> I tell the story because it has to be told. It has to be told so that it will not happen again. Canada wanted to show the world that the issue of sovereignty

[39]David Damas, *Arctic Migrants, Arctic Villagers: The Transformation of Inuit Settlement in the Central Arctic* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press; Kingston: 2002).
[40]McGrath, *The Long Exile*.
[41]Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*; Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know*.
[42]Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*, 31-32.
[43]Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know*, 70-75.

> was no longer in question. Because of us, Ellesmere Island is no longer the "No Man's Land" [explorer Knud] Rasmussen described it to be.[44]

Amagoalik and Audlaluk's personal stories of hardship and suffering, broken promises and broken families contextualize government decision-making and its effects on Inuit who experienced the relocations.

Following the 2010 apology, academic discussion of the High Arctic Relocations evolved to critique government responses to the RCAP hearings and the apology itself. Literary scholar Pauline Wakeham's 2014 criticism of the government's apology relies on the sovereignty thesis as a foundational assumption in order to argue that the apology was used to re-assert twenty-first century Canadian sovereignty claims.[45] Anthropologist James Slotta's 2015 critique of the RCAP hearings also relies on this foundation to explore how the voices of Inuit leaders were symbolically heard at the hearings as a result of the government's unwillingness to acknowledge their accounts or demands.[46] In 2019, political scientist Mark Salter also relied on the existence of the sovereignty narrative to examine the critique of limited evidence, arguing that sovereignty is circular and that the inherent diplomatic nature of sovereignty necessitates a lack of documented evidence because "referring to a lack of sovereignty creates a lack of sovereignty."[47]

In the 2020s, the literature has returned to an examination of the initial government motivations, including historian Janice Cavell's challenge to the dominant narratives of government motivation, suggesting that the government was motivated to relocate Inuit through paternalistic control of the Inuit economy.[48] Whitney Lackenbauer argues that the issues facing the government of Louis St-Laurent in the early 1950s were complex, typified as "known unknowns and unknown unknowns."[49] The government's response to

[44]Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know*, 319.

[45]Wakeham, "At the Intersection of Apology and Sovereignty."

[46]James Slotta, "Phatic Rituals of the Liberal Democratic Polity: Hearing Voices in the Hearings of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 57, no. 1 (2015): 130–160.

[47]Salter, "Arctic Security, Territory, Population," 366.

[48]Janice Cavell, ""Consolidation and Control of All Eskimo Income": The Motive for the 1953 High Arctic Relocation," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 55, no. 1 (2021): 118–151.

[49]P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "Defence, Development, and Inuit: St-Laurent's Modern Approach to the

this complexity was, Lackenbauer argues, to embrace experimentation (a pilot study) in the form of relocation.[50] Although Lackenbauer admits that his analysis contradicts the "canonical narrative of postwar government perfidy in the High Arctic in the name of Canadian sovereignty," he acknowledges the importance of examining diverse histories of the North and competing viewpoints.[51] Tester and anthropologist Krista Zawadski also note the many histories involved in the government decision to relocate Inuit, concluding that the decision was multi-faceted, including both economic concerns and sovereignty considerations.[52]

The main focus of the academic literature is the formulation of the High Arctic Relocation project.[53] Scholars have asked how and why the government made the decision to relocate Inuit from Inukjuak to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord in the 1950s, with a wide array of analyses stemming from the initial debate between sovereignty and humanitarian concerns. While most scholars acknowledge the significant issues with the implementation of the project that ultimately led to increased hardships for Inuit, this is not a primary argument. The early literature on the relocation typically avoided the affective ramifications of the project by ignoring Inuit voices and focusing on high-level government decision-making. However, research and writing in the late-1990s, and particularly in the 2000s, began to include these perspectives and voices, recognizing the broader problems with the program's formulation and implementation and better identifying the scope of its effects. Recently, the relocation literature has become more nuanced, building on the foundation of the 1990s and examining the welfare motivations and paternalist perspectives of the relocation, while exploring new angles of the sovereignty thesis.

North," ed. Patrice Dutil, in *The Unexpected Louis St-Laurent: Politics and Policies for a Modern Canada* (Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press, 2020), 193-194.

[50]Lackenbauer, "Introduction to Human Flagpoles or Humanitarian Action?," vii.

[51]Ibid., xvi.

[52]Frank James Tester and Krista Ulujuk Zawadski, *Inuit Relocations: Colonial Policies and Practices, Inuit Resilience and Resistance*, Righting Canada's Wrongs (Toronto, ON: James Lorimer; Company Ltd, 2023), 29.

[53]Although many scholars characterize the relocations as a policy initiative or a program in support of broader government policy, the High Arctic Relocations took place before the development of the federal government's Inuit policy. The relocations are therefore better characterized as a bureaucrat-led project.

Sovereignty

The emphasis of the academic literature on the sovereignty thesis as a motivation for government necessitates an examination of the complex and ever-changing nature of sovereignty in a Canadian Arctic context, including its usage in the 1950s during the formulation and implementation of the High Arctic Relocations, and in the 1990s and 2000s in order to understand how these definitions have been "read backward" in an attempt to explain government action.

While the Government of Canada expressed concerns about Northern sovereignty throughout the twentieth century and polar sovereignty was an internationally contentious issue in the 1950s, little to no archival evidence supports the claim that the government's *motivations* in relocating Inuit in 1953 were to project or protect Canadian sovereignty in the High Arctic. Over time, however, the presence of Inuit in the Northern most communities of Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord has contributed to Canadian sovereignty. This is an important but nuanced distinction, separating the intention and result of government actions.

Although the modern concept of sovereignty derives from Westphalian concepts of statehood and the control or authority of a governing body over a specified territory,[54] it has shifted over the past century from a predominantly legal concept to one of predominantly political and diplomatic recognition. This changing definition of sovereignty is necessary to understand in examining the possible influence of sovereignty in the government's motivations for implementing the High Arctic Relocations, the outcomes thereof, and the perceptions of the relocations in Canadian history.

In the 1950s, sovereignty functioned as a legal concept rooted in historical international law and diplomatic recognition of territory. Although the Doctrine of Discovery and Effective Occupation had dominated the legal discourse for centuries, the Doctrine of Contiguity was equally important in determining sovereign rights in the second half of the

[54]Maryann Cusimano Love, "Global Problems, Global Solutions," ed. Maryann Cusimano Love, in *Beyond Sovereignty: Issues for a Global Agenda*, Second (Toronto, ON: Wadsworth, 2003), 3.

nineteenth century, despite challenges to formally defining its application.[55] Consequently, historians Whitney Lackenbauer and Peter Kikkert argue, states entered the twentieth century with no legal certainty about territorial acquisition or the legal rules for maintaining sovereignty over territory. Although effective occupation was an important element of the international lawyers' doctrinal writings, state practice was largely disconnected from the ambiguous and often contradictory arbitration of the law.[56]

This uncertainty had implications for understanding sovereignty in what is now Canada's Arctic Archipelago. Britain had carefully charted and mapped its discoveries for centuries, though it did not ever "formally annex the Arctic islands or clarify its territorial rights in the region."[57] As Britain had little interest in the Arctic islands that could not support European colonization and had already ceded its territories elsewhere in North America, it gifted its Arctic territories to Canada in 1880. The international community did not challenge this transfer, although the extent of the rights actually passed on to Canada remained unclear in both substance and geographical extent.[58]

The fledgling Canadian government did not invest in any steps toward effective occupation of the Arctic Archipelago for more than two decades, relying on the terms of the gift from Britain as sufficient evidence of legal claim to the territories.[59] Ottawa finally took action after foreign expeditions and the arbitration of the Alaska Boundary Dispute in 1903, which raised concerns about Canada's historic and legal claims to the region.[60]

[55]See Lauren Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, 1460-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Antony Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Kikkert and Lackenbauer, "Introduction to Legal Appraisals of Canada's Arctic Sovereignty"; Kikkert, "Grasping for the Ends of the Earth."

[56]Kikkert and Lackenbauer, "Introduction to Legal Appraisals of Canada's Arctic Sovereignty," xvii-xxi.

[57]Ibid., xxii.

For further discussion of British Arctic exploration, see Shelagh D. Grant, *Polar Imperative: A History of Arctic Sovereignty in North America* (Vancouver, B.C.: Douglas; McIntyre, 2010).

[58]Gordon W. Smith, "The Transfer of Arctic Territories from Great Britain to Canada in 1880, and Some Related Matters, as Seen in Official Correspondence," *Arctic* 14, no. 1 (1961): 53–73.

[59]Smith, "Sovereignty in the North: The Canadian Aspect of an International Problem," ed. R. St. J. MacDonald, in *The Arctic Frontier* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1966); Smith, *A Historical and Legal Study of Sovereignty in the Canadian North: Terrestrial Sovereignty, 1870-1939*, ed. Lackenbauer, Northern Lights Series 17 (Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press, 2014).

[60]Kikkert and Lackenbauer, "Introduction to Legal Appraisals of Canada's Arctic Sovereignty," xxiii.

The weaknesses in Canada's title claims to the Arctic islands prompted Canadian Parliament to further enshrine its claim through discovery by funding new exploration activities and enacting legislation to assert Canadian authority in the Hudson Bay and "in all waters North of 55°N."[61] Parliament also developed a plan to "show the flag" by creating additional police posts throughout the Arctic.[62]

Effective occupation remained the standard for legal claims. In the conclusion to his 1950 memorandum, legal scholar Vincent C. MacDonald argued that effective occupation is a much surer way of managing claim to territory than principles of discovery or prescription, noting that effective occupation does not necessarily need to take a uniform approach: occupation can be approached differently based on various factors, including population, means of access, physical conditions (impassibility), climate, and groups of islands that can be jointly administered.[63] Each of these factors, MacDonald argues, mean that the Arctic Archipelago can be administered by Canada with relative ease and with surety. While Canada maintained some Arctic infrastructure, including post offices and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) posts that "met the requirements of international law and state practice,"[64] in the High Arctic, as well as some administrative capacity as a result of the territorial game and wildlife laws passed in both the House of Commons and by the Northwest Territories (NWT) government, Canada invested in relatively little enforcement capacity. The size of the Arctic compared to the size of the bureaucracy that managed

[61]Shelagh D. Grant, *Polar Imperative*, 206.

[62]William R. Morrison, *Showing the Flag: The Mounted Police and Canadian Sovereignty in the North, 1894-1925* (Vancouver, B.C.: University of British Columbia Press, 1985). For further reading on early twentieth century sovereignty initiatives by the Canadian government, see Shelagh D. Grant, *Polar Imperative*.

[63]Vincent C. Macdonald, "Canadian Sovereignty in the Arctic" [March 1950], *in Legal Appraisals of Canada's Arctic Sovereignty: Key Documents, 1905-56*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security Volume 2 (ed. Peter Kikkert and P. Whitney Lackenbauer):292.

[64]Kikkert and Lackenbauer, "Introduction to Legal Appraisals of Canada's Arctic Sovereignty," xxiv. For further reading on activities related to Canadian occupation of the Arctic, see William R. Morrison, *Showing the Flag*; Shelagh Grant, *Sovereignty or Security? Government Policy in the Canadian North 1936-1950* (Vancouver, B.C.: University of British Columbia Press, 1988); Dick, *Muskox Land*; Cavell and Noakes, *Acts of Occupation*; Shelagh D. Grant, *Polar Imperative*; Smith, *A Historical and Legal Study of Sovereignty in the Canadian North: Terrestrial Sovereignty, 1870-1939*; Kikkert and Lackenbauer, "Introduction to Legal Appraisals of Canada's Arctic Sovereignty."

the Arctic left significant opportunity for Canadian sovereignty to be undermined.[65] MacDonald noted that this should be of some concern to officials as the conditions supporting Canadian occupation claims are only favourable to Canada in the event that there are no competing claims.[66] MacDonald cited the *Eastern Greenland Case* (1931) in which the Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ) was satisfied of sovereignty on relatively little evidence provided that no other state made a superior claim to demonstrate the relative precarity of polar claims made on the basis of effective occupation.[67]

Although MacDonald concluded that in 1950 Canada had a strong argument to support its claims through effective occupation, supplemented by "Discovery and Tacit Recognition," his argument emphasized that policy should "lead to the maintenance of Canada's title upon the ground of Effective Occupation alone as the chief and most satisfactory ground of reliance."[68] Despite this seeming assurance, the report indicated that government policy needed to maintain effective occupation of its Northern administrative areas in order to maintain sovereignty claims. With the closing of several RCMP detachment posts in the 1940s, concerns about the HBC leaving certain Northern areas, and an increasing American administrative presence, the conclusion that sovereignty required effective occupation shaped Canadian decision-makers' intentions to improve the robustness of their potential claim via effective occupation.

The complex legal landscape of Arctic sovereignty remained generally unclear. Canada's claims to the Arctic Archipelago through prescription (rights claimed and exercised for extended periods of time) were bolstered by the ongoing silence of Norway and the United States.[69] With their "tacit acquiescence during over a fifth of a century on the part of Norway, the United States and of other nations" implying a diplomatic acceptance of Canada's

[65]For further discussion of the administrative capacity of the Arctic in the 1940s and 1950s, see Chapter 1.

[66]Vincent C. Macdonald, "Canadian Sovereignty in the Arctic," 294.

[67]Ibid.

For further reading on the *Eastern Greenland Case*, see Janice Cavell, "Historical Evidence and the Eastern Greenland Case," *Arctic* 61, no. 4 (2008); Smith, *A Historical and Legal Study of Sovereignty in the Canadian North: Terrestrial Sovereignty, 1870-1939*.

[68]Vincent C. Macdonald, "Canadian Sovereignty in the Arctic," 313.

[69]Kikkert, "Grasping for the Ends of the Earth," 71.

claims.[70] This argument was maintained through the 1920s and 1930s,[71] and is referenced in MacDonald's 1950 memorandum in which he notes that "it seems probable that, should a conflict concerning the Canadian Arctic arise it would be decided that Canada has fulfilled the requirements imposed by International Law concerning the undisturbed length of time necessary for prescription."[72] Other states had not challenged Canada's Arctic claims in the twentieth century, with Norway even accepting Canadian jurisdiction in 1930 following the Sverdrup Islands affair.[73]

In 1950 Canada's international legal experts had assured politicians and bureaucrats alike that a challenge to Canadian Arctic sovereignty was unlikely and that, in the balance, Canada had strong claims. However, politicians and Cabinet members remained anxious about the open questions regarding Canada's Arctic sovereignty in the late-1940s and early-1950s, with Cabinet and the Department of External Affairs (DEXAF) examining the issue more closely.[74] That these two branches of the federal government were concerned with Arctic sovereignty does not reflect a pervasive anxiety about sovereignty throughout the federal bureaucracy. Furthermore, concerns about the Northern territories generally, and particularly about the American presence in the territories does not necessarily translate to concerns about the High Arctic islands, where an American presence was limited.[75]

[70]Governor General Byng, "Governor General Byng to His Excellency, The Right Honourable Sir Esme Howard" [June 1925], *in Legal Appraisals of Canada's Arctic Sovereignty: Key Documents, 1905-56*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security Volume 2 (ed. Peter Kikkert and P. Whitney Lackenbauer):62.

[71]H.D.G. Crerar, "General Staff [Lieutenant-Colonel H.D.G. Crerar], Department of National Defence, Canadian Political Rights in the Arctic" [28 January 1930], *in Legal Appraisals of Canada's Arctic Sovereignty: Key Documents, 1905-56*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security Volume 2 (ed. Peter Kikkert and P. Whitney Lackenbauer):118.

[72]Vincent C. Macdonald, "Canadian Sovereignty in the Arctic," 308-309.

[73]For further reading, see Smith, *A Historical and Legal Study of Sovereignty in the Canadian North: Terrestrial Sovereignty, 1870-1939*.

[74]ACND Secretariat, "Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Northern Development" [16 February 1953], *in The Advisory Committee on Northern Development: Context and Meeting Minutes, 1948-71*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security Volume 4 (ed. P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Daniel Heidt).

[75]Daniel Heidt and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, *The Joint Arctic Weather Stations: Science and Sovereignty in the High Arctic, 1946-1972*, Northern Lights Series 20 (Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press, 2022).

Proponents of the sovereignty thesis have used the concerns of some government officials in the 1950s as an indication of a whole-of-government concern about political sovereignty. However, the major shift from legal to political sovereignty took place in the 1970s. The shift away from *de jure* sovereignty toward *de facto* sovereignty meant that sovereignty became increasingly prominent in societal and political conversations during the late 1970s and 1980s.[76] The increasing political interest in sovereignty also meant that governance practices seeking to achieve international recognition became increasingly important.[77]

As legal advisor Erik B. Wang noted in his 1969 memorandum on the "Role of Canadian Armed Forces in Defending Sovereignty," political sovereignty is

> a matter of effective control by the Canadian Government over activities taking place on or over Canadian territory. This is not a legal problem but a problem of exercising authority and mobilizing all available resources to enable the Government to determine Canadian policies in the light of Canadian interests. It is a political problem.[78]

Wang goes on to explain that "political sovereignty is not only a matter of influence and control, it is also *a matter of being seen* in a position of influence and control" (emphasis mine).[79] The rise of political definitions of sovereignty in the 1970s and 1980s provides an important context for the development of the High Arctic Relocations sovereignty thesis.

Alongside this shift, was the growing political power of Indigenous groups in Canada, including the creation of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC) in 1971.[80] This development

[76]Adam Lajeunesse and Rob Huebert, eds., *From Polar Sea to Straight Baselines: Canadian Arctic Policy in the Mulroney Era* (Calgary, AB: Centre for Military; Strategic Studies, 2017).

[77]Ted McDorman, *Salt Water Neighbors: International Ocean Law Relations Between the United States and Canada* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Peter Kikkert, "Building on 'Shifting Sands': The Canadian Armed Forces, Sovereignty, and the Arctic, 1968-72," ed. P. Whitney Lackenbauer, in *Canada and Arctic Sovereignty and Security: Historical Perspectives* (Calgary, AB: Centre for Military; Strategic Studies, 2011); Adam Lajeunesse, *Lock, Stock, and Icebergs: A History of Canada's Arctic Maritime Sovereignty* (Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press, 2016).

[78]Erik B. Wang quoted in P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Peter Kikkert, eds., *Lessons in Northern Operations: Canadian Army Documents, 1945-56*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security 7 (Calgary, AB: Centre for Military; Strategic Studies, 2016), 80-81.

[79]Erik B. Wang quoted in Ibid., 85.

[80]For further reading on the development of Indigenous political power in the 1970s and 1980s, see Sally

shifted the focus on Arctic sovereignty by emphasizing the role of Indigenous Peoples within Canadian society and their historic contributions.[81] By the mid-1980s, the Government of Canada formally recognized the role of Indigenous Peoples, and especially Inuit, in Canadian sovereignty. External Affairs Minister Joe Clark's statement to the House of Commons on 10 September 1985 noted how:

> From time immemorial Canada's Inuit people have used and occupied the ice as they have used and occupied the land. The policy of the Government is to maintain the national unity of the Canadian Arctic archipelago and preserve Canada's sovereignty over land, sea and ice undiminished and undivided.... Full sovereignty is vital to Canada's security. It is vital to the Inuit people. And it is vital to Canada's national identity.[82]

The role of Inuit in contributing to Canadian Arctic sovereignty has been underlined in Canadian politics since that time, with successive federal governments recognizing the present and past contributions of Inuit.[83]

The late 1980s and early 1990s also saw academics introduce a politically-oriented concept of sovereignty-as-security. The development of the Alaska Highway, Joint Arctic Weather Stations, the DEW Line, and the establishment of American and Canadian military bases throughout the North responded to security concerns during and after the Second World War.[84] These activities, which contributed to the administrative capacity of

M. Weaver, *Making Canadian Indian Policy: The Hidden Agenda, 1968-70* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1981); Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press, 2014); Arthur Manuel and Ronald M. Derrickson, *Unsettling Canada: A National Wake-Up Call* (Toronto, ON: Between the Lines Press, 2015).

[81]The role of Indigenous and Inuit political organizations in shaping the politics of the state, has been studied extensively, though there is less study about the role of Indigenous peoples in projecting state sovereignty on the international stage. See Weaver, *Making Canadian Indian Policy: The Hidden Agenda, 1968-70*.

[82]Joe Clark, House of Commons *Debates,* 10 September 1985, 6463 quoted in Coates et al., *Arctic Front*.

[83]See P. Whitney Lackenbauer, ed., *Canada's Northern Strategies: From Trudeau to Trudeau, 1970-2020*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security 17 (Calgary, AB: Centre for Military, Security; Strategic Studies, 2020).

[84]There is a substantial literature on Arctic military activities during the 1940s and 1950s. See Heidt and Lackenbauer, *The Joing Arctic Weather Stations*; P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Matthew Farish, *The Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line Coordinating Committee: Minutes and Progress Reports, 1955-63*

Canada in the Arctic, were undertaken with the primary motive of security, and contribute to what Shelagh Grant terms "the military North" in the 1950s.[85] Consequently, Canadian activities in the Arctic throughout this period were often conflated with concerns about Canadian sovereignty over Arctic territories. While *some* activities are direct responses to perceived challenges to sovereignty or a result of a concern about the potential for losing sovereignty claims, this does not apply to *all* activities in the North.

Activities in the Canadian Arctic in the 1940s and 1950s stem largely from political concerns about economic and military development. American activities in the Canadian Arctic to build military installations brought large numbers of American forces North, though strong assertions from American officials clarified that the United States recognized Canada's sovereignty and would not be pursuing sovereignty claims.[86] It is also clear from the minutes of the Advisory Committee on Northern Development (ACND) that Canada's military leadership had no concerns about the American presence in the Canadian Arctic.[87] Politically, however, there was significant discussion about the need to ensure that Canada take over the operations of the joint military installations through "Canadianization". Ultimately, this meant increasing the official Canadian presence in the Arctic and ensuring that there were sufficient Canadian citizens or military personnel trained to operate these stations.[88]

Furthermore, the development of Canadian administrative capacity in the Arctic, including the development of additional RCMP stations, contributed to the "Canadianization" of the Arctic. Some of these RCMP stations responded to a perceived need to secure against a potential threat by Inughuit hunters from Greenland who were active on Ellesmere

(Calgary, AB: Centre for Military; Strategic Studies, 2019); P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Daniel Heidt, "Introduction to Advisory Committee on Northern Development: Context and Meeting Minutes," in *The Advisory Committee on Northern Development: Context and Meeting Minutes, 1948-71*, Second, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security (DCASS) 4 (Calgary, AB: University of Calgary, 2019); Lackenbauer and Kikkert, *Lessons in Northern Operations*.

[85]S. Grant, *Sovereignty or Security?*

[86]P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "Tolerant Allies: The Joint Arctic Weather Stations, Canadianization, and Canada–United States Relations in the Cold War Arctic," *International Journal* 75, no. 4 (2020): 487–502.

[87]Lackenbauer and Heidt, "Introduction to Advisory Committee on Northern Development: Context and Meeting Minutes."

[88]Lackenbauer, "Tolerant Allies."

Island between 1920 and 1990.[89] Although RCMP stations had been set up in the 1920s to ensure that Canada could enforce its laws in the High Arctic, many of these stations had been abandoned during the Second World War as an austerity measure. After the war, the federal government had a stronger desire to ensure that Canada had the capacity to enforce its laws and ensure that there was no incursion by foreign nationals into the Canadian Arctic.[90]

Ultimately, the Canadian state undertook a wide variety of activities in the Arctic during the early Cold War period, many of which academics and other commentators have conflated with sovereignty objectives but all of which were primarily driven by other motivations. Reading more contemporary political and security-based definitions of sovereignty backward into the context of the 1950s creates an ahistoric narrative and distorts the real and perceived concerns of politicians and bureaucrats alike. While concerns about sovereignty certainly existed, they were very specific to the legal and "Canadianization"-related definitions of sovereignty. The idea of Inuit as an embodiment of Canadian sovereignty factored remarkably little in these frameworks at that time.

While the use of sovereignty arguments by Inuit for political purposes is ultimately what allowed relocatees to gain traction for compensation and apology by government officials in the 1990s and again in the 2000s, this study demonstrates that it is important to recognize that the Inuit use of sovereignty reflected the 1980s political definitions outlined above. As an instrument of Inuit political power, the sovereignty narrative was and remains an effective tool for bridging the contributions of Inuit and the concerns of the state. It is not however, grounded in the documentary evidence that outlines the government's decision making around the time of the relocations themselves.

[89]Dick, *Muskox Land*, 405.

[90]P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Peter Kikkert, "Sovereignty and Security: The Department of External Affairs, the United States, and Arctic Sovereignty, 1945-68," ed. Greg Donaghy and Michael Carroll, in *In the National Interest: Canadian Foreign Policy and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 1909-2009* (Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press, 2011).

Framework and Outline

This dissertation examines the History of the High Arctic Relocations from 1950-2010, exploring three distinct eras: the 1950s event, the 1990s-2000s sharing of experienced history, and the 1990s-2000s political telling of the relocation history. While most of the literature studying the High Arctic Relocations focuses on the initial event in the 1950s, the tragedy spans decades, signalling the importance of examining the multiple histories and constructions of the past. The overarching framework of this dissertation follows the model outlined by historian Paul Cohen in *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience and Myth*. The three keys outlined by Cohen represent three ways in which history is constructed. The first key, the event, is the reading of the past through documentary evidence in order to explain the phenomenon itself within its historical context that is familiar to practising historians.[91] The second key, experience, reflects the "thought[s], feelings, and behaviour of the immediate participants in different phases" of the historical event, who do not "have the entire 'event' preencoded . . . and therefore conceptualized what was happening to them in ways that differed fundamentally from the retrospective, backward-reading construction of historians."[92] The final key, myth, "represent[s] an impressing of the past into the service of a particular reading of the present" that draws energy from the past for, usually, political purposes.[93] Although the term "myth" carries with it certain connotations of subjectivity, it is used explicitly in this dissertation to explore the development of historical narratives used for political purposes. Taken together, these three keys allow for a broad examination of the issues related to the writing and construction of history, identifying and incorporating the so-called subjective truth of the past and recognizing its influence on present-day narratives and understandings of historically constructed truths.[94]

Part One of this dissertation examines the historical construction of the event of relo-

[91]Paul A Cohen, *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1997), xii-xiii.
[92]Ibid., xiii.
[93]Ibid., xii-xiii.
[94]Ibid., xv.

cation through documentary evidence. It examines the development and implementation of the High Arctic Relocations and relies on government documentation of the decision-making process to construct the past in its historical context. Chapter One uses the framework of "wicked" problems to define the complex and interrelated problems facing the federal government in Northern Québec and the Canadian Arctic in the late 1940s and early 1950s.[95] Chapter Two explores the formulation and implementation of a simplistic plan with imperfect information and in challenging climactic and bureaucratic conditions. Chapter Three examines the evaluation of the relocation plan on the basis of changing criteria and evolving problems that lacked solutions. As Part One focuses on the actions of government, the evidence is necessarily documents created by the government at the time of the event.

Part One reflects the approach of most writers on the High Arctic Relocation, which assumes that government is a a unified actor and ultimately acts rationally on the basis of the information that is available. The process of arriving at that rationality, however, is affected by the complexity of problems and by competing interests of organizations within government. Part One examines these tensions by exploring how competing interests and unsolvable problems led to the development of a poorly-planned and -executed relocation with devastating consequences for Inuit families. Part One also challenges the underlying assumption of unified government-action by exploring the three models of decision-making outlined by Graham Alison and Philip Zelikow in *Essence of Decision*. While the majority of Part One does follow the assumption of the federal government acting as a unified, rational actor (Model I), I analyze the actions of government through the lens of decision-making models and challenge these assumptions, exploring how organizational behaviour (Model II) provides alternative conclusions to the analysis of government problem identification and plan formulation.[96]

Part Two of this dissertation explores the experienced past of participants in the High Arctic Relocations, including Inuit (Chapter Four) and government officials (Chapter Five).

[95]The "wicked" problems framework, originally developed in 1973 by Horst W.J. Rittel and Melvin M. Weber, is outlined in detailed in Chapter 1.

[96]Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, Second (New York, NY: Longman, 1999).

By examining the partial but continuous experiences of relocation participants, Part Two indicates the important differences between lived experience and reported experience, contributing to the ongoing narratives of perception and reality in the Arctic. Part Two presents multiple "pictures of the past" by collating stories told between 1990 and 2020.[97] While few scholars focus on the self-described experiences of Inuit or government officials during the relocation and in the decades that followed, Part Two contributes another series of constructed narratives that illuminate additional realities of the past that differ from, but which are informed by, government administration.

Inuit were not privy to the decision-making process that led to the relocation, nor were they engaged in the evaluation of the decision. Accordingly, their opinions and experiences are missing from the documentary records generated at that time. They shared their experiences in various forms in the decades following the relocations, including testimonies before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs (SCAA) and the RCAP Special Hearings. Inuit have also shared their experiences through Inuit-led projects, including the *Iqqaumavara* Project, films, and autobiographies. The experiences of government officials, occurring within the structure of decision-making, are shared in similar fora but are also subject to analysis by government actors within their respective organizations. As such, the experiences of government are examined through the lenses of organizational behaviour (Model II) and governmental politics (Model III).[98]

Part Three examines the construction of High Arctic Relocation history in the 1990s and 2000s as part of Inuit-led advocacy for compensation and an apology. The construction of the historical narrative, as outlined in Part Three, directly served the political purposes of the 1990s; the resulting narrative has perpetuated myths about the High Arctic Relocations that are now generally accepted in the academic community and among public commentators. Chapter Six explores the development of the academic debate in which historians, perhaps innocently, contribute to the mythologization of the High Arctic Relocations.[99] Chapter Seven examines the perpetuation of the myth to secure an official

[97]Cohen, *History in Three Keys*, 60.
[98]Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*.
[99]Cohen, *History in Three Keys*, 213.

apology and the ongoing legacy of the High Arctic Relocation myth in Canadian national history. Because Part Three explores the development of High Arctic Relocation myth through the decisions of contemporary government, all three models of government decision making are used as analytical frames to better understand the construction and utilization of myth to achieve political goals.[100]

Throughout the dissertation, I examine the shaping of the historical narratives of the High Arctic Relocations, examining evidence through the analytical lenses of government decision making, individual experiences, and political goals while exploring the central question of how the perceived intentions of government, and the experiences and interpretations of those intentions, have coalesced around attempts to streamline a tangled web of known-unknowns and unknown-unknowns in the twentieth-century Canadian Arctic. I argue that the importance of the High Arctic Relocations should be less about whether the federal government was concerned with humanitarian action or human flagpoles, and should instead focus on the shifting influence and political power of government, academic, and Inuit actors in shaping the narratives of Arctic history.

Note on Language and Terminology

Primary documents cited throughout this dissertation contain historical language and content that may be considered offensive or potentially harmful, such as language used to refer to racial, ethnic and cultural groups. The content of these documents reflect the period in which they were created and the views of their creators. The original language is retained in quoted documents to ensure that the attitudes and perspectives of the authors are not erased from the historical record.[101] Where possible, language has been adapted to reflect contemporary approaches and best practices.

Throughout this dissertation readers will notice a variation of Inuktitut spellings. I have chosen to use the official spellings of Inukjuak and its demonym Inukjuamiut, and of

[100] Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*.
[101] Language adapted from Library and Archives Canada.

Makivvik Corporation (formerly Makivik Corporation) where possible, but note that these spellings have changed over time and reflect the transition to a standardized Inuktitut orthography in Canada beginning in 1976.[102]

Place names throughout Northern Québec (Nunavik) and the Arctic have also changed over time. This dissertation uses both the colonial and Inuit place names interchangeably, seeking to reflect the historical reality of the period under discussion. As a reference for readers, the present-day village of Inukjuak is formerly Port Harrison. Furthermore, the Inuit community of Grise Fiord is often interchanged in the historical record with the RCMP post at Craig Harbour. While relocated Inuit did not live at the post, and were eventually settled at present-day Grise Fiord approximately 50 kilometres north, government documentation in the 1950s typically referred to the community established "at" Craig Harbour. It is also beneficial for readers to recognize that Resolute (the Inuit community) and Resolute Bay (the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) base) are used interchangeably.

Finally, the language used to describe Inuit forcibly relocated from Inukjuak to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay is highly politicized. Inuit refer to themselves as survivors and exiles, adopting the name "High Arctic Exiles" in the early 1990s as a means of taking ownership of the historical narrative. This name is not universally accepted by relocated Inuit. Throughout this dissertation, I employ the less-politicized "relocatees" or "relocated Inuit" to distinguish between Inuit who experienced relocation and the politicization of members of that group.

[102]For further discussion of the development of Inuktitut orthography, see Piruvik, "Writing the Inuit Language," *Inuktut Tusaalanga*, 2024; Kenn Harper, "The Early Development of Inuktitut Syllabic Orthography," *Etudes / Inuit / Studies* 9, no. 1 (1985); Kumiko Murasugi and Donna Patrick, "The Evolution of Inuktut Dictionary-Making: From Historical Documentation to Inuit Authorship and Collaborations," *Dictionaries: Journal of the Dictionary Society of North America* 44, no. 2 (2023): 7–27.

Part I

The High Arctic Relocation as Event: Analyzing the Project Cycle, 1950-1960

Introduction to Part One

By the late 1940s, government officials in Ottawa recognized the Arctic was an increasingly important geographic area for strategic purposes, and thus one that required greater attention and intentional planning. The sparse population, difficult travel conditions, and general "frontier-style" administration that had characterized government involvement in the North over the eighty years since Confederation, meant that relatively little was known about the physical and human geography of the Canadian North, and even less about the High Arctic.[1] This was particularly true for the less-populated Eastern Arctic. The convergence of concerns about the economic and social conditions of Inuit living in the North, and strategic concerns about sovereignty in an increasingly global post-war era, meant that the government suddenly faced the challenge of managing a relatively small population in a large and complex geographic area with little administrative capacity.[2] The overarching challenges before the Canadian government at the beginning of the 1950s is the subject of much academic writing across many disciplines, but how these challenges affected programmatic decision making is less-well studied. One such programmatic decision is the High Arctic Relocation of Inuit from Northern Québec to the High Arctic.

[1]For further reading on the history of the Canadian Arctic administration, see William R Morrison, *Showing the Flag: The Mounted Police and Canadian Sovereignty in the North, 1894-1925*; Zaslow, *The Northward Expansion of Canada, 1914-1967*; Kenneth S Coates and Morrison, *For Purposes of Dominion: Essays in honour of Morris Zaslow*; Kenneth S. Coates and Morrison, "The New North in Canadian History and Historiography."

[2]See Jenness, *Eskimo Administration: Vol. 2: Technical Paper No. 14*; Clancy, "The Making of Eskimo Policy in Canada, 1952-62: The Life and Times of the Eskimo Affairs Committee"; P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Daniel Heidt, *The Advisory Committee on Northern Development: Context and Meeting Minutes, 1948-71*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security 4 (rev.) (Calgary, AB: Centre for Military; Strategic Studies, 2019); Lackenbauer and Clancy, "Introduction to Shaping Inuit Policy."

A substantial literature debates the motives of the relocations, but an analysis of the problems faced by government and the way in which the program was formulated is less developed. Part One addresses this gap by examining the life cycle of the relocation project from 1950 to 1980, including the identification of problems in the Arctic, the formulation and implementation of the plan to relocate Inuit as a pilot project in 1953, and the evaluation of the program between 1953 and the ending of formalized relocations in the late 1970s.

Part One relies on two theoretical concepts: the first is that decision makers in the 1950s were "rational actors" who "try to efficiently maximize gains and minimize losses as they consistently support their primary values."[3] By characterizing Northern decision makers as rational actors in developing and evaluating the relocation project, I focus the analysis of Part One on the decisions themselves as reflections of the government's values and the intentions of the program within the limits of bounded rationality.[4] In order to streamline this analysis, I necessarily simplify the role of the decision maker within the federal government structure, focusing on the decisions as acts of a unified government, rather than on the individuals – and individual departments – that make up the government. However, this assumption is constrained by a hierarchical level of analysis: the High Arctic Relocations were decided upon by the Department of Resources and Development (DRD), and therefore my analysis takes place at the departmental level, rather than at the level of Cabinet or the House of Commons. There is no evidence that the decision making for the High Arctic Relocations was raised higher than Minister Robert Winters. Accordingly, my focus in Part One is primarily on the civil servants who made and implemented departmental decisions. Although I name individuals in positions of departmental leadership and differentiate between different departments, the underlying assumption in Part One is that all civil servants were working together toward a unified goal, acting in a rational manner to value-maximize stated goals in relation to understood consequences. When discussing higher level issues, this assumption is removed to examine the organizational behaviour of the different hierarchies within the federal government, examining the

[3]Richard Hoefer, *Policy Creation and Evaluation: Understanding Welfare Reform in the United States* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012), 68.

[4]Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, 24.

differentiated roles of Cabinet, Parliament, and Departments.[5]

The second theoretical concept is a policy analysis framework developed in the 1950s by Law professor Harold D. Lasswell and philosopher Abraham Kaplan.[6] This framework, known as the decision process, consists of a series of seven categories that correspond to the seven functions of decision-makers. The framework outlines the distinct elements of decision-making, separating the functions of decision-makers into individual, analyzable components. Lasswell introduced the seven categories of decision-making in his 1956 seminar at the University of Maryland by asking seven questions:

> How is the information that comes to the attention of decision makers gathered and processed? How are recommendations made and promoted? How are general rules prescribed? How are general rules provisionally invoked in reference to conduct? How are the general rules applied? How is the working of prescriptions appraised? How are the prescriptions and arrangements entered into within the framework of such rules brought to termination?[7]

In Lasswell's theory, these questions refer to seven functions: intelligence, recommendation, prescription, invocation, application, appraisal, and termination. Although these categories are now rarely used, they did have a substantial influence on the development of the policy cycle which is now widely used by public policy scholars.[8]

The contemporary policy cycle (depicted in Figure 2) is more simplified than Lasswell's framework, reducing it to five steps: problem identification/agenda setting; policy formulation; (political) decision making; implementation; and evaluation.[9] The cycle will repeat until the termination of the policy. Importantly, the policy cycle allows policy makers and

[5]144 Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*.

[6]Harold D. Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan, *Power and Society* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1950).

[7]Harold D. Lasswell, *The Decision Process: Seven Categories of Functional Analysis* (College Park, MD: University of Maryland, 1956), 2.

[8]Pieter Winsemius, *Guests in Our Own Home: Thoughts on Environmental Management* (New York: McKinsey; Company, 1990); Werner Jann and Kai Wegrich, "Theories of the Policy Cycle," ed. Frank Fischer, Gerald J. Miller, and Mara S. Sidney, in *Handbook of Public Policy Analysis* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2007).

[9]Jann and Wegrich, "Theories of the Policy Cycle."

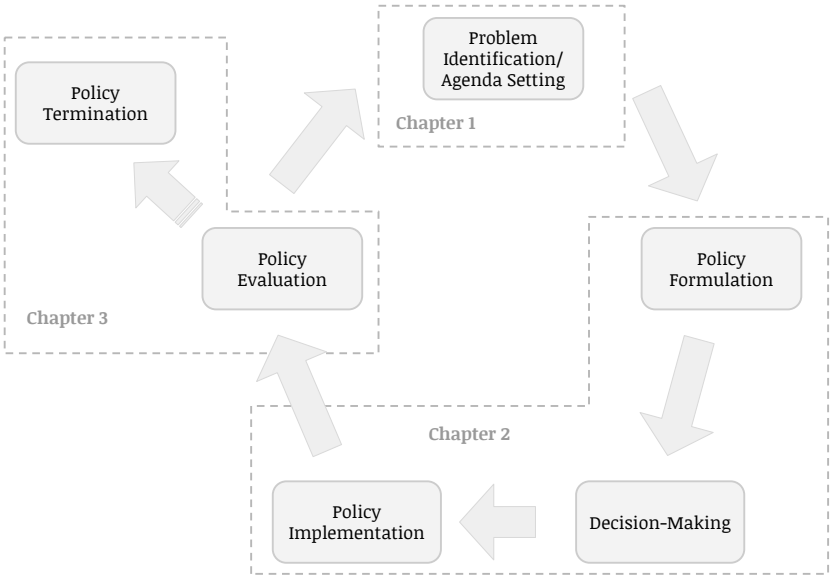


Figure 2: Illustration of Policy Cycle and Part I Framework

policy practitioners to have "an idea of where [they] are, what awaits [them], and how [they] can best prepare for the future, but especially it shows [that] that [they] are working towards a solution."[10]

As a framework for investigating historical policies, the policy cycle provides a framework for defining where decision-makers were in terms of identifying problems and solutions, what they expected from their actions, and how they responded to changing circumstances. It provides an opportunity to identify what solutions decision-makers identified to the initial and ongoing problems within the policy's life cycle and how decision-makers implemented those solutions, and then responded to the successes (or failures) of those decisions through evaluation. Although the policy cycle references decision-making that takes place at the policy level, its utility extends to analysis of decision making at other levels, including the High Arctic Relocations, which were a bureaucrat-led project pre-dating the federal government's development of an Inuit policy.

The chapters in Part One follow the structure of the policy cycle, arguing that the

[10]Winsemius, *Guests in Our Own Home: Thoughts on Environmental Management*, 16.

federal government, motivated primarily by social and economic challenges rather than strategic concerns, was attempting to address a "wicked" problem that it did not fully understand and for which it had insufficient capacity, resulting in unnecessary suffering for Inuit relocatees. Chapter One explores the identification of problems in the Arctic, examining the complexity of overarching forces and specific, interrelated issues identified by the government in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Chapter Two focuses on the middle section of the policy cycle: formulation of the relocation project as a response to the identified problems, the rapid decision-making by political leaders, and the rapid implementation of the relocation between October 1952 and summer 1953. Chapter Three examines the immediate and ongoing evaluations of the relocation project in the 1950s.

Chapter 1

Identifying the Problems in the Arctic, 1949-1952

Introduction

The 1950s and 1960s were an era of tremendous change in Northern Affairs. The structure and size of the Canadian government changed dramatically during this period, particularly in relation to its Northern portfolio. The decades immediately following the Second World War saw the rapid development of social programs and concerns about the economic well-being of citizens, in addition to the more technical planning initiatives, such as national infrastructure projects, that had dominated government discourse in the first half of the century.[1] In the 1950s, the "warfare state increasingly gave way to the welfare state," as government priorities adapted to changing domestic and international circumstances.[2] The emphasis on socio-economic concerns influenced every government department, including the newly-created and rapidly expanding Department of Northern Affairs. Historian

[1]For further reading about the social and economic changes in post-Second World War Canada, see Nelson Wiseman, *1950s Canada: Politics and Public Affairs* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2022); Patrice Dutil, ed., *The Unexpected Louis St-Laurent: Politics and Policies for a Modern Canada* (Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press, 2020).

[2]Wiseman, *1950s Canada*, 176.

Whitney Lackenbauer argues that the social and economic problems facing the Louis St-Laurent government in the North were complicated: "knowable, but replete with "known unknowns." Given the complexity of the problems and the lack of experience in delivering government services into a dynamic region in a state of major socio-cultural and economic flux, the situation was also filled with "unknown unknowns," where cause and effect could only be deduced in retrospect."[3] Anthropologist Diamond Jenness similarly argues that during the 1940s and 1950s the government's Eskimo Administration was "steering without a compass," unable to recognize the full economic or social implications of Arctic programs.[4] The variables of Northern administration were not only highly complex but highly interconnected: changes to address one social or economic problem could have devastating effects on another. The interconnectedness of Northern administration's problems represented a new kind of problem – and one not not theorized about until the 1970s – that governments have been attempting to manage ever since: "wicked" problems.

The "wicked" problem in the Arctic faced by government decision-makers in the early 1950s was a culmination of a variety of overarching forces related to Canadian bureaucratic, paternalistic, and strategic concerns that pulled administrators in multiple directions, and interconnected issues (both real and perceived) related to the economic and living conditions which specifically affected Inuit. While administrators demonstrated some awareness of these concerns, the interconnectedness of the issues, and thus the "wicked" nature of the problems they faced in the North, were not fully apparent. Nor could they be as the government relied on a dispersed network of government departments and non-governmental agencies and organizations for information, all subject to individual and organizational bias.[5] Further complicating the government's decision-making capacity was an inability to effectively identify the underlying causes of these issues, or to acknowledge the inherent challenges to government organization and priorities in the North.

It is within this complex context of "wicked" problems that the High Arctic Relocations were planned and implemented. This chapter examines the challenges of Northern

[3]Lackenbauer, "Defence, Development, and Inuit: St-Laurent's Modern Approach to the North," 195.
[4]Jenness, *Eskimo Administration: Vol. 2: Technical Paper No. 14*, 94-96.
[5]Lackenbauer and Clancy, "Introduction to Shaping Inuit Policy," ix.

decision-making through an analysis of the problem-identification element of the policy cycle, exploring what information came to the attention of decision-makers and how that information was gathered and processed between 1948 and 1952. The primary focus of the literature on the High Arctic Relocations is on this element of the policy cycle and the development of the relocation, specifically the motivations of government officials, coalescing around three dominant themes: sovereignty, welfare, and paternalism. Because the scholarly literature typically focuses on the motivations of government, the rationale for the relocations is overly-simplified in most of the writings, stripping away the complexity of the problems – real and perceived – that government officials faced. While Lackenbauer challenges this simplification in both his 2020 chapter "Defence, Development, and Inuit: St-Laurent's Modern Approach to the North" and in the introduction to *Human Flagpoles or Humanitarian Action?: Discerning Government Motives behind the Inuit Relocations to the High Arctic, 1953-1960*, the academic debate remains centred on the question of strategic or humanitarian motivations, overlooking the added complexity of bureaucratic developments and a changing Northern lifestyle and economy.[6]

The sovereignty argument gained significant popularity in the early 1990s following the publication of historian Shelagh Grant's "A Case of Compounded Error: The Inuit Resettlement Project, 1953, and the government response, 1990".[7] While she was not the first scholar to suggest that sovereignty concerns prompted government action to relocate Inuit for the purposes of establishing an ongoing and permanent presence in the far North,[8] Grant recognizes the significant confusion present within the federal government during the 1950s as a result of ongoing shifts in personnel and organizational structures, suggesting that the confusion of responsibility related to both Inuit and Northern Affairs contributed to a lack of clear direction. This, Grant argues, provides evidence of a government reaction to legitimate sovereignty concerns, rather than an attempt of intentional planning on the part of a disorganized and transitioning government. Grant grounds her sovereignty thesis

[6]For further discussion of the academic debate, see Chapter 6.

[7]Shelagh D Grant, "A Case of Compounded Error: The Inuit Resettlement Project, 1953, and the Government Response, 1990."

[8]Keith Lowther, a former undergraduate History student of Grant's at Trent University, had completed a Master's Thesis on the relocations in 1989 arguing that sovereignty considerations were a key factor in decision making. Lowther, "An Exercise in Sovereignty."

in evidence that Canada faced sovereignty concerns in the Arctic during the late 1940s and early 1950s, pointing to evidence of reported threats from Greenland in 1952 as being of great concern to the Canadian government as it worked through the early stages of developing its own external and foreign affairs policies.[9] Furthermore, Grant includes evidence about Cabinet discussions related to "Canadianization and concerns about a continued American presence in the Canadian Arctic as evidence of an overarching government concern about sovereignty, which the relocation project sought to address.[10] While Grant's original 1991 article makes a case for sovereignty as a motive for relocation, it does not articulate a direct link between high-level government anxieties and low-level government decision-making. Nonetheless, Grant's thesis forms the basis for further arguments, notably through its examination of government apprehensions and bureaucratic instability.

Cultural historian Alan Marcus also considered the Canadian government's sovereignty concerns.[11] Directly commenting on the 1990 Hickling Report's conclusion that sovereignty did not play a role in the government's decision-making,[12] Marcus asserts that sovereignty was a primary rationale for the relocations. Recognizing the absence of Inuit voices in the Hickling Report, Marcus includes Inuit in his argument, noting the inconsistencies between the stories of Inuit and government officials. In reviewing the official government motive outlined in the Hickling Report, Marcus identifies the "motives not publicly voiced by government: Economic policy incentives, moral convictions, and sovereignty."[13] Additionally, Marcus examines post-relocation government memos, including several within the Department of Resources and Development from C.M. Bolger (Administrator of the Arctic) to Bent Sivertz (Chief of the Arctic Division) and Alexander Stephenson (Arctic Services) in 1960 which cites sovereignty as a reason for Inuit to remain at Grise Fiord.[14] Marcus concludes that, because sovereignty was used as a *post hoc* rationalization for Inuit

[9]Shelagh D Grant, "A Case of Compounded Error: The Inuit Resettlement Project, 1953, and the Government Response, 1990," 3.

[10]Ibid., 11.

[11]A. Marcus, "Out in the Cold."

[12]Hickling Corporation, *Assessment of the factual basis of certain allegations made before the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs concerning the relocation of Inukjuak Inuit families in the 1950s: Report*.

[13]A. Marcus, "Out in the Cold," 291.

[14]Ibid., 293.

to remain in the High Arctic, sovereignty was therefore an unstated motive of government in 1952 during the formulation of the relocations.

The second major theme within the literature on the formulation of the relocations is that of economic welfare. Economic conditions in Inukjuak are well-documented and form a substantial portion of the early 1990s government reports on the relocations, including the 1990 Hickling Corporation Report, commissioned by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND), the 1991 report commissioned by the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) and completed by Daniel Soberman, a constitutional expert, lawyer, and instructor at Queen's University, and the 1991 report also commissioned by DIAND and completed by Magnus Gunther, a political science professor at Trent University.[15] The unambiguous records associated with economic conditions in Inukjuak and the government's documented reports on availability of caribou and other resources in the Eastern Arctic have provided strong support for economic arguments about the motives of the relocation project. The poor economic conditions in the Arctic generally had previously been discussed by anthropologist F.G. Vallee, historian Ken Coates, and historian Morris Zaslow,[16] and geographer R. Quinn Duffy highlighted the importance of economic discussions about welfare in government policy in the Eastern Arctic, including government housing, healthcare, and wage policies.[17] Political scientist P.G. Nixon's 1990 "The Welfare State North: Early development in Inuit income security" outlines the direct relationship between conversations about welfare, and specifically Inuit welfare, and those responsible for formulating the High Arctic Relocations.[18] Nixon's argument that the government was wary of the developing welfare state in Southern Canada and did not want to be responsible

[15]Hickling Corporation, *Assessment of the factual basis of certain allegations made before the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs concerning the relocation of Inukjuak Inuit families in the 1950s: Report*; D A Soberman, *Report to the Canadian Human Rights Commission on the Complaints of the Inuit People Relocated from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet, to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay in 1953 and 1955* (Ottawa, 1991); Gunther, *The 1953 Relocations of the Inukjuak Inuit to the High Arctic: A Documentary Analysis and Evaluation (Second Edition)*.

[16]Vallee, *Kabloona and Eskimo in the Central Keewatin*; K. Coates, *Best Left as Indian: Native-White Relations in the Yukon Territory, 1840-1973*; Kenneth S Coates and Morrison, *For Purposes of Dominion: Essays in honour of Morris Zaslow*; Zaslow, *The Northward Expansion of Canada, 1914-1967*.

[17]Duffy, *The Road to Nunavut: The Progress of the Eastern Arctic Inuit since the Second World War*.

[18]Nixon, "The Welfare State North."

for its expansion into the North, helps to explain some of the seemingly erratic decisions and actions of the officials responsible for Northern Affairs in the 1950s. Marcus and anthropologist David Damas also note that clearly articulated economic welfare discussions by those responsible for the Inuit relocation contribute important context to the discussion of the rationale for the policy's development.[19]

Perhaps the earliest explicit examination of economic conditions as a rationale for the relocation project is researcher Gerard Kenney's *Arctic Smoke and Mirrors*, which paints a dramatic picture defending government intentions and actions in the Arctic.[20] Kenney argues that there was "a sincere concern on the part of the government for the well-being of the Inuit living on the stark and unproductive "hungry coast" on the Eastern side of Hudson Bay" and that there "was plenty of documentation showing that the Inuit thought they were far better off in their new homes than they had ever been in Inukjuak, that they had more food and fur resources, that they were the healthiest communities of Inuit in all the Arctic, and that their communities were financially prospering."[21] Kenney's claims of poor economic conditions in Inukjuak, particularly in comparison to the conditions at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, have invited significant debate over the last thirty years, but nonetheless reference extensive documentation on economic concerns throughout the Arctic in the 1940s and 1950s. The presence of these documents combined with notable discussions about welfare programs in the Arctic cannot be overlooked.

While the literature actively promoting the theory that the "ostensible motive for moving people was to bring them from a region perceived to have been overpopulated to places of superior game resources," slowed during the 2000s, the economic welfare argument became a generally accepted premise of the relocation project.[22] Damas, historian and sociologist Hugh Shewell, and senior policy analyst at Economic and Social Development Canada Sarah Bonesteel assumed that the 1950s relocations were directly tied to the development of the Canadian welfare state and its application to Inuit and Northern communities.[23] In

[19] A. Marcus, "Out in the Cold"; Damas, "Shifting Relations in the Administration of Inuit."
[20] Kenney, *Arctic Smoke and Mirrors*.
[21] Ibid., 9.
[22] Damas, *Arctic Migrants, Arctic Villagers*.
[23] Damas, *Arctic Migrants, Arctic Villagers*; Hugh Shewell, *"Enough to Keep Them Alive": Indian Wel-*

part, this solidification stemmed from a growing recognition of the complexity of decision-making, and an appreciation for the complexity of problems facing administrators in the 1950s. The most influential arguments about the formulation of Arctic relocations in general come from geographer Frank Tester[24] and Native Studies professor Peter Kulchyski,[25] who identify the source of conflict between government actions and government values in managing Northern affairs in the 1950s. Tester argues in "Serializing Inuit Culture: The Administration of "Relief" in the Eastern Arctic, 1940-1953" that the liberal values of welfare conflicted with the 1950s bureaucratic ideas about the role of the state and the future of Indigenous peoples, which sheds light on the seemingly disjointed government policies of the early 1950s.[26] The follow-up argument of totalization in *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63* situates the formulation of relocation in the context of government desire to provide economic and social welfare to Inuit in the North while also balancing other responsibilities and values of a predominantly southern government.[27] In this context, relocation,

> was an assumed necessity that would allow various policies to be implemented. Thus, the creation of high Arctic Inuit communities solved several problems at one time. It is therefore no surprise that addressing the costs of 'relief' relative to concerns about state expenditures in support of capitalist accumulation, and a concern for Arctic sovereignty – both considerations relevant to a totalization function – played an active part in these moves. In this instance, administrators had found a single solution to two pressing policy problems.[28]

Tester and Kulchyski's characterization of the High Arctic Relocations as solving two policy problems rather than one acknowledges the complexity and examines how multiple variables pulled administrators in opposing directions. Following Tester and Kulchyski's

fare in Canada, 1873-1965 (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2004); Sarah Bonesteel, *Canada's Relationship with Inuit: A History of Policy and Program Development* (Ottawa, ON: Indian; Northern Affairs Canada, 2006).

[24]Tester, "Serializing Inuit Culture."

[25]Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*.

[26]Tester, "Serializing Inuit Culture."

[27]Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*.

[28]Ibid., 9.

work, the literature on economic motivations for relocation became more nuanced as scholars began to recognize the intersections of economic and social policies, and the role of centralization in the government's approach to policy development.[29]

Lackenbauer and geographer Matthew Farish also contribute to this more nuanced literature, arguing that the relocations are a part of a high modernism project in the Arctic in which the tensions between Ottawa decision-makers and those in the Arctic stemmed from what was understood to be "uniquely human and environmental conditions" requiring additional and more forceful intervention.[30] Those interventions, predominantly economic in nature, were symptomatic not of an intentionally nefarious government bureaucracy, but of a government that had very rapidly become engaged with a complex policy landscape for which it was ill-prepared, leading to "an attempt to humanize populations through the engineering of equality, conducted in distant and distinctly anti-humanist terms".[31] The theory-driven examinations of Tester, Kulchyski, Farish, and Lackenbauer represent the sparse attempts to tease apart the complex threads of problem identification and overarching influences on government decision-makers responsible for the High Arctic Relocations.

More recently, the growing contemporary academic recognition of the 1950s Northern Affairs bureaucracy as inherently colonial and paternalistic in their dealings with Inuit has prompted additional discussion about overarching influences on government officials. Historian Tina Loo describes the increasing role of a government "extend[ing] its power over more peoples and places" in its relocation projects throughout the 1950s and 1960s,[32] suggesting that "bureaucrats and politicians from across the political spectrum believed they were right to use the power of the state to improve the lives of all Canadians, particularly those who were less fortunate."[33] Loo's observation that "the federal government greatly expanded its presence in the region, re-configuring its governance to build a 'full-scale colonial administration' in less than a generation" indicates an intentional use of relocation to

[29]Damas, *Arctic Migrants, Arctic Villagers*; Bonesteel, *Canada's Relathionship with Inuit*.
[30]Farish and Lackenbauer, "High Modernism in the Arctic," 521.
[31]Ibid., 537.
[32]Loo, *Moved by the State: Forced Relocation and Making a Good Life in Postwar Canada*, 27.
[33]Ibid., 11.

achieve an unwritten and unspoken objective of government control and centralization.[34]

While Loo argues that the 1950s relocations throughout the Arctic reflected an intentional approach to advance the colonization of the Arctic, sociologist Scott McLean suggests that the 1950s represented a watershed moment in the development of colonial rule in the region.[35] McLean argues that changes to the terms of trade (price of furs), income from non-fur trade sources (family allowance credits and dramatic increase in spending on welfare assistance), and growing diversity of Euro-Canadian institutions in the region all eroded the feasibility of colonial rule in the Arctic. The formulation of relocation projects, therefore, were not an attempt to develop colonialism, but to hold onto an era that was quickly slipping away. Historian Janice Cavell also argues that the paternalist focus of government influenced decision-making for the relocations, distilling the motivation to a paternalist desire to exert economic control over Inuit.[36]

While sovereignty and paternalist/colonialist arguments about the High Arctic Relocations attempt to situate how government decision-makers addressed problems in the North, these arguments neglect the problems themselves. Conversely, arguments about the economic conditions at Inukjuak overlook the challenges facing the government throughout the Arctic and the reality of a rapidly changing North. While some of the literature does attempt to examine more than one of these variables, none provides an analysis of both overarching forces and identified problems to understand the formulation of relocation as a solution to the problems the government identified as requiring intervention in the early 1950s. This chapter brings these elements together, contextualizing the Northern challenges as a "wicked" problem and exploring the elements of the "wicked" problem by analyzing three overarching forces (paternalism, sovereignty, and bureaucratic challenges) and six interconnected issues (the declining fur trade, single-stream income, reliance on relief, hunting opportunities, lifestyle transitions, and declining health) that government officials identified at the time.

[34]Loo, *Moved by the State: Forced Relocation and Making a Good Life in Postwar Canada*, 19.
[35]McLean, "Beyond Neglect."
[36]Cavell, ""Consolidation and Control of All Eskimo Income": The Motive for the 1953 High Arctic Relocation."

In this chapter I argue that although many of the problems in the Arctic were relatively easily identified, understanding the underlying causes of these problems and the interplay between these causes was difficult, complicated by varying perspectives on and experiences in the North. The first section of this chapter examines "wicked" problems as a phenomenon arising in the second half of the twentieth century. The second section examines how the administration's assessment of problems in the North was complicated by forces that influenced decision making but which were not necessarily identified by decision-makers as affecting policy, including paternalism, sovereignty, and bureaucratic organization. The final section analyzes the economic and lifestyle issues that were identified as problems by government and which directly contributed to the "wicked" problem of Northern decision-making in the 1950s.

Defining "Wicked" Problems

The concept of "wicked" problems has attracted significant interest in recent years as social and economic problems have become increasingly complex and solutions decreasingly effective. While the moniker "wicked" problem has been attributed to many contemporary problems, including climate change and food security, current literature acknowledges that, at its core, public policy poses a similar challenge.[37] What makes a problem "wicked" is ultimately a function of its capacity to be solved. As originally defined by Science of Design professor Horst W.J. Rittel and City Planning professor Melvin M. Weber, "wicked" problems are resolvable, not solvable: the problems cannot be easily defined and so there cannot be a clear objective nor clarity about whether or not the problem has been solved.[38] Rittel and Weber examine social problems as being typified by the following ten propositions:

1. There is no definitive formulation of a wicked problem.

[37]B. Guy Peters, "What is so Wicked about Wicked Problems? A Conceptual Analysis and Research Program," *Policy and Society* 36, no. 3 (2017): 390.

[38]Horst W.J. Rittel and Melvin M. Webber, "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning," *Policy Sciences* 4, no. 2 (1973): 160.

2. Wicked problems have no stopping rule.

3. Solutions to wicked problems are not true-or-false but good-or-bad.

4. There is no immediate and no ultimate test of a solution to a wicked problem.

5. Every solution to a wicked problem is a "one-shot operation"; because there is no opportunity to learn by trial-and-error, every attempt counts significantly.

6. Wicked problems do not have an enumerable (or exhaustively desirable) set of potential solutions, nor is there a well-described set of permissible operations that may be incorporated into the plan.

7. Every wicked problem is essentially unique.

8. Every wicked problem can be considered to be a symptom of another problem.

9. The existence of a discrepancy representing a wicked problem can be explained in numerous ways. The choice of explanation determines the nature of the problem's resolution

10. The planner has no right to be wrong.[39]

Examining the 1953 High Arctic Relocations through the lens of these propositions shows that the problems administrators faced in the Arctic, and particularly the Eastern Arctic and Northern Québec during the early 1950s, were "wicked" problems that were not easily or definitively definable and symptomatic of larger problems occurring throughout the Arctic and Canadian society. Decision-makers faced strategic-level overarching and interconnected operational problems in the Arctic that were unique in both their formulation and possible solutions. In some cases, the problems were real (e.g. declining white fox populations), while in other cases the problems were perceived (e.g. access to country food) or based in paternalistic views of Inuit. Perceived problems were not considered

[39]The propositions listed here reference those used in Rittel and Webber, "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning," 161-167.

problems by Inuit, as explored in Chapter 4. Furthermore, the interplay between these strategic and operational issues meant that each individual issue was both a problem and a symptom or contributor to multiple other identifiable issues. The available solutions in 1953 were not immediate and could only be considered on a scale of bad-to-worse. Furthermore, decision-makers and advocates defined problems differently at different meetings and in internal communications, which ultimately influenced the nature of the attempts to resolve the real and perceived issues. Perhaps most importantly, there was no stopping-point and the solutions attempted by departmental officials had significant outcomes that were not indicative of the pilot project's intention. The situation in the Canadian Arctic in the early 1950s meets every criteria outlined by Rittel and Weber.

Although Rittel and Weber's initial explanation of "wicked" problems is useful in understanding the complex nature of the problems the government faced, their framework does not provide a good foundation from which to retrospectively conduct analysis about the actions of decision-makers. In the intervening decades, there has been significant scholarship around the concept of "wicked" problems and the ways in which policy-makers can address complex social issues. "Wicked" problems have come to be defined broadly as "those issues featuring high levels of complexity, uncertainty and divergence," among the multiple stakeholders, varied institutional roles, knowledge levels, expectations, interests, and values, leading to poorly identified and scoped problems that may be constantly changing in nature.[40] Public policy professor Brian Head suggests that policy problems are not binary in nature (e.g. "wicked" or "tame" problems), but that they exist on a sliding scale with varying degrees of "wickedness" that can be more or less complex for policy-makers to manage.[41] Retrospectively, the relocations were, using Head's typology, a "very wicked problem" in which neither the underlying problems nor the solutions were known at the time, and multiple actors inside and outside of government with conflicting values and interests were attempting to manage the situation in the Arctic.[42]

In the lead-up to the relocations in 1953, the government recognized a series of under-

[40]Brian W. Head, *Wicked Problems in Public Policy: Understanding and Responding to Complex Challenges* (St. Lucia, Australia: University of Queensland, 2022), 32.
[41]Ibid., 33.
[42]Ibid., 32.

lying problems affecting the well-being of Inuit in the Arctic, and particularly in Northern Québec, including game resources, decline in the fur trade, Inuit reliance on relief, and the transition from a more nomadic to a more permanent settlement lifestyle. Furthermore, these problems were exacerbated by government priorities, including the coordination of activities among various government and non-government organizations in a remote region and pressures to manage strategic concerns. While the government could identify problems and temporary resolutions, it could not identify solutions. Because the problems were inter-related and varied between regions and communities in the North, there was no obvious best solution. As Deputy Minister Hugh Young's February 1952 letter of invitation to potential participants of a conference on Eskimo Affairs stated,

> In recent years changes have taken place in the Canadian Arctic which have seriously affected the way of life of the Eskimos. These changes and the problems they have raised affect not only the Eskimos but everyone interested in that region and its people. The problems are complex and solutions which may be acceptable to one interest may be quite unacceptable to another. It has been suggested that instead of each interest attempting to deal piecemeal within its own problems, it would be desirable to hold a conference in Ottawa of all those interested or having a particular knowledge of the problems, with a view to working out solutions that would most effectively meet the situation to the satisfaction of all.[43]

The options available to government were circumscribed by the complexity of the problems and by the values of those *Qallunaat* analyzing the problems.[44]

In response to "wicked" problems, Head suggests that, "to the extent that specific types of complexity and diversity can be identified and appreciated, it becomes more feasible to apply specific forms of intervention (or non-intervention) to different parts of the problem."[45] The emphasis on structuring and identifying the complexity of the problem in

[43]H.A. Young, "Invitation to Meeting on Eskimo Affairs" [29 February 1952], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 253 file 40-8-1 pt 2.

[44]It is important to note that Inuit were not included in the government's formal discussions of real or perceived problems and were not invited to meetings discussing Eskimo Affairs until 1959. See Lackenbauer and Clancy, "Introduction to Shaping Inuit Policy."

[45]Head, *Wicked Problems in Public Policy*, 34-35.

order to develop and apply more effective, partial solutions is a common trait of modern thought on managing "wicked" problems, with many scholars arguing that addressing these types of problems is an iterative process requiring intensive and meaningful engagement to effectively define and scope the problems and potential solutions.[46] In the 1950s, this iterative process was complicated by the varied interests of government and non-government organizations involved in Inuit well-being. Communication between these organizations was often minimal and Inuit themselves were rarely consulted. Furthermore, these organizations were restrained by their own interests and perceptions about what was best for the Inuit.

None of this analysis on policymaking in relation to complex or "wicked" problems was available to decision-makers in the early 1950s who were faced with these challenges. Problem identification and scoping practices were comparatively limited, and managing multiple stakeholders and sub-problems was not prioritized. Furthermore, public policy was only just emerging as a specialized field of study in which improvements to the process could be analyzed and incorporated into to the practice of policymaking.[47] There were few guidelines or tools available to manage highly complex, and especially "wicked" problems. While some of these challenges have been lessened, many of the problems faced in managing the well-being of Arctic citizens persists to the present day, as the problems of economic opportunities, heath and wellness resources, communication, and travel remain. It is safe to say that the problems of the North remain "wicked", and that managing "wicked" problems continues to be an open-ended question for policymakers: as Head notes, it is "widely agreed that identifying suitable policy processes to address 'wicked' problems has become the most important challenge for public governance in the modern era."[48]

By 1950, it was clear to government officials in Ottawa that there were serious problems in Northern Canada that needed to be addressed, and they recognized that these problems were highly complex, involving a wide range of bureaucratic entities and including various

[46]Nick Turnbull and Robert Hoppe, "Problematizing 'Wickedness': A Critique of the Wicked Problems Concept, from Philosophy to Practice," *Policy and Society* 38, no. 2 (2019): 327-328.

[47]Harold D. Lasswell, "The Emerging Conception of the Policy Sciences," *Policy Sciences* 1, no. 1 (1970): 3–14.

[48]Head, *Wicked Problems in Public Policy*, 35.

levels of strategic and operational priorities. As cultural anthropologist Jameson Bond, who had spent two years observing Inuit on Southampton Island, explained in his 1953 briefing paper to the Eskimo Affairs Committee (EAC), "The 'Eskimo problem' is not one and single but rather consists of a series of problems, related in that they all deal with Eskimos but different in that each community is at a different stage of growth and calls for a particular treatment."[49] Northern Canada, and particularly the plight of Inuit living there, was a "wicked" problem.

The North as a "Wicked" Problem

The major, concrete challenges facing government in the North in the late 1940s and early 1950s were primarily related to the economic and living conditions of the Inuit, particularly in the Eastern Arctic. However, many of these concrete conditions were amplified by the less visible overarching forces of paternalistic attitudes, apprehensions about sovereignty, and challenges of bureaucratic structure. In the following two sections, I examine these overarching forces to provide context for government problem identification generally, and the economic and lifestyle issues specifically that were identified by government.

The complexity of these forces and issues, as well as the inter-relation between them, is outlined in Figure 1.1. The following two sections are written to analyze challenges from broad to narrow, providing context for the specific problems in Northern Québec and Inukjuak discussed in Chapter 2, but can be read in reverse to understand how conditions among the Inuit were amplified by the overarching forces influencing government decision making.

[49] Jameson Bond, "Eskimos in Relation to the Developing Arctic" [1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 3:Preface.

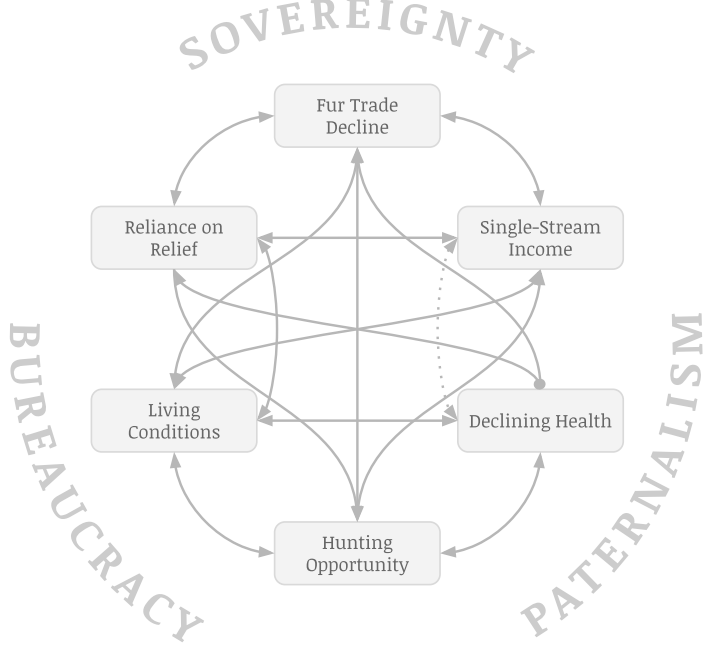


Figure 1.1: Factors and influences in making the Arctic a "wicked" problem

Overarching Forces

The overarching forces of paternalism, sovereignty, and bureaucratic challenges played a significant role in how the government identified problems in the North. The perspectives of decision-makers about the capacity of Inuit communities to adapt to new lifestyles and environments affected the perceived options available for addressing these problems, while the concerns of External Affairs about Canada's legal claims to the Arctic influenced the resources and attention (or pressure) given to decisions. Additionally, sovereignty concerns triggered a series of bureaucratic changes, making conditions even more challenging. Each of these overarching forces clearly contributed to how government identified problems, though only sovereignty was identified by government as contributing to decision-making.

Paternalism

Contemporary critics of the relocations have identified paternalism as a defining element of the program, but its role in government Arctic policy formation and implementation is even more significant.[50] Broadly defined as decision-making about subordinate groups on their behalf, typically without consultation and based on intentions of promoting well-being, paternalism was not considered problematic behaviour for governments in the 1950s. It was also not a new attitude of government, as paternalism had defined much of the Canadian government's decision-making throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, especially in relation to Indigenous people.[51] Despite the prevalence of paternalism, it had not often been directed at Inuit, whom the government had generally allowed to manage their own affairs, particularly in the more remote Eastern Arctic regions.[52] As the Arctic became increasingly accessible, three distinct elements of paternalistic behaviour emerged: increased intervention in Inuit affairs, concerns about lifestyle transitions, and fears about Inuit readiness for the modern world.

Government intervention in Inuit affairs increased substantially in the late 1940s, in part because of the rapid changes taking place in the North. As the 1940s came to an end, the Arctic became increasingly accessible and developed, and the Inuit seemed less "well-cared for,"prompting government officials and others interested in Inuit affairs to believe that government intervention was necessary.[53] The 1949 Eastern Arctic Patrol report noted that,

> Persons who once believed that the native way of life should be protected and that the Eskimo should not be molested or given educational facilities, now recognize that civilization is advancing into the Arctic at such a rapid

[50]For further reading about the role of paternalism and colonialism in the High Arctic Relocations, see Philip Goldring, "Historians and Inuit: Learning from the Qikiqtani Truth Commission, 2007-2010," *Canadian Journal of History* 50, no. 3 (2015); Cavell, ""Consolidation and Control of All Eskimo Income": The Motive for the 1953 High Arctic Relocation," 118–151.

[51]Weaver, *Making Canadian Indian Policy: The Hidden Agenda, 1968-70*.

[52]James Cantley, *Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic* (Ottawa, Ontario, 1950), 43.

[53]Ibid., 44.

> pace that it is impossible for the Eskimo not to be affected. It is therefore essential that this Administration, together with the responsible branches of other Departments, should assist the natives in every possible way to face the future in a realistic manner and in a way which will result in their becoming true Canadian citizens.[54]

This shift toward encouraging the development of Inuit communities was slow. Not all government officials believed that Inuit should be supported in transitioning from their traditional lifestyle. In 1952, comments from the Dominion Wildlife Services on the "Facts and Figures on Arctic Posts" brief that had been presented at the Conference on Eskimo Affairs suggested that transitioning from traditional lifestyles should be regarded with strong skepticism due to the effect on future generations:

> Eskimos should not be employed at air bases or other installation unless continuity of employment is guaranteed. Even if this condition is met provision for employment for next generation must be considered. If the father does not live the native way of life the children will not be in a position to learn methods of doing so."[55]

Additionally, participants at the first Meeting on Eskimo Affairs in May 1952 generally agreed that Inuit should be incentivised to maintain their traditional lifestyles as long as possible. Attendees at the meeting, including representatives from DRD, Department of National Health and Welfare (DNHW), Department of Citizenship and Immigration (DCI), Department of Transportation (DOT), the RCMP, and non-government organizations such as the HBC and both the Catholic and Anglican missions supported government assistance of Inuit maintaining their traditional lifestyle by "seeing that [Inuit] were properly equipped and placed in the most suitable areas for hunting" as well as working with Inuit to improve their hunting techniques and ensure they more effectively used the resources available.[56]

[54]Northwest Territories Council, "Northwest Territories Council Minutes" [21 April 1949], *Northwest Territories. Legislative Assembly Fonds.*, G-1979-042 21-1:4.

[55]John S. Tener and Victor E.G. Solman, "Memorandum for Mr. Smart" [4 June 1952], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 3:2.

[56]21 EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the Meeting on Eskimo Affairs" [19 and 20 May 1952], *in Shaping Inuit Policy: The Minutes of the Eskimo Affairs Committee, 1952-62*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security, Volume 14 (ed. Peter Clancy and P. Whitney Lackenbauer).

Concerns about transitioning from traditional to non-traditional lifestyles too quickly contributed to discussions about wage employment for Inuit. Fears about Inuit being trained to take wage employment in the North without the children "losing touch with the native way of life" became a stated objective of the relocations in March 1953,[57] and the EAC discussed this topic throughout the 1950s, including in May 1956 when Anglican Bishop of the Arctic Donald B. Marsh asked the committee to give consideration to the children of employed Inuit who "will not have been taught to hunt and they may not have the skills to get work unless educated or trained."[58] Assumptions that wage employment would not always be available to Inuit, or that they would not be skilled or educated enough to qualify for wage employment, amplified the fear of Inuit losing their traditional skills and way of life. The underlying paternalistic premise that Inuit communities needed to be slowly transitioned to a modern lifestyle limited the opportunities the government would provide to Inuit. In attempting to develop any kind of Inuit policy, government had to balance the varying levels of paternalistic perspectives, as well as acknowledge that "the basic problem facing administrators is how best to help the Eskimos help themselves through this transitional period in which much of the old pattern has been modified or has disappeared and the new way of life has yet to clearly emerge."[59]

Another aspect of paternalist thinking that influenced decision-making related to the perceived readiness of Inuit to manage their own affairs. The 16 January 1952 Memorandum for General Young (as the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories) from Deputy Commissioner Cunningham summarized these issues succinctly:

> In the past there does not seem to have been any effective approach to the problem of controlling the use of the Eskimo's whole income. It seems to me that this is the crux of the problem . . .
> The basic issue seems to be this: are we to regard the Eskimo as a fully privileged, economically responsible citizen with the right to spend his income as he

[57] n.a., "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister re: Eskimo Loan Fund" [16 March 1953], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 22 vol. 254 file 40-8-1 pt. 3:2.

[58] EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the Seventh Meeting of Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs" [28 May 1956], *in Shaping Inuit Policy: The Minutes of the Eskimo Affairs Committee, 1952-62*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security, Volume 14 (ed. Peter Clancy and P. Whitney Lackenbauer):76.

[59] Jameson Bond, "Eskimos in Relation to the Developing Arctic."

> pleases; or are we to regard the Eskimo as backward people who need special guidance in the use of their income? Should not the proposed conference face up to this issue?
> I personally feel that if we are realistic we must consider the Eskimo to be in the second category.[60]

This view, shared by Deputy Minister Young,[61] is an important aspect of the government's paternalism in relation to Arctic policy: in identifying a discomfort with Inuit controlling their own income, additional resources needed to be allocated for managing Family Allowance and relief credits, as well as accounts for earned income. Working with the HBC traders and RCMP to manage the welfare state in the North added layers of complexity to government administration that were only tempered by the creation of Eskimo Co-operatives in the late 1950s.

The paternalism of government in the 1950s was not limited to Inuit, but it did have a profound effect on the administrative capacity of government in this region. Although the level of paternalism varied across individuals within the department, and within other non-governmental roles throughout the North, its presence directly influenced the conversations had at the EAC and among members of the Arctic division as they worked to develop an Arctic Policy.

Sovereignty

One of the more contentious forces affecting the federal government during the 1940s and 1950s was sovereignty in the North. The extent to which concerns about sovereignty directly contributed to the government's problem identification has been widely debated,[62] but its role as a complicating factor in the "wicked" problem facing government has been misconstrued. Sovereignty was not explicitly stated as an objective by decision-makers

[60] F.J.G. Cunningham, "Memorandum for the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories" [16 January 1952], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 253 file 40-8-1 pt 2:1-2.

[61] H.A. Young, "Memorandum for Mr. Cunningham Re: Eskimo Economy" [17 January 1952], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 85 file 40-8-1 pt. 2.

[62] See *Historiography* in the Introduction and Chapter 6

in the lead-up to the relocations, though it is likely that it was in the minds of everyone working within Northern Affairs. Canada's specific challenges with sovereignty in the twentieth century stemmed from its prolonged progression from colony to Dominion to Commonwealth nation in control of its own foreign policy.[63]

Generally, Canadian sovereignty practices in the Arctic were sufficient as there were only minor challenges in the form of a few Greenland Inuit on Baffin Island and some American whalers – none of whom created any international incidents between state governments and all of which were easily managed locally.[64] In the 1940s, increased activity in the Arctic, particularly the development of defence infrastructure initiated by the American government, prompted some Cabinet ministers to worry about Canada's Arctic claims.[65] In 1948 the government launched the ACND to work out "overall coordination and some comprehensive programme of northern development" to counteract the perceived threats.[66] As Pearson noted in the inaugural meeting, "the Canadian effort in the north should be on as large a scale as practicable in order to minimize dependence on U.S. assistance," and thereby ensure "Canadianization" of the north.[67]

The Cabinet's growing unease in the late-1940s and early-1950s is illuminated in the request for a comprehensive memorandum on Canada's legal claims to sovereignty, completed in March 1950 by the Dean of Dalhousie University Law Department, Vincent C. MacDonald.[68] MacDonald's memorandum ultimately concluded that there was not a legal threat to Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic, though it could assure its claim through

[63]See Kikkert and Lackenbauer, "Introduction to Legal Appraisals of Canada's Arctic Sovereignty"; Kikkert, "Grasping for the Ends of the Earth."

[64]201, 236 Shelagh D. Grant, *Polar Imperative*.

[65]P. Whitney Lackenbauer, Peter Kikkert, and Adam Lajeunesse, "Lester Pearson, the United States, and Arctic Sovereignty: A Case of Un-Pearsonian Diplomacy?," ed. Asa McKercher and Galen Perras, in *Mike's World: Lester Pearson and Canadian External Relations, 1963-1968* (Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press, 2017), 150-152.

[66]ACND Secretariat, "Minutes of the First Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Northern Development" [2 February 1948], *in The Advisory Committee on Northern Development: Context and Meeting Minutes, 1948-71*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security Volume 4 (ed. P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Daniel Heidt):74.

[67]Ibid., 80.

[68]Vincent C. Macdonald, "Canadian Sovereignty in the Arctic."

effective occupation.[69]

In his 1950 report on the economic situation of the north, James Cantley of Arctic Services, a former District Manager of the HBC, also remarked on the global developments that meant that "the age is past now when any country can continue to hold such a huge territory without occupying it or attempting to develop its resources, however sparse they may be."[70] Cantley also mused that, "a territory that, fifteen or twenty years ago, may have been regarded as useless has now become, if not an asset, at least a liability of another kind."[71] He continued by noting that the Arctic,

> has become a potential frontier and as such it quite evidently interests countries other than our own. Whether we want to or not, it would appear that we shall have to revise our attitude towards the Arctic and take a much greater interest in its affairs than we have done in the past.[72]

Although Cantley mused about the importance of the Arctic, it is not clear that his concerns directed decision-making within the Northern Administration. In fact, between the completion of the MacDonald Memorandum and the Cantley Report in 1950 and the High Arctic Relocations in 1953, the government spent little time focused on Arctic affairs; even the ACND took a three-year hiatus during this period.

When the ACND met again in February 1953, early planning for the relocations was already underway. The renewed, explicit and growing concern about the Canadian North and interest therein by Cabinet was summarized by Secretary to the Cabinet J.W. Pickersgill noting:

> Ministers had a genuine feeling of interest in this area but, unfortunately, incomplete knowledge of northern activities. There was also an apprehension of seeming encroachment upon Canadian sovereignty. The Cabinet wished to be informed of all activities in this area, to have periodic reports of proposed

[69]For further reading, see Lackenbauer and Heidt, "Introduction to Advisory Committee on Northern Development: Context and Meeting Minutes"; Kikkert, "Grasping for the Ends of the Earth."
[70]Cantley, *Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic*.
[71]Ibid.
[72]Ibid.

> developments, to receive recommendations of what could be done to promote Canadian initiative, and to have Canada take the lead rather than be paced by the United States in areas of joint participation.[73]

The Cabinet's resurgent interest in 1953 is fundamentally about "Canadianization" of the North with Pickersgill requesting that Cabinet be informed of activities – an important distinction from directing Northern activities. Later in the year, Cabinet's interest would result in a rapid increase in Northern Affairs, including the bureaucracy of the administration responsible for the North, which certainly had an effect on the maintenance phase of the relocation, but relatively little influence on the formulation or implementation.

It is necessary to articulate that there is a difference between the interests and concerns of a politically-elected Cabinet and the civil service. While assuming that government functions as a unified rational actor can be a useful methodology for analyzing external affairs and international relations, oversimplifying government activities is ineffective to assess the perceptions of problems domestically. Alison and Zelikow argue that "government behaviour relevant to any important problem reflects the independent output of several organizations, partially coordinated by government leaders. Government leaders can substantially disturb, but rarely precisely control, the specific behaviour of these organizations."[74] As such, the concerns of Cabinet do not fully overlap with the concerns of bureaucrats within the Northern Administration. Bureaucrats may be, as Cantley's report suggests, "substantially disturbed" by Cabinet interests, but without evidence of specific Cabinet direction that the Northern Administration address "Canadianization" or effective occupation concerns it is difficult to draw a direct link between sovereignty and the motivation of the relocations.

Canada's Arctic presence became a concern for those working in Northern Affairs in late 1953 *after* Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent's re-election in summer 1953 and subsequent speech to the House of Commons in December of that year about the importance of the Arctic. Ultimately, the importance of sovereignty in the 1950s relocations was to complicate the problems that already existed (as outlined below), and to make these problems

[73] ACND Secretariat, "Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Northern Development," 124.

[74] Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, 143.

more urgent. Sovereignty was not a primary *motivator* for the bureaucrat-led project of relocation.

Bureaucratic Challenges

In the post-war era, the government faced a series of bureaucratic challenges, including the rapid growth of the Northern civil service, uncertainty of jurisdiction, and management of disparate government and non-government organizations responsible for Northern affairs. The rapid expansion of government in the post-war era resulted in many new programs and initiatives, but also presented various bureaucratic challenges that were particularly acute in the North. While the government as a whole grew, Northern affairs also grew rapidly: in 1950, Cantley reported a total of six Ottawa staff responsible for Arctic Services, combined with six welfare teachers, a handful of RCMP officers, and nine healthcare workers engaged in providing the services of the department in the North.[75] By 1955, this number had more than doubled, including the addition of six Northern Service Officers who were stationed in the North and the establishment of new services sections within the newly-created Arctic Division of the Northern Administration and Lands Branch throughout.[76] Additionally, the NWT Council grew from five members in 1951 to eight members in 1954, including the addition of elected representatives.[77] This rapid growth required significant re-organization as well as the development of infrastructure to manage the government and non-government interests in the North. Although there were important changes in the organization and size of Northern administration between 1947 and 1953, the most substantial changes occurred at the Departmental level.[78] As the government managed its post-war foci, its departmental organization shifted to manage these priorities. Initially under the Department of Mines and Resources (DMR), the focus of Northern affairs was predominantly resource management and development. This economic focus was retained

[75]Cantley, *Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic*, 44.

[76]R.T. Flanagan, "History of NWT and Department" [18 January 1963], *Gordon Robertson fonds*, MG 31-E87 vol. 73 file 9:67-69, `Restricted%20Access`.

[77]Ibid., 68.

[78]Ibid., 66.

in the shifting to the name DRD in 1949, in which Northern affairs maintained its concerns with wildlife and lands.

In 1953, the growing importance of Northern affairs was signalled by the renaming of the department – Northern Affairs was listed first in the department's name, making the government's focus on Northern issues more clear. In moving the second reading of Bill 6, regarding the renaming, Prime Minister Louis St Laurent explained that the

> bill is designed to give more emphasis to the fact that the people of Canada are greatly interested in this Northern territory and regard it as an important part of the territory subject to the sovereignty of the Canadian nation.
> . . .
> The government is now recommending to the house a redefinition of the duties of the department and a shift of emphasis and a new name. We think that the new name is rather important; it is indicative of the fact that the centre of gravity of the department is being moved North.
> . . .
> This will be the first time that this designation "Northern affairs" will have appeared in the name of a department of the government of Canada. I hope it will be felt, as we felt, that it is desirable that this be done as one of the indications of the growing interest in the importance of these territories.[79]

The renaming of the department was the final step in a series of administrative changes that took place throughout 1953 to shift the focus of the department northward: in September many of the duties related to infrastructure and special projects were transferred to the Department of Public Works (DPW), and the duties related to the National Film Board (NFB) were transferred to the DCI. The remaining activities within the newly formed Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources (DNANR)'s jurisdiction directly related to the North, its resources, and its people.

While the government redefined the departmental structure and responsibilities for the North in the late 1940s and early 1950s, it also reorganized the administration of Canada's Indigenous peoples. The administrative responsibility for Indigenous people was clearly delineated as under the purview of the Department of the Interior until 1936. However, when

[79]Government of Canada, "House of Commons Debates: Official Report 22nd Parliament First Session (vol. I)" [1953], *Library of Parliament*, Queen's Printer of Canada:697.

the responsibility for "Indians" was transferred to the DCI in 1936, Northern Affairs (and responsibility for "Eskimos") was transferred to the DMR. Still, this was not specifically outlined, and many questions of jurisdiction remained. The question of whether Inuit were under provincial or federal jurisdiction had been referred to the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) in 1939, but the ruling of the SCC in 1939 that Inuit were legally to be considered Indians and therefore ought to be included in the Indian Act,[80] had not been addressed legislatively or bureaucratically a decade later. This became an important point of contention because (a) it was unclear which Department was legally responsible for Inuit (the DCI or the DRD/DNANR), and (b) it was unclear whether Inuit would be included under the welfare conditions.[81] The memoranda between senior members of the DRD, including Minister Robert H. Winters, from 3 April 1950 to 15 June 1950 indicate significant confusion about the Department's responsibilities for Inuit, both within the federal government and across federal, provincial, and territorial jurisdictions.[82] The 1950 Order-in-Council that made "Eskimos" a responsibility of the DRD (later the DNANR) reduced this confusion. Furthermore, when the government introduced a revised Indian Act in 1951, it explicitly stated that "an Indian does not include any person of the race of aborigines commonly referred to as Eskimos."[83] Although these legislative changes were important, they had only minor implications for addressing the confusion about Inuit welfare, which remained at the intersection of several ministries, including Resources and Development and Health and Welfare, as well as at the intersection of federal Departmental responsibility and territorial

[80]Reference as to Whether the Term "Indians" in Head 24 of Section 91 of the British North America Act, 1867, Includes Eskimo Inhabitants of the Province of Quebec, accessed July 14, 2022, `https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/8531/1/document.do`.

[81]C.W. Jackson, "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister re: Welfare of Indians and Eskimos" [3 April 1950], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 253 file 40-8-1 pt 2.

[82]C.W. Jackson, "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister re: Welfare of Indians and Eskimos"; C.W. Jackson, "Memorandum for the Minister re: Eskimos and Indians" [4 May 1950], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 253 file 40-8-1 pt 2; J.G. Wright, "Memorandum for Mr. Gibson" [23 May 1950], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 253 file 40-8-1 pt 2; R.A. Gibson, "Memorandum for the Acting Deputy Minister re: Eskimos under the Indian Act" [23 May 1950], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 85 file 40-8-1 pt. 2; R.A. Gibson, "Memornadum for the Minister" [9 June 1950], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 85 file 40-8-1 pt. 2; Robert H. Winters, "Letter to the Prime Minister re: Recommendation on Transfer of Eskimo Affairs" [10 June 1950], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 85 file 40-8-1 pt. 2; C.W. Jackson, "Memorandum for the Minister re: Eskimos in Quebec" [15 June 1950], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 85 file 40-8-1 pt. 2.

[83]Canada, The Indian Act.

responsibility (which was further complicated by the presence of Inuit in Northern Québec and Labrador). Management of Inuit issues therefore required a coordinated approach among multiple departments and levels of government.[84]

In response to the need for more coordinated efforts in the North, the ACND was developed in 1948 and reconstituted in 1953, as the

> Cabinet had directed that the Committee should consider and report immediately, and periodically thereafter, on all phases of the development of the Canadian Arctic and on the means which might be employed to preserve or develop the political, administrative, scientific and defence interests of Canada in that area.[85]

In 1952, Deputy Minister Young also introduced a coordinated approach for dealing with Inuit affairs through the EAC. He had received reports from various government agencies and affiliates, including field officers within Northern Services, the RCMP, the Catholic and Anglican missions in the North, welfare teachers, and the HBC suggesting that changes to the Inuit lifestyle and economic prospects would soon require intervention. The completion of Cantley's 1950 Economic Survey further indicated there were "conflicting interpretations of policy and [that] misunderstandings are bound to arise."[86] This confluence of concerns from various sources, compounded by a meeting held in the Deputy Minister's office on escalating economic concerns in January 1952, prompted Young to invite more than thirty participants to a Meeting on Eskimo Affairs in May 1952.[87]

The intent of the special meeting was to bring together all those interested in and affected by Inuit affairs and

> to provide an opportunity for trading companies, missions, and all departments of government to exchange views and express opinions with the object of improving the social and economic conditions of the Eskimo.

[84]For further reading, see Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*.

[85]ACND Secretariat, "Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Northern Development."

[86]Cantley, *Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic*, 45.

[87]H.A. Young, "Suggested list of those to be invited to attend the meeting of Eskimo Affairs, May 19, 1952" [7 March 1952], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 85 file 40-8-1 pt. 2.

> The meeting will afford an opportunity of having different points of view presented. I hope that there will be open and frank discussions and for this reason the press will not be admitted to the meeting."[88]

The meeting was to have such great interest that it was rescheduled twice to accommodate schedules and the need for a much larger room. The Department and those involved saw the Conference as highly successful and immediately agreed to form a continuing committee, which would become the EAC and meet twice per year, beginning that October.

Significant bureaucratic challenges faced the Northern Affairs administration in the 1950s. The North was increasingly accessible and Cabinet was increasingly interested in developing the North. This renewed interest required the administration to continually reorganize and expand, which amplified legal and jurisdictional uncertainty. In addition, the competing interests and activities of numerous government departments and various non-governmental agencies and organizations – some of which had been or were contracted to conduct services on behalf of government – created a challenging landscape of coordinating activities and intentions, all without a clearly defined Arctic policy.

Conditions Among Inuit

Although the Government of Canada identified sovereignty as a potential strategic-level problem that required attention, its primary focus was on operational-level problems in the North. These problems undermined the government's stated goal of encouraging Inuit to maintain their traditional lifestyle. As such, government officials wanted to resolve these problems. Although the problems existed throughout the Arctic, government records indicate that it viewed Inuit in Northern Québec as requiring the most immediate intervention. This section outlines the government's identified operational-level problems, examining how the government gathered and processed the available information about Inuit economic and living conditions.

[88] n.a., "Notes for Deputy Minister Re: Opening of Eskimo Conference" [11 May 1952], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 253 file 40-8-1 pt 2.

The problems identified by the government were broad in scope and are generalized into two inter-related categories: economics and lifestyle. The economic problems were associated with the capacity of Inuit to acquire income that would allow them to make purchases at trade stores, namely the decline in the fur trade, a reliance on a single stream of income, and a reliance on relief payments. The lifestyle problems reflected the changing conditions of the North, and particularly the rapid development that was altering traditional lifestyles, including hunting opportunities, health, and the establishment of permanent settlements. The economic and lifestyle categorizations of these problems are loose: many of the problems can be categorized as both an economic and a lifestyle challenge. Furthermore, each identified problem significantly overlapped with other identified problems, the underlying causes of which were difficult to disentangle at the time, and remain challenging to separate into distinct, solvable problems. The issues facing Inuit in the North were tightly interwoven (see: Figure 1.1) so that resolving one issue would not necessarily have the effect of resolving what was viewed as an impending crisis among the Inuit. Due to the overlapping nature of these problems, these issues can be read in any order though they are presented here organized by economic issues (the declining fur trade, single stream income, and relief) and lifestyle issues (hunting opportunity, living conditions, and health conditions).

Fur Trade Decline

One of the most-discussed issues affecting the Arctic was the decline of the fur trade. Administrators understood that Inuit had come to rely on the income generated by trapping and selling fur, especially the lucrative white fox. However, various factors had led to the decline in fur trade-related income during the late-1940s, including the population of white fox, the development of silver-fox farms, and changes in fashion.[89] In 1949 the supply of fox and the price for fox pelts combined for the lowest income year recorded, prompting significant concern about the viability of the trade. The Eastern Arctic Patrol (EAP)

[89]Cantley, *Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic*, 40.

report for 1949 noted concerns about poor fox stashes in several communities.[90] The NWT Council held a special meeting on 27 October 1949 to address the impending economic crisis that was particularly acute in the Eastern Arctic, noting that,

> Under the present depressed state of the long-haired fur trade the Eskimo receives about $3.50 for white fox which in 1946 brought him $20. This is having serious repercussions on both Eskimos and traders. The Eskimo income is reduced by five-sixths and the price of essential goods he must purchase has about doubled in the past three years. Relief costs for Eskimos will rise, particularly in areas where country food is scarce and the natives depend on store food. A number of independent traders will no doubt be forced out of business, and if the low prices on white fox continue indefinitely the Hudson's Bay Company may have to discontinue the operation of their Arctic posts as they did in Labrador a few years ago.[91]

A precis for the 27 October 1949 meeting of the NWT Council suggested that new relief projects and continued government assistance were likely needed as low fur prices would likely remain low.[92] This information prompted the NWT Council to request

> the employment of a competent business man experienced in the fur trade in the North and with a sound knowledge of Eskimo conditions to undertake the following investigations:
>
> a. The feasibility of opening government-owned or co-operative stores at points rich in native food supplies which are not at present served by traders, owing to the local scarcity of white fox.
> b. Methods by which the Eskimo economy might be improved, such as by the introduction of new industries, handicrafts, etc.
> c. The feasibility of subsidizing fur prices at a level to permit the Eskimo to earn a decent living without reliance upon relief which has a demoralizing effect.

[90] Northwest Territories Council, "Northwest Territories Council Minutes."

[91] Northwest Territories Council, "Northwest Territories Council Special Meeting Minutes" [27 October 1949], *Northwest Territories. Legislative Assembly Fonds.*, G-1979-042 21-1:2-3.

[92] "Precis for Northwest Territories Council" Northwest Territories Council, "Precis for Northwest Territories Council" [27 October 1949], *Northwest Territories. Legislative Assembly Fonds.*, G-1979-042 21-1.

d. The advisability of the government taking over all trading Eskimo territory as in Greenland.

e. The possibility of some arrangement whereby the Hudson's Bay Company might continue in the picture with a degree of government supervision and assistance to accomplish desired results.[93]

This request would ultimately result in Cantley's "Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic" (the Cantley Report) in 1950.

The Cantley Report provided a much-needed overview of the history of the Arctic as well as an overview of the fur-trade economy. The Cantley Report explained that the white fox followed a four-year cycle in which the number of foxes present varied, with biologists hypothesizing that the cycle was influenced by the breeding patterns of both the foxes and the lemmings upon which they relied for food. This fluctuation resulted in an inherent issue with "booms and busts" within the fox cycle, that was more complex to manage because of the credit system in place. Additionally, the most recent cycle years had also resulted in a sharp decline in the price paid per pelt, as shown in Figure 1.2.

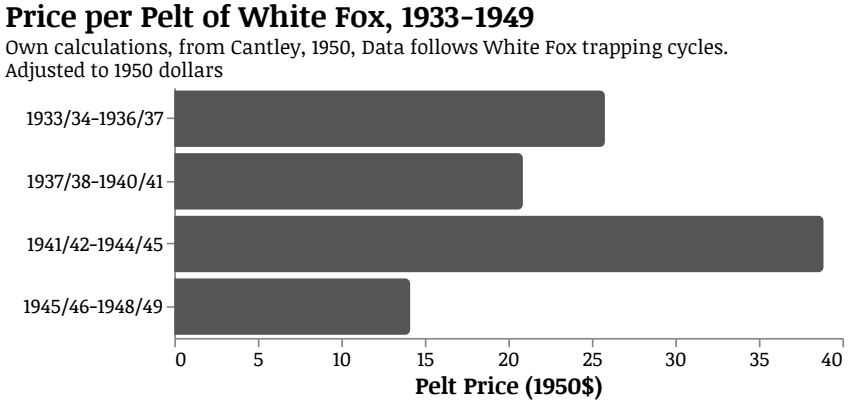


Figure 1.2: Adjusted calculation of the prices obtained by Inuit for each white fox pelt sold in the Arctic between 1936 and 1949.[94]

The Cantley Report further indicated that government intervention was required to manage the fur-trade moving forward. Cantley recommended,

[93]Northwest Territories Council, "Northwest Territories Council Minutes" [27 October 1949], *Northwest Territories. Legislative Assembly Fonds.*, G-1979-042 21-1:203.

1. That the R.C.M. Police should be relieved of all responsibility for the issues of family allowances, relief, old age allowances, etc.
2. That this responsibility should be assumed by the Hudson's Bay Company, in collaboration with and under the direct supervision of Arctic Services.
3. That provision should be made for the closest co-operation between Arctic Services and the Hudson's Bay Company, both at administrative level and in the field, on all Arctic and Eskimo affairs.

Cantley expressed concern about the economical operation of a government-trading organization, and the government shared these reservations, preferring over the long-term to support transition to alternative and additional streams of income and to provide education on budgeting for the boom-and-bust cycle of the fur trade. In the short-term, government would need to find creative solutions to manage the shortfall.

Although the years immediately preceding Cantley's survey were devastating, the white fox population did increase in 1952. This provided some hope for the future of the fur-trade, though the instability meant that the problem would persist through future cycles.

Single Stream Income

As Inuit were "so deprived of game food as to require constant recourse to white man's food," the government believed it was necessary for Inuit to have access to income that could be used to purchase food at the trade stores.[95] Furthermore, as "stress has been laid by the Administration on the nutritive value of certain foods" that were required to be included in issues of Family Allowances and relief, some imported foods had come to be "required as a necessary supplement to the native diet," and regarded as important, further increasing the need to purchase food, even when hunting was sufficient.[96] The income available to Inuit derived from two sources: the fur trade and Family Allowances/relief

[94]These calculations are based on the data included in the 1950 Cantley Report and the Bank of Canada's inflation calculator. Prices were consistent across the Arctic, though there are reports of some variation occurring between trading posts.

[95]Northwest Territories Council, "Northwest Territories Council Minutes," 2.

[96]Cantley, *Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic*, 27.

payments. For most Inuit – and particularly those in the Eastern Arctic – the fur trade was their only source of earned income. Given the rising costs of goods imported to the North, and the increased reliance on those goods for food, clothing, and fuel due to insufficient hunting resources and government education programs, it was necessary to find alternative and additional streams of income for Inuit that were more stable than the fur trade.

In 1950, the NWT Council began examining the possibility of diversifying the Inuit economy, including through the development of a reindeer industry, as suggested in the 1948 Eastern Arctic Patrol report.[97] However, limited resources – and specifically the assignment of the qualified Arctic botanist to other duties – resulted in the cancellation of this project study.[98] Diversifying the Inuit economy was further complicated by the many concerns about the types of income-generating activities in which Inuit ought to engage. The short- and long-term stability of wage employment on Inuit and their families was a concern because Inuit were largely unskilled labourers. The primary employment opportunities were therefore short-term construction projects, which would leave Inuit unemployed when the projects transitioned to more technical operations for which they had insufficient education and training. Many government officials believed this to be a problem because labouring Inuit would be unable to transfer traditional skills, especially hunting and trapping, to their children, who were not guaranteed employment. Additionally, wage employment led to more permanent encampments, which perpetuated the problems with sufficient hunting resources for population levels and new lifestyle issues related to health and wellness. Although some Inuit, especially in the Western Arctic, had become reliant on wage employment, this was seen as something to be avoided altogether, or reserved for the "more advanced communities."[99]

Instead, the NWT Council chose to focus on the development of a handicrafts indus-

[97] Although the NWT Council was, as a territorial administration, comprised of many of the same civil servants responsible for Northern Affairs within the federal government, the focus of the organization was more localized and the Council included representatives with elected representation from the Mackenzie District in the Western part of the territory. R.T. Flanagan, "History of NWT and Department," 63.

[98] Northwest Territories Council, "Northwest Territories Council Minutes" [23 February 1950], *Northwest Territories. Legislative Assembly Fonds.*, G-1979-042 17-1.

[99] Jameson Bond, "Eskimos in Relation to the Developing Arctic."

try, utilizing traditional skills. In December 1949, the NWT Council recommended the appointment of a handicraft specialist to the staff of the Arctic Division in order to organize a handicraft industry, preferably through the Canadian Handicrafts Guild.[100] While the initial proposal of a handicraft industry focused on diversifying income specifically for polio victims who were unable to return to their traditional hunting and trapping lifestyle, in February 1950 the NWT Council recognized that "an Eskimo handicrafts industry is essential to improve the chances of many becoming more self-sustaining."[101] To encourage the development of the industry, the NWT Council engaged the services of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild and "authorized a grant of $8,000 from the Liquor Fund on the basis of a budget submitted by the Guild. It is hoped that with this initial grant, the industry may be self-supporting."[102]

During the first meeting of the Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs in October 1952, government officials discussed the importance of diversifying the Inuit economy, focusing on the development of industries that used traditional skills, including handicrafts, boat building, and eiderdown collection.[103] To further encourage the development of these industries, the EAC agreed to have Deputy Minister Young work with the Department and the Treasury Board on the development of a loan fund that could be used by groups or individuals to "assist them to purchase necessary supplies and equipment with which to increase their earning power or to embark upon any approved project which local traders or others may not be prepared to finance."[104] This proposed fund, which would become the Eskimo Loan Fund (ELF), was almost immediately proposed to the Treasury Board by Deputy Minister Young, whose memo to Secretary of the Treasury Board R.B. Bryce on 20 October 1952 laid out a plan for a fund similar to that provided for in Section 69

[100]Northwest Territories Council, "Northwest Territories Council Minutes" [7 December 1949], *Northwest Territories. Department of the Executive fonds.*, G-1979-042 17-1.
[101]Northwest Territories Council, "Northwest Territories Council Minutes" [23 February 1950], *Northwest Territories. Department of the Executive fonds.*, G-1979-042 17-1.
[102]Ibid.
[103]31 EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the First Meeting of Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs" [16 October 1952], *in Shaping Inuit Policy: The Minutes of the Eskimo Affairs Committee, 1952-62*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security, Volume 14 (ed. Peter Clancy and P. Whitney Lackenbauer).
[104]30 Ibid.

of the Indian Act, which Inuit were unable to access.[105] Over the following two months, Deputy Minister Young corresponded frequently with the Treasury Board and Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources (MNANR) Jean Lesage to work out the details of the loan fund within the Department's Estimates for the 1953-1954 fiscal year. The focus of those discussions was primarily on the administration of the loan fund as separate from the ordinary estimates,[106] and the assurance that the loans be used for projects related to commercial activities, which "must involve cash profits out of which the loans could be repaid."[107] The Treasury Board approved the ELF for the 1953-1954 fiscal year. It would be used widely throughout the 1950s. By 1954 the Department was already considering substantially increasing the size of the loan fund to accommodate projects.[108]

During the October 1952 meeting in which the ELF was first devised, attendees more favourably discussed the encouragement of wage employment, with the important caveat that Inuit engaging in wage employment and their families "do not lose their ability to return to the native way of life if employment should cease. Rotation of employment and time off for hunting are good precautions."[109] The government's paternalistic attitude toward wage employment was shifting, albeit slightly. The primary concern remained the transference of native skills,[110] but a recognition that these skills could be maintained in addition to participating in wage employment indicates that the government was more concerned about the potential total collapse of the Inuit economy.[111]

[105]H.A. Young, "Letter to R.B. Bryce, Secretary of the Treasury Board" [20 October 1952], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 3.

[106]Deputy Minister Young notes the "psychological factor" of ensuring that the loan fund is properly placed under Loans and Investments, an indicator of the government's hesitation to be seen as providing "free" money. H.A. Young, "Letter to G.W. Stead, Treasury Board" [19 November 1952], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 3.

[107]G.W. Stead, "Letter to H.A. Young, Deputy Minister" [14 November 1952], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 3.

[108]In part, this recommended increase stemmed from the use of $20,000 (40%) of the fund for the relocation projects in Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord. F.J.G. Cunningham, "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister" [11 March 1954], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 22 vol. 254 file 40-8-1 part 4.

[109]31 EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the First Meeting of Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs."

[110]21 Ibid.

[111]It is worthwhile to recognize that education policy in the North was also tempered by paternalistic concerns about Inuit children not spending enough time with their parents on the land to learn traditional hunting and trapping skills. These attitudes resulted in recommendations to have Inuit children spend

Although wage employment, special projects such as the handicrafts industry, and the ELF provided opportunities for diversifying the Inuit economy, none were sufficient to support the income requirements of Inuit, especially in the Eastern Arctic and Northern Québec where wage opportunities and potential buyers for handicrafts and other Inuit-made goods were minimal and the cost of imported goods was high.

Reliance on Relief

An important component of the social welfare state is the associated moralistic value placed upon the idea of receiving government payments in the form of economic relief, which assumes that those receiving relief payments will feel 'demoralized' by their reliance on aid and that they will therefore work to decrease their reliance on it. This moralistic assumption is based on a particular conception of economic and class values, steeped in capitalist culture. As the social welfare state developed in Canada, there was a general recognition that not all cultural groups subscribed to capitalist culture, or its moralistic assumptions. The government interpreted these different approaches to capitalism as indicative of cultures being at different "stages of evolution."[112] Those considered "less evolved" were seen as needing to be educated in order to understand the economic culture of capitalism and to be motivated to work hard and effectively manage their finances. The cultural assumptions about how individuals will reject reliance on relief has two important implications for decision making: first, relief payments are a temporary budget item for governments that can pay out during low economic times and replenish during good economic times. Second, relief is not a form of income or economic stability for recipients.[113]

The concerns about economic prospects for Inuit were not limited to economic diversification through the possibility of wage employment and the development of new industries

half their time at school and half with their parents. EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the Meeting on Eskimo Affairs," 22.

[112]Government of Canada, "House of Commons Debates: Official Report 23rd Parliament First Session (vol. IV)" [1957], *Library of Parliament*, Queen's Printer of Canada:3663.

[113]For further reading on early relief in the Arctic, see Tester, "Serializing Inuit Culture"; Nixon, "The Welfare State North."

or to the declining fur trade. Administrators worried about the escalating monetary costs of relief and the perceived deleterious effects of reliance on relief on the morale of Inuit. Although many broad concerns about the development of government-funded social programs, such as Family Allowances, arose in the aftermath of their creation, the outrage was particularly poignant when it came to Inuit recipients of these program. Like the Indian Act, which developed special provisions for the use of Family Allowances, the NWT Council developed additional regulations to manage payments, including restricting payments for children who were away attending school or in hospital.[114] Worries about abuse of relief payments were rampant.[115] Additionally, the government had significant concerns about the potential of reliance upon relief demoralizing Inuit.[116] RCMP Constable A.K. McRae in Port Harrison reported its deleterious effects on efficient hunting and trapping:

> Although the Eskimo in this area are dependent upon relief to varying extents, in some form or another, it is believed that with proper care and administration, it would be possible to cut this expenditure to a minimum, by placing the native in a position, whereby he must help himself before receiving any outside assistance. This has been done in a number of cases with the worst of the inefficient trappers in this area, and has been fond to work quite well, it also has a tendency to give the native more faith in his own efforts and therefore he becomes a better man, which in turn has the effect of increasing the efforts of the efficient trappers, and through this medium, the living conditions as a whole, are improving.[117]

All of these concerns were exacerbated by an important reality for government: relief was

[114]B.G. Sivertz, "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister" [21 April 1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 vol. 3.

[115]A Washington Post article on December 1952 prompted significant discussion within the Department and among the Canadian public about the true benefits of social programs and the potential (alleged) abuses of payments. Though there are significant socio-political implications of the article and 1950s American views on socialism contribute to the fears expressed therein and in reactionary correspondences, the challenges of developing a welfare state in Canada are discussed at length in other works and are outside the scope of this dissertation. J.A. McKenna, "Kublukluk in the Wall Street Journal" [2 December 1952], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 vol. 3.

[116]Northwest Territories Council, "Northwest Territories Council Special Meeting Minutes."

[117]A.K. McRae (Cst. i/c Port Harrison Detachment), "General Conditions - Eskimo Districti E9, Port Harrison, P.Q." [29 June 1952], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 18 acc. 85-86/048 vol. 55 file TA500/8-1-13.

expensive and increasing at a rapid rate, reaching a peak in 1951.[118]

Government concerns about costs are summarized in Director of the Northern Administration and Lands Branch F.J.G. Cunningham's January 1952 memo to Deputy Minister Young:

> During the conference which was held in your office on January 14 on Eskimo affairs it appeared that a major problem was the reaction of Eskimo to relief and family allowances. In particular, it appeared that the knowledge that relief and family allowances was available results in many cases in decreased effort by Eskimo to make a living by hunting and trapping, and that an attempt was being made to overcome this difficulty by refusing relief where the Eskimo was not doing all that he could to support himself and his family, and by restricting as far as possible the benefits of family allowances to the children for whose benefit they are intended. It also appeared that these efforts were not wholly successful, the amounts expended in relief have increased from $14,000 in 1946-47 to $112,000 in 1950-51, although approximately $250,000 was paid in family allowances in 1950-51.[119]

To appease these concerns and the critics of social welfare, as well as ensure its economic viability, the government believed changes needed to be made to address the reliance of Inuit on relief:

> Mr. Stevenson, in the discussion, made the point that careful management of relief and family allowances by the Administration was in itself insufficient to induce the Eskimo to exploit his normal means of livelihood to the fullest possible extent; and that the fullest possible exploitation of hunting and trapping as a means of livelihood for the Eskimo could not be attained until some means was devised of regulating the use by the Eskimo of their whole income, that is their cash income from the sale of furs, in addition to their income from relief and family allowances.[120]

Discussions about how to address the regulation of Inuit income and relief payments predominantly reflect the paternalism of the government, but also indicate the government's need to manage the finances of the welfare state.

[118] Figure 2.1, on page 86, shows the relief issued to Inuit in Quebec in the 1940s and 1950s.
[119] F.J.G. Cunningham, "Memorandum for the NWT Commissioner."
[120] Ibid.

Hunting Opportunity

The availability of food resources for Inuit communities was a major concern of government, particularly as fears of starvation following the release of Farley Mowat's *The People of the Deer* in 1951 had illuminated the situation facing some Inuit communities and increased the public pressure to address the situation. However, access to hunting opportunities and "native" or "country" food resources had been a concern of government for years. For example, the 1948 Eastern Arctic Patrol Report suggested that "although [it was] a rather poor fur year, native food was quite plentiful and with the help obtained from Family Allowances the average family now has a better annual income than in former years."[121] The report on the Hudson Bay area for 1948 noted that

> Native food resources during the past year have generally been quite good, although Northern Québec can only be considered fair at the best of times. In this respect, it is suggested that action be taken to determine whether a reindeer project might be successfully embarked upon near Fort Chimo and/or Port Harrison. Due to the scarcity of native food supply in these areas, the introduction of reindeer would be most beneficial to the native people, who at the present time are so deprived of game food as to require constant recourse to white man's food.[122]

The 1950 Cantley Report also described food resources in the North at great length, outlining the types of game preferred by inland and coastal Inuit communities and the resources available to those communities in different parts of the Arctic.[123] Cantley also corroborated Bailey's statement on the particularly poor conditions regarding food availability in Northern Québec, explaining that those living along the Québec coast were required to supplement their diet with various fish due to the population density in that area.[124] Cantley's section on food resources notes that the primary issue related to hunting opportunities is location-based:

[121]Northwest Territories Council, "Northwest Territories Council Minutes," 2.
[122]Ibid.
[123]Cantley, *Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic*, 23-27.
[124]Ibid., 26-27.

> Taking the Arctic as a whole, it may be said that there are sufficient food resources to feed the present population, provided means can be devised to distribute the natives over the available, suitable areas and encourage and assist them to preserve their native skills and independence.[125]

Concerns about the availability of game resources relative to the population centres had prompted significant discussion in the Northern Administration for decades, resulting in various attempts to manage game resources, including ordinances to prevent over-hunting, programs designed to educate Inuit about conservation practices, and attempts to introduce reindeer farming and herding.[126] The ongoing concerns eventually led to considerations of introducing storage facilities for meat to help manage fluctuations in game availability, suggesting that the problem of hunting opportunities was much larger than Cantley had initially judged.[127] Despite the various and ongoing efforts to address food shortages in some parts of the Arctic, the availability of resources to support denser populations was an ongoing problem that prompted serious consideration of Cantley's suggestion that Inuit be relocated from areas without sufficient resources to areas with lower human populations.

Transition from Nomadic Lifestyle

The effect of permanent settlement on Inuit lifestyle and economic prospects became a major concern of the Northern administrators in the early 1950s. The overview of the "Cumulative Effects of Government Aid" at the May 1952 Meeting on Eskimo Affairs indicated that Inuit in many parts of the Arctic were beginning to transition from their traditional, nomadic lifestyle to more permanent encampments, set up near or at white settlements for the purposes of attaining economic security through wage employment or

[125]Cantley, *Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic*, 28.

[126]It is important to note that these were very colonial practices, based on assumptions that Inuit were poor conservationists and which did not account for Inuit knowledge or traditional practices. Northwest Territories Council, "Northwest Territories Council Minutes" [1 December 1949], *Northwest Territories. Legislative Assembly Fonds.*, G-1979-042 16-1. For further reading, see Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*.

[127]163 EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the Eleventh Meeting of Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs" [28 March 1960], *in Shaping Inuit Policy: The Minutes of the Eskimo Affairs Committee, 1952-62*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security, Volume 14 (ed. Peter Clancy and P. Whitney Lackenbauer).

relief.[128] The concerns of government officials were in part paternalistic as there was a strong desire to have the Inuit retain their traditional lifestyle because they believed most Inuit were "not yet ready" to make the transition to modern life. However, there were also practical concerns to this transition, as Inuit settled in permanent encampments had a more difficult time obtaining food resources through hunting and income through trapping. The minutes of the 1952 meeting suggest that there were also difficulties experienced among Inuit who had settled in permanent encampments for the purposes of obtaining wage employment but who struggled to adjust to the more nomadic lifestyle once the employment had ceased.[129] The minutes also suggest a concern about the "decided tendency, particularly among the poor groups, to forsake their former hunting way of life and to congregate in larger groups near the settlements where they can obtain [relief] more regularly."[130]

For government officials, this raised several problems. An increase in reliance on relief meant larger costs for relief programs. Congregation of larger groups meant decreased hunting opportunities due to the supply of game in settled areas that could not support large Inuit populations (and which further increased the reliance on relief). Larger, more permanent settlements had negative effects on health. While more permanent settlement did provide some opportunity for improved economic conditions through wage employment and the trade of handicrafts and other commercial projects, these benefits did not yet outweigh the perceived negative effects.

Although policy preferences about living conditions would change rapidly during the 1950s as the government began to encourage Inuit to seek wage employment and education in settlements, concerns persisted throughout the decade about why and how these permanent camps were set up. Slow progress was preferred, though government officials did recognize that progress could not be undone: Inuit who experienced living in settlements and receiving wage employment and permanent housing, such as at Fort Chimo, could not be expected to return to traditional, nomadic conditions.[131]

[128]EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the Meeting on Eskimo Affairs."
[129]Ibid.
[130]Ibid., 18.
[131]C.K. LeCapelain, "Letter to Inspector Larsen" [8 June 1953], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 85 vol. 1072 file 252-3 pt 4.

Health Deterioration

Health conditions among Inuit were another source of considerable concern for government and non-government officials. Health appeared on the agenda at nearly every meeting of the EAC during the 1950s, and discussions ranged from rates of tuberculosis to sanitation and heating in the makeshift dwellings that Inuit began to more permanently occupy on the edges of settlements. The 1950 Cantley Report specifically mentions the problems associated with sanitation in permanent, rigid-frame dwellings,[132] while education programs about proper sanitation was an ongoing suggestion by Bishop of the Arctic (Anglican Mission) Marsh.[133] The NWT Council also discussed Inuit health at length, noting the lack of medical facilities in the North which affected treatment costs and time and also made it difficult for Inuit who had received treatment to return to their prior ways of life in the Arctic. There were also substantial concerns about how changes in diet would affect Inuit health, with the Cantley Report noting the Administration's emphasis on the nutritive value of imported food contrasted with the observation that "the most primitive communities, living largely on the resources within the country, are still the healthiest and most virile."[134] The real challenges associated with deteriorating Inuit health in the Arctic and the limited capacity for managing health, combined with the perceived causes of health decline, occupied much of the government's Arctic agenda, influencing how the government understood the other problems it faced in the North.

The problems of the Arctic identified by the government in the early 1950s were complex and highly interrelated. The solutions for those problems were even less clear. In his notes for the inaugural meeting, Deputy Minister Young outlined his hope to discuss "what can be done to assist the Eskimos:

- as hunters and trappers.
- To take up other employment.

[132]Cantley, *Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic*, 29.
[133]EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the Eighth Meeting of Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs" [27 May 1957], *in Shaping Inuit Policy: The Minutes of the Eskimo Affairs Committee, 1952-62*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security, Volume 14 (ed. Peter Clancy and P. Whitney Lackenbauer):101.
[134]Cantley, *Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic*, 27.

- To find new sources of income, e.g., handicrafts, eiderdown, reindeer herding, etc.
- To conserve and make the best possible use of their available income.
- To find and make other resources available to them.
- To find and move them to better hunting grounds."[135]

He hoped that the congregation of all those interested in the plight of the Inuit might lead to clarity about the problems the government faced and the solutions available to them. The committee would provide an ongoing opportunity for those interested in Inuit affairs to elaborate on the problems and provide increasingly complex perspectives on what could be done and what should not be done to address those problems.

Conclusion

The economic and lifestyle problems identified by government as affecting the well-being of Inuit in the Arctic could not be isolated from each other. The decline of the fur trade mattered predominantly because it was the only stream of income for many Inuit. The lack of employment opportunities in many communities meant that there was no way to supplement income when fur prices were low or when white fox was difficult to trap. Furthermore, when employment or handicrafts opportunities were available this took away from the time available for Inuit to trap or hunt. Therefore, diversifying income opportunities undermined the traditional skills and methods of sustenance for Inuit. As these skills and self-sufficiency of food declined, Inuit required additional income to pay for trade store goods and needed to live closer to economic centres. Both of these realities transitioned Inuit away from their nomadic lifestyles, and further increased Inuit reliance on relief. These conditions, identified by government to be administrative problems requiring a solution, were not individually solvable.

[135] n.a., "Notes for Opening of Eskimo Conference."

The conditions among Inuit were not only complex and intertwined, but perceived by government through the overarching lenses of paternalism, sovereignty, and bureaucracy. The problems were made more complex by the way government officials viewed the problems. Solutions were limited by these perspectives, though they were not directly recognized by decision makers. Although government administrators might have been able to moderate the effects of this "wicked" problem, the way in which an experimental solution would be formulated and implemented in 1952-1953 reflected these internal and external challenges.

Chapter 2

Formulating & Implementing the Relocation

Introduction

It took several years for the small Arctic Division to complete the complex process of identifying problems in the Arctic. There was no clear direction from a codified Arctic policy to guide the process of gathering and processing information about the North or its inhabitants. The overarching forces of bureaucratic challenges, sovereignty and paternalism, and the perceived interrelated conditions among Inuit served only to complicate the process. Formulating and implementing a plan to carry out a pilot project that would ultimately relocate eleven families to the High Arctic, however, took less than a year.

Although formulating the relocation plan was relatively straightforward, taking place almost entirely within the DRD administration, it was also subject to the challenges of managing varying perceptions of Inuit capabilities. The individual administrators involved were unable to agree on whether Inuit ought to live traditional lifestyles, if they were capable of managing their own financial accounts, and what level of support they required from the government. This became a more acute problem during the implementation phase when additional government departments, including the RCMP, became involved, and a

lack of clear communication between these organizations exacerbated these underlying issues. Not only were Northern administrators attempting to solve a "wicked" problem, they attempted to do so in the context of competing interests, poor communication, and *ad hoc* coordination. This chapter examines the government's process from idea to application between October 1952 and September 1953, arguing that the rapid formulation and implementation of the relocation project resulted in a lack of clear, strategic direction.

Although a significant documentary record summarizes the discussions related to the development of the relocation plans, some researchers allege that most decision making occurred via unrecorded conversations.[1] While some specific decisions were not recorded, the Deputy Minister's files include a significant number of memoranda outlining the formulation and implementation process, from which it is possible to reconstruct departmental decision making – a process generally overlooked in the literature. Shelagh Grant includes some analysis of the memoranda exchanged between the RCMP and the DRD regarding the destination locations, while Frank Tester and Peter Kulchyski examine the economic development of programs that facilitated the relocation, including the ELF.[2] In examining this documentary record, it is clear that federal government civil servants in Ottawa and the agents of government who travelled to the North believed that the situation of Inuit living in Northern Québec, and especially in Inukjuak, was unsustainable and required government intervention. I argue that civil servants, unable to agree on the specific problems or solutions, hastily contemplated, funded, and carried out a pilot project to relocate Inuit. Although significant inter-departmental collaboration occurred, relatively little oversight or policy direction guided the project, with many critical decisions left to the discretion of individual officers of the RCMP.

[1]Cavell, ""Consolidation and Control of All Eskimo Income": The Motive for the 1953 High Arctic Relocation."

[2]Shelagh D Grant, "A Case of Compounded Error: The Inuit Resettlement Project, 1953, and the Government Response, 1990"; Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*; Shelagh D. Grant, "Introduction," in *Errors Exposed: Inuit Relocations to the Arctic, 1953-1960*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security (DCASS) (Calgary, AB: Centre for Military; Strategic Studies, 2016).

Project Formulation

Tracing the development of the recommendation to move Inuit from densely populated areas to areas considered under-populated is relatively straightforward. This section examines the development and promotion of the idea to relocate Inuit from Arctic Québec, where officials believed that conditions among Inuit were the worst, to the High Arctic, where they assumed that Inuit would be in a better position to improve their economic prospects and living conditions. I argue that the formulation of the relocation project was generally effective, with a clearly established understanding of the general purpose of the program and the means by which to fund the program.

Relocation of Indigenous people was not a new idea in the 1950s, though there were relatively few examples of relocating Inuit.[3] Inuit had been relocated several times since 1902, predominantly as a response to changing trade conditions throughout the Keewatin and Northern Québec.[4] Most of these relocations were over relatively short distances and within the same degree of latitude. Large-scale relocation over a large distance that did not follow the creation of a trading post was a new idea, but represented the application of a previously-used policy solution to a new set of problems.

The minutes of the first meeting of the EAC in May 1952 reflect the initial suggestion to relocate Inuit to more remote areas of the High Arctic. The minutes state that "the movement of Eskimos from over-populated areas to places where they can be assured of being able to make a better living" would improve conservation and better utilization of food resources.[5] It is notable that this suggestion was not first conceived of at this meeting, but thought of in advance by administrators within DRD as a means by which to assist Inuit through development of the economy, for the suggestion to "find and move [Eskimos] to better hunting grounds" was included within the notes compiled for Deputy Minister

[3]P. Whitney Lackenbauer, *Battle Grounds: The Canadian Military and Aboriginal Lands* (Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press, 2007).

[4]Inuit were also moved within the Arctic and to Southern Canada for purposes of healthcare and education as these facilities often did not exist in the North, and particularly in smaller communities. Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*.

[5]EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the Meeting on Eskimo Affairs," 25.

Hugh Young on 11 May 1952.[6]

It is not clear in the minutes of the May 1952 Meeting on Eskimo Affairs how the fifty-five individuals in attendance responded to the suggestion of relocating Inuit to address the complex problems discussed during the meeting. At the time it was evident that those interested in Inuit affairs all had their own interests and opinions about the acceptability and feasibility of potential solutions,[7] and this is reflected in the responses received by the DRD officials following the meeting. In June 1952, mammalogist John S. Tener and Chief biologist Victor E. Solman of the Wildlife Services Division provided comments about the potential transfer of Inuit based on concerns about conservation efforts, which they believed might be undermined by Inuit use, noting that "[a]ny transfer of Eskimos should be preceded by a thorough survey of the wildlife resources of the area to be settled and by careful consideration of the effects on such resources of Eskimo use."[8] Wildlife Services saw Northern conservation efforts as an acute problem, likened to crisis-era policies of the Depression and Second World War, with limited concern for the well-being of Inuit: "Eskimo reluctance to move should not preclude moves any more than has been the case in the relocation of prairie farmers under P.F.R.A. [Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration] and the expropriation of property and removal of persons for necessary purposes in connection with recent National Defence developments in large areas in Alberta and Saskatchewan."[9] This perspective was somewhat extreme, but not unique. Acting Chief of Dominion Wildlife Services J.P. Richards also expressed reservations about relocations focused on the economic impacts:

> The advisability of moving people to areas which are more productive either in terms of foxes or country food – or both – is something which obviously should be carefully and thoroughly explored. The main thing is to make sure that the potentialities of the areas, to which such transfers are to be made, are

[6]The notes for the Deputy Minister include the suggestion of relocating Inuit but are not signed. It is likely that the notes were compiled for Deputy Minister Young by members of the Northern Administration & Lands Branch and Arctic Services Branch. n.a., "Notes for Opening of Eskimo Conference," 2.

[7]H.A. Young, "Invitation to Meeting on Eskimo Affairs."

[8]John S. Tener and Victor E.G. Solman, "Memorandum for Mr. Smart."

[9]Ibid. On the creation of the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range straddling the Alberta-Saskatchewan border and other military appropriations of Indigenous lands, see Lackenbauer, *Battle Grounds*.

> sufficient to provide the newcomers with a reasonable livelihood without at the same time reducing the living standards of the present inhabitants.
> While the income derived from the sale of white fox pelts is an important factor in the native economy, obviously the abundance and availability of other country food resources is of much greater importance. We ourselves could not operate under an economy based on such an unsound structure.[10]

Despite these concerns, relocation remained an option to address the problems affecting Inuit. As the second meeting of the EAC approached in October 1952, the senior Northern administrators discussed relocation. In setting the agenda for the meeting, the Director of NALB F.J.G. Cunningham and Deputy Minister Young limited the agenda items to those considered most pressing, including the transfer of Inuit.[11] The draft agenda notes for the meeting presented to Deputy Minister Young on 15 October, provide additional details of the intention behind the transfer of Inuit:

> Improvement of Eskimo Economy
> (iii) Transfer of Eskimos from over-populated and/or depleted areas to under-populated and/or more favourable hunting areas, and also to areas where employment, seasonal or otherwise, may be obtained.
> Transfers from Northern Québec to North and Northeast Baffin Island.
> Transfers to Northern islands which are not populated at present, viz., Ellesmere Island, where there is a R.C.M. Police detachment; to other areas where there are weather stations but where at present there is no one capable of dealing with Eskimos.
> Policy regarding employment of Eskimos at bases, weather and radio stations, mining camps, and at other settlements, seasonal and/or permanent.
> Rotation of employment, scales of wages and rations, compulsory savings.[12]

The intention to transfer Inuit was, at its core, a reflection of the paternalist desire of the government to make decisions on behalf of Inuit for their perceived well-being and gradual

[10]J.P. Richards, "Memorandum for Mr. Smart" [7 June 1952], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 3.

[11]F.J.G. Cunningham, "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister" [8 October 1952], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 3:5.

[12]F.J.G. Cunningham, "Notes on [Draft] Agenda for Meeting of General Committee on Eskimo Affairs to be held Thursday, October 16, 1952" [15 October 1952], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 3.

transition to modern society. Inuit were not invited to the EAC meeting to discuss the situation or the possible solutions because it was believed that they were not yet capable of contributing to the conversation about their welfare.[13] At the meeting itself,

> [Consideration] was given to the possibility of assisting natives to move from over-populated areas to places where they could more readily obtain a living. It was agreed that Craig Harbour and Cape Sabine on Ellesmere Island should be investigated as possible localities where Eskimos could be placed under the care of the R.C.M. Police detachments and arrangements made to enable them to obtain necessary supplies through the loan fund.[14]

The non-binding direction given by the attendees of the EAC provided the DRD administration with sufficient endorsement from enough individuals and organizations with interests in the Arctic, who would be needed to support the relocation, to proceed with the planning, decision-making, and implementation phases of the policy. With this endorsement in October 1952, the formulation of the relocation project could formally begin. In order to formulate the program, administrators would need to develop a case for relocation, including who would be relocated, to where these individuals would be relocated, how they would be relocated, and when they would be relocated. The "what" and "why" elements had already been determined through the problem identification process and creation of the idea to relocate Inuit.

Identifying Potential Participants

In order to have the relocation provide the largest potential effect on both the Inuit being relocated and the community where they were relocated, the participants for the relocation project would need to come from areas of the Arctic that were experiencing the worst conditions. Administrators had been receiving reports about the deteriorating conditions across the Arctic for several years, though the Cantley Report had identified that the

[13]Inuit were not invited to attend meetings of the EAC until 1959. F.J.G. Cunningham, "Letter to Clyde Kennedy" [16 June 1952], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 vol 3.

[14]EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the First Meeting of Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs," 31.

issues were most acute in the Eastern Arctic, and particularly in Northern Québec.[15] This report was corroborated by RCMP detachment reports, summaries of which had been forwarded to Deputy Minister Young in October 1952 and included in the briefing notes for the October EAC meeting. According to these summaries, there were "many instances of privation and hardship among the Eskimos."[16] The summaries included excerpts from the reports made by RCMP officers throughout the Arctic, illuminating some of the worst living conditions that the RCMP had encountered. Many of the excerpts outlined the state of identified problems, including poor health, unsanitary and overcrowded living conditions, economic destitution from poor fur trapping and reliance on unstable wage employment, and starvation due to poor hunting conditions.[17] The segments from the Port Harrison Detachment report submitted in June 1949 are explicit:

> Actually at the present time the large majority of the hunters in this particular district do not and cannot pay their way due to the low price for fur and the high cost of retail goods. . . The big drawback here is that the Eskimo economy in this district is based entirely on white foxes and seals. White foxes are reasonably plentiful about three years out of seven and during the other four years the Eskimo is forced to rely on the charity of the trading companies. The past fur season should have been one of the good years but due to the negligible price that was paid for the fur the year was actually not successful and the average native hunter went into the hold. Unless fur prices increase before the next fur season, that season also will not be a success.[18]

This report went on to indicate that Inuit in the Port Harrison Detachment area were "progressively losing [their] ability to concentrate on hunting for food" due to their reliance on the fur trade, which was further exacerbating the issues experienced in the Detachment area.[19]

The reports from the Port Harrison Detachment Area did not improve in their outlook

[15]Cantley, *Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic*.
[16]n.a., "Summary of Reports on Conditions Amongst Eskimos" [14 October 1952], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 vol 3:1.
[17]Ibid.
[18]Ibid., 5-6.
[19]Ibid., 6.

on the plight of the Inuit after 1949. The report submitted in July 1950 presented a bleak picture of the projected prospects for Inuit in that area:

> I think this report will show clearly the hopelessness of the plight of the Eskimos of the District, under present existing conditions. There seems to be no hope for them for the future under the present conditions, and not much hope for them even if fur prices did rise somewhat in the future. ... The economic conditions amongst all of the Eskimos in New Québec seems to be getting worse year by year. The relief, and family allowances, which have been issued to them in recent years has, in so many cases, been only enough to keep them from actual starvation.[20]

The fur prices and income generated from fur sales did not improve throughout the Arctic and were notably worse in the Eastern Arctic, as indicated by the decline in price per pelt in Figure 1.2 on page 64.[21]

By 1951, the RCMP reports suggested that the only way for Inuit to survive in the area was through direct relief and indirect assistance, such as the financing of a whale hunt in 1950-1951 that allowed Inuit to obtain sufficient food resources to survive the winter.[22] Although the situation appeared to have improved by June 1952, the Detachment Report still noted that there had not been any fur caught at Port Harrison and that Inuit in this area were dependent upon relief. The costs of relief at Port Harrison and the Arctic as a whole were increasing substantially. The steep increase in relief costs for Québec are reflected in Figure 2.1.

The creation of the Canadian welfare state in the mid-1940s was not a universally popular government action, even among government officials. Concerns about how subsidies, including Family Allowances, would be used by Indigenous people influenced the ways in

[20]G.C. Roberts, Insp. for Officer Commanding, 'G' Division, A.O.D., "Condition of Eskimo, Port Harrison Detachment Area" [10 July 1950], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 18 acc. 85-86/048 vol. 55 file TA500/8-1-13.

[21]Cantley, *Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic*; Bank of Canada, Inflation Calculator; Northwest Territories Council, "Northwest Territories Council Minutes."

[22]G.A. Mansell, (Cpl. i/c Port Harrison Detachment), "Conditions of Eskimos - District E-9-Port Harrison, P.Q." [19 June 1951], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 18 acc. 85-86/048 vol. 55 file TA500/8-1-13.

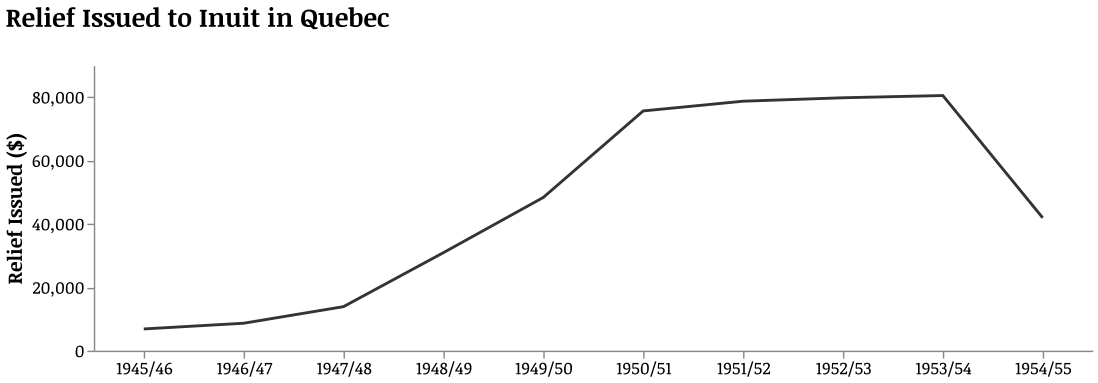


Figure 2.1: Total dollars of relief issued by the federal government to the Inuit in Québec between 1945/46 and 1954/55.[23]

which payments would occur. The DRD was responsible for managing Family Allowance and relief payments for Inuit recipients and the programs were poorly managed. Family Allowance payments, for example, would take nearly fifteen years to be properly administered due to complications arising from the registration of Inuit children and the disbursement of credits through a variety of organizations (including the HBC, RCMP, and independent traders). Additionally, disagreements about the ways in which credits could be used by Inuit (e.g. whether Inuit could be trusted to spend their Family Allowances wisely if issued a cheque like other Canadians) and when they should be disbursed led to credits building up in the DRD accounts. All of these factors contributed to a variety of accounting errors related to the program.[24]

These errors in turn exacerbated the problems of issuing relief to Inuit. Government officials were quite concerned about the increasing reliance of Inuit on government subsidies, including Family Allowances and relief. The payment of relief to Inuit in Québec had risen dramatically in the late 1940s, as outlined in Figure 2.1. The rising costs were an area of concern because they affected the budget, but so were the worries that the Inuit were

[23]Note a sharp increase in the amount of relief issued during the years immediately preceding the relocation, corresponding to the decline in income generated by the fur trade.
n.a., "Relief Issued to Eskimos" [1955], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 vol 3.

[24]Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*, 73-87.

choosing to rely on relief and Family Allowance payments rather than work as trappers.[25] This reliance on government payments was partially to blame for Inuit choosing to set up more permanent encampments near trading posts where they could more easily access relief, but which was, in the view of government, contributing to over population in these areas. RCMP Constable A.K. McRae in Port Harrison wrote:

> The real reason for the present living condition of the natives in this area is not the scarcity of food, but the over population of the area, and if some of those natives could be made interested to move to the outlying islands or to another district entirely, conditions would be much better for the remaining natives.[26]

In forwarding this report, Inspector W. Dick reminded DRD Director Cunningham that there had been previous attempts to disperse the population at Port Harrison:

> It will be noted that Constable McRae believes that there is over-population of Eskimos at various places in the area. As you know some Eskimos have been moved in the past year or two from the mainland of Québec to adjacent islands in Hudson Bay and those moves generally, have had the desired result.[27]

The idea to relocate individuals from overpopulated areas in the Eastern Arctic, such as Port Harrison, to less densely populated areas elsewhere in the Arctic had been building throughout 1952, and administrators had strong evidence to suggest that intervention was required at Port Harrison, making it a good site to consider for experimenting with population transfer as a resolution.

Location of Relocation Destination

The second element required administrators to propose a location to which Inuit could be transferred. In February 1952, RCMP Inspector Henry Larsen wrote to RCMP Commissioner Leonard Nicholson about the prospect of establishing a Police Detachment at

[25] A.K. McRae (Cst. i/c Port Harrison Detachment), "General Conditions - Eskimo Districti E9, Port Harrison, P.Q.."

[26] Ibid.

[27] W. Dick, "Cover Page for RCMP Report re: Conditions at Port Harrison" [5 August 1952], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 18 acc. 85-86/048 vol. 55 file TA500/8-1-13.

Pim Island and recruiting additional Inuit families, particularly from Pond Inlet, to be employed by the RCMP as at Craig Harbour.[28] Larsen's suggestion that transferring Inuit to Ellesmere Island where the RCMP might look after their welfare more effectively than at the trading posts includes the rationale that this transfer would "in a general way improve their economic circumstances."[29] It is well-noted throughout the literature that the RCMP believed they were the best organization to manage Inuit welfare,[30] and the report completed by Inspector Larsen on this matter in late February 1952 and forwarded to Deputy Minister Young, provides a strong rationale for centralizing Family Allowance payments through the RCMP.[31] Family Allowance mechanisms for Inuit recipients would remain an ongoing source of debate until 1960.[32] The RCMP wanted to take over the role of the HBC as administrator in the North and insisted that they could manage these payments and look after the needs of Inuit in remote areas because the members stationed at these remote Detachments "are keenly interested in the welfare of the Eskimos and speak their language as well as anyone and understand the natives' needs in that area."[33] The RCMP's belief that it could manage Northern administration allowed the government additional flexibility in location choice because it would not be necessary to relocate Inuit to an area with a trade store if the RCMP could take on this role.

Although the Cantley Report recommended that the government increase its cooperation with the HBC rather than try to create a government monopoly on trading in the Arctic,[34] the government and the HBC had various perspectives on the best way to manage trade and welfare in the Arctic. Critics of James Cantley's recommendations note that he had a history of working both with the HBC and independent trading companies, making

[28]H.A. Larsen, "Letter from Inspector Larsen to Commissioner Nicholson re: Proposed Movememnt of Eskimo Families from Baffin Island to Ellesmere Island, N.W.T." [5 February 1952], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 18 acc. 85-86/048 vol. 42 file D1512-2-4-Q-16.

[29]Ibid.

[30]See Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*.

[31]H.A. Larsen, "Letter to Commissioner L.H. Nicolson re: Family Allowances and the RCMP" [29 February 1952], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 18 acc. 85-86/048 vol. 2 file D1512-2-4 Q22.

[32]Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*, 342.

[33]H.A. Larsen, "Proposed Movement of Eskimo Families."

[34]50 Cantley, *Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic*.

his recommendations less objective.[35] However, the push from Commissioner Nicholson and Inspector Larson to have these activities transferred to the RCMP certainly played a role in the government's eventual decision to rely on the RCMP detachments to interface with relocated Inuit on behalf of government in the High Arctic.

In deciding on remote locations that would be plentiful in country food and low in population density, the High Arctic seems to have been the only region considered. The Cantley Report indicated that this area had significant promise for the purposes of better hunting opportunities as the population density was lowest and there was the greatest stretch of coastline available.[36] The primary criteria for a relocation destination seemed to be the presence of RCMP support, as outlined in Deputy Minister Young's letter to Inspector Larsen in February 1953:

> As you are aware, we have been giving consideration to the possibility of transferring a few Eskimo families from overpopulated areas to places in the high Arctic, including Craig Harbour, the proposed detachment site at Cape Herschel, and Resolute Bay. It would be possible to establish these small settlements only with your co-operation as there is no one else at these places who could assist these people in adjusting themselves to new conditions.[37]

The DRD's reliance on the RCMP's cooperation for the relocation of Inuit to new locations signalled a shift away from the government's reliance on independent and HBC traders to administer the Arctic. It also indicated that the government could not implement a policy such as relocation entirely on its own given its shortage of human resources in the Arctic during this period. Reliance on the RCMP, however, meant closer cooperation between the DRD and the police. Given the differences in perspectives on Northern administration and the relative independence of how the RCMP operated its Northern detachments, this close cooperation would result in significant issues in the implementation of the project.

[35]See Shelagh Grant, "Inuit Exiles Deserve an Apology," *Toronto Star*, November 14, 1991; Cavell, ""Consolidation and Control of All Eskimo Income": The Motive for the 1953 High Arctic Relocation," 118–151.

[36]Cantley, *Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic*, 17.

[37]H.A. Young, "Letter to Commissioner L.H. Nicolson" [20 February 1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 3.

The coordination of Northern activities into small centres to which Inuit could be relocated was both a consequence of the bureaucratic challenges that the Northern administration faced in terms of personnel, and an indication of the paternalism that governed much of the government's decision making. The desire to move Inuit away from densely populated areas and close proximity to trade stores upon which they were too reliant was in conflict with the paternalist government opinion that Inuit could not live in areas so remote that the government could not provide support. Deputy Minister Young indicated the requirement for the police to be involved for both these reasons in his letter to Commissioner Nicholson in February 1953:

> You have a detachment at Craig Harbour, and I understand you intend to put one at Cape Herschel this year. There is none at Resolute Bay at present, but I understand the meteorological people would like very much to see a detachment reopened there. We could not consider placing Eskimos at Resolute Bay unless we had someone to look after them and direct their activities. This could not ordinarily be done by any of the people employed at the station there. I would be interested to hear, therefore, if you propose to open a detachment at that point this year.[38]

The location of the police detachments at Craig Harbour and the potential of re-opening a detachment at Resolute Bay were deliberate. Commissioner Nicholson's reply to Deputy Minister Young's letter inquiring about re-opening a Detachment at Resolute Bay suggested that the motivation to re-open the detachment specifically at Resolute Bay was a response to the confluence of potential activities there, including the transfer of Inuit. Commissioner Nicholson noted that he "would be quite willing to select a good man and have him stationed there with the specific job of taking care of the natives. He might even be able to encourage some hunting and trapping on their part and handle their furs for them."[39] Commissioner Nicholson's willingness to cooperate may have also been influenced by the increasing sovereignty pressures that the RCMP faced in general. In January 1953 the Cabinet sought to increase Canadian presence in the North to improve sovereignty

[38]H.A. Young, "Letter to Commissioner L.H. Nicolson."

[39]L.H. Nicholson, "Letter to H.A. Young, Deputy Minister" [24 February 1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 3.

claims through effective occupation including the development of "political, administrative, scientific and defence interests of Canada,"[40] and the 13 February 1953 Cabinet Directive specifically mentioned the use of the RCMP to achieve that goal:

> With this situation in mind, I suggest that the most important single method which might be employed to preserve and develop Canadian interests in the Arctic is the adoption at the highest level of a vigorous policy in all Canadian Arctic services, including communications, transportation, aids to navigation, meteorology and police.[41]

It is clear from the documents that the police were used as part of Canada's Arctic sovereignty work in the 1950s, including in 1953. It is not clear that this extended to Inuit who were to be supervised from afar by the police. The presence of police in the High Arctic contributed to the "Canadianization" of the Arctic and to the state's presence therein. Inuit however, were neither agents of the state nor were they the target of the Cabinet Directive that sought to "preserve and develop Canadian interests in the Arctic."

By 10 March 1953, the potential locations for the relocation project plan had been decided upon:

> I am pleased to note from your letter of the 24th of February that you are prepared to open a detachment at Resolute Bay in view of the fact that we plan to move a small group of Eskimos to that point during the coming summer.
> I understand that Colonel Cunningham had a discussion with you recently about our plans to improve the Eskimo economy and the part we would like your detachments to play in these plans. We shall welcome the co-operation of your force in selecting the Eskimos who can be moved to better locations and we expect shortly to outline to you in some detail the plans we have in mind.[42]

The RCMP would be a key component of Inuit administration in the High Arctic and a crucial element of the relocation project.

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[40] n.a., "Cabinet Conclusions: Concerns about Sovereignty Infringement" [22 January 1953], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 2 vol 2652 file Jan-Feb 1953.

[41] n.a., "Memorandum for Mr. McKay" [13 February 1953], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 25 acc. 90-91/109 vol. 58 file 50197-40.

[42] H.A. Young, "Letter to Commissioner L.H. Nicolson" [10 March 1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 3.

Financing the Project

The final element of the program formulation that remained was how the program would be carried out, and specifically how it would be funded. The method of undertaking a project of a relatively large scale was somewhat challenging, particularly given the high costs of operating in the Arctic and the lack of transport and communication resources available. In order to transfer Inuit from one area of the Arctic to another, the administration would need to acquire transportation for those Inuit, their dogs, and any supplies that would be required at the new location. Given that the new location would be considerably further North, these supplies would need to account for the differences in living conditions, supplies which Inuit would not have. Although the budget of the DRD was increasing throughout this period,[43] there was not a clear fund from which a project like this could be financed. The idea to create an ELF, modelled after the fund established under the Indian Act, provided an opportunity for the DRD to fund special projects that they believed had the potential to improve the Inuit economic situation.

Director Cunningham's briefing notes for Deputy Minister Young explained the concept:

> It is recommended that, subject to Regulations of the Treasury Board, provision be made for a continuing Special Account in the Consolidated Revenue Fund, to be known as the Eskimo Loan Fund, from which interest-free loans may be made to Eskimos to assist them in the purchase of supplies and equipment or to take up any approved project which the Hudson's Bay Company or other traders are not prepared to finance, and to authorize the crediting of this Special Account of all repayments made by Eskimos and the readvancing of such moneys; the excess of the amounts charged over the amounts credited to this Special Account at any time not to exceed $50,000. The Eskimo Loan Fund would not be a recurring item. Permission would have to be obtained to set this up as a new vote, but once set up, the fund would be carried forward from year to year while the need for it remained. The purpose of this fund would be to make advances to natives for justifiable projects which traders might not care to finance but where, in the opinion of the R.C.M. Police or our local representatives, there is reasonable expectation of recovery during good economic years. Advances and

[43] R.T. Flanagan, "History of NWT and Department," 65-67.

> collections on this account would be made through the traders. If approved, it is intended to place $50,000 in the estimates for 1953-54 for this purpose.[44]

The ELF was approved of in principle by the EAC and was discussed among Deputy Minister Young, Minister Winters, and the Treasury Board over the following weeks, formally approved for the 1953-54 estimates. Cunningham's description of the ELF is noteworthy: the intention of the fund was primarily to improve the economic situation of the Inuit, but the loan fund allowed for the development of pilot projects which might have a "reasonable expectation of recovery" so as to allow for increased financial flexibility within the Department.[45] Although Cunningham's briefing notes also included the recommendation that $5,000 be placed in the 1953-54 estimates for the purposes of transferring Inuit under Item 3 of the EAC agenda, the discussion at the EAC meeting indicated that funding for the transfer should be covered by the ELF, assuming that it was approved.[46]

The ELF was established in March 1953 and Deputy Minister Young received the first memo outlining the Department's plans for the first projects to be funded by the loan:

> Loan Project No. 1 Cape Herschel The R.C.M. Police will establish a detachment at Cape Herschel on the east coast of Ellesmere Island to police a region where Greenland natives have from time to time been hunting on Canadian territory. Native food supplies are reported to be plentiful. There are no Canadian Eskimos in the region and it is planned to move in five Eskimo families from overpopulated depressed areas and establish them in the native way of life under the direction of the R.C.M. Police. It is estimated that the cost of moving these Eskimos and equipping them to live at Cape Herschel will not exceed $200 per family or $1000 in all, which will be charged to the time in the estimates – Transportation of Eskimos – and to Relief.
> As there is no trading post at Cape Herschel a year's stock of supplies for the natives will have to be provided in care of the R.C.M. Police. It is proposed to finance the purchase of these supplies under a loan issued to a leading Eskimo in the group. These goods will be held by the R.C.M. Police as security for the loan and will be dispensed by the Police on behalf of the loanee in return

[44]F.J.G. Cunningham, "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister," 3-4.
[45]Ibid.
[46]EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the First Meeting of Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs."

for payment in money or in kind and the proceeds will be credited to the loan. When goods for relief or Family Allowances are to be issued, the R.C.M. Police will make out the vouchers to show the order as being filled by the loanee who for this purpose will be acting as a trader. When the vouchers are approved for payment the amounts will be credited to the loan.
The exact cost of supplies will not be known until the families are selected and the purchases made. It is estimated that the cost should not exceed $1000 per family. The loan to the leader of the group should, therefore, be for an amount up to $5000.
Loan Project No. 2 Craig Harbour This project is similar to Project 1 [Cape Herschel]. Five Eskimo families would be established under the R.C.M. Police to live off the country where native food supplies are reported to be good. The amount of the loan would be up to $5,000.
Loan Project No. 3 Resolute Bay It has been tentatively agreed with the R.C.M. Police that if we will move five Eskimo families to Resolute Bay they will reopen their detachment there to supervise the Eskimos and maintain law and order in a settlement where there are four different organizations, each with its own senior officer, and many transient visitors.
The Meteorological Service could offer permanent employment to at least one Eskimo to learn to replace one of their mechanics and might employ one or two others on semi-skilled jobs. All could be employed on menial jobs but, except in summer, we prefer at least part of the group to hunt and trap after the native way so that the children of employed Eskimos can learn the native way of life with them. The details as to terms of employment and rotation of labour will be carefully worked out for the guidance of the R.C.M. Police.
As there is no trading post at Resolute Bay this project would operate on the same principle as Project 1. The amount of the loan would be up to $5,000.
The above three projects have as their object:

a. Relief of population pressure in distressed areas.

b. A pioneer experiment to determine if Eskimos can be induced to live on the Northern islands which, relics indicate, once supported a native population.

c. An experiment to work out a method by which Eskimos may be trained to replace white employees in the North without the Eskimo children losing touch with the native way of life.

d. If these projects warrant it, more natives can be moved North both to

these pioneer points and to other points to be selected later.[47]

While this memo outlined other projects to help support the Inuit throughout the Arctic, those which would be funded by the ELF were most consequential. The detail with which the conditions of the loan were outlined indicates the importance of the financing component of formulating the relocation. The specificity of this memo in outlining the relocation projects is representative of the best written explanation of what the DRD was attempting to accomplish. It is useful to note that Project 1 – Cape Herschel does explicitly outline a concern with Greenlandic Inughuit on Ellesmere Island and the intention to use the RCMP to police the region.[48] The noted lack of Canadian Inuit in the region speaks to its under-population for the resources available rather than to the intention that Canadian Inuit occupy the territory. As Project 1 is so explicit about the policing component of the project, it is expected that this would also be present in other projects designed to contribute policing efforts that contribute to sovereignty if this were the intention. That neither Craig Harbour nor Resolute Bay have this included as an objective indicates that it was not, at the least, a primary objective. All of these projects were approved by Deputy Minister Young, who had financial authority once the ELF was created.

Decision Making

With funding in place, all that remained was the final decision making and the implementation of the relocation projects. Decision making, as part of the policy cycle, is an inherently political process. It requires the acceptance of a policy proposal by those with the political authority to make decisions on behalf of the government. In the case of the relocation project, the politics of decision making are unclear. There is no direct evidence that the program was accepted or approved by an elected, political decision maker. The Minister of Resources and Development (MRD) Winters did not contribute to the documentary evidence regarding his approval or disapproval of the plan as formulated by

[47] n.a., "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister re: Eskimo Loan Fund."
[48] Ibid.

Deputy Minister Young, the RCMP, and members of the Northern Administration. While it is possible that there exists some memo or written discussion, none has been found to date, hence there is no evidence of ministerial approval of the relocation project.[49]

This lack of evidence implies that the relocation project was not considered important enough to require ministerial approval. That it was funded through the ELF indicates that the program was meant to be a pilot project and conducted on a small scale to test the possibility of relocation as a solution to the "wicked" problems facing the government. Furthermore, the request for funds outlined in the ELF proposals were small – $5,000 for each relocation to Craig Harbour and Resolute Bay was an amount that could easily be managed under the delegated authority of the Deputy Minister. This, combined with the larger challenges facing Cabinet, suggest that the relocation project may have been considered too small a scale to require Ministerial approval.

It is unlikely that Minister Winters would have been consulted.[50] As historians Frank Tester and Peter Kulchyski note, the minister was relatively uninterested in government-led solutions to social problems. Quoting the former Deputy Minister Hugh Keenleyside, Tester and Kulchyski suggest that Winters,

> believed that the only sure way to promote development in the poor and backward countries was to strengthen the practices of private enterprise and to introduce modern methods of resource development under the aegis of capitalistic institutions. He believed strongly in the trickle-down principle.[51]

Given the amount of documentation about the relocations and the reporting done to the ACND and Cabinet about the relocations as an activity being undertaken in the Arctic, it is unlikely that there was any nefariousness to not including the Minister in the decision-making process. In all likelihood, the project was simply considered politically unimportant and small enough to be managed under the authority delegated to the Deputy

[49]There is no evidence of Winters' involvement available in any of the documentation I have consulted or that consulted by researchers investigating the relocations during the 1990s.

[50]There is no indication from the documentation that Minister Winters was consulted verbally or in writing.

[51]Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*, 59.

Minister. Deputy Minister Young's involvement in the formulation of the relocation plan and ongoing discussions with his senior administrators suggest that there was little doubt that the projects would be approved as proposed. The decision to move ahead with the relocation projects seems to have been made by early April when Deputy Minister Young wrote to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs Dana Wilgress that there were already Canadian Inuit stationed at Craig Harbour and that the DRD was planning to relocate additional Inuit to that detachment area.[52] The decision-making process – as a political process – was the most straightforward and rapid component of the relocation project, requiring little discussion and taking only a few weeks. The efficiency of the decision-making process was aided by the delegated authority held by the Deputy Minister who was intimately involved in the formulation of the plan.

Implementing Relocation: Summer 1953

The implementation of the program to relocate Inuit from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord was also rapid. The decision to send Inuit to these new communities was finalized in early April 1953, although the confirmation of who was to be relocated did not occur until early June when the ship manifest for the *C.D. Howe* and the *d'Iberville* was sent to the DOT. The *C.D. Howe* left Inukjuak in mid-July, signalling the official beginning of the implementation phase of the program. Rapid implementation had many problems. These included the various organizations involved (including the DRD and the RCMP), the different perspectives on what would be required to make the program effective, ineffective communication, changes to the plan prior to initiating action on those changes, and the pre-existing challenges of operating in the Arctic.

Following the approval of the plan as proposed through the ELF, the project was implemented rapidly. On 8 April 1953 Director Cunningham undertook the first steps towards implementation, outlining the proposed process in a letter to Commissioner Nicholson,

[52]H.A. Young, "Letter to L.D. Wilgress re: Return of Greenland Eskimo" [2 April 1953], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 85 vol. 294 file 1005-7-5.

> As the first step towards carrying out this plan, we would suggest that the attached telegrams should be sent to your detachments at Port Harrison and Pond Inlet, so that we many obtain information regarding the natives who are willing to go and what they will require in the way of equipment and supplies. You may wish to add to these messages anything that may assist you in making your own arrangements.
> I think it would be would be most desirable, at the outset at least, to have one family at each place from the Pond Inlet area. These Northern people are accustomed to the long darkness and could do a great deal to encourage and assist the newcomers in adjusting themselves to strange conditions. . . .
> In order to meet out Treasury's requirements regarding Eskimo loans, it will be necessary to appoint one Eskimo in each group as trader and to make him nominally responsible for the supplies that will be shipped in for trade. This will not make any actual difference in the arrangements made as we shall still have to look to the N.C.O. in charge of each detachment to supervise and direct the operations. It will be necessary, however, for us to know the names of the Eskimos to be nominated as traders.
> As soon as we get the information asked for in these telegrams, we shall be able to go ahead with our arrangements and we shall keep you informed of what is being done.[53]

Cunningham's instructions were relatively straightforward: the RCMP would determine which families would be transferred from Port Harrison and Pond Inlet to the detachments at Craig Harbour, Cape Herschel, and Resolute Bay. Once these families were determined, three Inuit (one for each destination) would be appointed as the trader for purposes of the ELF, and then the DRD would take out a loan on their behalf to procure the supplies which would be sent North with them.[54]

Six days later, Inspector Larsen wrote back to Cunningham, explaining that he had sent wireless messages to the detachments at Port Harrison, Fort Chimo, and Pond Inlet. These messages were heavily adapted from the drafts that Cunningham had proposed, with two important alterations. First was the inclusion of the Fort Chimo detachment and the request that this detachment name five families willing to be relocated to Resolute Bay

[53]F.J.G. Cunningham, "Letter to Commissioner Nicholson re: Transfer of Eskimos" [8 April 1953], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 85 vol. 1072 file 252-3 pt. 4.
[54]Ibid.

where they "can possibly get permanent employment at air base and weather station... and hunt and trap in spare time."[55] Second, Larsen included what would become a highly consequential final line: "Families will be brought back home at end of one year if they so desire."[56] In Larsen's memo he explained this inclusion:

> I considered it advisable to make that promise. I have in mind the sad experiences of those families of Eskimos (I believe eleven families) who were taken from Cape Dorset to Dundas Harbour in 1934 by the then Northern Administration and after being there with the Hudson's Bay Company for two years were taken to Arctic Bay and Fort Ross. They suffered hardships and asked, from time to time to be taken back to Cape Dorset. They never were taken back and the survivors and their descendants are still in the Fort Ross-Spence Bay district.[57]

Larsen's telegrams were also significantly more specific than Cunningham's drafts, including the exact number of families requested from each detachment area and the proposed destination. The telegrams requested that the Port Harrison detachment identify seven families with strong hunting and trapping skills with four destined for Craig Harbour and three for Cape Herschel, that the Fort Chimo detachment identify five families to transfer to Resolute, and that the Pond Inlet detachment identify three families, one of which would transfer to Craig Harbour and two of which would transfer to Cape Herschel.[58]

The differences between Cunningham's instructions and Larsen's telegrams are important. In the decision to include Fort Chimo it is unclear whether Larsen was acting on his own or whether he and Cunningham had discussed the possibility of including Inuit from Fort Chimo in the plan. There is no indication in the funding documents that Inuit from Fort Chimo would be included in the relocation plan, though there had been significant discussion over the previous months of transferring Inuit from Fort Chimo. Ultimately,

[55]H.A. Larsen, "Telegram to the N.C.O. in Charge, R.C.M.P., Port Harrison, P.Q." [14 April 1953], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 85 vol. 1072 file 252-3 pt 4.

[56]Ibid.

[57]H.A. Larsen, "Letter to The Director, Northern Administration and Lands Branch RE: Responsibility, Care and Supervision of Eskimos" [14 April 1953], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 85 vol. 1072 file 252-3 pt.1.

[58]H.A. Larsen, "Telegram to the N.C.O. in Charge, R.C.M.P., Port Harrison, P.Q.."

Fort Chimo would be the first detachment area to respond to Larsen's request in May,[59] but the DRD would ultimately decide not to include these Inuit in the pilot project as they would have to be "definitely earmarked for employment at Resolute Bay" and they were accustomed to living in wood houses, which would not be available.[60] Instead, it was suggested that these Inuit might be employed at Churchill, but that possibility could be discussed in the future.[61] Deputy Minister Young's note to Commissioner Nicholson reiterated these comments, indicating that the DRD was hesitant to include Inuit from Fort Chimo in the initial experiment.[62]

Perhaps more interesting is Larsen's decision to include a promise that relocated Inuit could return home at the end of one year. There is clearly no discussion about this promise between Larsen and the DRD prior to the wire of 14 April. While this promise would become an important point of contention in the government's responsibility for what would transpire, (see Part Two) it indicates the *ad hoc* nature of the relocation implementation and the competing interests of the various individuals and government organizations involved in the implementation process.

In early June the final itineraries of the *C.D. Howe* and *d'Iberville* were finalized and the families to be relocated from Port Harrison and Pond Inlet were confirmed, along with the supplies requested by the DRD on their behalf. The 8 June 1953 letter from Deputy Minister Young to DOT Deputy Minister J.C. Lessard confirmed the Eastern Arctic freight requirements of the DRD, including passengers for the *C.D. Howe*. Young's letter outlined that seven families (34 Inuit) would embark at Port Harrison, one family (four Inuit) at Churchill, and four families (20 Inuit) at Pond Inlet.[63] Young's letter noted that "the above

[59]L.H. Nicholson, "Letter to Deputy Minister Young re: Detachment Replies" [6 May 1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 3.

[60]C.K. LeCapelain, "Letter to Inspector Larsen re: Distribution of Eskimo Families" [17 June 1953], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 85 vol. 1072 file 252-3 pt. 4.

[61]Ibid.

[62]H.A. Young, "Letter to Commissioner Nicholson re: Fort Chimo Natives" [13 May 1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 3.

[63]These numbers would shift slightly between the date of this memo and the final embarkation. Furthermore, the family from Churchill and one of the families from Pond Inlet were not part of the relocation scheme, but were transferring for other reasons. H.A. Young, "Letter to J.C. Lessard, Deputy Minister of Transport" [8 June 1953], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 22 vol. 176 file 40-2-20 pt. 3.

listed Eskimos will be distributed in groups – four families to Resolute Bay, four families to Craig Harbour, and three families to Cape Herschel."[64] The letter did not specify which families would be transferred to which destinations. Arrangements with the DOT were practically finalized by 8 June 1953, though the RCMP was not informed that Inuit from Fort Chimo were not included on the manifest until 17 June 1953 when C.K. LeCapelain, the Acting Director of the NALB, wrote to Inspector Larsen to explain that only Inuit from Port Harrison and Pond Inlet were being transferred in the initial experiment.[65] In this letter, LeCapelain suggested that the DRD felt "it is most desirable that at least one Pond Inlet family should be allotted to each of the three places so that the Port Harrison natives may receive some assistance and guidance in adjusting themselves to a new environment, particularly during the dark period."[66] This is the only indication of a clear plan for how to distribute the Inuit families among the three locations. On 27 June 1953, the *C.D. Howe* left port in Montreal on its way to Clyde River, via Port Harrison and Pond Inlet where the 54 relocatees would embark.[67] The plan was for Inuit to transfer at Clyde River to the *d'Iberville* which would take them to their final destinations.

The archival record affirms that the RCMP generally understood the plan as outlined by the DRD. It is curious that although the DRD was so heavily reliant on the RCMP to manage the relocation, as outlined by Deputy Minister Young in his memos regarding the requirement of a RCMP detachment in order to relocate Inuit, the DRD did not consider clear communication with the RCMP to be an important part of implementing the program. The communication between Deputy Minister Young, Directors Cunningham and LeCapelain, Commissioner Nicholson, and Inspector Larsen all suggest that there was a lack of clarity in the specifics of the program. This lack of clear intention, exacerbated by the varying perspectives on what the program's ultimate objectives were, trickled down to the communications sent to the individual RCMP officers involved in implementing the relocation in the High Arctic. That the program existed without clearly agreed-upon goals and without an overarching Inuit policy to direct decision-making meant that there was no

[64]H.A. Young, "Letter to J.C. Lessard."
[65]C.K. LeCapelain, "Letter to Inspector Larsen re: Distribution of Eskimo Families."
[66]Ibid.
[67]n.a., "Draft Press Release" [25 June 1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 4.

guiding framework for tactical decisions that would be necessary in the field. Ultimately, these issues with communication at the highest levels of the DRD and RCMP would result in individuals having to make quick decisions at Cape Herschel, Craig Harbour, and Resolute Bay that did not necessarily align with the intentions of the program.

One element of the relocation project that had not yet been actioned by mid-June was the intention for Inuit at Resolute Bay to have access to employment opportunities. With the plan underway and Inuit about to leave for the High Arctic, Deputy Minister Young wrote to the Deputy Ministers of the DOT and the Department of National Defence (DND) to explain the program and inquire about any opportunities that might be available for Inuit employment.[68] On 27 July, Acting Deputy Minister A.J. Cowley of the DOT suggested that the Meteorological Division could potentially offer employment as they had done in the past but that there were currently no opportunities; the DND would have to provide employment in the short term.[69] The DND, however, was upset that they had not been consulted about the project: on 6 July 1953, Air Officer Commanding R.C. Ripley of the RCAF Air Transport Command responded with significant misgivings about the transfer of Inuit to Resolute.[70] The DND's concerns were realized only after Inuit were en route but were significant enough to warrant a special interdepartmental meeting on 10 August.[71] This meeting was able to somewhat alleviate the concerns of the RCAF and the DND but only temporarily.[72] The hastiness of the relocation experiment is evident

[68]H.A. Young, "Letter to C.W. Drury, Deputy Minister (Department of National Defence) and J.C. Lessard, Deputy Minister (Department of Transportation)" [15 June 1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt 4.

[69]A.T. Cowley, "'Letter to Deputy Minister Young re: Resolute Bay" [27 July 1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 4.

[70]R.C. Ripley, "Memorandum on Civilian Employment at Resolute Bay" [6 July 1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 4.

[71]n.a., "Minutes of A meeting held to discuss the transfer of certain Eskimo families from Northern Quebec to Cornwallis and Ellesmere Islands'" [10 August 1953], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 22 vol. 254 file 40-8-1 pt. 4.

[72]Although the RCAF indicated that they were comfortable with the DRD's explanation about intention and implementation plans in August 1953, by February 1954 the RCAF base at Resolute Bay began to express significant concerns about the project's implementation. See F.J.G. Cunningham, "Memorandum for C.W. Jackson" [4 August 1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 4; C.W. Jackson, "Letter to C.M. Drury" [6 August 1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 4; C. Drury, "Memorandum to the Deputy Minister" [2 February 1954], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 vol

in the interdepartmental discussions that took place during the summer, following the implementation of the program, and indicates both a lack of attention to the details of implementing this type of program as well as a casual approach to the assurance of the success of the project's economic objectives.

Meanwhile, the implementation of the relocation did not go according to plan. C.J. Marshall (Secretariat, ACND) and the RCMP submitted reports in early November outlining the difficulties faced in implementing the plan in the High Arctic. The first element of difficulty, Marshall explained, was the haste of planning and implementing the project: the "task at Resolute has been made more difficult than it need have been by what appears to have been hasty planning of the experiment."[73] Marshall notes that the plan was nearly a year in the making but that the implementation only truly began in April, by which time it was "only with some difficulty that [Constable Gibson] was able to contact a number of families to ask for volunteers to go to Resolute."[74] Furthermore, the ships transporting Inuit to their destinations also encountered difficulties with the plan as constructed in Ottawa. Marshall notes that the ship transporting Inuit arrived at Resolute at 9:00pm on 7 September and left by noon on 8 September, though it was supposed to have stayed "a couple of days to help the settlement to get established."[75] The ship's departure was hastened by the rapidly changing weather conditions in the harbour – not unusual for early September.[76] This hasty departure, in combination with a lack of infrastructure for the RCMP detachment and a lack of pre-selected camp site for the Inuit made the first week "unnecessarily unpleasant while the members of the group adjusted themselves."[77]

Perhaps more problematically in Marshall's view was the lack of useful supplies, combined with the inclusion of what he perceived to be some unnecessary items.[78] Marshall

4.

[73]C.J. Marshall, "Report on Eskimo Settlement at Resolute" [9 November 1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 4:2.

[74]Although Marshall indicates that Inuit who participated in the relocation project were volunteers, the nature of Inuit participation is disputed, as outlined in Part Two. Ibid.

[75]Ibid., 3.

[76]See, for example, Heidt and Lackenbauer, *The Joing Arctic Weather Stations*.

[77]C.J. Marshall, "Report on Eskimo Settlement at Resolute."

[78]Ibid.

reported that there were some conspicuous items missing in the supplies dropped off at Resolute, including rifles, duffel cloth, oil lamps, wash tubs, tent material, snow knives, fish hooks, and first-aid supplies, totalling a shortage of $1,124 worth of goods.[79] Marshall continued that

> It seems particularly unfortunate that all the shortages should be made up of those items which are the most necessary for the Eskimo and I understand that the lack of such items as rifles and duffel cloth will make their life more difficult than it need have been this winter. What happened to the $1,124 worth of goods no one appears to know, but the fact remains that the Eskimo, during the most difficult period of the year, will have to do without some of the necessities of life.[80]

Marshall estimated that 40% of the total $5,000 borrowed from the ELF for supplies had gone astray through items "not being delivered, unnecessary items being purchased or excessively high prices being paid," suggesting that there were significant errors made in the implementation phase of the plan.[81] The DRD staff responded that only minor errors were made in ordering the supplies and that only a few goods did not arrive, for which Inuit would not be charged.[82] Cunningham also blamed Constable Gibson (the officer-in-charge at the Resolute Detachment) for not having checked the supplies before the *C.D. Howe* left port, an assessment that did not take into account the immediate departure of the ship after unloading.[83] Any issues with Inuit equipment, such as their tents, was to have been the responsibility of the officer-in-charge at Port Harrison, as the DRD had presumed that the equipment (including tents) that Inuit had at Port Harrison would be sufficient for their new location at Resolute.[84] The DRD staff also shifted the blame for issues related to the selection of camp sites and living quarters for the detachment to the RCMP, noting that Larsen had previously completed an inspection and made arrangements.[85] In short,

[79]C.J. Marshall, "Report on Eskimo Settlement at Resolute," 4-5.
[80]Ibid., 5.
[81]Ibid.
[82]F.J.G. Cunningham, "Letter to G.W. Rowley re: C.J. Marshall Report" [15 December 1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 4.
[83]Ibid., 3.
[84]Ibid.
[85]Ibid.

the many issues with implementation identified by Marshall were, in the view of the DRD, not issues at all – or were not their fault.

The relocation to Grise Fiord seemed to be generally successful in its implementation, although weather conditions prompted an unplanned expansion of the Inuit camp. Unanticipated weather prevented landing at Cape Herschel, resulting in a last-minute decision to also relocate those families to Grise Fiord:

> When we arrived here on August 17th, Buchanan Bay and Alexandra Fiord were entirely free of ice, except for occasional drifting pieces and some grounded chunks around the shore. The "*d'Iberville*" remained at anchor until August 26th when the ice commenced to drift in from the North. Our supplies by then being unloaded, we proceeded out of the Bay in order to rendezvous with the C.G.S. "*C.D. Howe*", to pick up natives from Port Harrison for the proposed native settlement to be established in conjunction with our detachment. However, on our return on September 1st Capt. Carron of the "*d'Iberville*" could not see his way clear to enter Buchanan Bay to land the natives . . . Then, without making any attempt, and after laying around 10 miles south of Pim Island until noon September 3rd, the "*d'Iberville*" returned to Craig Harbour and landed the additional Eskimo families there.[86]

The possible presence of ice and fog in early September were not considered during the planning phase. The lack of any instruction as to how to proceed should weather conditions become an issue speaks to the hastiness with which the project was planned, the lack of attention to details of implementation, and the decentralization of decision making during the implementation phase of the project.

The RCMP officers at the three detachment areas proposed as destinations for the Inuit families were evidently charged with making a large number of the implementation decisions. The guidelines for doing so were relatively obscure, outlined in a draft memorandum that outlined the objective of the transfer as "primarily to determine how well Eskimos transferring from over-populated areas in Northern Québec can adapt themselves to conditions in presently unpopulated high Arctic areas where there is reason to expect

[86] n.a., "Inspection Report" [10 November 1953], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 18 vol. 85086 file 048/13/G-577-14/C.

they can make a satisfactory native living by hunting and trapping."[87] What seems to be a general lack of instruction from the DRD to the RCMP and from the RCMP to the Northern detachments is indicative of a haphazard implementation phase with no clear goals or expectations for how the plan was to be carried out. The program of relocation had been formulated, decided upon, and implemented in under a year with the majority of the planning taking place over the course of only two months. It also involved the input of multiple government departments (though not necessarily all the departments that needed to be involved) and individuals within those departments, with varying perspectives on the capacity of Inuit to manage the changing Arctic conditions and economic opportunities making small decisions without consulting the main planners. These decisions would have enormous impacts on the implementation of the program. All of this took place in the absence of an overarching Inuit policy that could have guided the tactical decision-making.

Conclusion

The formulation, decision making, and implementation of the relocation project between October 1952 and September 1953 was rapid and complicated by the various perspectives and authorities of the many individuals involved in the process. The formulation of the program responded to the complex problems the government had identified and attempted to address these problems in what was considered to be the most challenging area of the Arctic. The government generally accepted the concept of a pilot project to transfer Inuit to better hunting locations, though the premise of the type of lifestyle the government ought to be encouraging remained a point of conflict. The general agreement of the EAC to attempt the relocation and to fund it through the creation of the ELF represents a particularly unified moment in managing Inuit affairs. This agreement clearly aided the formulation process and is reflected in the relatively quick decision making that occurred in March

[87]It is unclear if this draft memorandum or another version of it was sent to the RCMP detachments. n.a., "Memorandum to R.C.M.P. Detachments Regarding Operations at Eskimo Settlements at Craig Harbour, Cape Herschel and Resolute Bay [DRAFT]" [n.d], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 85 vol. 1070 file 251-4 pt 1:1.

1953. As Cantley's December 1952 memo to M. Meikle suggests,[88] strong communication and early planning would be key to success,

> If anything is to be attempted this year it will be necessary to start making preliminary arrangements immediately. There will have to be close liaison with the R.C.M. Police, the Hudson's Bay Company and possibly others on most of the projects both in the field and at executive level. Communication with the field organizations takes time and they in turn must have sufficient notice to make the necessary local arrangements with natives and others[89]

Cantley's observation that Northern projects require time and significant interdepartmental and inter-organizational cooperation suggests that the DRD had sufficient knowledge of what might be required to undertake these projects. Unfortunately, Cantley's warning went unheeded.

The implementation of the program represents the challenges of attempting to rapidly resolve a "wicked" problem in the context of competing interests, poor communication, and *ad hoc* coordination. The implementation was clearly decentralized: individual RCMP officers and Northern administrators were given authority to make decisions and carry out a complex plan in a short amount of time and with little strategic guidance. The direction from Ottawa was sparse, was interpreted differently by those responsible for carrying out the project, and was insufficient to react to the changing Arctic conditions. Although many Northern projects were conducted in this way during the 1950s, the lack of strategic guidance in this instance would ultimately undermine the project and have detrimental effects on the relocated Inuit.

[88] It is not clear who M. Meikle was, other than that he worked for the NALB and seems to have been involved in the development phase of the relocation. Grant notes that Meikle indicated issues with memos written by Cantley, expressing concern about oversimplifying the problems and potential solutions, but does not provide additional details about his involvement. Shelagh D. Grant, "Introduction to Errors Exposed," 88.

[89] J. Cantley, "Memorandum for Mr. Miekle" [18 December 1952], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 85 vol. 1234 file 251-1 pt. 2.

Chapter 3

Evaluating the High Arctic Relocation

In July 1953, the purpose of the relocation project remained somewhat unclear to the various government agencies with interests in the North, and the responsibilities of those agencies had never been clearly outlined. An *ad hoc* meeting between the DRD and the DND on 10 August 1953 indicates that there was poor communication between government departments regarding the intention behind the relocations and the responsibilities of the many departments engaged in Northern work for Inuit welfare at their new locations.[1] However, despite the difficulties in communicating among government departments and the lack of clearly defined intention behind the project as discussed in Chapter 1, government officials did have criteria by which to evaluate the success of the relocation project.

The criteria used by government officials, including administrators with the NALB and the RCMP, were not officially listed in any program plan, nor were they consistent across individual officials or over time during the course of the government's acute interest in the newly established communities during the 1950s. Rather, these evaluation criteria often changed in importance and scope along with the goals and attitudes of the government

[1] n.a., "Minutes of A meeting held to discuss the transfer of certain Eskimo families from Northern Quebec to Cornwallis and Ellesmere Islands'."

itself. This approach to the relocation project differs from the approach to many other Northern projects and programs during this period,[2] which is explained in part by the complex nature of the problems faced by Northern Administrators[3] and in part by the challenges of coordinating a large number of departments with disparate capacities for Northern development.

Evaluation of the High Arctic Relocations in the 1950s is an understudied component of the relocation literature. While anthropologist Diamond Jenness is critical of the High Arctic Relocations, he discusses them only as an example of pessimistic analyses and a broader lack of strategic thinking in managing Inuit economic problems in the 1950s.[4] The most comprehensive examination is Frank Tester and Peter Kulchyski's *Tammarniit* which examines the government's evaluation of accountability problems related to poor accounting practices and missing supplies in relation to the relocation.[5] Tester and Kulchyski also examine the reliance on the military at Resolute Bay as an indication of the project's lack of self-sufficiency and the reliance of the DNANR on other departments in implementing and continuing the relocation project.[6] In contrast, Janice Cavell argues that the evaluation of the relocation project was motivated by internal politics with the DNANR, resulting in a shift away from authoritarianism in controlling Inuit finances.[7] These examinations of the government's own evaluations of the relocations suggest that the government evaluated the success of the project on the basis of newly identified problems stemming from the relocation itself, rather than on the objectives of the project.

In this chapter, I explore the evaluation of the program by the DRD in Fall 1953, and by its successor the DNANR beginning in December 1953, concluding with the DNANR's analysis about the future of possible relocation projects in fall 1960. In doing so, I ex-

[2]The wildlife management program, for example, was highly structured and reported on in detail at nearly every meeting of the NWT Council.

[3]see Chapter 1

[4]Jenness, *Eskimo Administration: Vol. 2: Technical Paper No. 14*, 94-96.

[5]Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*, 157-174.

[6]174 Ibid.

[7]Cavell, ""Consolidation and Control of All Eskimo Income": The Motive for the 1953 High Arctic Relocation."

amine the government's indicators of success through analysis of the economic and living conditions at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, the conditions at Inukjuak in the years following the relocation project, and the stated effects of the relocation on sovereignty. I argue that the government's overall evaluation of the program as a success reflected a changing understanding of the goals of the program and changing government priorities. I begin by outlining the activities of the NALB and the RCMP during the summer of 1953, and proceed to an examination of the Indicators of Success outlined above as articulated in government reports throughout the 1950s. I conclude this chapter by discussing the declining conditions at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, and the somewhat improved conditions at Inukjuak, suggesting that the relocation had, at best, limited success in achieving its objectives.[8]

The evaluation of the relocation project by government officials largely depended on who was doing the evaluation and when they did so. Stated another way, the perceived success of the program was linked to an ever-changing set of objectives and goals that reflected changing government perceptions of the importance of the North and the people who lived there. The relocations, as specified by the 16 March 1953 memorandum on the proposed projects for the ELF, stated that their objectives were:

> a. Relief of population pressure in distressed areas.
>
> b. A pioneer experiment to determine if Eskimos can be induced to live on the Northern islands which, relics indicate, once supported a native population.
>
> c. An experiment to work out a method by which Eskimos may be trained to replace white employees in the North without the Eskimo children losing touch with the native way of life.
>
> d. If these projects warrant it, more natives can be moved North both to these pioneer points and to other points to be selected later.[9]

[8] Although other metrics are available for evaluating the relocation project, some of which are discussed in Parts Two and Three, this chapter focuses on the ways in which the federal government evaluated its program during the period it was an active government project.

[9] n.a., "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister re: Eskimo Loan Fund."

Mapping these stated objectives to the problems identified by government as outlined in Chapter 1, the objectives seem to address only some of the problems (see Table 3.1). Given the challenges of attempting to address a "wicked" problem, it is reasonable that a single activity would not solve, or even resolve, all of the identified problems in the north. As this section will indicate however, the problems and objectives of relocation would be weighted differently over time.

Table 3.1: Identified Problems and Program Objectives in 1953

Identified Problems	**Program Objectives**
Fur Trade Decline	n/a
Reliance on Relief	An experiment to work out a method by which Eskimos may be trained to replace white employees in the North without the Eskimo children losing touch with the native way of life (c)
Single-Stream Income	An experiment to work out a method by which Eskimos may be trained to replace white employees in the North without the Eskimo children losing touch with the native way of life (c)
Living Conditions	Relief of population pressure in distressed areas (a)
Declining Health	n/a
Hunting Opportunity	Relief of population pressure in distressed areas (a)
Sovereignty	A pioneer experiment to determine if Eskimos can be induced to live on the Northern islands (b)

The relocation project was initially evaluated in Fall 1953 when Northern Administrators visited the newly established Inuit camps. Bent G. Sivertz, then an Administrative Officer with the DRD, submitted the first report in September 1953. Sivertz's memorandum to Deputy Minister Hugh Young reflected the two types of resettlement projects: one for employment at Resolute Bay and one for improving access to game resources at Grise

[9]Collated from Library of Parliament, *Parliamentary Information: Departments and Committees*, 1948-2011.

Fiord.[10] These were important differences in objectives for the two communities and they bear on how the communities' successes were evaluated, with ELF Objective C being applicable only at Resolute. However, as the correspondence between the DRD and the DOT in June 1953, and the July-August 1953 correspondence and meeting between the DRD and the DND indicate, these employment opportunities were dependant on cooperation from other departments, which was not always forthcoming.

In his memorandum regarding his experience at the Resolute Bay camp, Sivertz addressed some of the challenges associated with this employment objective, indicating concern about the economic prospects of the Inuit there: "Our plan to resettle a group of Eskimo families proposes to mix the primitive life with casual employment at the base," he explained, continuing by stating: "I do not think this will work."[11] Sivertz's concerns reflected the realities of Northern operations and the bureaucratic challenges of administering an Arctic program across numerous federal departments, as well as the challenge of paternalistic attitudes of government officials that often conflicted with practicable activities. Furthermore, Sivertz noted existing conflicts between the primitive living conditions available at Resolute and the expectation of socio-economic development associated with permanent employment. Sivertz summarizes these conflicts, noting that the Inuit families

> are expected to earn their living principally by hunting but it is intended also that they be employed at the RCAF and Department of Transport establishments casually from time to time. The two forms of Eskimo resettlement are here being mixed. I think there is danger these people will become camp fringe dwellers, combing refuse dumps and looking for handouts. If they are to be hunters they should live away from the base. If they are to live near the base they should be made part of it.[12]

In Sivertz's mind the blurring of objectives was a clear indication that the project at Resolute would be unsuccessful. A similar blurring also interfered with and made more

[10]B.G. Sivertz, "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister re: Trip to the Eastern Arctic" [23 September 1953], *B.G. Sivertz - General Correspondence*, RG 85-C-1-a vol. 1042 file 22341.
[11]Ibid.
[12]Ibid.

precarious the economic prospects of the settlement at Resolute. Sivertz's concerns reflected problems with Inuit camps situated near military installations throughout the early Cold War, though as Whitney Lackenbauer and Ryan Shackleton argue, Resolute became, over time, a model for a transitioning Inuit society.[13]

As the economic prospects were only one element of the evaluation, however, Sivertz's concerns were quickly dismissed by senior officials. In his response to Sivertz's memo, Director F.J.G. Cunningham advised Deputy Minister Young to proceed with caution in making changes to the pilot program, particularly with regard to improving employment prospects.[14] Cunningham's memo reminded the Deputy Minister of the work being undertaken to make arrangements for casual employment at Resolute, but suggested that the primary objective was not economic but to determine "how well Eskimos from Northern Québec will adapt themselves to life in the high Arctic."[15] Cunningham does not explicitly note that this is due to a concern with increasing the population of the High Arctic, but does suggest that it is preferable for the Inuit to "become accustomed to the change and [be] satisfied with their new environment."[16] Cunningham's memo reflected the comments made by James Cantley (working as an Arctic Administrator for DRD) regarding his perception of the primary objective of the relocation:

> The transfer of seven families of Eskimos from Port Harrison and three families from Pond Inlet during the past season was made primarily to determine how well natives from Northern Québec could adapt themselves to high Arctic conditions. They went North on the understanding that they would continue to live as hunters and trappers and that if they were satisfied to settle there permanently we would provide the trading facilities. On the other hand, if they

[13]Whitney Lackenbauer and Ryan Shackleton, "Inuit-Air Force Relations in the Qikiqtani Region during the Early Cold War," ed. P. Whitney Lackenbauer and W.A. March, in *De-Icing Required: The Canadian Air Force's Experience in the Arctic*, Sic Itur Ad Astra: Canadian Aerospace Power Studies Series 4 (Trenton: Canadian Forces Air Warfare Centre, 2012).

[14]It is also likely that Cunningham's memo had the additional intent of providing context for the incoming Deputy Minister R. Gordon Robertson, who had been appointed to resume the duties of Deputy Minister as of 15 November 1953. F.J.G. Cunningham, "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister re: Sivertz Report" [29 October 1953], *B.G. Sivertz - General Correspondence*, RG 85-C-1-a vol. 1042 file 22341.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Ibid.

> did not like the country, they would be returned home again.
> At the time these arrangements were made, we inquired into the possibilities of some of the people finding employment, but nobody was interested. As a matter of fact, most of those we approached were quite lukewarm to the idea of transferring Eskimos to the High Arctic at all. However, we felt that the experiment was worth while. Faced with the problem of having too many people in Northern Québec for the resources available, it was felt that if we could encourage people to move to virtually virgin territories where there seemed to be every prospect that they could at least obtain sufficient food, it would be a step in the right direction. We must now wait to see how it works out.[17]

Cunningham's response to Cantley's memo suggests a strong agreement about the purposes of the project and the desire not to undertake rapid changes to the program, particularly regarding Inuit employment.[18] RCMP Commissioner Leonard Nicholson sent Cunningham a report suggesting that the Inuit families were adapting well, providing the department with an indication that the program was working as intended, particularly when evaluated against the first two ELF objectives, which seem to have been the primary concerns of the department's leadership at this time.

G.W. Stead, the member of the Treasury Board responsible for Northern Affairs, visited the Arctic Islands in September 1953, and his report is also useful in understanding how the government initially evaluated the relocation project. Stead was an instrumental part of the development of the ELF the previous year and his review of the first ELF funded projects is insightful. He noted that Inuit who were settled at Resolute the day prior to his arrival

> came from Port Harrison on the East coast of Hudson Bay where the increasing Eskimo population has been outrunning the food supply. Eskimos lived at Resolute some 300 years ago and I can only presume that they moved away owing to the decline in the availability of food which now appears to be restored.[19]

[17]J. Cantley, "Memorandum for the Director re: Sivertz Report" [13 October 1953], *B.G. Sivertz - General Correspondence*, RG 85-C-1-a vol. 1042 file 22341.

[18]F.J.G. Cunningham, "Note to Cantley" [30 October 1953], *B.G. Sivertz - General Correspondence*, RG 85-C-1-a vol. 1042 file 22341.

[19]G.W. Stead, "Report on Tour of the Arctic Islands" [29 September 1953], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 22 vol. 176 file 40-2-20 pt. 3.

Stead's impression that the primary purpose of the relocation project was to provide hunting opportunities and address the over-population problem at Port Harrison reflects the discussions he had had with Northern administrators in the lead up to the program's implementation.

Like Sivertz, Stead also suggests significant issues related to the proximity of the Inuit camps to the military base:

> As soon as the Eskimo family arrived problems of their relationship of their relationship to the Military encampment began to appear. Where Military camps and Eskimo villages are adjacent, the Eskimos tend to be turned into "camp followers". The different moral bases of the two societies tend to exercise harmful influence on both: junior members of the Armed Forces attempt to get a corner on the output of handicrafts and so forth. The ad hoc approach that presently passes for policy falls between two stools. The reasons for moving this family are grounded in an attempt to keep the Eskimo in his native state and to preserve that culture as primitive as it is. However, by moving the Eskimos to an area where they come into intimate contact with White men destroys the basis of this reasoning while leaving them untrained to cope with the problems presented by this contact.[20]

Stead's concerns about the proximity of the Inuit camp to the RCAF base are indicative of the paternalism and conflicting opinions about Inuit policy that affected all of government administration on Northern Affairs. His views also reflect some of the underlying problems with managing Inuit affairs, not only those that were explicitly stated.[21] However, these concerns also provided a direct challenge to the project's potential for success under both the economic and living conditions criteria. Though Stead believed that the project would likely be an overall success, despite only observing the initial setting up of the camp, his report indicates that its success at Resolute Bay would be primarily related to the hunting opportunities available there.

[20]G.W. Stead, "Report on Tour of the Arctic Islands."

[21]Ibid.

For further reading, see Lackenbauer and Shackleton, "Inuit-Air Force Relations"; Jenness, *Eskimo Administration: Vol. 2: Technical Paper No. 14*.

Meetings of both the ACND and the EAC took place in October 1953, providing an opportunity for the DRD to provide strategic updates on the perceived success of the program after one month. Prior to these meetings, the DRD had received the reports of Sivertz and Stead, as well as an interim report from RCMP Constable Gibson, officer-in-charge at Resolute Bay. Constable Gibson's report suggested that satisfactory progress had been made on all of the stated program goals, including hunting and trapping opportunities, economic opportunities, and general well-being and happiness. Gibson reported that the Inuit had been able to "obtain sufficient country food to last for some time," and that "observations show that Arctic fox will be very plentiful in this area. Trapping will commence when the season is opened."[22] Additionally, Gibson noted that he had made arrangements to fly in both ivory and soapstone to encourage handicrafts during the dark period, as well as arrangements for schooling "to keep the camp active as the Port Harrison Natives have never experienced a dark period."[23] Finally, Gibson noted that "camp moral *(sic)* is very good and the natives state they are happy with their new home."[24] The administration welcomed his very positive picture of the conditions at Resolute, free of the broader concerns voiced by Sivertz and Stead.

The meeting of the ACND on 19 October 1953 reported on the "Movements of Eskimo from Certain Areas" in broad terms and without providing an indication of the DRD's perceived success of the program so far. The minutes for the meeting indicate only that

> An experiment is being made in moving Eskimo from areas where conditions are difficult to places where they can find employment or good hunting. Seven families from Port Harrison have been moved to Ellesmere Island and Cornwallis Island while five young men have gone to Fort Churchill where they are employed by the services.[25]

[22]F.R. Gibson, "Report re: Eskimo Project - Resolute Bay, Northwest Territories" [14 October 1953], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 pt. 4.

[23]Ibid.

[24]Ibid.

[25]ACND Secretariat, "Minutes of the Twelfth Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Northern Development" [19 October 1953], *in The Advisory Committee on Northern Development: Context and Meeting Minutes, 1948-71*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security Volume 4 (ed. P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Daniel Heidt).

The meeting minutes indicate that the ACND considered hunting and employment to be the primary, explicit goals of the relocation project. However, the project was implemented as part of the annual EAP, and the ACND was given updates on both the EAP and the relocation project simultaneously. As a result, there was a perhaps unintended merging of the goals of the program and the EAP. To further complicate the project goals, the 1953 EAP established a new RCMP post at Cape Herschel and re-established a post at Resolute Bay – both of which were intended destinations for the relocation project. The RCMP post at Cape Herschel is noted in the ACND minutes as the Northernmost RCMP post, which is important given the context of the ACND's renewed mandate to manage Arctic projects which might be related to sovereignty claims. The discussion of RCMP posts and their Northern locations was an ongoing phenomenon, repeated in House of Commons discussions about occupancy of Ellesmere Island in May 1954. But while emphasis was placed on the RCMP detachments, there was little discussion about the relocation project and the presence of Inuit at these posts. The ACND meeting minutes do not even mention that there was a failed landing of Inuit families at Cape Herschel. The lack of apparent discussion regarding the specifics of the movement of Inuit is indicative of the relatively minor strategic importance of the relocation project in Fall 1953.

In contrast, the update on the relocation project provided to members of the EAC the following day was much more clearly focused. Under the heading "Economy and Welfare Conditions", Director Cunningham reported on

> various projects which have been undertaken or which are currently under consideration for the betterment of economic conditions. These could be classified as those designed to improve conditions among the more primitive hunting groups, those designed to diversify the economy and increase earnings, and those designed to bring Eskimos to a stage where they may largely abandon their hunting economy and become producers or employees.[26]

Cunningham's report referenced the "assistance that had been given... to natives from Port Harrison to move from unfavourable to more favourable hunting and trapping areas,"

[26]EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the Third Meeting of Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs" [20 October 1953], *in Shaping Inuit Policy: The Minutes of the Eskimo Affairs Committee, 1952-62*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security, Volume 14 (ed. Peter Clancy and P. Whitney Lackenbauer).

echoing the objectives stated in the ELF proposal, thereby emphasizing the importance of these first objectives in the government's evaluation.[27] Cunningham noted that the "first reports received from Cornwallis and Ellesmere Islands indicate that the Eskimos who were transferred there from Port Harrison this year are adapting themselves very well to their new environment and are obtaining all the country food they require."[28] All indications provided in Fall 1953 were that the project was successful, based on the criteria of improved hunting and perceived improved trapping conditions for the Inuit.

In November 1953, reports from the field began to indicate that relocation was not a panacea. C.J. Marshall, Secretariat to the ACND, wrote in November 1953 that he believed the project at Resolute "will be an unqualified success because people are well fed and happy and seem to be satisfied with their new environment. However, it appeared to me that if the experiment is successful it will be owing primarily to good luck and to the resourcefulness of Constable Gibson."[29] It is clear that success for Marshall is based on the first ELF objectives, noting that conditions for a fully traditional lifestyle are not possible, even in the High Arctic. This is an indication of the beginning of a change toward an emphasis on the tertiary objectives of experimenting with wage employment.

Marshall's suggestion that Inuit were well-fed and happy points to success in some indicators, but his concern that the living conditions were poor and that there Inuit relied on the RCAF echoed the concerns of Sivertz and Stead. Cunningham and the DRD administration as a whole generally disregarded these concerns about reliance on the RCAF, but they do indicate that there was a strong rift between government officials about the intent of the project to manage the maintenance of the Inuit lifestyle.[30] The RCMP inspection report of 10 November 1953 echoes this sentiment. In reviewing the newly established com-

[27]EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the Third Meeting of Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs."

[28]Ibid.

[29]C.J. Marshall, "Report on Eskimo Settlement at Resolute."

[30]Discrepancies in the intensity of initial concerns about the reliance of Inuit on the RCAF base exist throughout the documented record. It is likely that different perspectives on Inuit well-being and different analyses of the relocation project's goals among the many departments responsible for Inuit welfare in the High Arctic contributed to these differences of opinion. However, as the Inuit community developed at Resolute, the presence of the air force base became mutually beneficial. The symbiotic relationship between the RCAF and Inuit in the late 1950s and early 1960s is considered a historical success, despite uncertainty at the time. For further reading, see Lackenbauer and Shackleton, "Inuit-Air Force Relations."

munities at Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay, the inspection report is somewhat optimistic, but also realistic about the challenges. At Grise Fiord, the report notes,

> The natives transferred from Port Harrison needed lots of help and encouragement in order to establish themselves but I feel that they will make out all right. The Natives in question seem to have lost most of their ambition during the past few years eking out a hand to mouth existence at Port Harrison and I hope that this move will be of benefit to them, if not, it certainly will not be the fault of our members.[31]

At Resolute, the report notes that,

> This is a cold and windy spot, but there is a large airport here with RCAF personnel and various branches of the Department of Transport. The natives set up their camp about 2 miles from the DOT, which is about 4 or 5 miles from the airstrip. They might find it hard for the first winter, since the only water transport are the small, one man, kayaks. Cst. Gibson was lodged with the Department of Transport Weather Station. He will have full supervision of the natives as they will completely rely on him for guidance. Cst. Gibson is a very good man and was a year at Port Harrison so be *[sic]* knows the natives taken up. Some of the natives will be no doubt employed as temporary workers this winter. Adequate supplies were landed by the Department of Transport and left in charge of our Constable, so the natives should not suffer if the hunting proves poor during the first year. These natives are good at making native handicrafts and carvings and will find a ready market at this point to supplement their incomes.[32]

The inspection report indicates that there was potential for hunting and trapping as well as for development of handicrafts industries and employment as means of improving the economic situation of the Inuit from Port Harrison. The report is also clear that the living conditions at both Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay would be difficult and that Inuit would still need to rely on government assistance.

The 31 December 1953 report from the RCMP detachment at Grise Fiord indicated strong success in hunting and good success in trapping with the possibility of improved

[31] n.a., "Inspection Report."
[32] Ibid.

trapping as the camp became more established.[33] The follow-up report in February 1954 suggested that

> Eskimo conditions could hardly be better. The Port Harrison natives have adapted themselves very well.
> These natives have spent five of the worst months of the year for living and hunting in, and in answer to the query of whether or not they were desirous of remaining at Craig Harbour for another year, all the natives, with the exception of the old fogey from Port Harrison who declined to answer, expressed their desire of remaining. This one native wishes to see what the spring and summer have to offer. The Port Harrison natives with their ability to carve ivory and stone, would never have to go in need even in a poor trapping year, as they have a source of income that would buy the necessities at the trading store. There is no reason why these natives or three times their number, couldn't live and thrive off the abundance of game at Craig Harbour for many years to come.[34]

Early indications from the RCMP were that the program would be successful in improving the economic conditions of the relocated Inuit and that the relocation was having positive affects on morale. The reliance of the DNANR administrators on reports by the RCMP provides an interesting dimension to the evaluation of the relocations: the RCMP had its own goals in the High Arctic and its own views on the future of Inuit affairs, as expressed by Larsen during the development of the project.[35] These differing goals necessitated different evaluation criteria, though it is not clear that this was a consideration in the receipt or DNANR assessment of the RCMP reports.

By the end of 1953, however, it was already clear that the Inuit at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord would not be maintaining their traditional lifestyle. Life in the Arctic was changing dramatically, and even faster than the government had anticipated. Therefore, the goals of the relocation project necessarily shifted.

[33]R.C.M.P., "Eskimo Conditions, Craig Harbour Area" [31 December 1953], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 18 acc. 85-86/048 vol. 55 file TA500/8-1-13.

[34]Cley Fryer, "Rehabilitation Program of Eskimo at Craig Harbour" [1 February 1954], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 18 vol. 55 T-500-8-1-5.

[35]See Chapter 1.

Shifting Focus: Wage Employment, 1954-1955

In November 1953, Deputy Minister Young transferred from the DRD to the Department of Public Works and was replaced by R. Gordon Robertson, who had previously been working in the Privy Council Office advising the government on issues of constitutional law and external affairs.[36] Robertson's appointment to the position of Deputy Minister coincided with the departmental name change from "Resources and Development" to "Northern Affairs and National Resources." This name change reflected the desire of the government to pursue "a more active policy for the Canadian North and an administration that dealt with it really as a part of Canada rather than as something that was thought about only when some problem arose."[37] In his memoir, Robertson recalled that Prime Minister Louis St-Laurent wanted a new team to develop the new approach, including a new Minister in Jean Lesage and a new deputy who knew government and could learn the specifics of the department.[38]

Robertson's arrival at the DRD in November 1953 is important: his previous role in the Privy Council Office and direct interest in External Affairs had given him a clear picture of the Northern concerns held by Cabinet, and especially by Minister of External Affairs Lester B. Pearson. Robertson recalled having asked a junior member of the Privy Council Office to "look into the problem of our incapacity to act effectively in the North" in July 1953, only to take on the role of the problems in the North himself a few months later.[39] Reflecting back, Robertson noted that there were significant "human problems" in the north, which he had to address during his time as Deputy Minister. These problems, which Deputy Minister Young and the DRD had identified in previous years, were weighted differently by Robertson, whose primary concern was the education and health of the Inuit population. In citing Minister Lesage,

[36]Gordon Robertson, *Memoirs of a Very Civil Servant: Mackenzie King to Pierre Trudeau* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

[37]Ibid., 108.

[38]Ibid.

See also Lackenbauer, "Defence, Development, and Inuit: St-Laurent's Modern Approach to the North."

[39]Robertson, *Memoirs of a Very Civil Servant*, 108-109.

> The objective of government policy is relatively easy to define. It is to give the Eskimos the same rights, privileges, opportunities, and responsibilities as all other Canadians; in short, to enable them to share fully the national life of Canada.[40]

Robertson noted that these concerns were closely tied to the development of a "sound economy" that was diversified, but which required time to develop: the complications arising from the transition "are infinite".[41]

Robertson's arrival to the DRD in November 1953 and its subsequent name change to the DNANR in December 1953 signalled a shift in the focus of the evaluation of the relocation project. Although hunting and trapping would remain important components of the overall evaluation, increasing significance was placed on the third ELF objective: the development of opportunities for wage employment. Although this was not a possibility at Grise Fiord, it was a key evaluation component of the settlement at Resolute Bay, beginning in 1954.

The first reports of 1954 from the North regarding the new Inuit settlements came from the RCAF base at Resolute in February. The RCAF's concerns from the previous summer about the DND's responsibility for Inuit were apparently justified: "It has been reported that these families have become, more or less, wards of the RCAF Detachment at Resolute Bay."[42] The DND's position that they could not be responsible for the welfare of Inuit in these communities due to the constraints on resources and personnel is important: the military's primary responsibilities in the North were national defence, not welfare. The DNANR agreed that the RCAF was not to have any responsibility for Inuit, and that this responsibility was under the purview of the RCMP. Robertson's response reaffirmed that the air force's only involvement was to be potential employment, and the possible receipt of certain supplies through the air base.

Much of Robertson's early correspondence regarding the settlement at Resolute focused on the diversification of the Inuit economy, including the possibility of developing employment agreements with other departments. A note by DNANR's resident Arctic expert and

[40]Robertson, *Memoirs of a Very Civil Servant*, 120.
[41]Ibid.
[42]C. Drury, "Memorandum to the Deputy Minister."

Secretary of the ACND Graham Rowley in February 1954 regarding a telephone discussion with Director Cunningham and T.A. Harwood of the geophysics section of the Defence Research Board (DRB) reflects the importance placed on employment opportunities, noting the potential for Inuit to assist with an operation of the DRB,[43] and that the "Geological Survey is anxious to employ two of these [Eskimo at Resolute Bay] on another expedition if they can be spared."[44] In March, the budget discussions led to a further discussion regarding the nascent ELF: A memorandum from Cunningham to Robertson suggested that there may need to be some amendments made to the conditions governing the operation of the fund, in part to address the need to provide suitable housing for employed Inuit.[45] The importance of housing had been identified by Robertson as a part of the challenge, but its inclusion as a component of the ELF as a response to relocated Inuit being provided with permanent employment reflects the seriousness with which this policy was being pursued, as well as the inherent challenges of shifting the Inuit economy.

During Robertson's first trip to the Arctic as Deputy Minister, he visited the settlement at Resolute, and en route he had several conversations with Constable Gibson, stationed at the RCMP detachment at Resolute Bay. As part of the discussions were two items regarding employment of Inuit: The first involved the Summer Sea Supply as an additional casual labour opportunity for Inuit men, while the second involved the regulation of employment hours for Inuit labourers.[46] Both of these discussion items indicate a growing importance of employment in the Resolute Bay project.

The 26 April 1954 Memorandum to the ACND also reflects the changing nature of the relocation project. The April report noted that there were significant efforts to develop local industries and improve employment opportunities for Inuit throughout the North.[47]

[43]Although this was a potential opportunity, it was considered that the newly-relocated Inuit at Resolute were not prepared/able to take on this employment

[44]G.W. Rowley, "Note to File" [19 February 1954], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 22 vol. 544 file "Rowley ACND - 1954".

[45]F.J.G. Cunningham, "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister."

[46]AAB (Cabinet Secretariat, PCO), "Notes for Gordon Robertson" [31 March 1954], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 vol 4.

[47]G.W. Rowley, "Memorandum for the Advisory Committee on Northern Development re: Government Activities in the North" [26 April 1954], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, MG26 N1 vol. 18 file "Arctic".

The report to ACND the previous October had explained the project as an initiative to move Inuit to better hunting grounds and relieve population pressure. The April report, under the heading "Transfers of Eskimos to more favourable hunting grounds" noted that

> Additional families will be transferred at an approximate cost of $1,000 from Port Harrison to Resolute Bay to meet the demand for casual labour for handling supplies during airlifts and during the summer resupply. Possible employment also includes assistance to the Geological Survey and the Meteorological Division.
> A few families may be moved from Northern Québec to Pond Inlet and Arctic Bay where hunting and trapping are better.[48]

The report indicates that the department's policy had fully shifted toward encouraging every kind of employment, including casual and sporadic employment in the High Arctic. The report strongly indicates that at Resolute Bay, the opportunities for employment were very strong and that this had become a key component of the 1953 relocation, in turn prompting the consideration of additional relocations specifically to Resolute Bay. Relocations for the purposes of hunting and trapping, the initial primary objectives, were now focused on other areas. This indicates that the focus of evaluation had shifted toward wage employment, but also that the evaluation criteria for Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay were diverging.

It is also noteworthy that wage employment was a concern across the Arctic Division, and the approach to Inuit wage employment was a substantial component of the nascent Eskimo Policy being developed during this period. The EAC spent considerable time discussing wage employment and the effects of both casual and permanent wage employment on settlements, housing, and general well-being. In May 1954, at Robertson's first official meeting, the EAC focused on the standardization of Inuit wages, but by the following May, wage employment and its associated effects was to be the primary discussion item. By this time, it was generally felt among members of the committee that, despite challenges associated with transitioning to a lifestyle dependent on wages, employment had generally progressed without any serious problems and was considered somewhat "fortuitous because

[48]G.W. Rowley, "Memorandum for the Advisory Committee on Northern Development," 40.

of the difficulties caused by the decline in the caribou and in the fur market."[49] These comments covered the Arctic as a whole, but comments by RCMP Commissioner Nicholson outlined the perceived success of the policy to move Inuit to places within the North where they could slowly make the transition to modern Arctic life:

> Mr. Nicholson thought it might be a good idea at this time to review the objectives of this Committee when it was set up. They were: (a) to do nothing to encourage the Eskimos to leave the north; (b) to do everything to encourage the Eskimos to be self-supporting by living off the country; (c) to help those who were unable to support themselves; (d) to encourage practical education. He said that progress was being made and felt that the movement of Eskimos to settlements like Resolute and Craig Harbour had been most successful; and that we should seek means to increase this sort of project.[50]

Commissioner Nicholson's comments suggest that the projects at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord are noteworthy examples of the success of the EAC. Despite limited employment opportunities at Grise Fiord, Nicholson's citation of these projects in this context reflects his belief that the projects' success were at least in part a result of the employment opportunities that kept Inuit in the north, provided opportunities for Inuit to be self-supporting, and encouraged practical education.

In May 1957, the EAC minutes noted that Arctic life was changing dramatically. "An expanding wage economy, will, of course result in many changes in Arctic life, aside from providing a more certain livelihood for the Eskimo people," the committee predicted. In 1954 it was clear that "the hunting-trapping economy of the Arctic was losing ground to wage economy and will probably continue to do so."[51] Throughout the Arctic, the wage economy was becoming increasingly important, and the development of the wage economy at Resolute began to gain importance as an evaluation criterion, indicating the success of this settlement in preparing Inuit for the changing Arctic conditions.

[49]EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the Seventh Meeting of Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs."
[50]Ibid.
[51]EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the Eighth Meeting of Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs."

The Relocations and Sovereignty Claims, 1954-1960

Although sovereignty as a rationale for the relocation project had been raised briefly in August 1953 during a meeting between DRD and DND representatives, it had not been an element of the project's evaluation in the initial stages. This single reference in August 1953 reflected the growing concerns of the federal government and the increasing rhetoric about the issues facing Canada's north:

> Mr. Sivertz pointed out that the Canadian Government is anxious to have Canadians occupying as much of the North as possible and it appeared that in many cases the Eskimo were the only people capable of doing this.[52]

Sovereignty was an identified problem, but in 1953 the relocation of Inuit was not considered a plausible solution. Instead, some solidification of sovereignty claims through effective occupation was seen as one tangential benefit to the relocation project. As the settlements at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord were established however, it seemed that the communities began to contribute to the government's list of activities in the North that could be used in the case of a sovereignty claim.[53] In subsequent decades, contributions to sovereignty became one of the criteria used to evaluate the success of the settlements.[54]

In April 1954, the relocation project was included in the list of activities reported to the ACND. Although description of the project was focused on employment, the inclusion of the relocation in the report signifies the belief by DNANR that relocation represented a significant activity in Northern Canada, aligning with the Cabinet's request for the ACND to

> consider and report periodically on all phases of development of the Canadian Arctic and on the means which might be employed to preserve or develop

[52]n.a., "Minutes of A meeting held to discuss the transfer of certain Eskimo families from Northern Quebec to Cornwallis and Ellesmere Islands'."

[53]C. Bolger, "Memorandum for the Director re: Relocation of Eskimo Groups in the High Arctic" [15 November 1960], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, N92-023 Alex Stevenson Papers, Box 10.

[54]It is important to note that the contribution of Inuit at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord to sovereignty differs from the communities themselves contributing to sovereignty, as much of the literature argues. See "Historiography" in Introduction.

> the political, administrative, scientific and defence interests of Canada in that area.[55]

Still, despite the inclusion of the relocation project in the ACND report, the relocations were not considered a part of Canadian sovereignty operations at the strategic level.

In May 1954, concerns about Canadian sovereignty claims were heightened by an incident reported by *Time Magazine* regarding Soviet Arctic claims and the use of the phrase "North of Canada" to refer to Ellesmere Island.[56] In response to a question posed by MP for Vancouver Quadra Howard C. Green regarding the opportunity for Canada to assert its sovereignty over Ellesmere Island in response to the article, Minister Lesage replied:

> I quite agree with the hon. member, Mr. Chairman, that we should do everything to assert our sovereignty in those Arctic islands, of which Ellesmere is the most Northern. About a year ago the Royal Canadian Mounted Police established a second post on that island. Just two or three months ago I announced in the house that a group of islands had been named after Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, and that group includes Ellesmere Island.[57]

Minister Lesage concluded his remarks on this event by specifying that there were "two [Canadian flags], because there are two posts. There is no question of sovereignty, and there is no question of occupancy. We occupy that island." In these comments, Lesage made no mention of the fact that there were also Inuit settlements on Ellesmere Island. Sovereignty was determined by the flying of the Canadian flag at the RCMP posts at Craig Harbour and Alexandra Fiord, not by the Inuit settlements.

Minister Lesage continued to use this explanation of Canadian sovereignty in 1955 when, at a meeting of the Special Committee on Estimates of the DNANR in March 1955, Lesage explained that,

> Our claim to the Northernmost islands has never been challenged. If you will look at the annual report of the department and the map which is attached to

[55] n.a., "Cabinet Conclusions: Concerns about Sovereignty Infringement," 14.

[56] Government of Canada, "House of Commons Debates: Official Report 22nd Parliament First Session (vol. V)" [1954], *Library of Parliament*, Queen's Printer of Canada:4680.

[57] Ibid.

> the back cover it shows the effective occupation of the Northern islands. . . At Resolute bay you have an R.C.M.P. post, a weather station and an air field. At Craig Harbour you have R.C.M.P., at Alexander Fiord you have an R.C.M.P. post. These are all in the Queen Elizabeth Islands which are the Northernmost islands...
> We are occupying these islands effectively now. We have these weather stations where there are Canadians living all the year round. [58]

Minister Lesage was adamant about the effectiveness of Canada's way of claiming the Northernmost islands and did not mention the Inuit settlements. His only comment about Inuit settlements and their relationship to sovereignty was to indicate that the development of additional defence establishments in the North would mean some employment for some Inuit, but that these would be highly isolated areas and not communities. Lesage further emphasized in his comments to the committee that the Inuit who would be employed at the defence establishments should not develop into permanent communities contributing to the claim of effective occupancy.[59] In 1955, the Inuit settlement at Grise Fiord was not considered part of the sovereignty conversation.[60]

By January 1956, the conversation about sovereignty on Ellesmere Island had shifted. Secretary and Coordinator of the ACND and Arctic expert Rowley's memo for Deputy Minister Robertson outlined the history of Ellesmere Island from 1880, including the note that "In the past few years there has been a great increase in Canadian activity in Ellesmere Island. A second joint Arctic weather station was opened and there are again two R.C.M.P. detachments. A number of families of Canadian Eskimos now live in the island."[61] Attached

[58]Government of Canada, "Proceedings of the Special Committee on Department Estimates, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources" [23 March 1955], *Canadian Sovereignty in the Arctic*, RG 25 vol. 6510 file 9057-40 part 5:447-448.
See also Heidt and Lackenbauer, *The Joing Arctic Weather Stations*.

[59]Government of Canada, "Proceedings of the Special Committee on Department Estimates, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources," 449-450.

[60]Although Grant would argue that it is important to read between the lines regarding sovereignty claims due to the Canadian government's unwillingness to make explicit claims about sovereignty, in this instance, Minister Lesage was making comments to a closed meeting where he could be reasonably certain that there was no threat to Canadian sovereignty claims. Throughout the proceedings the committee discussed explicit details of these claims, including the challenges of managing the international implications of the sector theory of claim.

[61]G.W. Rowley, "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister re: Canadian Sovereignty in Ellesmere Island"

to Rowley's memo was a list of activities on Ellesmere Island, including the landing of "Eskimo colonists" in 1953.[62] In 1956, Robertson was chairman of an interdepartmental committee working on Canada's position regarding territorial waters, and was also (along with Minister of External Affairs Lester B. Pearson) managing Canada's response to two important polar sovereignty questions: the race for Antarctica, in which many states were considering the application of a sector theory to confirm their ownership of the continent with the United Nations;[63] and the intrusion of Soviet scientists into Canadian waters on ice floes, which were neither clearly land nor clearly water under international law.[64] The heightened concerns about polar sovereignty in the face of threats from the Soviet Union and the direct discussion of how to manage polar claims at the United Nations – which had the possibility of leading to direct confrontation in the Arctic – altered how the DNANR evaluated the presence of Inuit on Ellesmere Island.

As the communities at both Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord became increasingly permanent throughout the 1950s, their importance in projecting Canadian sovereignty over the Arctic also increased. By 1960, when Eskimo Co-operatives were established at both Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord to allow Inuit greater control over their economies, the DNANR considered the communities key elements of Canada's strategy of effective occupation. In October 1960, C.M. Bolger, Administrator of the Arctic, and his assistant Alexander Stevenson, were directed by Ben Sivertz, now director of the NALB, to write a paper

> outlining the history of the Resolute and Grise Fiord communities and defining the advantages and the problems of establishing additional colonies in the High Arctic. Our paper should ask if it is the wish of the Government to fortify our

[19 January 1956], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 22 vol. 545 file "Rowley ACND 1956".

[62]Rowley incorrectly identifies the landing of seven Inuit at Alexandra Fiord as this was a scheduled relocation but was cancelled due to poor weather, with those Inuit settling at Grise Fiord instead. G.W. Rowley, "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister."

[63]R. Gordon Robertson, "Letter to Jules Leger re: United Nations discussion of Antarctica" [20 April 1956], *Canadian Sovereignty in the Arctic*, RG 25 vol. 6510 file 9057-40 part 6.
For further discussion of Antarctic sovereignty discussions and their influence on Canadian Arctic sovereignty, see Kikkert, "Grasping for the Ends of the Earth."

[64]Jean Lesage, "Memorandum to Cabinet re: Canadian policy on Territorial Waters and the Continental Shelf" [2 March 1956], *Canadian Sovereignty in the Arctic*, RG 25 vol. 6510 file 9057-40 part 6.

> claim to sovereignty of these islands by establishing Eskimo groups on them and it should contain our best recommendation on what, if anything, should be done along this line.[65]

The paper, which Sivertz had been wanting since 1957, included a lengthy examination of the economic activities of the North and the successes of the settlements at Resolute and Grise Fiord from this perspective. It also detailed some of the larger issues with relocating Inuit, including issues with supplying and providing a decent quality of life to these centres in the High Arctic. Importantly, the paper also included the following points,

> Although the Eskimos at Grise Fiord have not had the opportunities of employment, they have, however, obtained a good livelihood from the country and this community also serves a distinctly useful purpose in confirming, in a tangible manner, Canada's sovereignty over this vast region of the Arctic.[66]
>
> . . .
>
> The employment of Eskimos, particularly in the High Arctic, within the range of their capabilities would be a distinct advantage to DOT and render a service to weather stations, and again the matter of sovereignty would be another aspect of such employment.[67]
>
> . . .
>
> One important factor to always keep in mind is that the Eskimos at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord are an invaluable human resource in the Northern economic development taking place on Cornwallis Island and the adjacent islands, and other groups at several other points in this vast region might develop a similar importance. Then again, as already mentioned, the occupation of these Northern islands by Canada's first Arctic citizens only enhances our claims to sovereignty of these regions.[68]

The Inuit settlements were now officially recognized as contributing to Canadian Arctic sovereignty claims.

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[65]C. Bolger, "Memo for Mr. Stevenson re: Relocation of Eskimo Groups in the High Arctic" [4 October 1960], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, N92-023 Alex Stevenson Papers, Box 10.

[66]C. Bolger, "Memorandum for the Director," 3.

[67]Ibid., 4.

[68]Ibid., 6.

Although Bolger noted that there were significant advantages to maintaining the settlements at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord for the purposes of "enhancing our claims to sovereignty of these regions" there were no further relocations of Inuit to the High Arctic. The two communities continued to receive federal governmental support throughout the 1960s and, in 1970 the NWT Government took over administrative responsibility for the communities.[69] These two Inuit communities continued, in part, to contribute to the economic development of the North and – as it is now acknowledged – to bolster Canadian sovereignty.

Declining Conditions at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, 1957-1960

The government's perceived early successes at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord prompted the decision in 1955 to allow additional Inuit families to move north. These families were moved, according to the government, at the request of the Inuit themselves. The 1954 RCMP report from the Port Harrison detachment indicated that there was a strong desire by Inuit to move North to join their families:

> Several native families have received correspondence from the natives who left here on the "*C.D. Howe*" in 1953 that were placed at Resolute Bay and Craig Harbour, the conditions to them seem very favourable and several families have asked for their names to be placed on the list should any further native families be moved north.[70]

The officer-in-charge, Constable J.E. Decker, suggested that this would be beneficial to the detachment area, suggesting that "It is felt that this additional group could be moved, it certainly would clear some of the congested areas. At the present time suitable camp

[69] A. Stevenson, "Inuit Relocation - High Arctic" [30 November 1977], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, N92-023 Alex Stevenson Papers, Box 10:5.

[70] J.E. Decker, "Conditions Amongst Eskimos, Port Harrison District" [27 December 1954], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 18 acc. 85-86/048 vol. 55 file TA500/8-1-14.

localities are slightly overcrowded and in order to maintain a better standard of living from country food, it would be necessary to minimize the size of camps."[71] The conditions at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord were good, and in his 1960 report on the project Bolger noted that,

> The outcome of these ventures has been more successful and satisfactory than had ever been anticipated. The Eskimos have been able to obtain all the country food they need and sufficient fur and additional produce to purchase their own other requirements from the store. They have adapted themselves quickly to the changed conditions and have been, on the whole, happy in their new environment. So much so, they requested that arrangements be made to have some of their relatives transferred north. This was done – in 1955 and subsequent years when small numbers of Eskimos were moved North.[72]

The majority of those moved in 1955 went to Resolute Bay, where there were greater resources and employment opportunities available. However, the positive conditions in the High Arctic would not last.

Beginning in late 1956, the government identified issues with ongoing supply problems at Resolute Bay. The initial relocation had seen both incorrect and insufficient supplies landed at Resolute Bay. This problem persisted, with "approximately 18 1/4 tons of supplies" arriving at Churchill, MB too late to be transported to Resolute Bay by ship in October 1956.[73] In January 1957, these supplies had still not been transported to Resolute Bay, and it was further identified that there were ammunition shortages at Grise Fiord.[74] Shortages of supplies persisted into 1958, with the RCMP patrol survey for that year indicating that there were food shortages, despite the good hunting. R.A. Gould reported that:

[71] J.E. Decker, "Conditions Amongst Eskimos, Port Harrison District."

[72] C. Bolger, "Memorandum for the Director," 2.

[73] W.G. Kerr, "Memorandum to the Chief of the Arctic Division re: Supplies for Resolute Bay, N.W.T." [26 October 1956], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, N92-023 Alex Stevenson Papers, Box 19.

[74] J.P. Richards, "Memorandum for Mr. W.G. Kerr re: Suppplies for Resolute Bay and Ammunition for Grise FIord" [28 January 1957], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, N92-023 Alex Stevenson Papers, Box 19.

> Shortly after the "Howe" arrived at Grise Fiord, Thomassie... came to see me regarding this problem. He said that the Eskimos had come to Craig Harbour five years before and although the hunting had been good there and at Grise Fiord, there had never been enough tea, coal oil, tobacco, flour, sugar, milk, 30-30 ammunition and duck for their tents at the store. He said that when the store ran out of food, heating and hunting supplies, the Eskimos did not like leaving the camp to go on hunts, because of the hardship caused to their wives and children... He said that although the game was good their children still needed white man's food and he pointed out that the Eskimos were obeying the white man's game laws as they had been asked, but because there was not enough white man's food at the store they were going hungry as a result.[75]

These supply shortages were not uncommon to Northern communities more generally but were particularly acute in the High Arctic where the opportunities for resupply were very limited. The additional challenges of transportation and communication in this region meant significant delays in addressing these shortages, if they were addressed at all. Furthermore, reports of difficulties with settling fur accounts at Resolute Bay compounded the problem.[76]

In discussing the possibility of further relocations, government officials considered the deteriorating conditions at Grise Fiord to be a strong deterrent to future projects. Bolger's memo in 1960 outlined this perspective: "I pointed out to the Director some of the problems we have had with Grise Fiord in respect of supply and medical services, and his own feeling is that while Grise Fiord should be continued for sovereignty purposes, it should not be duplicated at other isolated locations."[77] Instead, government policy shifted to focusing potential relocation projects on the basis of employment opportunities, establishing "any new colonies... in the vicinity of established weather stations."[78]

The problems that existed at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord did not, in the government's estimation, constitute a failure of the relocation project. Rather, they signalled lessons to

[75]R.A. Gould, "Eastern Arctic Patrol Report - Grise Fiord" [27 August 1958], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, N92-023 Alex Stevenson Papers:6.

[76]R.A.J. Phillips, "Letter to Inspector Fitzsimmons" [14 June 1957], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, N92-023 Alex Stevenson Papers, Box 19.

[77]C. Bolger, "Memo for Mr. Stevenson."

[78]Ibid.

be learned for future projects. Bolger's 1960 report outlined the prospective new policy on relocations:

> In considering any moves North and to meet changing conditions in the Arctic, is our policy still along the lines as follows:
>
> a. To ensure to Eskimos the means of obtaining a reasonable standard of living according to their stage of development.
>
> b. To assist those of the more primitive groups to continue their hunting and trapping way of life by seeing that they are adequately equipped and by encouraging them to make fuller use of the resources that are available. Assistance is also to be given to members of these groups to transfer, when necessary, to areas where hunting conditions are more favourable. They are also to be encouraged to take up other occupations besides trapping, where feasible, such as handicrafts and small home industries.
>
> c. To assist more advanced groups to combine other occupations with trapping and also take up employment, temporary or permanent, that will enable them to augment their income without, however, unfitting themselves for the life of a hunter should employment cease and they be thrown back on their own resources. Seasonal employees will spend part of the year working and part trapping. Year-round employees should be allowed reasonable time off for hunting throughout the year. In this way they will retain certain ethnic skills and be more content in their work.
>
> d. The more advanced, younger men of any group will be given opportunities and encouraged to take employment or training for employment in order that they may fill positions available at the weather stations, other military and civilian centres, and with oil companies.[79]

The changes in Arctic conditions and the information collected from the initial High Arctic relocation project suggested that moving Inuit to isolated locations was not sustainable. The government had already recognized that there were inherent challenges in attempting to administer a large number of isolated communities spread across vast distances,[80] and

[79] C. Bolger, "Memorandum for the Director," 4-5.

[80] EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the Eighth Meeting of Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs," 91.

had been working toward centralization since 1958.[81]

Although the government administration expressed some interest in relocating Inuit for the purposes outlined by Bolger, these relocations never occurred. Bolger explained in 1960 that,

> No further large scale moves have been made, awaiting surveys which would determine whether the animal population could stand the present amount of killing or whether other resources were available. Because of staff limitations it has never been possible to make the survey required. In 1956 the Deputy Minister requested that action be taken to select two places as possible locations for the settlement of Eskimos in the High Arctic and that surveys be carried out to determine their suitability from the standpoint of the abundance of wildlife. The Department of Fisheries were also brought into the picture and although some investigations have been made, we have not seen any reports indicating that the project was tackled or completed as originally planned.
> Some years ago the DOT gave tentative approval to considering employment of Eskimos at weather stations all over the Arctic, provided of course they had certain qualifications. No further action has been taken in this regard. No doubt the employment of Eskimos, particularly in the High Arctic, within the range of their capabilities would be a distinct advantage to DOT and render a service to weather stations, and again the matter of sovereignty would be another aspect of such employment.[82]

The desire to have better information in the 1960s is indicative of a more advanced Northern administration with greater resources, but also a government increasingly aware of its own capabilities.

Despite efforts to investigate the potential of new relocation projects in the late 1950s and early 1960s, including several studies on the economic and social prospects of relocation schemes,[83] the government did not pursue these projects, opting for alternative

[81]EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the Ninth Meeting of Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs" [26 May 1958], *in Shaping Inuit Policy: The Minutes of the Eskimo Affairs Committee, 1952-62*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security, Volume 14 (ed. Peter Clancy and P. Whitney Lackenbauer):119.

[82]C. Bolger, "Memorandum for the Director," 4.

[83]J.D. Flynn, "Memorandum re: Relocation of Eskimos from Northern Canada" [29 August 1969], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, N92-023 Alex Stevenson Papers.

administrative strategies, including transfer of responsibilities for Northern Affairs to local councils and the NWT Government.

Improvements to Conditions in Inukjuak

One of the primary motivations for the relocation projects was to improve the conditions in overburdened areas, such as Inukjuak. Although this was the most consistently stated rationale for the projects, it does not feature regularly in the evaluation of the project. The DNANR continued to receive reports from the Port Harrison detachment throughout the 1950s regarding the conditions in that region, but conditions improved only slightly and only over a lengthy period of time. In 1954, the economic conditions were only slightly better in the community because the fur trade was still depressed, though there seemed to have been some economic relief resulting from the development of the handicrafts industry.[84] However, living conditions were still congested, and the RCMP report indicates that additional relocation might help resolve some of the issues, particularly since there was an expressed interest by the families of some of the previously relocated Inuit to move. J.E. Decker observed:

> At the present time suitable camp localities are slightly overcrowded and in order to maintain a better standard of living from country food, it would be necessary to minimize the size of camps. This can be done only by two alternatives, 1. To move some of the natives from some camps to other areas along the coast. 2. To move the native families who wish to be moved, near their friends or relatives to remote areas in the north. . . The no. 2 idea would be best by far, if the natives could be placed at such suitable places as the former placement has been made.[85]

In 1955, an additional four families from Inukjuak were moved to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay in response to both requests from Inuit and the ongoing reports of poor conditions at Port Harrison.

[84]R. Gordon Robertson, "Memorandum for Mr. Cunningham re: Reports from Miss Hinds" [1 February 1954], *Eskimo Affairs*, RG 22 vol. 256 file 40-8-1 vol 4.

[85]J.E. Decker, "Conditions Amongst Eskimos, Port Harrison District."

The RCMP report on the patrols made in 1955-1956 throughout the Port Harrison Detachment Area indicate that the conditions in Port Harrison had stabilized:

> In the Port Harrison district itself the hunting could not be said to be good but since a fairly large number of natives have been moved to other areas (Craig Harbour) the country is supplying adequate game to keep most of the natives happy. With a large white population in this district a large number of natives are employed locally either permanently or day to day when extra men are needed. This along with carving is giving the natives a fairly steady income. If the carving industry can keep at a fairly constant level it is felt that the natives will give up their large dog teams. This will cut down the large amount of meat that has to be obtained for dog food.[86]

The transition from a predominantly fur-based economy to a mixed economy with handicrafts and wage employment in the Port Harrison district occurred fairly rapidly between 1955-1960. The RCMP reported sufficient hunting resources in the area, and improved health and living conditions. In the years following the relocation of Inuit families from Inukjuak, the conditions there seem to have improved in each area that administration had identified as problematic in the early 1950s. Although the 1956 report indicated that some of these improvements were a result of the relocation, it is clear that other elements of Northern development also contributed to the improved conditions at Inukjuak: the transition to a mixed economy, the experiments with new and different housing types made by Constable Decker,[87] and the introduction of Northern Service Officers and additional Nursing Stations in the district.[88] While conditions at Inukjuak clearly improved from the government's perspective in the years following the relocations, it is not certain how much of the improvement resulted from the relocations. Many elements of Northern life contributed to the problems faced by Inuit at Inukjuak, and many solutions to those problems were implemented between 1953 and 1960 by the DNANR, the RCMP, and other federal

[86]V.D.R. Wilson, "Conditions amongst the Eskimos - Wakeham Bay, Sugluk, Povungnituk, Ivuyivik and Port Harrison, P.Q." [31 March 1956], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 18 acc. 85-86/048 vol. 55 file TA500/8-1-13:4.

[87]J.E. Decker, "Conditions Amongst Eskimos Generally - District E9 - Port Harrison, P.Q." [3 July 1957], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 18 acc. 85-86/048 vol. 55 file TA500/8-1-13.

[88]G.B. MacDonald, "Conditions amongst Eskimos - Generally - Annual Report" [2 June 1960], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 18 acc. 85-86/048 vol. 55 file TA500/8-1-13.

departments. Parsing the individual effects of these changes is challenging, making it difficult to evaluate the significance of the relocation on the cumulative improvements to life at Inukjuak.

Conclusion

The High Arctic relocations were highly complex, attempting to solve multiple problems simultaneously. The attempt to address a series of interrelated real and perceived problems was poorly planned and executed. Administrators who lacked understanding of the "wicked" nature of the problem implemented a program of relocation with minimal comprehension of how it would actually solve – or even resolve – the problems facing the government. The *ad hoc* nature of the program's implementation was reflected in its evaluation. As then-Chief of the Arctic Sivertz explained in October 1956,

> It should be remembered that we are feeling our way in these projects. So far things have gone well – better than we could properly have hoped. After two years the people seem content to stay on, whereas they only agreed to go in the first place on condition that we promise to return them to their former homes after "two or three years."[89]

The government's perceived success of the High Arctic relocation project stemmed initially from the improved hunting and economic conditions the Inuit experienced at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, as well as the stabilization of conditions at Inukjuak. As the project progressed and the settlements matured, problems emerged: supplies continued to not arrive at the trading posts, employment opportunities were confined to the Resolute Bay area, and the hunting and trapping conditions that were so promising in the early-1950s began to dwindle. But by this time, the settlements had a new purpose — enhancing Canadian sovereignty claims in the High Arctic.

[89]B.G. Sivertz, "Memo for Director re: Eskimo Settlements at Resolute Bay and Craig Harbour" [22 October 1956], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, N92-023 Alex Stevenson Papers, Box 5.

Part II

Remembered Experiences: Telling the Stories of High Arctic Relocation

Introduction to Part Two

The High Arctic Relocations in the early-to mid-1950s are extensively documented in government records: these records address the identification of problems in the North, the potential solutions to those problems, and the formulation and implementation of the relocation plan. While there is generally not much government documentation available about the actual undertaking of the relocation, the experiences of those who were relocated, as well as of the government officials who participated in the relocation, have been collected in various forms in the years since. Inuit oral histories of this, and other events, are reliable records of the experiences of those who were relocated and of their descendants. Part Two explores these experiences, contextualizing the events outlined in Part One and providing a broader understanding of the relocation and its effect on the lives of Inuit throughout the Canadian North.

Exploring the High Arctic Relocations as a series of experiences is an important component of understanding the history of the relocations, their short- and long-term effects, and the responsibility of government. Writing history as experience is fundamentally a philosophical activity: it is an attempt to paint a "picture of the past" and to represent the ranges of emotion confronted by those who lived the relocation and its aftermath.[1] In *History in Three Keys*, historian Paul A. Cohen outlines the "impossibility of truly resurrecting the experienced past" as "the best a participant account can do is provide a vivid and compelling sense of what the past was like. It cannot give us the past."[2] The experience of the past is also constrained by several factors, including that participants

[1]Cohen, *History in Three Keys*, 59.
[2]Ibid.

are limited in their knowledge by geography, by their ability to know and understand the context of their situation, and by what Cohen calls "outcome-blindness" – that participants cannot know (or control) their fate, and therefore cannot recognize the importance of what they are experiencing.[3] Cohen notes that participants also experience the past continuously, rather than as constructed periods with distinct beginnings and endings.[4] These elements of experience are directly contrasted against the construction of history as an event spanning a fixed period of time.

Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 both tell the stories of High Arctic Relocations through the remembered experiences of Inuit and government, respectively. There is comparatively little written about these experiences of relocation, with most of the literature focused on attempting to explain the actions of government or contextualizing the inhumanity of government action against the hardship of Inuit.[5] Historian Whitney Lackenbauer notes that there was an "absence of Inuit voices in the relocation decision, and thus in the debate about government motives" because Inuit were "objects of government policy, not co-creators of it."[6] This absence of Inuit voices or agency in the development and implementation of the relocation necessarily means that Inuit voices should not be used in any attempt to decode government motives or intentions for the relocations. Given that much of the scholarship on the High Arctic Relocations has focused on the question of government motives as indicators of historical policy trends in the Arctic, Inuit voices have largely been excluded from the discussions. In answering research questions about government intentions and motives, it is necessary to use only the evidence in the government archives. Where Inuit voices are useful – and indeed vital – is in answering questions about the experience of relocations and its effect on the people who were relocated. While there is ample evidence from Inuit in their own voices and using their own media,[7] much of the

[3]Cohen, *History in Three Keys*, 60-63.

[4]Ibid., 65.

[5]For further reading, see "Historiography" in the Introduction and in Part One.

[6]Lackenbauer, "Introduction to Human Flagpoles or Humanitarian Action?," iv-v.

[7]See René Dussault and Georges Erasmus, *The High Arctic Relocation: Summary of Supporting Information, Vols. 1-2* (Ottawa, ON: Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1994); Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*; Marquise Lepage, *Martha of the North* (National Film Board of Canada, 2008); Zacharias Kunuk, *Exile* (Isuma Productions, 2009); Iqqaumavara, *Iqqaumavara Memory Project*, 2011;

scholarship has focused on summarizing these experiences to make arguments about the moralism of government policy, rather than examining the complexities of the hardships Inuit experienced.[8] Although the postscript to Shelagh Grant's abridged version of her submission to RCAP, appearing in the Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security (DCASS) volume *Errors Exposed*, includes reference to the Inuit testimony and its importance, she concedes that it is important for the purposes of "understand[ing] 'what' happened to them, but only government officials and the police knew 'why'."[9]

Government officials' testimonies at RCAP are largely absent from the academic literature. The stance of civil servants who testified is not substantially different from the evidence available in government documents. Only Shelagh Grant and Janice Cavell mention the government testimony given at RCAP in any substantive way, with both focusing on the defensiveness and hostility of former civil servants during the hearings.[10] Alan Marcus's inclusion of government testimony serves only to add detail to his previously constructed narrative, and does not comment on the testimony itself.[11] Major differences exist between the discussion of experiences of those civil servants stationed in Ottawa – which is reflected in the archival documents – and those civil servants stationed in the High Arctic. These differences in experiences are in part place-based, and in part based on the different government departments they represent. Differences between government departments and the ways in which those departments understood and implemented policy, as well as the ways in which their officers experienced the implementation and effects of policy, are not discussed in the literature on High Arctic Relocations.[12] The federal government is characterized throughout the literature as a single entity, acting in a unified manner.[13]

Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know*.

[8]McGrath, *The Long Exile*; Wakeham, "At the Intersection of Apology and Sovereignty."

[9]Shelagh D. Grant, "Introduction to Errors Exposed," 36.

[10]Shelagh D. Grant, "Introduction to Errors Exposed"; Cavell, ""Consolidation and Control of All Eskimo Income": The Motive for the 1953 High Arctic Relocation."

[11]Alan Rudolph Marcus, *Relocating Eden*.

[12]Although the literature does differentiate the departments that different officials worked for, including working for Northern Affairs or the RCMP, these differences are not noted as important.

[13]The one exception seems to be noting James Cantley's former position within the HBC as potentially influencing his motivations, though this is only ever referenced and never discussed in great detail. Alan Rudolph Marcus, *Relocating Eden*; Damas, *Arctic Migrants, Arctic Villagers*; Cavell, ""Consolidation and

While substantial political science and public policy literature highlights the differentiated nature of governments,[14] this focus on organizational culture postdates most High Arctic Relocation literature. As a result, the High Arctic Relocation literature includes very little discussion or analysis of the government officials' testimony.

There is more literature on RCAP as a whole, focusing primarily on the inefficacy of the commission to effect policy changes: a common criticism is that the recommendations of RCAP were largely ignored by the federal government,[15] and that the effect can best be characterized by "much has happened . . . little has changed."[16] *Commissions of Inquiry and Policy Change: A Comparative Analysis*, edited by political scientists Gregory J. Inwood and Carolyn M. Johns, sought to understand the general influence of government commissions on policy development, with the theoretical framework for the book focusing on the role of Commissions of Inquiry in policy change and examining why some commissions have an effect on changing policy while others do not.[17] Political scientist Peter H. Russell's chapter on the RCAP extends this analysis to examine how RCAP contributed

Control of All Eskimo Income": The Motive for the 1953 High Arctic Relocation."

[14]See, for example: James G. March, *Decisions and Organizations* (New York, NY: Blackwell Press, 1988); Zur Baruch Shapira, *Organizational Decision Making* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*. and for Canadian examples, see Mark Schacter, *Cabinet Decision Making in Canada: Lessons and Practices* (Ottawa: Institute on Governance, 1999); Thomas Townsend and Robert Craig Keigo Kunimoto, *Capacity, Collaboration and Culture: The Future of the Policy Research Function in the Government of Canada* (Ottawa, ON: Policy Research Initiative, Government of Canada, 2009); Mahmoud Eid and Toby Fyfe, "Globalisation and Crisis Communication," *Journal of International Communication* 15, no. 2 (2011): 7–27.

[15]Keira L. Ladner, "Negotiated Inferiority: The Royal Commission on Aboriginal People's Vision of a Renewed Relationship," *American Review of Canadian Studies* 31, nos. 1-2 (2001); Alan C. Cairns, "Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples: Aboriginal Nationalism, Canadian Federalism, and Canadian Democracy," *Saskatchewan Law Review* 70, no. 1 (2007); David Stack, "The First Decade of RCAP's Influence on Aboriginal Law," *Saskatchewan Law Review* 70, no. 1 (2007); Julia Hughes, "Instructive Past: Lessons from the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples for the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools," *Canadian Journal of Law and Society* 27, no. 1 (2012); Katherine Graham and David Newhouse, eds., *Sharing the Land, Sharing a Future: The Legacy of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press, 2021).

[16]Marlene Brant Castellano, "Renewing the Relationship: A Perspective on the Impact of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples," *The Journal of Aboriginal Economic Development* 2, no. 2 (2002): 116.

[17]Gregory J. Inwood and Carolyn M. Johns, eds., *Commissions of Inquiry and Policy Change: A Comparative Analysis* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 4.

to "rethinking the very nature of the country."[18] Russell concludes that the nature of RCAP made it difficult to have a direct influence on policy changes, but that its primary accomplishment was in providing education and deepening the knowledge of Canadians about the problems faced by Indigenous peoples, providing an opportunity for longer-term policy changes to occur.[19] Sociologist James S. Frideres also argues that the RCAP was designed to provide policy direction to the government on issues related to Indigenous peoples, with a broad scope provided for in the mandate, but that the commission itself was limited in its ability to enact change.[20] Frideres also notes that the RCAP, in its careful construction of inviting witnesses with different expertise, experiences, ages, and genders, was able to hear a variety of concerns and perspectives on the issues of self-government and self-determination, economic self-sufficiency, and community healing.[21] This has led sociologists Chris Andersen and Claude Denis to argue that the RCAP was an important tool in the construction of Indigenous identities, though it privileged concepts of the nation model of Indigenous politics.[22]

Within this context, Part Two seeks to illuminate the experiences of High Arctic Relocation in order to expand the historical understanding of the relocations themselves, the effect of these relocations on Inuit communities, and how these relocations have influenced perceptions of the Canadian Arctic. Chapter 4 tells the stories of Inuit who were relocated, those who were left behind in Inukjuak, and their descendants. The chapter includes the experiences of men, women, and (at the time of relocation) children. Chapter 5 tells the stories of some of the agents of government. These stories are all of adult men who were employed and who made active choices, including about their work. The experiences relayed in these chapters represent a wide spectrum of perspectives, each of which provide a piece of the overall picture of the High Arctic Relocations.

[18]Peter H. Russell, "The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples: An Exercise in Policy Education," ed. Gregory J. Inwood and Carolyn M. Johns, in *Commissions of Inquiry and Policy Change: A Comparative Analysis* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 154.

[19]Ibid.

[20]James S. Frideres, "The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples: The Route to Self-Government?," *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 16, no. 2 (1996): 262-263.

[21]Ibid., 261.

[22]Chris Andersen and Claude Denis, "Urban Natives and the Nation: Before and After the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples," *Canadian Review of Sociology* 40, no. 4 (2003): 373–390.

Each set of experiences tells a different story: Inuit tell stories of hardship and survival in unknown and unfamiliar land, despite a lack of information and support. They tell a story of perseverance and adaptation in an unfamiliar environment and without the physical or emotional aid of family or community. All of this sets the context for a story about betrayal and exploitation by a far-away government for the greater good of a nation that would not know of their sacrifice.

In contrast, representatives of federal departments tell stories primarily about humanitarian action and wanting to improve the living circumstances of the Northern Québec Inuit. Taken together, they construct a narrative of caring deeply about Inuit welfare. Read individually, they indicate uncertainty and failure of process. The stories government agents tell suggest that they believed change was necessary and that this was the best they could do in the circumstances. In their stories, they are the heroes.

While the stories of these experiences are very different, they are all important. They provide a personal narrative to a story that is often told only through a documentary lens. While archival evidence provides an important contextual layer, there is no primary documentary evidence that relays the experiences of those who were relocated or of those who carried out the relocation. Experiential evidence exists in the form of remembered experiences, told and recorded many years after the event. The evidence provided by both Inuit relocatees and Inuit who were left behind, and by civil servants of the federal government, is of the remembered experiences. Those events that were sensed by Inuit and government officials, each in their own environments, were translated into an experience of the moment and then remembered before being recalled decades later. In the case of Inuit, the experiences of the past were still sensed in the present: the separation from community, the harsh environment, and the feelings of betrayal by government remain. For government, the experiences of the past remained in the past – their experiences were tangential to the story of their lives over the years that passed between the event and the recall of that event. As a result, the remembered experiences are different and must be considered not only as distinct in terms of the different content and context they can provide for historians of the present, but also in the connection of those past experiences to their experiences of the present. Nowhere is this more poignant than in the difference

between Inuit calls for compensation for current hardships and civil servants' calls for their reputations to not be muddied by accusations of past wrongdoing.

The evidence of remembered experience presented in Part Two relies primarily on the transcripts of oral testimony provided to the RCAP in 1993.[23] This testimony is challenging to use: there exists an inherent power imbalance between the government-created commission, as an agent of the state, and Inuit testifying before the commissioners, as a marginalized population within that state. While anthropologist James Slotta argues that the Special Hearings on the High Arctic Relocation represented a "phatic ritual" between the state and Inuit which began the process of reconciliation by enabling Inuit to voice their grievances and the state to hear them by opening communication between the two groups on the issue of relocation, the testimony did not immediately serve the purpose of bringing the two sides together.[24] Despite the opportunity for reconciliation being presented by the testimony during the RCAP hearings, settler scholar of Indigenous literatures Sophie McCall argues that the RCAP missed an opportunity for reconciliation because of the way in which it distanced itself from the testimony provided by Indigenous participants.[25] McCall argues that "RCAP played a crucial role as catalyst in telling, recording and disseminating subsequent community narratives," even though the textualization of those narratives within the highly editorialized report did not necessitate readers to acknowledge their "implication in the history of Canadian-Aboriginal relations."[26] McCall further suggests that the process of the RCAP, in which more than 1,000 witnesses presented testimony over 178 days of public hearings, "may hold the potential for initiating acts of reconciliation, grounded in a politics of difference."[27] McCall also notes that the narrative structure of the report resulted in necessary compromises to the testimony that was included, in effect sanitizing the voices of Indigenous witnesses to fit the story of progress the report sought

[23]Conducting additional interviews of Inuit relocatees and their descendants was determined to be insensitive given the number of interviews and testimonies already publicly available. Interviews of government officials is no longer possible.

[24]Chapter 7 addresses the ongoing struggle between Inuit and the state following the RCAP hearings. Slotta, "Phatic Rituals of the Liberal Democratic Polity."

[25]Sophie McCall, *First Person Plural: Aboriginal Storytelling and the Ethics of Collaborative Authorship* (Vancouver, B.C.: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 110.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid., 113.

to tell.[28]

The testimony provided to the House of Commons SCAA in 1990 and to the RCAP in 1993 forms the majority of the evidence base for Part Two. In managing the oral testimony provided to these two bodies of government, I often reproduce the transcript segment in its entirety and focus on moments within the testimony that are initiated by those who are testifying – Inuit or government officials – rather than solicited by Members of Parliament or Commissioners. I recognize that I am constructing arguments based on my own narrative structure and through the selection of these transcript segments, though I allow voices to be heard in their own way as much as possible by reproducing testimony and quotations without editorializing or truncating. By focusing on testimony unsolicited by leading questions, I seek to represent the experiences as those who experienced the events described them.

In addition to the oral testimony, I also use oral evidence collected by Inuit for the *Iqqaumavara* project in 2011, in which Inuit documentarians recorded Inuit experiences of the High Arctic Relocations and their effects. These interviews, which take place nearly twenty years after the hearings and after the negotiation of a Compensation Agreement and an official apology,[29] are highly valuable: the interviews include relocated Inuit, Inuit left behind at Inukjuak, Inuit who eventually returned to their home communities and those who remained in the High Arctic, and their descendants. The interviews are also conducted by Inuit and in the homes of interviewees, removing the structures and motivations of the state as framing devices. Finally, these chapters rely on the written autobiographical recordings of recalled experiences, both by relocated Inuit and by former civil servants.

Whereas Part One examines the written record of government actions related to the High Arctic Relocations during the period in which those relocations took place in order to reconstruct *what happened*, Part Two seeks to understand the perspectives of those who lived the relocation, both as Inuit relocatees and as government relocators, in order to examine the *effect* of what happened.

Chapter 4 tells the remembered experiences of Inuit thematically, examining the prob-

[28]McCall, *First Person Plural*, 113.
[29]See Chapter 7

lems Inuit were reported to have faced, and the problems they reported facing. By using the framework outlined in Chapter 1, this chapter focuses on the stories of Inuit remembered experience and allows the hardships and suffering to be voiced at the level of individuals. By arranging Inuit testimony into the individual components of the "wicked" problem outlined in Chapter 1, I illuminate the real and perceived natures of the government-identified problems, as experienced by Inuit. As Inuit experienced relocation as an all-encompassing event in their lives, this chapter also seeks to explore the remembered experience as all-encompassing by examining all aspects of its effects on Inuit, including those who were relocated and those who were left behind.

Chapter 5 tells the remembered experiences of government through the lens of organizational goals, reflecting the organizational nature of the government and the ways in which civil servants experienced the program of relocation. The behaviour of organizations is of paramount importance. As political scientists Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow argue:

> To be responsive to a wide spectrum of problems, governments consist of large organizations, among which primary responsibility for particular tasks is divided. Each organization attends to a special set of problems and acts in quasi-independence on these problems. But few important issues fall exclusively within the domain of a single organization. Thus, government behaviour relevant to any important problem reflects the independent output of several organizations, partially controlled by government leaders. Government leaders can substantially disturb, but rarely precisely control, the specific behaviour of these organizations.[30]

The division of power and responsibility within a government organization is particularly acute in Northern Affairs in the 1950s, when the small administration was required to rely on the services of other departments to complete its work. The relocation, therefore, was a product not only of the Northern Affairs administration, but of the actions of several other government departments as well. Each government department had its own own goals and objectives.[31] These organizational goals were determined in part by the missions of individual organizations within government, but also by the beliefs and preferences of

[30] Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, 143.
[31] Ibid., 167.

the leadership of those organizations. The way in which these organizational goals match the objectives of a government program could determine the success or failure of that program.[32]

The individuals who worked for various branches of the government would not have experienced the relocation if it were not for their position within government. That positionality is therefore important in understanding the experience. The organization of government also provides an important context for how much information these individuals would have or could have had access to, further illuminating the known unknowns and unknown unknowns of the "wicked" problem the government as a whole sought to resolve. Access to information about the program, and particularly about its goals, is a key component of how an event is experienced: it is the difference between what Inuit experienced and what early settlers experienced.[33] By placing the actions and responsibilities of individual government departments into the context of organizational goals, it becomes possible to understand the myriad experiences related by government officials and thus the incongruity of the historical narrative.

[32]Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, 169.

[33]The experiences of Inuit relocatees were likened to the experiences of former-Deputy Minister Gordon Robertson's settler ancestors during the RCAP hearings, though Commissioner Bertha Wilson challenged this comparison by making note of the differences in communication and consent to move. Gordon Robertson, "Testimony" [28 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):162.

Chapter 4

Inuit Experiences of Relocation

Introduction

Inuit remembrances of the High Arctic Relocations are individual experiences of a collectively traumatizing event initiated by the federal government in the 1950s. This chapter attempts to collate those experiences and examine the individual experiences through an exploration of the themes that appear throughout the recollections of Inuit who were relocated, and their descendants. There is not a singular experience of relocation or of its aftermath. Ascribing value to those individual experiences is not appropriate. Inuit who were relocated in 1953 experienced the initial request to relocate, the trip North, and landing at their final destinations in a fundamentally different way than those relocated in 1955, and those who relocated later. The experiences of opportunity and deprivation were different at Resolute Bay and at Grise Fiord, and they were different for children, teenagers, and adults. Furthermore, the entire act of relocation was experienced differently by those from Inukjuak and by those from Pond Inlet. Finally, the event of relocation was experienced very differently by those who relocated and by those who were left behind. Despite all of these differences in experience, every Inuk affected by the High Arctic Relocations tells a story of deprivation, of hardship, and of trauma resulting from the actions of the federal government and those in its employ.

In this chapter, I present the experiences of Inuit as told by Inuit themselves. The experiences presented herein are individual stories that may not reflect government actions or policies, but rather reflect how individuals experienced government actions and policies. In constructing this narrative, I use the testimony presented to the House of Commons SCAA in 1990, the testimony presented to the Special Hearing on the High Arctic Relocation of the RCAP in 1993, the recorded interviews completed for the *Iqqaumavara* memory project in 2011, and published autobiographies. The sources in this chapter rely on the oral history of Inuit, and specifically of those who chose to share their stories – or the stories of their families – in a public forum. It is not, therefore, a complete picture of the High Arctic Relocations as experienced by Inuit. It is instead a representation of the individual experiences, shaped by the politics and trauma-responses of Inuit communities, by the federal government, and by the individual participants themselves.

To provide a direct contrast between the perception of government and the experience of Inuit, this chapter is structured thematically, examining the evidence through the lens of government-identified problems outlined in Chapter 1. I begin this chapter by examining Inuit experiences of economic and lifestyle factors in Inukjuak and of the destinations of Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord. I then explore Inuit experiences of relocation through the broader lenses of culture, gender-based hardships, and sovereignty, as analogues to the forces of bureaucratic challenges, paternalism, and sovereignty that underlined the government's problem-identification process in the early 1950s.

Underlining all of the experiences related in this chapter are Inuit societal values (*Qaujimajatuqanginnut*) and language. Societal values, as outlined by the Government of Nunavut, include *Inuuqatigiitsiarniq* (respecting others, relationships and caring for people), *Pijitsirniq* (serving and providing for family and/or community), *Pilimmaksarniq/ Pijariuqsarniq* (development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort), *Piliriqatigiinniq/ Ikajuqtigiinniq* (working together for a common cause), *Tunngarnarniq* (fostering good spirits by being open, welcoming, and inclusive), *Aajiiqatigiinniq* (decision making through discussion and consensus), *Qanuqtuurniq* (being innovative and resourceful), and *Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq* (respect and care for the land, animals and

the environment).[1] These social values help shape the Inuit worldview and contribute to the ways in which Inuit interact with and experience their world. Inuit have explained that colonization and relocation throughout the Arctic disrupted the transmission of this value system in the twentieth century; some Inuit acquiesced to the dominating force of the federal government, forcing them into a society for which they had no compass.[2]

The values of *Pijitsirniq* and *Aajiiqatigiinniq* are reflected significantly in the Inuit experiences outlined below, as the importance of family and community influenced how Inuit made decisions about going to the High Arctic and returning to their communities decades later, and affected the intensity of feelings of separation. The Inuit value of *Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq* is instructive: Inuit despair at being told by the government how to conserve animal and land resources is evident throughout the experiences outlined below. The value of *Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq* emphasizes feelings of paternalism and the shock of a new and unfamiliar land, while the relocations and separation from familiar communities and lands undermine the values of *Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq* and *Piliriqatigiinniq/Ikajuqtigiinniq*. *Qanuqtuurniq* is not specified in Inuit testimony of the High Arctic Relocations, but it does provide important context for Inuit discussion of reliance on the RCAF dump at Resolute and counters the government narrative that conditions were bearable because of Inuit survival.[3]

Inuit presenting testimony before the House of Commons SCAA did so without the benefit of a culturally appropriate space, though some did speak in Inuktitut, for which translation was provided.[4] At the RCAP Special Hearings, Inuit spoke in their preferred

[1]Government of Nunavut, "Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit," 2024.
For further reading about Inuit societal values, see Angela Mashford-Pringle et al., "Weaving First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Principles and Values into Health Research Processes," *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 160 (2023); Shirley Tagalik, "Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: The Role of Indigenous Knowledge In Supporting Wellness In Inuit Communities In Nunavut," *National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health* Inuit, nos. Child and Youth Health (2012); Frank James Tester and Peter Irniq, "Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Social History, Politics and the Practice of Resistance," *ARCTIC* 61, no. 1 (2008): 48–61,
For an excellent examination of Inuit worldviews and the many definitions across Inuit communities, see Shari Fox Gearheard et al., eds., *The Meaning of Ice: People and Sea Ice in Three Arctic Communities* (Hanover, NH: IPI Press, 2013).

[2]Tagalik, "Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: The Role of Indigenous Knowledge."

[3]For further discussion of government claims about Inuit experiences, see Chapters 5 and 6.

[4]Government of Canada, "Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence of the Standing Committee on Abo-

language and were guided through the Commissioner's questions by Inuit leader and former-Makivvik president Mary Simon, who acted as a cultural bridge between Inuit and Commissioners.[5] As part of the cultural bridge, the Inuit concept of *Ilira* was introduced to the RCAP. *Ilira*, the fear or awe Inuit had of the *Qallunaat*, and especially of the RCMP, contributed significantly to Inuit decision-making regarding the relocation, as well as the reactions of Inuit to events in the North. Susan Aglukark, then working for ITC and presenting on behalf of ITC President Rosemarie Kuptana, described *Ilira* to the RCAP Special Hearing in the following manner:

> The Inuit concept of "Ilira" or fear and awe of *Qadlunaat* described the relationship from the Inuit perspective. Within these historical circumstances and this relationship of subservience and dominance, it was impossible for real consultation to take place. For this reason, it is very difficult to accept the position forwarded by government that Inuit were informed and willing participants in the relocation scheme.[6]

Inuit describe their fear and awe of the RCMP and the government in many ways. John Amagoalik, relocated from Inukjuak to Resolute Bay in 1953, characterized it as an obligation to hear the RCMP's proposal after a series of repeated visits to the camp and a seeming unwillingness to "take no for an answer for their relocation proposal."[7] Samwillie Elijasialuk, who was relocated to Grise Fiord from Inukjuak in 1953, also described the relationship between Inuit and *Qallunaat* as authoritative, framing Inuit compulsion to do what was asked of them as a wise response to the *Ilira*.[8]

In addition to Inuit feeling compelled to respond to requests, Larry Audlaluk, also relocated to Grise Fiord from Inukjuak in 1953, recounted how the fear of the white man's

riginal Affairs 34th Parliament Second Session vol. 2 no. 20-32" [1990], *Library of Parliament*, Queen's Printer of Canada.

[5]Georges Erasmus, "Opening Remarks" [5 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):8-9.

[6]Susan Aglukark, "Testimony" [5 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):29.

[7]Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*, 18-19.

[8]Samwillie Elijasialuk, "Testimony" [5 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):47-48.

laws prompted unsafe behaviour. He believed, for example, that his childhood friend Allie ran away as a child following the drowning death of his brother because he was afraid to face the RCMP.[9] Minnie Allakariallak, who was relocated to Resolute Bay in 1955, described the fear as follows:

> When a *Qadlunaat* person says something, we would get intimidated right away. The police – we were told that police would arrest people if they broke the law. We felt that we had to say yes so that we would not be arrested. We were very, very worried. So, therefore, we had to say yes, because we were intimidated and we were very scared. They are the lie enforcers. We were told that they arrest people if a person does a bad thing, so therefore we felt that we had to comply with their wishes.[10]

The fear and awe of the government and the RCMP meant that Inuit experienced the "requests for volunteers" as commands, making the relocation a coercive experience. This contradiction between Inuit experience and government documentation underlies all experiences of the relocation.

Inuit Experiences of Government-Identified Problems

Fur Trade

The decline of the fur trade throughout the late 1940s and into the early 1950s was an important part of the government's initial concern for the well-being of Inuit, especially in Northern Québec. Belief that the fur trade was not sustainable in the long-term had prompted the government to explore opportunities to diversify the Inuit economy, as well as to explore the possibility of relocation. According to government studies, the white fox population was declining and the government believed that this was in part due to over-hunting. According to Inuit, this was part of a normal cycle and not a major concern, as Samwillie Elijasialuk explained,

[9] Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know*, 62.

[10] Minnie Allakariallak, "Testimony" [7 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):379-380.

> In some years the fox are very scarce. This is true in all locations. Sometimes they are very plentiful. When foxes were scarce and the Hudson Bay Company was not able to attain a large harvest of fox pelts, they said that foxes were gone.[11]

The fur trade was, in the view of the government, the main source of income for Inuit and therefore a key component of Inuit lifestyle. Although it was the main source of income for those in Inukjuak, it was not the primary focus, as John Amagoalik explained, earning money for basic goods, such as flour and tea, was important but the focus of Inuit life was "living from season to season . . . and living off the land".[12] The Inuit view of the fur trade was very different from that of the government: the fur trade was intended to supplement Inuit life and provide for some basic necessities, including flour and tea, but was not central to Inuit life.

Although the decline of the fur trade was used as an impetus for the relocation, Inuit perceived that their success in trapping was a determinant of who was selected to be relocated to the High Arctic. In Inuit experience, those who were most successful were not approached about relocation because of their high value to the HBC. Samwillie Elijasialuk explained:

> The most competent and best providers, those who had a boat, some of our relatives Johnny Inukpuk, they were not allowed to even be considered for relocation because they were very competent trappers, they did not want such people to be sent to the High Arctic or to be relocated. Then the poorly-equipped people were not targeted either because they were poorly equipped. They were targeting sort of middle-level people who were solidly capable, who were capable of being independent, they were the targets for relocation. It was sort of the middle class of Inuit people at the time.[13]

Jaybeddie Amagoalik, relocated from Inukjuak to Resolute Bay in 1953, added that:

[11] Samwillie Elijasialuk, "Testimony" [6 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):235.

[12] Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*, 19.

[13] Samwillie Elijasialuk, "Testimony" [7 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):494.

> Perhaps what was one of the deciding factors was they had information on who had sold the most seal skin pelts, who had sold the most fox pelts, each competent in their own field of work. So they had information on who best was doing these things and so this information was used to target the recruits. And some people who travel very far from the various posts, people who were capable of being very independent and who did not often have to go to the trading post to get supplies and when they did often came with a plentiful supply of fox pelts. I think that information was used to deliberate as to who should go.[14]

Although the government indicated that the relocation was done in part to move Inuit toward greater resources – including more plentiful fox – this was not a central component of Inuit life after the relocation. Recollections of trapping foxes in the High Arctic were that the foxes were plentiful, but that trading furs for goods was not done transparently as it had been in Inukjuak. Jackoosie Iqaluk, who was relocated to Resolute Bay in 1955, recalled that in the first winter they trapped foxes, in large part because they were plentiful.[15] Although John Amagoalik recalls there being a lot of foxes available and many furs caught, trapping was primarily seen as a stop-gap measure until the men at Resolute Bay found wage employment.[16] Jackoosie's recollection of the process of trading furs for goods at the store in Resolute Bay reflects this temporary, transitional approach.[17] Inuit experience of the fur trade, both at Inukjuak and in the High Arctic, was that it was a tangential part of life, helping to supplement income and provide access to store goods.

Wage-Based Income

Although there were limited opportunities for wage earning in Inukjuak, Inuit did not experience this to be a problem. The experience at Inukjuak was that it was possible to acquire any trade goods required because the trade store was stocked and there was always

[14]Jaybeddie Amagoalik, "Testimony" [7 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):495.

[15]Jackoosie Iqaluk, "Testimony" [7 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):410.

[16]Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*.

[17]Jackoosie Iqaluk, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)."

sufficient monetary resources to purchase those goods. Descriptions of the experience in Inukjuak indicate that although there was not a plentiful amount of money, it was enough for Inuit to live comfortably.

Although wage employment was not a concern of Inuit at Inukjuak in the early-1950s they recalled being very disappointed that those children who were relocated lost the opportunity for education, which had a direct affect on their ability to acquire skills-based jobs in the future. The presence of a school at Inukjuak meant that those children who remained were able to receive basic education and were therefore able to obtain better jobs. Those who were relocated were deprived of education until a school opened in 1957. This had a lasting effect on Inuit well-being and economic opportunities. Elisapee Nutaraq, who was relocated to Grise Fiord as a young girl, was frustrated by her lack of education, noting that her peers who were not relocated received an education while she, and those who were relocated to the High Arctic did not.[18] This disruption to education had two important and inter-related long-term consequences, according to Lizzie Amagoalik: Inuit children's proficiency in English and the ability of relocated Inuit to get a good job in the modern Arctic economy.[19] Ultimately, those who were relocated experienced a future loss of income and were unable to fully participate in the modern Arctic economy because they did not have the skills or education required. As Jaybeddie Amagoalik explained, "it is [now] very hard to find jobs as an ordinary person without education."[20]

The transition to wage employment in the High Arctic was rapid: the DND and the RCMP required Inuit aid with transportation and safety, as did the explorers who began looking for oil in the late 1950s. Inuit recalled being taken away for months at a time in the employ of the "oilers" to help them map the area.[21] By 1957, Jackoosie Iqaluk explained:

> We started not being simple hunters any more because we started taking around

[18]Elisapee Nutaraq, "Testimony" [8 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):547.

[19]Lizzie Amagoalik, "Testimony" [7 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):478.

[20]Jaybeddie Amagoalik, "Testimony" [8 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):542.

[21]Simeonie Amagoalik, "Testimony" [6 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):179.

> explorers, oil and mineral explorers. We had to help them get around. There was a lot of polar bears in the area and we had to ensure their safety, because we had dogs and we helped them out. We provided them with a labour force, that's how we did it then.[22]

As part of its stated goals for relocation, the government had hoped to provide opportunities for employment with the DND and the DOT. These opportunities did eventually materialize, and Inuit recall that the men did take up some jobs at the air force base, for which they were paid transparently.[23] However, wage employment in the High Arctic was not always transparent, as Jaypettie Amaraulik, relocated from Pond Inlet to Resolute Bay in 1953, explained:

> When I was told to go to Mould Bay, I was told I would be paid $10 a day. Perhaps that's what happened. But when I returned I was never informed, "This is how much money you have in your account." What we did was, take what we needed from the little trading post, but we were never informed, like, if we were overdrawn or how much we had left, so we were kept completely in the dark as to what was in our accounts.[24]

The wage economy was also not equitable in Inuit experience. Andrew Iqaluk, relocated to Resolute Bay in 1955 from Inukjuak, noted that the police treated Inuit differently on the basis of their abilities and competencies.[25] This unequal treatment sometimes led to discrepancies in pay for services: While Andrew Iqaluk recalled being paid for the work that he did and for the trips that he described,[26] Samwillie Elijasialuk recalled that he was not compensated for his services to the RCMP, including taking care of the RCMP dog teams, in part because he accompanied the RCMP on trips between Inuit communities: "I was told, 'Because you are amongst Inuit and you are simply visiting there, you are not going to be paid'."[27] Jaypettie Amaraulik told a similar story to the RCAP, explaining

[22]Jackoosie Iqaluk, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)," 408-409.

[23]Ibid.

[24]Jaypettie Amaraulik, "Testimony" [6 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):173.

[25]Andrew Iqaluk, "Testimony" [7 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):420-422.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Samwillie Elijasialuk, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)," 457.

that when the RCMP would travel to Ottawa they would leave their dog teams behind at Resolute Bay, expecting Inuit living there to take care of and feed the dog teams, requiring great personal effort, without compensation.[28]

Although wage employment did occur in the High Arctic, and the government did contribute to the transition toward wage employment for Inuit in the late-1950s, it was not transparent or equitable. High Arctic wage employment also relied heavily on traditional Inuit skills, with skilled labour positions and education taking longer to introduce in the High Arctic than elsewhere in the Arctic.

Relief

The increase in relief payments to Inuit in the Eastern Arctic and Northern Québec was an important factor in the government's decision to experiment with programs designed to allow Inuit to become more self-sufficient. The government led Inuit from Pond Inlet to believe that a major impetus for relocating Inuit from Inukjuak was that the Inukjuamiut relocatees were welfare cases and required assistance. However, Inuit experience of welfare in Inukjuak indicates that welfare payments were much less prominent, as Samwillie Elijasialuk explained,

> The government says they assisted us, they helped us, they gave us welfare, but that's not the case. We were never given any welfare in Inukjuak back then. Only the widows were given welfare, and that wasn't much either. Only the widows used to receive welfare. Anyone who was able to hunt was not provided with any welfare. That was the information that the government gave, that they were providing too much welfare and too many hand-outs to the people of Inukjuak. That's the information that was given to the Inuit of Pond Inlet, and that was not the right information.[29]

The second element of relief payments was Family Allowances. As outlined in Chapter 2, there were significant issues with the payment of Family Allowances throughout the

[28] Jaypettie Amaraulik, "Testimony" [7 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):489-490.

[29] Samwillie Elijasialuk, "RCAP Testimony (6 April 1993)," 241.

Arctic, and in Inukjuak there was a system for Family Allowance payments, resulting in Inuit in that area receiving their payments. However, in the High Arctic, these payments seem to have ceased altogether, as Markoosie Patsauq, who was relocated to Resolute Bay in 1953 as a child, recalled:

> When we were in Inukjuak, the services we got like help when we were kids, we started getting services like some kind of welfare to help our grandparents. When we moved up to the High Arctic, we lost all our services. My grandmother did not receive any money for welfare to receive groceries. So instead we started using our family allowance and then we stop receiving those allowances. So therefore, we had no services at all.[30]

Issues related to the administration of welfare and Family Allowance payments in the High Arctic, as well as confusion about whether these payments were to be used to pay back the ELF that had been taken out on behalf of relocated Inuit, meant that Inuit experienced a decline in relief payments and Family Allowances in the High Arctic, which exacerbated the challenges they faced.

Hunting and Food Resources

The lack of food resources at Inukjuak was one of the most compelling arguments made by the federal government regarding the need to relocate Inuit away from Northern Québec. The government's description of an area it perceived to be over-populated for the food resources available had prompted some smaller-scale relocations from the Port Harrison Detachment Area to islands in Hudson Bay in previous years. It was also used as the primary justification for the High Arctic relocations, both in the 1950s and in the 1990s when the government was forced to reevaluate its actions. The starvation argument forms the primary prong of the humanitarian-action justification of moving Inuit to "better hunting grounds." Inuit experience of food resources at Inukjuak and in the High Arctic however, tell a different story.

[30]Markoosie Patsauq, "Testimony" [7 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):324.

The Inukjuak Environment

In Inuit experience, the hunting and food resources at Inukjuak were sufficient for their needs. Animals were not necessarily plentiful near the camps themselves or close to the town site of Inukjuak, but because this was their ancestral homeland, Inuit were familiar with the environment and knew exactly where to look. As Minnie Allakariallak recounted,

> I will talk about the place where I was. There was firewood, there was plenty of food, seafood, codfish was the regular diet of ours and even in the wintertime we would fish for cod. When we moved there, when there were seals, at the time – this is still in the original home – we had plenty of seal meat and fish. They told us, 'You are hungry and you would have to move to where there is lots of game.' That's what they told us originally. But there were lots of lakes in the surrounding, where there was fish and the fish would migrate and there will be plenty of fish along the shoreline. There was lots of food, bird, so we were not worried. We were not thinking of moving anywhere else.[31]

Inuit were also used to travelling long distances to hunt, following the migration patterns of the caribou. As Simeonie Amagoalik explained, there were large fluctuations in game availability, which Inuit were accustomed to: caribou in the early 1950s were located far from Inukjuak, resulting in hunting trips of three weeks or longer, but shortly after the relocations they had moved back to the vicinity of Inukjuak.[32]

The food resources of Inukjuak were also diverse and included vegetation in addition to meat. Picking berries with his sister in Inukjuak is John Amagoalik's first memory.[33] He supports this memory by explaining:

> In Northern Québec we were used to a variety of food in our diet. Of course, we lived on seal a lot of the time but we were also used to caribou, small game like rabbits and game birds, different kinds of fish, and even things that grew on the ground, like berries and different plants. Many years later, we did have

[31]Minnie Allakariallak, "Testimony" [5 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):34-35.
[32]Simeonie Amagoalik, "RCAP Testimony (6 April 1993)," 275.
[33]Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*, 15.

> someone do a study as to how many species of plants we could depend on in Northern Québec compared to what we could harvest in the High Arctic. Down in Northern Québec we could harvest fifty-two different species of animals and plants. Up in the High Arctic that number went down to six or seven. So, there was a big difference.
>
> That was one of the major difficulties that our parents had. Our parents were used to that diet, and now they couldn't find Arctic char, and they couldn't find geese, or berries. It was very, very hard for them.[34]

The range of plants and animals provided for a highly varied diet, which was not available at Resolute Bay. Simeonie Amagoalik recalled that the food available at Inukjuak included "just about everything, berries, vegetation, and all sorts of different varieties of food" whereas at Resolute Bay the only staples were polar bear meat and seal meat.[35] Anna Nungak, relocated to Resolute Bay in 1955 also recalled that "we used to think of all the food that we used to have back home and we used to speak to each other saying, 'Gee, I wish I could have that'."[36]

In Inukjuak and Pond Inlet, Inuit also had the supplies and equipment to conduct their hunting and procure sufficient food resources. Jackoosie Iqaluk explained:

> At that time, my older brother and I were very young men although we were competent hunters by that time. We were equipped with a boat. Our older brothers had a boat which was almost new. It didn't have a deck, it was an open boat. We also had kayaks. Even I had a kayak of my own. We had dogs, dog teams. We had all the equipment required to try to make a living, so we were well equipped."[37]

Many of these supplies were left behind at Inukjuak as they could not be carried on the *C.D. Howe*, and the supplies and equipment provided and available in the High Arctic were expensive and insufficient for the environment.[38]

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[34]Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*, 24.

[35]Simeonie Amagoalik, "Testimony" [5 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):52.

[36]Anna Nungaq, "Testimony" [5 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):58.

[37]Jackoosie Iqaluk, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)," 404.

[38]Larry Audlaluk, "Testimony" [5 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):130-131.

The High Arctic Environment

Inuit experience of food resources at Inukjuak was that it was sufficient for their needs. In contrast, the experiences in the High Arctic were devastating as the hunters did not know the land or the patterns of the animals, did not have the proper equipment for hunting in the environment, and experienced significant government intervention in their hunting practices. Furthermore, the High Arctic lacked vegetation and diversity of food resources in comparison to Inukjuak, as well as access to supplies that many Inuit relied upon.

The primary difference between Inukjuak and the High Arctic was the environment. Although families from Pond Inlet were relocated with the intention of helping those from Inukjuak adjust, they also did not know the environment or the patterns of animals in the area. John Amagoalik explained the importance of knowing the environment:

> The men had to explore this place first. You cannot just put people in a strange place and expect them to start surviving right away. First, they have to get to know the environment. You have to know where to go. You don't go just anywhere to find animals; you have to know where they are, where to find them. It took some months before the men started to have an idea about where to go.[39]

This knowledge gap about where to go to find animals was compounded by the different availability of animals and vegetation in the High Arctic. The government told Inuit that they were moving to a land of plenty, but Inuit experienced a different reality:

> We had been told by the RCMP that there was plenty of game in the area and that we would be able to catch different species of animals for our food, but when we arrived there we discovered that there weren't too many species of animal. It was mostly walrus, seals and polar bears and we were used to a much different diet. Of course we were used to large animals, but we depended very heavily on fish, game birds and caribou and that was just not available. At the time all we could find was some starving muskox who couldn't even move. So it was devastating to find out we had been told a pack of lies about this place. There was no vegetation; there was just gravel all over the place.[40]

[39] Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*, 24.

[40] John Amagoalik, "Interview" [2011], *Iqqaumavara Project*, Iqqaumavara Project, `www.iqqaumavara.com`.

Samuel Arnakallak, from Pond Inlet, also noted that the government had lied about the food resources that would be available in the High Arctic, telling Inuit that "there was plentiful wildlife: polar bear, walrus, musk ox and plentiful caribou. My mother told me that, previously, no caribou had existed there. There was lots of foxes."[41] Inuit believed, based on what the government had told them, that there were significant food resources in the High Arctic, but as Andrew Iqaluk explained, the government never told Inuit where to find the wildlife they had promised, resulting in a struggle to hunt for food.[42]

Not knowing where to find food resources resulted in significant hardship. Inuit recall many instances of extreme hunger at both Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord. The Final Report of the RCAP Special Hearing on the High Arctic Relocations indicates that the government did not have an adequate understanding of the game resources in the High Arctic, noting that it was fortunate that the *d'Iberville* was unable to land Inuit at the third location site because "game failed to materialize in the Cape Herschel area in the winter of 1953-54, and the land would not have been able to support the relocatees."[43] The resources available at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord were better, but only marginally.

For Inuit, it was clear that the government's actual knowledge of hunting techniques and opportunities in the High Arctic was poor, leading to further frustration. Markoosie Patsauq likened the government's general lack of preparedness and knowledge of hunting conditions to the government having "not done their homework."[44] In the High Arctic, this was not only upsetting, but also dangerous:

> When we were taken ashore at Craig Harbour, Philipoosie noticed our personal stuff being unloaded, but he saw no large boats for our use. . . He was told they would have to use canoes for walrus hunting. He said, "No, that is not acceptable! Do you realize how dangerous walrus hunting is with just canoes?" A large male walrus is about ten feet long, four feet wide, and weighs two thousand pounds. We had only brought 20-foot lake canoes with us, fitted with

[41]Samuel Arnakallak, "Testimony" [6 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):225.

[42]Andrew Iqaluk, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)," 421-422.

[43]René Dussault and Georges Erasmus, *The High Arctic Relocation: A Report on the 1953-55 Relocation* (Ottawa, Canada: Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1994), 96.

[44]Markoosie Patsauq, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)."

> 7.5-horsepower outboard motors. After this, the officials told him the RCMP at the detachment would loan them RCMP boats – 32-foot, 65-horsepower utility boats – for walrus hunts, but it was just one of many oversights.[45]

Eventually, hunting did improve in the High Arctic, but not because of any government action. Elijah Nutaraq, who was relocated to Grise Fiord in 1953, explained to the RCAP Special Hearing that the food resources of Ellesmere Island were only fully known by the Greenland Inuit who, over many decades, were able to pass their knowledge on to the Canadian Inuit: "It was only through them that we were able to find where the fish were, where the animals were, and where the wildlife resources were."[46] Canadian Inuit relationships with Greenland Inuit eventually improved hunting knowledge and expanded the variety of food resources.

The government made the situation even more challenging by imposing high expectations and strict regulations on Inuit hunters. Andrew Iqaluk recalled that the RCMP required that Inuit men go hunting, seemingly ordering them to go out on the land in a manner that was uncomfortable for Inuit who were not only willing to provide for their family but were eager to do so: "After we got there, when we were spending our first winter or first two winters there, the local policeman told us, "You go hunting." We were commanded to go hunting from our village at the time."[47] Furthermore, there were strict conservation regulations in place that prevented Inuit from hunting as they had in Northern Québec or Baffin Island. Samwillie Elijasialuk recounted the strict regulations on game resources in the High Arctic:

> We were told right off that, "You can only catch one caribou per year for your family. That's the regulation." Also, "You are not allowed to kill any musk-ox. You are liable to a $5,000 fine or be arrested if you kill any musk-ox." My question is: Why did they even bother mentioning caribou and musk-ox and the plentifulness thereof when they were trying to recruit these people?[48]

[45]Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know*, 30.

[46]Elijah Nutaraq, "Testimony" [6 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):267.

[47]Andrew Iqaluk, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)," 422.

[48]Samwillie Elijasialuk, "RCAP Testimony (5 April 1993)," 45-46.

In addition to the strict regulations, there were instances of RCMP officers controlling the hunt, as Samuel Arnakallak explained:

> The police and their employees – their special constables – were the only ones allowed to do the actual killing of the caribou. The police had this attitude that we didn't know the difference between female caribou and male caribou, so they were the only ones allowed to shoot the caribou. I guess they thought we were ignorant of such things. We were told, in no uncertain terms, that we were not allowed to catch or kill any caribou from that area.[49]

The lack of hunting opportunities and resources were only one element of the severe food scarcity in the High Arctic. Inuit from both Inukjuak and Pond Inlet were accustomed to having access to trade stores and staple foods such as flour, tea, and milk. There were limited supplies available at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, particularly in the first few years, and these items were not available to Inuit. Samwillie Elijasialuk explained that although he did not know extreme hunger while growing up, he began to experience this upon moving to the High Arctic, because "there was no trade goods, there was no food and groceries available in any measure in the new locations."[50] In response to the lack of access to trade goods, Inuit at Resolute Bay would visit the RCAF base in search of provisions, including scrounging the dump:

> The kitchen at the air force base threw out a lot of food, and we used to pick it up. Also, after a military flight arrived, we all rushed to the dump because we knew that the people who came on the plane would have box lunches and they never finished them. There would be sandwich leftovers, so we would rush to the dump and get those sandwiches, those pieces of food.[51]

While the dump at Resolute provided some opportunity for Inuit there to acquire staples and other goods, this was not available at Grise Fiord. Rynee Flaherty recalled how challenging it was to try and feed her son without access to trade goods, suggesting that, under the circumstances in which no trade goods were available to her in Grise Fiord, scrounging for food at the dump would have improved her son's health:

[49]Samuel Arnakallak, "RCAP Testimony (6 April 1993)," 162.
[50]Samwillie Elijasialuk, "RCAP Testimony (5 April 1993)," 43.
[51]Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*, 31.

> I didn't know how long it was going to take when the ice would crack. Our son, Peter almost starved to death. I was not breast feeding him. We were dumped into a place where there was no grocery, no milk and I used to regret a lot of times why didn't I pick the garbage while I was in Resolute Bay so that Peter could have something to eat because I did not breast feed Peter.[52]

Samuel Arnakallak remembered that his family were used to having access to supplies in Pond Inlet and that they had been promised that everything would be provided in the new location:

> We were all used to being supplied with the white man's trade goods, and we never really even brought much from our original home in Pond Inlet because we were under the impression that we were going to a land of plenty where everything was going to be provided. If, at least, we could have been given some fuel, at least, to bide us, or if we were told, "You are going to have to bring your own supplies", we would have done so. But, as it was, we were very poorly supplied, because nobody told us that we were going to have to fend for ourselves.[53]

The poor access to supplies in the High Arctic made life comparably much harder for Pond Inlet relocatees than it had been on Baffin Island. For the Inukjuamiut the comparative conditions were much worse.

Hunting and food resources in the High Arctic were challenging to acquire and Inuit remember no support from government, or its agents, in managing these difficult circumstances. For many Inuit, the government seemed to actively make conditions worse, leading to extreme and unnecessary hunger and suffering. While Inuit had been satisfied with access to resources at Inukjuak and Pond Inlet, the shift in diet, access to both "country" and "white man's" food, and the additional challenges of hunting in a new environment and with limited equipment made living in the High Arctic nearly impossible.

[52]Rynee Flaherty, "Testimony" [7 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):436.

[53]Samuel Arnakallak, "RCAP Testimony (6 April 1993)," 160-161.

Living Conditions

The living conditions in the High Arctic were very different than they were in Northern Québec and Baffin Island. Inuit had to learn to adapt to a different climate – including long periods of darkness, which the government had considered – as well as to meet the challenges to building housing posed by the new environments. These challenges were exacerbated by the lack of provisions provided by government for building shelters during the first winter.

When Inuit first arrived in late-August/early-September the temperatures in the High Arctic were already very cold and snow was already falling. Minnie Allakariallak remembered that when she arrived in Resolute Bay "it was cold. I remember it was cold. It was always cold there. July and August was always cold. We were used to warm weather."[54] The physical landscape was also very different, as John Amagoalik explained:

> It was just barren beach. I remember landing on the beach. We looked around, and there was nothing but gravel as far as the eye could see. It was snowing heavily, and there was a strong North wind.[55]

This difference in physical landscape made it harder to shelter from the winds, making the cold temperatures feel more extreme. John Amagoalik's recollection of hiding behind a rock, huddled with the dogs to try and keep warm while his parents looked for a place to pitch the tents reflects his perception of being abandoned in a barren land with no resources or support.

Opportunities for shelter were limited in the High Arctic, in part because there were no natural features to support tents, and in part because the climate did not provide appropriate snow coverage to build igloos. Tents were challenging to pitch on the gravel beaches, as Minnie Allakariallak explained: "There was just gravel, no big rocks to tie up your tents. I mean what could we do if there's a hard wind, there's nothing to hold up our tents. We had to fill up some boxes to put gravel on and tie it on."[56] When Inuit were

[54]Minnie Allakariallak, "RCAP Testimony (5 April 1993)," 39.
[55]Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*, 22-23.
[56]Minnie Allakariallak, "RCAP Testimony (5 April 1993)."

able to pitch their tents, they found them to be unsuitable to the conditions in the High Arctic. First, Inuit were used to using caribou skins for tents, but there were insufficient caribou skins procured for them by the government, and to make up the difference, they were provided buffalo hides. As Elijah Nutaraq noted, these were of poor quality and were insufficient for keeping warm; they also made the inside of the tents quite dark, further affecting Inuit perceptions of day and night.[57] They were also, as Larry Audlaluk recalled, difficult to work with.[58] These tents, which did not provide sufficient warmth for the cold, harsh winters of the High Arctic, were the primary residences for Inuit during their first winter. Larry Audlaluk recalled that:

> There was also not enough scrap wood to build sod houses, so my family ended up living in their tents. My brother Elijah never forgot that when they went to bed at night, they'd be wearing their clothes, for it was so cold in their makeshift tents. He said it was like they were always out on a camping trip.[59]

There were no supplies or resources available for Inuit to improve their living quarters during that first winter.

Although many Inuit had lived in igloos in Inukjuak during the winter months, they were unable to do so in the High Arctic. Anna Nungak explained that they were unable to build igloos in Grise Fiord because of the strong winds that prevented snow from accumulating.[60] To make matters worse, Inuit received limited supplies and no plywood was available in Grise Fiord, resulting in living quarters with "rocks as our floor" and limited light with no flashlights or lamps, even during the dark period.[61] Samuel Arnakallak recalled a similar problem for those from Pond Inlet who were used to living in sodden-earth shelters, *qarmaq*, which required pieces of wood to reinforce the earth. A lack of wood at both Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord made *qarmaq* impossible to build without resorting

[57]Elijah Nutaraq, "Testimony" [5 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):127.

[58]Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know*, 33.

[59]Ibid.

[60]Anna Nungaq, "Testimony" [6 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):286.

[61]Anna Nungaq, "RCAP Testimony (5 April 1993)," 107.

to scavenging wood from the air force base dump.[62] The physical conditions of the High Arctic differed so significantly from those of Inukjuak and Pond Inlet that Inuit were not prepared, or properly equipped, to create shelters with the materials available that could keep them warm during the long winter months.

Although Inuit were poorly supplied, this was not true for the air force base. The base had building materials and other items available, which Inuit were not allowed to access. Nonetheless, Minnie Allakariallak recalled that her husband needed to scavenge wood from the dump in order to build a shelter to keep their family warm.[63] As there was not to be any contact between Inuit and the air base in those early years, Inuit had to carry materials on their own from the dump to the settlement, often under the cover of night or via a long, circuitous route so as not to be seen.[64] As Jackoosie Iqaluk noted, the air base, despite its relative distance and the strict rules around visiting, was a vital lifeline for those in Resolute Bay:

> We used to light our shelters with candles because in the wooden shelter we would not be able to use *qulliks* or stone lamps. For three years we lighted by candle only. We were able to scrounge candles from the military installation because there was no trade store as such with these items available.[65]

Jackoosie went on to explain that the air base had a warehouse in bad condition with a frozen lock that Inuit often accessed in order to survive. His admission to raiding the air base dump and store for supplies speaks to the desperation of those Inuit at Resolute Bay who were struggling to survive in an unfamiliar land with limited supplies and support.

The housing in the High Arctic was very poor and relied on Inuit improvisation and desperation. There were insufficient supplies and the environmental conditions were inappropriate for the types of housing that Inuit were used to building. The improvised shelters that Inuit created reflected a desperation to survive.

[62]Samuel Arnakallak, "RCAP Testimony (6 April 1993)," 159.
[63]Minnie Allakariallak, "RCAP Testimony (5 April 1993)," 35-36.
[64]Ibid., 38-40.
[65]Jackoosie Iqaluk, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)," 408-409.

Health

Although health problems among Inuit were identified by the government as a reason to move them from permanent encampments, their experiences of the health care provided by the government in the High Arctic is overwhelmingly negative. Inuit who were relocated expressed harrowing tales to the RCAP commissioners regarding the standard of health care they received.

The primary problem in the view of Inuit was that there was no access to medical personnel in the High Arctic. While there had been a nursing station at Inukjuak, and there was a doctor at the RCAF base, the RCMP were responsible for the health and well-being of Inuit at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord. Simeonie Amagoalik, relocated to Resolute Bay in 1953, remembered that:

> We left behind us in Inukjuak teachers, spiritual advisors, stores. The government told us that they were going to help us out in the new locations, but there was absolutely nothing in the High Arctic locations. So, the eldest of our people died off very quickly and my wife had several infant deaths, some infants born to us never lived long enough because it was too cold, there was not enough food, and then there was also many of our people sick. When the police, who were the only available medical personnel, had to look after people, all he fed them as medicine was apple juice.[66]

Jaybeddie Amagoalik also blames the lack of medical personnel for the deaths of his two younger sisters, who died because they did not have any medical attention or medical services.[67]

The biggest challenge however, was the presence of tuberculosis in the communities and the effects it had on the Inuit population. Markoosie Patsauq had tuberculosis when he boarded the *C.D. Howe* in 1953:

> However, the day we were leaving Inukjuak, in the year of 1953, they did not give us x-rays because they said that the x-ray machines they were not operating

[66]Simeonie Amagoalik, "RCAP Testimony (5 April 1993)," 52.
[67]Jaybeddie Amagoalik, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)," 329.

> because they were broken. However, the government had stated that we were very healthy people, and yet they said that we were healthy but we were not examined properly. They could have examined us. They could have given us x-rays. That way they might have known. But after we pass Iqaluit, that's the only time they ever given us x-rays after we pass Iqaluit perhaps because the x-ray machine was fixed – they didn't know about my T.B. until we pass Iqaluit. For that reason I was quite ill with T.B. It took a long time for them to diagnose me with T.B. For that fact, I was lucky to be alive. I know that I was just lucky to be alive because I was diagnosed a few years after the fact that we were located. I had no strength at all. I had to be carried around in a stretcher.[68]

Tuberculosis was often untreated in part because there was no medical personnel or health care facilities in the North. The problems of tuberculosis were not confined to the High Arctic communities, but the presence of tuberculosis, particularly in Resolute Bay, amplified the problems of loneliness and isolation. John Amagoalik noted that, because of tuberculosis, there was always somebody, often several members of the same family, away in the hospitals in the south, so that "our families were never complete."[69] Family members being taken away to southern hospitals for treatment had terrible effects on those left behind, who were required to adapt, often having to stay home to look after children rather than hunt or trap to acquire food or pelts for income. Jaypettie Amaraulik remembers that:

> When we returned [from Mould Bay], it was not long after that that my wife was sent outside to a hospital. I had two very small children to look after and I could no longer do any more hunting, or serious hunting, at least. I had to stay nearby to look after my children. I set a seal net and we were able to catch seals by that method, so our dogs were fed that way. I was able to provide my neighbours with the seals that I caught that way. This was, basically, the only way that I helped out, in any measure, the Inukjuak people that I was settling in with. I thought I was going to be able to catch, or pursue fox pelts and

[68]Markoosie Patsauq, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)," 318-319.

[69]John Amagoalik, "Testimony" [6 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):195-196.

> polar bear pelts. I could not even do this, because now I had to stay at home, looking after my children.[70]

While Inuit living in larger communities, such as at Inukjuak or Pond Inlet, were affected by family members being sent south, they could rely on their extended families to help with childcare or hunting. In the small High Arctic communities, Inuit were more greatly affected by the loss of a family member, even temporarily.

The hardships of adjusting to life in the High Arctic and doing so without medical care were further exacerbated by what was perceived as an attempt to portray the communities as healthier than they were:

> The police used to come when they were expecting the ship to arrive, getting around to checking what sort of clothing they would wear at ship-time. Boots and other articles of clothing were inspected by the police, with the intention of equipping them with new sets of clothing and telling us, "You are going to have to wear your best clothing when the ship comes."[71]

This deception of the inspection patrols had numerous affects on the community during the remainder of the year. Inuit needed to ensure that they had their best clothes available for when the ship came, so they did not wear their good clothes the rest of the year. Larry Audlaluk explains that this caused their community to save their best clothes for ship time, wearing tattered clothes during the rest of the year. While this had effects on physical health, it also had emotional effects:

> In Nunavik, it was the custom of most families to discard the personal possessions of the deceased . . I remember after the funeral for Salluviniq, my mother came home, tearfully recounting how she had just burned all of Allie's and Salluviniq's new clothing. The RCMP expected us to dress our best at ship-time—they wanted us to be described well by the people onboard. And so, because we feared them, we did. The clothes that my mother burned were being saved for the boys for *C.D. Howe* time. She said, "All spring and summer the two boys wore tattered clothes, all the while new clothes were put away, just waiting, to be worn for special occasions; so sad!"[72]

[70] Jaypettie Amaraulik, "RCAP Testimony (6 April 1993)," 172.
[71] Samwillie Elijasialuk, "RCAP Testimony (6 April 1993)," 211.
[72] Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know*, 65-66.

For Inuit, the effort to conceal the true health of the community not only led to poorer health outcomes, but it also added to their everyday struggles and exacerbated their grief.

The health and well-being of Inuit, which the government had purported to be concerned about in Inukjuak and other communities across the Eastern Arctic, was much worse in the High Arctic. Inuit experience of healthcare in the High Arctic was overwhelmingly negative – when it existed at all.

Overarching Issues

Inuit Culture

One of the most prominent themes of Inuit relating their relocation experiences is the mismatch between Inuit cultural values and government expectations. These cultural values, specifically *Inuuqatigiitsiarniq*, *Pijitsirniq*, and *Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq*, centre the importance of community, family, and land. The relocation ripped Inuit away from their communities and their land, particularly in Inukjuak, and separated family groups upon arrival in the High Arctic. These hardships had short-term effects on the relocatees themselves, and longer-term effects on the survivors and their descendants. This section focuses on the short-and long-term effects of removal from community and land, as related in Inuit testimony.

The initial relocation caused families to be divided between Northern Québec and the High Arctic. Elijah Nutaraq recalled that: "At the time of our relocation we were plucked out of our traditional camps. Our parents, cousins, uncles, aunts, they were all crying. There was a lot of weeping when we about to move and then we were put on the ship."[73] Although the expectation was that those moving to the High Arctic would be returned after two years, the sadness of being separated was still present. The separation was made worse by further separating the relocatees when some Inuit were transferred to the *d'Iberville* to travel to Resolute Bay and others remained onboard the *C.D. Howe* to travel to Ellesmere

[73]Elijah Nutaraq, "RCAP Testimony (5 April 1993)," 122.

Island. All Inuit aboard the *C.D. Howe* recalled the fear and sadness of this separation. As Samwillie Eliasialuk recalled:

> My mother was told, "Your children are going to be designated to go where we tell them to go." She was not very happy about being told that. Those of us who have children today can just imagine suffering this kind of treatment. Now, if I, myself, was told that my children, my own children, are going to be scattered about in all sorts of different locations, I would not be very happy. I am sure that none of you would. I would cry. I would weep if my children were going to be scattered to many different locations. That's what my mother did. She cried when people were separated on the *C.D. Howe*. Even the dogs were howling, and the people were crying, because they were being separated. This was the first trauma that we suffered. This was the first brutally emotional event that we had to live through, that the government put us through, which has an effect on us and our children, even today.[74]

This separation of family units already separated from their larger communities, was devastating.

The Inukjuamiut were not informed about the separation. Samuel Arnakallak from Pond Inlet remembered that there was a meeting aboard the ship to which only the Pond Inlet families were invited:

> When we talk about the meetings that were held between us before we arrived into Craig Harbour, a few Elders from Pond Inlet and the people that were representing the government, they told us that the people from Inukjuak had never been in the same climate as we were, so we were told to assist them. The meetings that were held between Inuit from Pond Inlet and – they were indicating to us the names of the people from Inukjuak.
> . . .
> I thought, maybe they didn't want them to hear because they didn't want them to know that they were going to be separated, because their plans were already that they would be separated and they didn't want them to hear that. When they did that we went out. They indicated to us that these five people will be under your guidance.[75]

[74]Samwillie Elijasialuk, "RCAP Testimony (6 April 1993)," 187.
[75]Samuel Arnakallak, "RCAP Testimony (6 April 1993)," 219-220.

Simeonie Amagoalik recalls that he was separated from his brother aboard the ship:

> When we went beyond Pond Inlet, we were separated into different groups and when they started separating certain groups, my older brother, who couldn't really look after himself, was designated to go to Alexandra Fiord. That's how insensitive the police were. I had to eventually go get him myself by dog team from Resolute to Craig Harbour.[76]

Being separated from family, even for a short time, had a terrible effect on Inuit, who held strongly the value of *Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq*.

The isolation from community caused significant grief among the relocated Inuit communities. Larry Audlaluk recalled that his father died of a broken heart, grieving for his home after only eight months at Grise Fiord:

> What I believe was ultimately the real cause of his death. It was the knowledge that he had made a mistake by agreeing to move. He told Arnakallak that he did not know how to tell his family that he felt he was coerced into relocating. He felt that he must somehow tell them, but he did not know how to do it. He said he was in an impossible situation, that he did not want to sound helpless to his family. . . . I think my father also felt like he should have better understood the situation.[77]

The separation was made harder by the complete sense of isolation and the lack of communication between the High Arctic communities and the communities of Inukjuak and Pond Inlet. John Amagoalik described it as a "complete and utter isolation" that affected every aspect of their lives: "We were completely cut off from the world for the first three or four years; no way of communicating with our families and friends back home."[78] Samwillie Elijasialuk also recalled the challenges of communication, made more difficult by the disrespect with which the RCMP treated letters they wrote:

> In those days, also, there was no communications, readily available communications, and the only way they could communicate with relatives back home was

[76] Simeonie Amagoalik, "RCAP Testimony (5 April 1993)," 51.
[77] Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know*, 31.
[78] John Amagoalik, "RCAP Testimony (6 April 1993)," 198-199.

> through letters in those days. Now we had cases and know about cases where letters being sent to their relatives were torn by the RCMP. My own mother's letter to her relatives I found at the dump torn. So, these are the type of things that cause hurt in our heart and when we say them, we are telling the truth.[79]

This grief permeated the High Arctic Inuit for decades. Lizzie Amagoalik tells the story of Jaybeddie and Simeonie's grandmother who would ask every day "when are we going home?" in the hope of returning home, both to see her relatives and to see her homeland.[80] She never returned to Inukjuak.

The survivors of the High Arctic relocations tell stories of how the grief of being separated became a problem for the communities of Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord. The first problem was the loss of much traditional knowledge throughout the High Arctic communities. Elijah Nutaraq explained that the passing on of knowledge was highly communal, so that even those without a father could learn hunting skills.[81] When Inuit were relocated it became harder to transfer these skills and knowledge. Sarah Amagoalik was pregnant with her first child when she boarded the *C.D. Howe* in Inukjuak, bound for Resolute Bay in 1953, and recalls that she "did not bring any of my sisters who would help me, leaving my mother, my parents."[82] In a strange place and without the support of family or community, Sarah Amagoalik did not know how to properly care for her child and nearly starved her baby in the first year at Resolute Bay.

The second problem was that, even though there were other Inuit in the community, those from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet had different traditions and cultural practices. As Lizzie Amagoalik explained:

> Inuit who shared our community had different traditions. They were foreign to us. Fellow Inuit but we could not relate to them. We could not understand each other. Even when my father spoke to them, they couldn't understand

[79]Samwillie Elijasialuk, "RCAP Testimony (5 April 1993)," 48.
[80]Lizzie Amagoalik, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)," 393.
[81]Elijah Nutaraq, "RCAP Testimony (5 April 1993)," 68.
[82]Sarah Amagoalik, "Testimony" [5 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada): 108.

> so they would just leave. We had no community. We were in great grief and couldn't go to our relatives who had lost loved ones.[83]

These different traditions created many challenges for Inuit, from burial practices to marriage expectations.[84] They also caused violence in the communities. Paul Idlout recalled that in the early days Inuit from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet had a difficult time communicating with each other because they spoke different dialects,[85] while Anna Nungaq remembered that "we use to fight. Summertime mostly we could throw rocks at each other. Some kids still have scars on their faces."[86]

In addition to these challenges, the grief caused much anger among Inuit, which was exacerbated by access to the RCAF's Arctic Circle Club (the service bar) at the Resolute airbase.[87] Angie Amagoalik believes that the relocation caused her parents' generation to become angry with the government which resulted in a lot of drinking problems.[88] Larry Audlaluk explained the use of alcohol to try and numb the suffering from the relocation:

> I used alcohol to help me stir up emotions, emotions I could not express when I was sober. Alcohol helped me to loosen my tongue. I would cry and lament what had happened to my parents, relatives, and most of all, to me. Nothing would come of it. I would remain bitter, angry, prone to violence . . . The more I learned about the history of our forced move, the more I learned just how complex the whole issue was, the angrier I got. I learned that my parents were only told part of how of the government justified the move, which was by naming it the "Eskimo Rehabilitation Program." It angered me too to find out that they had no intention of honouring their promise to return us home.[89]

[83]Lizzie Amagoalik, "Interview" [2011], *Iqqaumavara Project*, Iqqaumavara Project, `www.iqqaumavara.com`.

[84]Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know*.

[85]Paul Idlout, "Interview" [2011], *Iqqaumavara Project*, Iqqaumavara Project, `www.iqqaumavara.com`.

[86]Anna Nungaq, "Interview" [2011], *Iqqaumavara Project*, Iqqaumavara Project, `www.iqqaumavara.com`.

[87]Alcohol consumption by Inuit in the North was an ongoing concern of government and Inuit. For further reading, see Heidt and Lackenbauer, *The Joing Arctic Weather Stations*, 392. and Lackenbauer and Heidt, "Introduction to Advisory Committee on Northern Development: Context and Meeting Minutes."

[88]Angie Amagoalik, "Interview" [2011], *Iqqaumavara Project*, Iqqaumavara Project, `www.iqqaumavara.com`.

[89]Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know*, 315-316.

Alcohol use pervaded the High Arctic communities, with many Inuit acknowledging their use of substances to dull the pain of being separated from family and the grief of loneliness and isolation.

The relocation also had a devastating effect on those who stayed. Lazarusie Epoo describes the burden felt by the self-described "left behind":

> Now, the adults that are in Inukjuak had the freedom to use the wildlife resources. They were in Inukjuak. They recognized all of the features of the land and what was in it. There was nothing impeding them from carrying on with life. They were saddled with a different set of factors. The main thing on their minds was separation from family members. What weighed heavily on their minds was: When am I ever going to see my relatives again? Would it be after the two years that were mentioned?
> They knew that their relatives were going to come back after two years and, perhaps, what weighed heavily on their minds was: Maybe some of our relatives would not want to return. I was one of those. These are my cousins and nephews and aunts, the people that were relocated. As my mind matured and as I became an adult myself my mind was concentrated on the circumstances, that these are relatives in the High Arctic were experiencing. I, myself, when I became an adult, became saddled with the same burdens that the adults were experiencing. . . . For those who were left behind in Inukjuak, their biggest concern was longing for family, longing for family members. When their certain family members did not make it back, their physical well-being was affected. They were weakened by the people, their cousins. The adults were related to numerous people of their generation back in Inukjuak.[90]

While much of the focus of High Arctic Relocation literature is on those who relocated to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, much less is written about the effect of the relocation on those who remained in Inukjuak. Lazarusie's testimony provides an important, if brief, example of how those who were left behind experienced their own grief.

Eventually, Inuit did begin to return. After twenty years, Larry Audlaluk recalls the internal conflict of having the opportunity to return home and the renewed separation of fam-

[90]Lazarusie Epoo, "Testimony" [8 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):529-530.

ilies, noting that the first opportunity to leave came in 1973 when the then-Commissioner of the Northwest Territories Stuart Hodgson came to Grise Fiord.

> my mom, my uncle, and Elijah requested to be taken to Inujjuak. It was a spur-of-the moment decision. I did not want to uproot my own young family, nor did I want my relatives to leave. But after so many years of trying and failing to go home, they took their chance. They were flown to Inujjuak on the commissioner's aircraft. Also as a result of this news, Ningyou Killiktee, Markoosie Innualuk, and Ookookoo Quaraq and their families left for Pond Inlet a few years later. Being separated from them so abruptly was very hard. Most of my family stayed with me in Grise Fiord, which was lucky for me, but difficult for those that left.[91]

The abrupt return of relocated Inuit to Inukjuak greatly disrupted life in Grise Fiord, creating another separation of families. As Larry explained, it was also not an easy transition for those who chose to return to their homes, nearly twenty years after they had left:

> When I would hear from Elijah once they were back in Inujjuak, he would say that they were not coping well without us. After years of feeling the pull back to Inujjuak, they were now feeling a pull to Grise, to us. They felt a strong attachment to their roots in Nunavik, but the relocation had created a permanent division within them, and they were being pulled in two different directions. Eventually, they became so homesick for us that we scraped together the cost for a charter flight to bring them back after a year.[92]

Inuit who were relocated to the High Arctic in the 1950s and not able to return after the promised two years suffered significant long-term isolation and separation. When they were provided an opportunity to return, it had become unclear to many which place - Nunavik or the High Arctic - was their home.

In the late 1970s, the government provided another opportunity for Inuit to return to Pond Inlet and Inukjuak. Many Inuit did return, though the challenges were significant. Lizzie Amagoalik recalled that there was nothing for her family in Inukjuak and that they "came home strangers back to our old country" because "there was nobody to recognize us."[93] Anna Nungaq described the challenges of Inuit who were in limbo, between two

[91] Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know*, 289-291.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Lizzie Amagoalik, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)," 402.

worlds, with elders in one community and children who belonged to another. For Anna, her desire to return was to be with her family again, those whom she had left behind. When she returned however, many of those she remembered were no longer there:

> It is very hard when you return, when some of your family members are missing. You had left as a whole family and when you come back some of the family members are missing. It is really bad and it is hurting. I have left my husband's grave and I returned to my relatives in Inukjuak who were in good health. They were fine and some of our relatives that we had left behind also had died. My only uncle, Johnny, had raised us and that is the main reason why I had really wanted to come back to Inukjuak. All my aunts were gone. Although we had returned back to Inukjuak . . . I am still hurting.[94]

The divide between the older community members who remembered Inukjuak and those who were born in the High Arctic also strained family relationships – many of the children knew only Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord as their homes. As Anna explained:

> Some of my grandchildren who grew up in Grise Fiord, that is their homeland. Martha's little son, who grew up in Grise Fiord, who is 11 years old, keeps asking us when are we returning back to home.[95]

The decisions about whether to return in the 1970s and 1980s divided families once again, renewing feelings of grief and anguish for relocated Inuit who were now being asked to decide whether to reunite parts of their families at the expense of dividing other parts.

Returning to Inukjuak not only created new family separations, but it also caused a new series of problems for Inuit. Lizzie Amagoalik recalls that:

> After much grief, we returned to Inukjuak in 1979. We didn't see even a single relative we had been so attached to. They all had passed away and the younger ones didn't know us. They didn't know that we were related. So we were stranded again. Inukjuak Inuit used to say: "We don't want to hire High Arctic people." Our children had to go to school as strangers. They were told: "We don't want damn High Arctic people."[96]

[94] Anna Nungaq, "RCAP Testimony (5 April 1993)," 103-104.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Lizzie Amagoalik, "Iqqaumavara Interview."

The return to Inukjuak did not restore family relationships or relationships to the land. The community ties had been severed. Significant change had occurred in the intervening years and the relocatees were not fully embraced when they returned. Many considered returning to the High Arctic, and some did.

The return also caused additional economic and infrastructure hardships in Inukjuak. Lazarusie Epoo explained that:

> The people that were relocated were very young. They were young adults newly married and they were quite capable. When they set out to the High Arctic as young adults, when they eventually returned they came back with no more than a suitcase in their hands – nothing more than a suitcase. They left behind all of their essential belongings. They came back with only one suitcase, perhaps a change of trousers or a change of clothing, perhaps containing some papers. Some of them came back under these circumstances, not all of them, but some of them. Their canoes, their snowmobiles, their sleds – essential equipment like that were left behind – their houses, their blankets. They paid for themselves. They paid for their children. They left behind their relatives and their attitude was, perhaps, if they could find some way, somehow to return the remainder of their family and belongings, perhaps a way could be found to do that. This returnee would have to be sheltered.[97]

Those who had been taken to the High Arctic with nothing returned to Inukjuak with nothing. They required housing, equipment, and jobs. Many who returned were unskilled or uneducated, and many more had disabilities or were so aged that they required additional health care. The needs of these returning Inuit were a significant burden to Inukjuak and stretched its resources.[98]

[97]Lazarusie Epoo, "RCAP Testimony (8 April 1993)," 531-532.

[98]There is strong evidence that Inuit tried to work with both provincial and federal governments to provide financial and infrastructure assistance to support this return, including asking the government to build houses and pay for the return of equipment and family members to ease the burden on Inukjuak. Government approvals of programs and funding were significantly delayed or abandoned in the 1980s and early 1990s, leading Inuit to engage in political advocacy, as discussed in Chapter 7.

Gender-Based Hardships

The paternalism of the government toward Inuit is a well-documented problem and the final report of the RCAP Special Hearings on the High Arctic Relocation is clear that paternalism played an important role in how the relocations were conducted.[99] A subset of paternalism is the gendered approach to relocation. Inuit women have shared many experiences over the years, though their specific concerns and issues related to their experiences are not present in the literature.[100] Women were not included in the considerations by government in the 1950s and their gender-based experiences of the relocation are missing from the literature. The literature's emphasis on the motivations of the relocation has entrenched the male-dominated views of the challenges and hardships which Inuit experienced in the context of a debate about whether the government was improving access to male-dominated activities such as hunting and trapping, or moving Inuit for the purposes of establishing sovereignty through male-dominated labour and exploration.[101]

The government's stated intentions to relocate Inuit for the purposes of moving them to better hunting grounds and to places where they might acquire wage employment were based on the government's emphasis on male-dominated labour contributing to the Inuit economy. Although there were instances of Inuit women participating in the labour force, including working janitorial jobs,[102] the government did not consider these or the women-

[99]Dussault and Erasmus, *Report on the 1953-55 Relocation*.

[100]Literature about Indigenous women is generally sparse, and very little is written about Inuit women. For further reading on the roles of Indigenous women, see Kim Anderson, *Life Stages and Native Women: Memory, Teachings, and Story Medicine* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2011); Carol Williams, *Indigenous Women and Work: From Labor to Activism* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2012); Mary Jane Logan McCallum, *Indigenous Women, Work, and History: 1940-1980* (Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press, 2014). For further reading on the changing roles of Inuit women in the Arctic, see Nancy Wachowich, "Unpacking from the Field: Reflections on Conversations with Inuit Women in Pond Inlet" (University of Western Ontario, London, ON, 1992); Minnie Grey, "From the Tundra to the Boardroom to Everywhere in Between: Politics and the Changing Roles of Inuit Women in the Arctic," ed. Cheryl Suzack et al., in *Indigenous Women and Feminism: Politics, Activism, Culture* (Vancouver, B.C.: University of British Columbia Press, 2010).

[101]The contributions of women are often ignored or are invisible within public policy, even in the twenty-first century. For further reading on this phenomenon generally, see Caroline Criado Perez, *Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men* (New York, NY: Abrams Press, 2019).

[102]Maina Arragutainaq, "Testimony" [7 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ot-

dominated roles within Inuit life such as child care or domestic activities to be contributions to the Inuit economy. Women were largely ignored by the government in their planning. Sarah Amagoalik recalled that the women would be left alone for months at a time:

> Also, the other burden was that we stayed at home while our men were out hunting or out somewhere all the time. It seemed that I was the only one in Resolute with my baby on my back. When I went out with my baby on my back, the only sound I could hear was ringing in my ears. There was absolutely nobody else in Resolute other than the very few people that we had living with us in the community. Our men used to be out for, what seemed to me, like months at a time and our husbands were taking around geologists and other explorers in the High Arctic islands.[103]

While the men were away, the women had to take care of the communities. Larry Audlaluk recalled:

> One of my earliest memories are also of my mother and my uncle's wife, Anna, Annie Novalinga and me coming along scouring the hills for valuable heather. Often, both of them would walk easily six miles a day return, scouring – and when I see those hills today I wonder how on earth they did it. They were very heavy burlap bags to carry those ethers *[sic]*. My mother must have been a very strong woman. Three bags she carried, and the other woman only could carry two. Maybe she was so desperate for us to survive and have heat. She must have been quite powerful.[104]

Women were responsible for taking care of the communities, including cooking and providing clothing. Both Elizabeth Allakariallak and Elizabeth Allak recalled that as little girls they had to find and carry water and help their mothers to help the people in Resolute.[105] When John Amagoalik's mother was away in the hospital, his father had to learn to make bannock, and they relied on other members of the community to make boots and parkas; he recalls that "we were lucky to have other women who were able to do that."[106]

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tawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):440-441.

[103]Sarah Amagoalik, "RCAP Testimony (5 April 1993)," 110.

[104]Larry Audlaluk, "Testimony" [8 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):599.

[105]Iqqaumavara, *Iqqaumavara Memory Project*.

[106]Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*, 28.

In addition to the many unrecognized activities for which women were responsible, Lizzie Amagoalik also recalls that the trade stores were not stocked with women's clothing:

> As for us women, we were left there with nothing. We had nothing available for us. We really struggled. We struggled to the best of our ability. Because white people had rags and cloth, we would pick these up, wash them and try to make clothing for our children out of rags.[107]

Inuit women of the High Arctic were not only placed in challenging conditions, but they and their needs were ignored and unrecognized by government planners and field agents.

The challenges the women faced were also taken on by the female children. Dora Pudluk, who was relocated to Resolute Bay as a small child, recalls that she was responsible for the children very early on: "I had to work very hard in order to take care of the younger girls, especially when I was very young at the age of nine, so it was quite a heavy burden on me. One of the girls just used to cry."[108] Lizzie Amagoalik also recalls that, because her father was ill and did not have any sons or nephews within the community, she had to act like a son for her father, helping with the hunt: My father and I used to hunt seals by dog-team. I went with him all the time. I was the only son, but I was a girl.[109] In a larger community, children may not have been relied upon as heavily to support the work of adults in order to survive.

In addition to these challenges were those related to pregnancy, childbirth, and raising children in a harsh and unfamiliar environment. Sarah Amagoalik was pregnant when she boarded the *C.D. Howe*:

> Shortly after we left our community, this was my first pregnancy and I was hungry. I didn't like what they were feeding us on the ship and I didn't like the taste of the water and I was always thirsty because I didn't like the water that I was drinking on the ship. The dogs were given some food. I used to eat the whale meat when the dogs were being fed because I was hungering for

[107]Lizzie Amagoalik, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)," 399-400.
[108]Dora Pudluk, "Testimony" [7 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):342.
[109]Lizzie Amagoalik, "Iqqaumavara Interview."

> the traditional food. So, that is how I was at that time, but things got harder and harder when we landed in the High Arctic. In our first year in the High Arctic, that was very difficult. I almost starved to death in my first winter in the High Arctic and I almost starved my baby. I was not aware of anything wrong myself and I was not aware that I was doing anything wrong, but I was not able to eat anything for about a month. I lost my appetite. I never ate anything other than tea and I was feeding my baby, breast-feeding my baby, and I was unintentionally starving him by losing my appetite. Also, I did not know how to wean a baby. I did not know how to bring up and nurture a baby. So, I was going through this experience.[110]

Leaving behind her family to accompany her husband to Resolute Bay in 1953 meant that Sarah Amagoalik was isolated from her community at a critical time in her life. This affected her own health and that of her infant son.

Inuit, and particularly Inuit women, shared stories of losing children to malnutrition and other illnesses (particularly tuberculosis), exacerbated by the lack of medical facilities available in the High Arctic.[111] These hardships are hinted at in testimony provided to RCAP but there is limited follow-up discussion.[112] Still others lost their children when they went to the medical centres in Southern Canada.[113] Even those who were able to return were not always returned right away: Rynee Flaherty's daughter was sent south and then returned to Inukjuak before being sent to Resolute Bay, when she was from Grise Fiord. It was only after two years in transit that her daughter was returned to her, not recognizing her own parents:

[110]Sarah Amagoalik, "RCAP Testimony (5 April 1993)," 108-109.

[111]Elizabeth Allakariallak, "Testimony" [8 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada); Minnie Allakariallak, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)."

[112]Martha Flaherty, "Testimony" [8 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada).

[113]The focus of testimony at the RCAP Special Hearings is the deceit and intentions of government that caused hardships for Inuit generally. The loss of children to disease and malnutrition and to hospitals in the south is included in testimony as a traumatic consequence of government decisions, but does not receive explicit attention. Discussion of concerns raised by Inuit women, including issues related to miscarriage, still births, infant mortality, and sexual abuse is limited in the transcripts of the House of Commons SCAA and the RCAP Special Hearings. A closed session of the RCAP Special Hearing on 8 April 1993 may have included further discussion of these issues.

> I had a very hard time when she want to go back to her parents, to Jackoosie's family. Oh, boy, I used to love her so much and it would hurt. She couldn't stop. Although she was very small, she wanted to go back to her parents. That has really hurt me. Because she wanted to go back to her parents, she thought those were her parents.[114]

Although the relocatees as a group made very few decisions about their movements throughout the Arctic, women and children made even fewer decisions. Sarah Amagoalik, in her testimony to the House of Commons SCAA in 1990, explained that she had to leave her mother in Inukjuak to follow her husband Simeonie Amagoalik to the High Arctic, which is why she was part of the first wave of relocations.[115] She was pregnant at the time and experienced significant hardship as a result of leaving her community during an important transitional period of her life. Lizzie Amagoalik recalled that she and her children had to follow her husband to Inukjuak from Resolute Bay, despite not being recognized by their own relatives.[116] Elisapee Nutaraq also recalled having to follow her husband to Inukjuak from Grise Fiord, despite having a job and connection to the land:

> Although I am not educated, I worked and had a job in Grise Fiord which I really appreciated when I was still living in Grise Fiord. But in spite of all that, with my job, my husband and I had to follow them because they wanted to return to Inukjuak. I had no choice but to return with them. I didn't really feel like going back in some ways. I would just think about it, but I did not talk about it. If my husband and I were not married, I would have just stayed behind in the High Arctic in Grise Fiord instead of returning to Inukjuak. I thought Grise Fiord was the place of my homeland. I did not want to leave it."[117]

Inuit relocatees as a whole lacked agency in their relocation to the High Arctic, but the agency of women in the decision-making process was even less.

The women of the High Arctic were nonetheless strong and independent. They were, in the memories of many relocatees, the reason they survived. Larry Audlaluk explained:

[114]Rynee Flaherty, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)," 357.
[115]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 no. 20-32," 22:7.
[116]Lizzie Amagoalik, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)," 478-479.
[117]Elisapee Nutaraq, "RCAP Testimony (8 April 1993)," 547-548.

> As we struggled to survive in the High Arctic, [My mother's] skills as a survivor were the backbone of our family in times of hardship, especially after my father died. She forged a life for us without any help or advice. She was determined to build for us a strong home that survived, and she succeeded.[118]

Inuit women were a key component of the new communities' survival and government planning relied on their skills and support without ever addressing them. At the time, their needs and contributions were invisible. The stories and experiences of the Inuit women who were relocated alongside these men remain untold and an important area for future research.

Sovereignty

The many hardships of Inuit in the High Arctic were amplified by not being able to return to their home communities after two years. Samwillie Elijasialuk told the RCAP commission that "when we took up the promise that we could return and mentioned it and were told that, "No, it's not possible for you to return", it has broken our spirit, it has broken our lives."[119] Not being allowed to return prompted an important question: Why? Why were Inuit brought to this land and why were they not allowed to leave? For Inuit, this question led them to search for answers. The answer they found, Markoosie Patsauq explained in his testimony to the SCAA, was "for us to make sovereignty over the land there possible. We were sent there to hold the land. We only found this out much later [when doing research in the 1980s] and it makes us angry."[120] Markoosie Patsauq noted in his comments to the SCAA that much of the Canadian government's concern seemed to be the presence

[118] Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know*, 24.

[119] Samwillie Elijasialuk, "RCAP Testimony (5 April 1993)," 47.

[120] Although Markoosie Patsauq's testimony does not specify how or when Inuit "found out" about the sovereignty intentions of government, based on the documents submitted by Makivvik Corporation and appended to the House of Commons SCAA minutes in 1990, it appears that this information was realized during archival visits during the 1980s. Further research into the Makivvik Corporation's research and meetings minutes could provide additional insight into the timeline of Inuit knowledge and activism. For further reading, see Chapter 6.
Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 no. 20-32," 22:6.

of Greenlanders on Ellesmere Island. Samwillie Elijasialuk explained that, in his mind, the police presence was not enough, which is why Canadian Inuit were relocated to Grise Fiord:

> As my older brother said, our grandmother said the buildings in Craig Harbour were unoccupied for long stretches of time and Greenlanders used to take their fuel and the food in Craig Harbour when they were out polar bear hunting in the area. So, they used those huts – those buildings – for their purposes when they were hunting polar bear because police were never there to occupy that post full-time. There were two white policemen and two Inuit special constables, who could never occupy that post at all times. I want to make clear – I know I am repeating this, but I want to make clear that Inuit – to be there would have been very hard to supply and it would have been a real burden and bother to have to supply Inuit or others who may have been permanently residing there. To me, the meaning of this is that they wanted people who could not just take off or return to their original homeland. And that is what I surmise was the reason why they sent us there. They sent us there to establish communities to assert Canada's sovereignty so that it could be said that those places were now occupied permanently by Canadian Inuit. Well, the Canadian government says, "No, that was not the reason." But, we do not believe their statement.[121]

Simeonie Amagoalik also felt that, as Inuit, their role was to be ambassadors of Canada to the Greenland hunters:

> About George's question regarding the Greenlanders, he asked if they were made to feel unwelcome in Grise Fiord. Well, it was not to make them feel unwelcome, but it was the law of the Canadian government and law of the Greenlandic government, or the government regime under which they were living – were two very different things. The Greenlanders were no longer allowed, or they were being dissuaded from harvesting polar bear and musk ox from what Canada deemed to be its areas. So, because we were sent there to be Canadians and to, by extension, apply the law of Canada, that is the information that was eventually made clear to the Greenlanders, that this particular

[121]Markoosie Patsauq, "Testimony" [6 April 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):264-265.

> stretch of tundra or that geographical area was now, no doubt, Canada and the laws of Canada apply and, therefore, because it is a different set of laws, the Greenlanders should abide by them or follow the laws of that geographical area. That was the point that was made clear to them, eventually.[122]

Despite the Inuit belief that they were to dissuade Greenlandic hunters from hunting on Ellesmere Island, Larry Audlaluk recalls having very friendly relationships with the Greenland Inughuit and looking forward to their springtime visits to Grise Fiord.[123] He explained that the Inughuit continued to visit for nearly forty years, until 1993, and only stopped because "the ice bridge between Ellesmere Island and Greenland no longer freezes enough for them to safely travel over," and because the "territorial government announced that if the Greenlandic hunters were caught hunting polar bear in Canada, the hides would be confiscated. This threat has been carried out at least once."[124] The presence of Canadian Inuit in the High Arctic did not dissuade Greenlandic hunters from crossing over to Ellesmere Island, regardless of any government intention that they might have done so.

When the government's intention to open the Arctic to resource development increased during the late 1950s and early 1960s, oil companies recruited High Arctic Inuit to participate in resource exploration.[125] These explorations, often months-long, were hard on the small communities, as Inuit men were gone and therefore unable to hunt or provide for their families, while women were left alone with limited supplies. These explorations exacerbated the hardships. In retrospect, Inuit believe that their presence in the High Arctic and their familiarity with the land allowed them to aid the government's resource exploration initiatives. There is general acceptance of the connection between resource exploration and sovereignty claims. For Inuit, their role in resource exploration provides an explanation for why they were relocated to the High Arctic. Andrew Iqaluk explained:

[122]Simeonie Amagoalik, "RCAP Testimony (6 April 1993)," 265-266.
[123]Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know*, 72-76.
[124]Ibid., 293-294.
[125]During the RCAP Special Hearings, Inuit relocatees explained that they had been hired by various big mineral and oil companies to aid in exploration activities and provide wilderness survival support for these expeditions. Andrew Iqaluk, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)," 420-426. An examination of the EAC Minutes suggests that the government encouraged hiring Inuit during this period for exploration projects related to mapping and resource development. See EAC Secretariat, "Minutes of the Eleventh Meeting of Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs," 160.

> We opened this area for development and it's certain that our presence also had the effect of asserting Canada's sovereignty in this area although it has always been denied. It's quite obvious when you look at the map that sovereignty had to be a reason for having people occupying that area. I want the government to acknowledge that. I want the government to say to me, yes, we did use you for sovereignty although they have always denied it. I know, and it's obvious to many people, that that was one of the reasons and I myself took part in the opening of that area for development.[126]

Moses Idlout summarized the feeling of being used by the government as one of disappointment:

> All that I see, all that I feel is that the Government wanted sovereignty so badly they didn't stop to consider Inuit as humans. I have even seen the documents about the government wanting to relocate and experiment with the Inuit. So, here I am today having been affected and been part of an experiment. There are still people who came from here still living up there getting worn out from this experience.[127]

Larry Audlaluk agrees that the government expected Inuit to fight for their survival, but is also proud of what he and his community have accomplished:

> My attitude today is that the Government of Canada gave us the High Arctic to live in, to pioneer, and to make part of Canada as ordinary Canadians. I have accepted that. . . . Canada wanted to show the world that the issue of sovereignty was no longer in question. Because of us, Ellesmere Island is no longer the "No Man's Land" Rasmussen described it to be. We are now truly Canadian flag bearers and Canadian citizens. But what a cost! Nevertheless, we are proud of our accomplishments. We are up here to stay.[128]

Inuit had many questions about why they were sent so far away to struggle and enduring many hardships. Their search for answers led them to conclude that part of the reason was the government's concern for sovereignty and the capacity of Inuit to live in the North. Some Inuit remain angry and disappointed about being used as puppets, while others take pride in their role as human flagpoles. All argue that they suffered immensely.

[126] Andrew Iqaluk, "RCAP Testimony (7 April 1993)," 426.
[127] Moses Idlout, "Interview" [2011], *Iqqaumavara Project*, Iqqaumavara Project, `www.iqqaumavara.com`.
[128] Audlaluk, *What I Remember, What I Know*, 318-320.

Conclusion

Inuit experiences of relocation to the High Arctic are varied, though they share common themes of inadequate provisions, devastating physical hardships, and profound grief. They faced different challenges in different seasons and different years. The hardships for children, women, and adults were diverse, and the difficulties adjusting were different for those coming from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet.

This part of the relocation story is often glossed over by the literature on the High Arctic Relocations because Inuit experiences do not, and cannot, tell the story of government decision-making. The stories of Inuit experiences that are discussed in the literature are typically distilled into a single story of universal suffering and grief caused by the government that focuses on the physical distance between Inukjuak and the High Arctic and on the government's broken promise of a right to return after two years. The literature's focus on the debate about government intention necessarily limits the stories of Inuit experiences to a universalized consequence of government action, rather than as nuanced experiences of individuals. This focus limits discussion to that of Inuit suffering for the benefit of a Canadian state or to comparative discussions of the well-being of Inuit in Inukjuak and the High Arctic.

The literature's narrow focus on government intention fails to recognize how the hardships experienced by Inuit affected every aspect of their lives over the course of decades and how life in the High Arctic was controlled by agents of the state. Inuit experiences do not provide further insight into the intentions of government decision makers, but they do provide detailed insight into the breadth and duration of suffering and hardships that resulted from decisions made in Ottawa. Examining the stories of Inuit relocatees, as told by Inuit, suggests a multitude of experiences occurring over many decades and generations, and in various locations throughout the Canadian North. Broadening the literature of the High Arctic Relocations to include these experiences allows for a more complete picture of this chapter of Arctic history.

Chapter 5

Government Experiences of Relocation

Introduction

Inuit experiences of the High Arctic Relocation are highly individualized and reflect the personal circumstances, origins, and destinations of Inuit who participated in the program. Although the actions of the federal government are often referred to in the collective, the experiences of government officials are also individual, as those who decided on and implemented the relocation had their own experiences of the Arctic, rationale for participating, and differing contextual information. The literature's underlying assumption that the federal government functioned as a unified, rational actor limits understanding of the complexities that drove individual decision making and influenced individual experiences. The many organizations that make up the federal government, including the RCMP, DRD/DNANR, and the RCAF all had different goals in carrying out the relocations, and these goals are reflected in the experiences of the individuals serving those organizations. These organizations within the federal government not only held different objectives, such as the RCMP's goal of contributing to Arctic sovereignty and desire to take on a greater

responsibility for Inuit administration,[1] but they also reflect a politics of governmental decision making in which "ongoing struggles in outer circles help shape decision situations among [actors] who can affect the government's choice and action."[2] The experiences of the individual government officials outlined in this chapter reflect the goals of the organization within government to which the individuals belong as well as illuminate some of the politics occurring between government departments.[3]

In this chapter, I examine the relocations from the perspective of departments and agencies within the government and the experiences of individuals within those organizations. This chapter explores the experiences of members of the DRD/DNANR who were responsible for the problem identification and planning stages of the relocation project, and for overseeing the program from Ottawa, as well as RCMP members who were responsible for implementing and operationalizing those plans in the field at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord. I also explore the challenges expressed by RCAF members stationed at the Resolute air force base in 1953 as a government entity that could observe the relocated Inuit but had no access to strategic or operational planning about the relocation. Although other organizations inside and outside of government, including the HBC and the churches, had tangential involvement in the relocation at various times throughout the 1950s and subsequent decades, these are not central to the government experiences of the relocation and are not discussed herein.[4]

In exploring these issues, this chapter relies on testimony given by government officials at the House of Commons SCAA in 1990, the RCAP Special Hearings in 1993, and autobiographies written following those hearings. It is important to recognize that many government officials involved felt that they had been attacked by the testimony previously provided by Inuit relocatees and wanted to correct the record. Robert "Bob" Pilot, of the RCMP noted in his appearance before the House of Commons SCAA that "when I read

[1] n.a., "Memorandum for Mr. McKay"; H.A. Larsen, "Proposed Movement of Eskimo Families."
[2] Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, 255-56.
[3] Ibid., 144, 257.
[4] The experiences of organizations that participated in various aspects of the relocation, including transportation of Inuit and supplies, preparing Inuit for the relocation, and engaging with the government on strategic policy questions related to education, health, and economics that contributed to the decision to relocate Inuit, are important areas for future research.

the newspaper article [regarding allegations by Inuit] I was quite taken aback. I felt that having been stationed in Grise Fiord, I should at least place my comments on record."[5] Gordon Robertson, the former Deputy Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources (NANR), was more emphatic:

> If this is the way that people are treated who try to serve Canadians and try to do their duty, then I think we have very little hope of having a successful government and successful administration in this country. I really feel very strongly indeed about the way in which the reputations of people were destroyed wantonly in the hearings that were televised last April. I don't find any television around here.
> Apparently it is only one side that is to be televised in this. I find it a very strange application of justice when the actions of these people can be held up the way they have been and their reputations destroyed in this one-sided way.[6]

Ben Sivertz, whose government career included nearly twenty years working on the Arctic file in Ottawa, including as Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, wrote in 2000 that he was saddened by the attack, in his view formalized by RCAP, that turned

> a complex piece of history into a black and white affair, casting the white government employee as the 'bad guy', and the Northern people, the Inuit, the exploited innocents. In spite of my difficulty with this Commission and my shabby treatment at its hands, my experiences in Northern work have not been diminished where personal recollection is concerned.[7]

The experiences of the government related in this chapter therefore must be understood within the context of these feelings of defensiveness.

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[5]Government of Canada, "Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs 34th Parliament Second Session vol. 3 no. 33-42" [1990], *Library of Parliament*, Queen's Printer of Canada:40:46.

[6]Gordon Robertson, "RCAP Testimony," 129.

[7]128 Tracy O'Hara and Bent Sivertz, *The Life of Bent Gestur Sivertz: A Seaman, a Teacher and a Worker in the Canadian Arctic* (Victoria, B.C.: Trafford Publishing, 2000).

Department of Resources and Development/Northern Affairs and National Resources

The primary goal of the DRD and its successor department, the DNANR, was to manage what was perceived to be a multi-faceted problem facing Inuit of Northern Québec, as outlined in Chapter 1. As the government department responsible for Inuit affairs, the DRD felt pressure to manage Inuit access to traditional food resources, to address issues with Inuit economy, and to do so with a limited staff and budget. The experiences shared by officials from the DRD suggest that there was an intention to address these perceived problems but, due to a lack of staff and resources, the problems and their potential solutions were not properly identified.

In the early 1950s, the DRD was, in the opinion of Doug Wilkinson – a filmmaker and later a Northern Services Officer with the DNANR – woefully lacking in resources to address the problems it faced in the North because "at the time, the Arctic Division of Mines and Resources had no staff stationed in the North. For advice from the field, Ottawa administrators had to rely solely on traders, missionaries and policemen."[8] This, in Wilkinson's opinion, put the success of the relocation plan "in jeopardy from the start."[9]

The lack of resources in the North was not unique to the DRD; it was repeated in the RCAP testimony of Gordon Larsen, who testified on behalf of his deceased father, RCMP Inspector Henry Larsen.[10] The result of this lack of resources was that the department had to rely on other organizations to gather information about conditions in the field.

Sivertz, who was then managing projects across the Arctic and was the only individual who testified at the RCAP Special Hearing who was involved in the decision-making process, related that he received his information about the conditions in Northern Québec from his field agents, James Cantley and Alex Stevenson:

[8]Doug Wilkinson, "Testimony" [28 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):13.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Gordon Larsen, "Testimony" [28 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):222.

> Cantley and Stevenson had spoken to me of Inuit in Northern Québec who were destitute because of the shortage of game and fur-bearers. They thought certain regions of the High Arctic might provide livelihood for a moderate number from Northern Québec if the department would undertake to move them.[11]

Although Sivertz had travelled extensively in the Arctic the previous year at the request of Deputy Minister Young, his knowledge of the large territory was still nascent. He, and his department, had to make decisions based on the opinions of a few individuals and on scarce data, particularly in the High Arctic. Sivertz explained that the destinations of Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord were chosen because it was believed that these areas had strong game resources, but the actual information was limited, in large part because "The Canadian Wildlife Service had almost no data. We were relying on anecdotal reports of various people. We knew a good many people who had travelled through the area, and we consulted them as to the abundance of game."[12] Decision-making in the context of minimal information is challenging. Wilkinson further explained the challenge of gathering and processing that information:

> But good as they were, they had to rely for up-to-date information from the field on the few more or less permanent inhabitants at the settlements: the traders, the missionaries and the policemen. It was very difficult to even get information from these people. In those days, communication between North and south was by ship in the brief summer, by short-wave radio for the rest of the year. There was nothing else, no way to talk back and forth, no way to discuss ideas and plans, except during brief visits in the summer on the once-a-year ship visit. As a result, any project planning had to be done almost completely in Ottawa.[13]

Even if there had been perfect information from 1952 about the conditions in Northern Québec or the High Arctic, that information may not have been accurate by the time the project was implemented in the summer of 1953.

[11]Bent G. Sivertz, "Testimony" [29 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):388.
[12]Ibid., 408.
[13]Doug Wilkinson, "RCAP Testimony," 16.

In addition to relying on the RCMP and the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) for information about the Arctic, the experience of DRD officials was that they had to rely on other departments for implementing its programs. The primary partner was the RCMP, though the DRD also had to rely on the DOT for transport services, the DNHW for health and welfare services in the North, and the HBC for much of the administration of relief and Family Allowance payments. This complex web of service providers proved challenging for the Northern administration generally but was an additional factor in communicating information to Inuit about the experimental project. Sivertz, who was "the person who carried out the plan from justification of the idea to consultation with Inuit families who might wish to go and describing to them the conditions they should expect, to arranging space on the ship for Inuit who decided to go,"[14] believed that his communication to Inuit was very clear: "Margery Hinds [the welfare teacher at Inukjuak] did her best to explain this to all of the people she knew. As I said, the police officers there did the same, and our special envoys who went up, I believe, three times – that is my recollection."[15] Sivertz perceived that communication to Inuit about the conditions to expect, as well as the opportunity for a return to Inukjuak if they found life to be unsatisfactory, had been clearly articulated, yet the experiences of other government officials and Inuit suggest otherwise.

As the DRD transitioned to the DNANR and came under new leadership, the focus of the department began to shift toward Northern affairs, with an increasingly large staff both in Ottawa and in the field. Sivertz, for example, found himself promoted to Director of the Arctic Administrative Branch in early 1954, a job with "incredible scope, administering both federal and territorial legislation," overseeing eight division chiefs.[16] This rapid expansion accompanied a shift in focus for the Cabinet and Parliament toward Northern issues. Despite this broader shift, the staff of the newly-named DNANR did not experience any alteration to the approach of the relocation project. The goals remained economic: Robertson, who inherited the program when he was appointed Deputy Minister in November 1953, described that "the intention was to establish communities that wouldn't be

[14]Bent G. Sivertz, "RCAP Testimony," 389.
[15]Ibid., 414-415.
[16]O'Hara and Sivertz, *The Life of Bent Gestur Sivertz*, 132.

reliant on hand-outs, that wouldn't be reliant on charity; they would be self-reliant. That was the basis on which the whole thing was planned, as I understand it."[17] Sivertz also recalled that the intention of the project was to address the intense poverty that the RCMP had reported was being experienced by Inuit at the Port Harrison Detachment.[18] The project, therefore would experiment with moving people to regions of the High Arctic that were currently unoccupied but still accessible by the EAP and where Inuit might be able to earn a livelihood.[19] The additional benefit, Sivertz explained, was that the moves would help address the problems that the RCMP was experiencing with Greenlanders crossing to Ellesmere Island and breaking Canadian game laws.[20]

For officials within the DNANR, the High Arctic Relocations were never about sovereignty. Rather, they were about "Canadianization" of the North.[21] According to Robertson, who had participated Cabinet discussions in 1953, sovereignty was not a concern when it came to the Arctic islands:

> The question is: What is the meaning of "concern for sovereignty"? If the question is intended to mean: Did the Canadian government have any doubt about its title to the Arctic islands? Did it have any fear about a challenge by any other country to its title over the Arctic islands? Was it worried about the United States challenging Canadian title to the Arctic islands?
> The answer is no. There was no such fear. I state that with confidence on the basis of what I knew in the Department of External Affairs, what I was in a position to know in the Privy Council office.
> I attended every meeting of the Cabinet during 1949 to 1953 and I am in a position to know what was discussed there, particularly in the meeting that I have seen referred to of January 1953.[22]

In 1953, Graham Rowley was "Secretary and Co-ordinator of the Advisory Committee on Northern Development, a committee at the Deputy Minister level, charged with advis-

[17]Gordon Robertson, "RCAP Testimony," 126.
[18]Bent G. Sivertz, "RCAP Testimony," 389-390.
[19]Ibid., 388-389.
[20]Ibid., 388-380.
[21]For a thorough discussion about Canadianization in the context of sovereignty, see Chapter .
[22]Gordon Robertson, "RCAP Testimony," 117-118.

ing the Cabinet on government policies and co-ordinating government activities there."[23] Rowley agreed with Robertson, noting that:

> Canadian sovereignty was a responsibility of the Department of External Affairs. It is inconceivable that this move could have been devised by the Department of External Affairs and conducted by the Department of Resources and Development without it having passed at some time through my office. The only occasion the move was ever mentioned at the time at the Advisory Committee on Northern Development was as one of many items of general interest that I reported. There was no suggestion that it was related to sovereignty.[24]

Rowley believed that sovereignty was secured in the Canadian Arctic without Inuit occupation. He explained that any activities taking place in the Arctic were demonstrations of sovereignty and that there was "no evidence that sovereignty played a role in these relocations."[25] Robertson and Rowley were clear and confident in their testimony that the relocations were not about sovereignty and, based on how departments and agencies within the federal governments worked in the 1950s, they could not have been.

There were, however, two related concepts that did have a potential affect on the relocations: enforcement of Canadian game laws, and "Canadianization." Sivertz mentioned the first concept, enforcement of Canadian game law, as a potential *additional* benefit to the relocations taking place on Ellesmere Island:

> I took up [the idea of relocation to the High Arctic] with General Young, our Deputy Minister. He discussed it with Commissioner Leonard Nicholson of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police who thought the plan fitted the police idea of curtailing the periodic incursions of Greenland Eskimos who crossed to Ellesmere Island to kill polar bear, muskoxen and white fox.[26]

Although Robertson clarified that the Greenlanders were not a threat, particularly to sovereignty, he did concede that neither the RCMP nor the DRD liked that the Greenlan-

[23]Graham Rowley, "Testimony" [29 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):518.
[24]Ibid., 520.
[25]Ibid., 527.
[26]Bent G. Sivertz, "RCAP Testimony," 388.

ders were breaking Canadian game laws. He emphasized although this was a concern, it was not, in his mind, a primary consideration.[27]

The second related concept was "Canadianization." Sivertz explained that there was a secondary benefit of "Canadianizing" the Northern islands, but that this "often sort of got tangled in people's minds with sovereignty."[28] Robertson also noted that there were "only two or three references that make any mention of the context of "Canadianizing" the High Arctic . . . as being a significant factor" but that this was not a Cabinet-directed move.[29] The presence of a Cabinet-level interest in Canadian sovereignty, both through policing and "Canadianization," did not translate into DRD officials, such as Sivertz, experiencing any pressure to undertake activities to support these interests.

The DNANR, which took over responsibility for the administration of the relocation program in Ottawa, and not the day-to-day management of the communities, saw it as a true success. Inuit in Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord were considered the most well-off Inuit in the Arctic. In his memoir, Robertson recalled that:

> On no visit did I hear a word of complaint about the move from Inukjuak. Nor did I ever, from 1953 to 1963, receive any request by any Inuit or family to move back to their former home. I did receive requests from some of the people of Resolute and Grise Fiord to have friends from Inukjuak come to join them because the hunting at the new settlements was so much better than on the 'hungry coast'. In response to those requests, and to the wish of the people at Inukjuak themselves, another group moved in 1955 to the better living conditions of the High Arctic.
> The two settlements, Resolute and Grise Fiord, came to be regarded as the best, healthiest, and most independent settlements in the Canadian Arctic. There is ample testimony on record from several independent observers to support that departmental judgment.[30]

As a whole, the DNANR saw the relocation projects as complete successes. Graham Rowley explained to the RCAP Commission that the criteria for success were based on the

[27]Gordon Robertson, "RCAP Testimony," 149.
[28]Bent G. Sivertz, "RCAP Testimony," 425-426.
[29]Gordon Robertson, "RCAP Testimony," 139-140.
[30]Robertson, *Memoirs of a Very Civil Servant*, 123.

relative prosperity of Inuit in the High Arctic compared to that of Northern Québec. The relocations, in his opinion, "met this test according to all contemporary accounts."[31] They were a definitive success from the perspective of Ottawa, with Rowley summarizing that:

> It is not a shameful chapter in Canadian history, as Inuit politicians, denying the testimony of their Inuit elders, have described it at international meetings. It is a story of courage and success. Those involved – the Inuit, Henry Larsen, Alex Stevenson and Ross Gibson who devoted years of his life to helping the Resolute Inuit in any way he could – should be honoured, not pitied and pilloried.
> The true story is one of which Canada and all Canadians can, and should, be proud.[32]

The criteria by which the DNANR evaluated the success of the relocations was primarily administrative. Officials evaluated the success of the project on the basis of government-authored reports on the collective rather than individual experiences of Inuit. From their offices in Ottawa and their short-term visits to Resolute Bay, the DNANR officials experienced the relocation experiment through snapshots of community life. Through this lens, it was remembered as a successful outcome of the DNANR's nascent Inuit policy.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police: "G" Division

In contrast to the DNANR, the RCMP operated in much closer proximity to Inuit at Inukjuak and the new communities of Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord. Members of the RCMP spent considerable time in the Arctic and living near Inuit, and many learned to speak Inuktitut to reduce communication barriers. Although there was still considerable separation between RCMP detachments in the Arctic and the communities they served, the RCMP had a much different experience of the Arctic and the relocation project.

The RCMP however, also had a different relationship to the Arctic: it was the responsibility of the RCMP to "show the flag" throughout the Arctic and to administer justice.

[31] Graham Rowley, "RCAP Testimony," 551.
[32] Ibid., 557-563.

They also carried out the day-to-day operations of the DRD/DNANR, including managing welfare and relief payments, and operating trade stores. Further, they were responsible for the Northern activities of the DNHW, including doing wellness checks on Inuit camps and overseeing the health of Northern communities. These responsibilities of the RCMP were wide ranging, meaning that the RCMP Commander of "G" Division, Henry Larsen, had to manage the needs of several departments.[33] But these were also responsibilities that the RCMP actively wanted to take on. In a September 1952 letter to the Commissioner of the RCMP, Larsen outlined what he viewed as some of the problems with Inuit administration in Northern Canada. He suggested how the RCMP might be able to address the problems of administrative spending on relief expenditures in the North by consolidating Inuit affairs operations under the responsibility of the RCMP detachments:

> In regard to the issuing of rations and ammunition to destitute Eskimos, it is believed that a substantial saving of public funds could be made if the supplies were purchased by the administration at wholesale prices "Outside" and shipped to our Detachments in the Eastern Arctic on the Government Supply Vessel, to be stored in our Detachment buildings and issued by our Detachment personnel as required. . . At the present time, in the Eastern Arctic, relief orders are issued on the local Hudson's Bay Company Post, by the R.C.M. Police. The H.B.C., of course, make a profit on the relief rations issued to the natives in addition to marking up a charge for transportation of the supplies from the "Outside". It would still be necessary for us to depend upon the Hudson's Bay Company Trading Post Manager to issue rations to destitute Eskimos, from Company Stores and on Police orders, at those places where we have no Police Detachment.
>
> The R.C.M. Police should make every effort to interest and retain suitable members for work in Eskimo Territory, who would be willing to devote their entire service to the Eskimo cause. The work required of our members in Eskimo Territory has no counterpart elsewhere, and requires experience in it before one is able to deal effectively with the various problems, therefore, if the R.C.M. Police are to undertake a greater share in Eskimo administration, we must be

[33]For further reading on the role of the RCMP in the North in the early twentieth century, see William R. Morrison, *Showing the Flag*. For an examination of the changing roles of the RCMP during the 1950s, see Ryan Shackleton, ""Not Just Givers of Welfare": The Changing Role of the RCMP in the Baffin Region, 1920-1970," *The Northern Review* 36 (2012): 5–26.

> prepared to place suitable members at our Detachments. . . I believe that our members can handle any and all additional responsibility in Eskimo affairs that may be assigned to them in the future.[34]

Larsen's letter suggests a desire to improve the quality of the RCMP officers taking up posts at Northern detachments because of the multifaceted work required of them, but also the force's desire to take on a greater share of the administration of Inuit affairs in the North by taking on HBC and DRD roles.[35] The question of the government relying on the HBC, a private company with a monopoly in many areas of the North, to conduct its business was first raised as a key question underlying the 1950 Cantley Report's recommendations and continued to be a subject of discussion among RCMP and DRD leadership.[36]

Operationally, the RCMP had significantly more experience in the Arctic and in handling Inuit affairs than any other division within the government at the time. The RCMP constables at Northern detachments were the government's representatives in the North and were responsible for the main interactions that Inuit had with the government. This included liaising on behalf of the government and representing the government's plans to Inuit. In general, RCMP were to "represent, as best they could, the pros and cons of any proposal to the Inuit and let the Inuit decide."[37]

The experiences of the RCMP in planning and implementing the High Arctic Relocation project are influenced by its role in the project: although some members of the RCMP were interested in playing a bigger part in the administration of the Arctic, it was not responsible for strategic-level decisions. The RCMP leadership was involved in some of the early discussions regarding the relocation project through membership on the EAC,

[34]H.A. Larsen, "Conditions Amongst Eskimos - Generally" [29 September 1952], *Copy in Shelagh D. Grant Papers*, RG 18 acc. 85-86.048 vol. 42 file D.1512-2-4-Q 27.

[35]Although Larsen advocated that "G" Division take on additional administrative responsibilities in the Arctic, the expansion of the DNANR would limit the expansion of the RCMP's role in most of the Arctic, beginning in the 1950s as Northern Service Officers took on many of these responsibilities, allowing RCMP officers to focus on community policing. At the time of the High Arctic Relocations however, the role of the RCMP was still very uncertain, particularly in the more remote Inuit communities. See Shackleton, ""Not Just Givers of Welfare"."

[36]Northwest Territories Council, "Northwest Territories Council Special Meeting Minutes"; Cantley, *Survey of Economic Conditions Among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic*.

[37]536-537 Graham Rowley, "RCAP Testimony."

but this influence was limited and the officers on the ground did not have knowledge of the arrangements or the dealings of their superiors in Ottawa. Ross Gibson, who was stationed at Inukjuak in 1953 and re-assigned to Resolute Bay alongside Inuit, described the uncertainty this way:

> I always suspected a pipeline to the Department of Northern Affairs of which I knew nothing. They were on their own and they never told me what was what or what was going on. . . I feel a lack of communication between the various departments was something that might have hindered the better progress of this particular movement of the Eskimo people.[38]

Despite the communication challenges between the RCMP officers and the administrative officials at DRD, the RCMP were given some opportunities to make decisions that would improve the situation on the ground, as Rowley described:

> The government representatives on the ground would usually have some latitude in modifying normal procedures to meet special local circumstances. They would have to be able to justify such modifications. Local officers would want a project to succeed and would do their best to assist it.[39]

This latitude was most evident in the addition of a possible return to Inukjuak in the instructions issued by Inspector Larsen in April 1953: "Please note the reference in the messages to the Eskimo families being brought back to their homes. I considered it advisable to make that promise."[40] This promise, issued by the RCMP without the approval of the DRD, would become a major point of contention over the next forty years. Although Sivertz indicated it was widely known about throughout the Arctic and Québec, it was not clear to anyone within the government, the RCMP, or Inuit themselves what exactly had been meant by Larsen's promise.[41]

Ross Gibson recounted his experience of relaying the message about the relocation by explaining that "patrols were made for people to settle in the High Arctic after receiving a

[38]Ross Gibson, "Testimony" [17 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings ed. 7 July 1993 (Ross Gibson)*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):23-24.

[39]Graham Rowley, "RCAP Testimony," 536.

[40]H.A. Larsen, "Letter Re: Responsibility, Care and Supervision of Eskimos."

[41]For more information regarding the legacy of the promise to return, see Chapter 7.

message from Superintendent Larson," using interpreters employed by the HBC to "make sure that the Natives understood all aspects of the move, including the dark period."[42] He noted that he did not make any promise of a return to Inukjuak and that he relied on local civilians, including the welfare teacher Margery Hinds and the HBC post manager Rheub Ploughman to help select Inuit for the program.[43] In Gibson's mind, the differences between Inukjuak and the High Arctic were minimal:

> I could see where there was not going to be much change from my observations and knowledge of the High Arctic. While the Eskimos in Port Harrison lived in igloos in the wintertime and tents in the summertime, I could see whereby it was going to be no great hardship as far as that was concerned.[44]

This perception of similarities suggests an important differences in how government officials, including RCMP officers, and Inuit experienced the relocation program.

Gibson also recalled that he, along with Larsen, were responsible for selecting the site for the Inuit camp at Resolute Bay, basing their decision on the presence of an old, abandoned Inuit camp:

> Excavation by scientists revealed that nearby a Native camp some 200 years ago had been there. No known reason for its demise was available, but there were signs of plenty of food which had been available during that time. It is now believed that perhaps it was the dark period that took the people from the area.[45]

Gibson's description of the activities that took place in the days and weeks after arrival at Resolute Bay largely match those provided by Inuit, though the details indicate a fundamentally different experience and much different concerns:

> Upon arrival with the Native people on the shores of Cornwallis Island, tents were erected, dogs were tethered and hunters had to get out and hunt for

[42]Ross Gibson, "RCAP Testimony," 7-8.
[43]Ibid.
[44]Ibid.
[45]Ibid., 11-12.

> seafood for dogs and people concerned. My greatest concern was the present shortage of country food and the supply for the coming winter.
> Several weeks before darkness, Eskimos went every day to hunt and they were constantly reminded of the forthcoming darkness. Igloos were built the same as in Port Harrison under my supervision. Cleanliness was to be of great importance.[46]

A similar story of events was provided by the RCMP officer in charge at Craig Harbour, Glen Sargent, who selected the site for the Inuit camp on the Lindstrom Peninsula.[47]

The RCMP were also responsible for operationalizing the relocation project: although DRD officials in Ottawa planned and developed the project, the day-to-day decisions had to be made by RCMP officers on the ground. Ross Gibson recounted that he "felt that there was a lack of communication to a greater degree to the man who was in the field which I think is always the case . . . I was given a free reign. I just verbally reported to the Commissioner."[48] These decisions had to be made with little or no understanding of the strategic objectives of the experiment, or of the government's long-term intentions.

The RCMP officers' experiences of the relocation project in Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord were, therefore based on their perceptions of the program's goals and their own beliefs about why they were stationed in the High Arctic: For Ross Gibson, the purpose of the project was to help Inuit maintain their traditional lifestyle, which influenced his decisions about interactions between Inuit and the RCAF:

> My refusal to allow Eskimos on the RCAF and other white establishments has been greatly criticized and I had my reasons. There were some 50 men stationed there, white men. I refer to them as white men. In the Eskimo side were these young girls and so on. Canteen was available. White man's way of life was quite prominent and they had all the amenities that one would want from the south.[49]

[46]Ross Gibson, "RCAP Testimony," 11-12.
[47]Bob Pilot, "Testimony" [28 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):274.
[48]Ross Gibson, "RCAP Testimony," 36.
[49]Ibid., 13.

Despite the seemingly protective reasons provided by Gibson to the RCAP Commission, the deeper reason for keeping Inuit away from the base was evidently rooted in the paternalistic approach of the government toward Inuit and one of the underlying motivations for the relocation program – to maintain the traditional Inuit way of life:

> All this was new to the Eskimo and I did not want – and I was instructed from the Commissioner of the Mounted Police that my purpose was to keep the people on the land, not to allow them on the base because they were afraid of perhaps being exposed to the white man's way of life, prostitution, alcoholism and so on.[50]

Although the underlying motivations of the program were not clearly explained to the RCMP officers responsible for carrying out the project, aspects of the complex and interwoven rationale were discussed. Bob Pilot, stationed at Craig Harbour beginning in 1955, believed that sovereignty was a secondary purpose of the project, with the primary purpose being to provide assistance.[51] Pilot based this belief on the location of Craig Harbour, and the initial rationale for building a detachment there in the 1920s to establish sovereignty over the Arctic islands.[52] Bob Pilot explained to the House of Commons SCAA that:

> I believe that the suggestion of the 1920s that Inuit families be moved to establish a permanent settlement still remained in the minds of some civil servants. Perhaps the poor hunting and over-population in and around Port Harrison in the late 1940s and early 1950s helped to revive that idea, and perhaps poor hunting and over-population were the primary reason for the move. However, in saying that, I also believe that the secondary motive for having them move was for sovereignty.
> If I or any RCMP member was there to show the flag and to establish sovereignty, and we were there on a two or three-year assignment, then the Inuit who were living and hunting in the area on a permanent basis were also there to maintain and establish sovereignty.[53]

[50]Ross Gibson, "RCAP Testimony," 13.
[51]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 3 no. 33-42," 40:42.
[52]Ibid.
[53]Ibid., 40:45.

For both Gibson and Pilot, the relocation was, on the basis of their experiences, a successful project. Gibson believed that the project was a complete success and that there was no need for compensation as Inuit did adjust to their new lands and were never abandoned. Gibson also noted in his testimony to the RCAP Special Hearing that Inuit at Resolute Bay were much better off than they had been at Inukjuak.[54] Pilot also believed the project was successful, noting that there was a period of adjustment with some significant hardship experienced in the first years at Grise Fiord, but that upon his arrival in 1955 the relocatees seemed to be well-adapted.[55] Pilot explained that when he was in Grise Fiord the fox cycle was at its peak, with Inuit having high spending power due to the large number of furs they could trap each season. As he explained, "that is the reason why we ran out of food a lot of times in the store, because of the good trapping that they happened to have during those peak years.[56] His summary of conditions for the House of Commons SCAA was also positive, noting that, in his view, the amount of money Inuit had in their bank accounts during 1956 was significant for the time and he believed they had good income based on the availability of wildlife and their proficiency as hunters.[57] In his experience, Inuit were never hungry and did not require welfare, which is why they did not receive any:

> No, I never saw the people hungry. We were responsible for providing welfare. We had the opportunity and we had the mechanism within the detachment, which had been given to us by the federal government, to give welfare to the people if they needed it, but at no time during my period did the people come and ask for welfare.[58]

Based on the information available to them about the goals of the project and the conditions of Inuit in their communities, both Gibson and Pilot considered the relocations successful.

The experiences of the RCMP officers in the High Arctic also were shaped by their interactions with Inuit. Although they were stationed in the North, they were still living

[54]Ross Gibson, "RCAP Testimony," 24-25.
[55]Bob Pilot, "RCAP Testimony," 273.
[56]Ibid., 263-264.
[57]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 3 no. 33-42," 40:48-49.
[58]Ibid.

at a considerable distance from Inuit camps and therefore did not have a full picture of the Inuit experience. Bob Pilot made note of this, explaining that his perceptions of local condition were based on his limited experience in the North at that time, and on what he heard from those who came to the detachment:

> a great deal of time was spent with the Inuit men during September and October assisting with their hunting of walrus and whale which was required for dog food during the winter months. During the winter, the Inuit men would travel to Craig Harbour about once a month to trade. Because it was a long two-day trip, they usually came by themselves.
> When at Craig Harbour, we seldom saw the women and children unless they were sick and we would travel to the camp to assist in any way we could.[59]

Pilot also conceded that, while he did not hear about any complaints during his time at Grise Fiord, he did not know everything that was occurring. In part, this was due to language and cultural barriers, but also in part because by the time he arrived in 1955, many Inuit had adapted. He explained that: "during the early years before I arrived in 1955, I understand there was some unhappiness. The area was not at all what they expected and the living conditions were not what they had expected."[60] The information that the RCMP officers in the North received from Inuit at the time was limited. Neither Gibson nor Pilot recalled having direct conversations with Inuit about being unhappy or about wanting to return to Inukjuak. They also did not ask.

Department of National Defence: Royal Canadian Air Force

The concerns raised by the DND regarding Inuit being perceived as wards of the RCAF base at Resolute in February 1954 indicate some of the issues with how information about the relocation was shared between departments at the EAC.[61] The DND, and specifically

[59]Bob Pilot, "RCAP Testimony," 27.
[60]Ibid., 263.
[61]C. Drury, "Memorandum to the Deputy Minister."

the RCAF, had very limited knowledge of the relocation or the goals of the project. The DND's objective in the North was security. The department had no responsibility for Inuit, except to provide wage employment in some instances. As such, the DND leadership did not need to know much about the relocation project or its goals, and only needed to communicate the most basic information to the men at the base. The commander of the RCAF station at Resolute interpreted the trips of Inuit to the dump for supplies and food as the RCAF taking on duties as welfare agents.[62]

The DRD and the DND with RCAF representation met in August 1953 to discuss the relocation and its goals, including that the RCAF would not be responsible for Inuit in any way.[63] However, it is not clear that this information was effectively transferred to personnel at the base. Pierre Desnoyers and Armand Brousseau, stationed there at the time, recalled that there was very little information available to them, with Desnoyers explaining that:

> At no time whatsoever can I recall that any specific reasons were given, other than there was mention that preceding the years of 1953 there were archaeological studies carried out on Cornwallis Island whereby some burial sites had been found. The government of the day had decided to bring some Inuit people into that environment to see if they could survive. That is one of the reasons I recall.

For both Desnoyers and Brousseau, the ability of Inuit to survive in the North was the only reason (of which they were aware) for the relocation program.

Despite the close proximity between the Inuit community and the air base, the RCAF were not informed of DRD plans or intentions. To personnel on the base, it seemed as though the two groups were expected to live alongside each other in a remote region without any communication or interaction. Desnoyers and Brousseau both shared that, as outsiders to the program who were based in the High Arctic, the arrival of Inuit relocatees seemed poorly planned and executed.[64] Moreover, it seemed as though the RCAF were not included in any aspect of the program, despite their close proximity:

[62]Lackenbauer and Shackleton, "Inuit-Air Force Relations," 83-85.

[63]n.a., "Minutes of A meeting held to discuss the transfer of certain Eskimo families from Northern Quebec to Cornwallis and Ellesmere Islands'."

[64]Pierre Desnoyers and Armand Brousseau, "Testimony" [28 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):105-107.

> There were no conscientious plans that were made on behalf of the RCAF in order to support the Inuit. I think very little was known, even by our commanding officer, other than the fact that these people were arriving. There was nothing prepared to support them in any form.[65]

Although the RCAF would initially have contact with Inuit only through secretive Inuit trips to the dump, contact increased in later years as employment opportunities became available. The initial perceptions and experiences of RCAF personnel were based on very limited information and, in part, were the consequence of a clear intention to keep the two groups separated. As Inuit began to engage in wage employment in later years, the perceptions shifted and relations between the two communities improved. RCAF knowledge about the relocation project and its goals remained limited.

Conclusion

The experience of relocation from the government's perspective is complex. Different organizations received varied information about the problems and the intentions of the relocation, and individuals within any given organization may have received more or less information depending on their rank and role. This led to vastly different perceptions about what was occurring and whether the relocation was succeeding in its goals. Sivertz explained this well: "The Inuit who have testified have no knowledge whatsoever of the arrangements or of the possibility."[66] Similarly, Sivertz noted that the RCMP were not informed of all the elements of the relocation plan, including the possibility of return to Inukjuak: "[Ross Gibson] had nothing to do with it. He was an agent helping with the operation of the communities. He had nothing to do with the promise or its execution, carrying it out."[67]

These differences in experience can make it challenging to understand what occurred and to evaluate the success of the project, though they do illuminate the effects of what

[65]Pierre Desnoyers and Armand Brousseau, "RCAP Testimony," 106-107.
[66]Bent G. Sivertz, "RCAP Testimony," 430.
[67]Ibid., 453.

happened. Decision makers in Ottawa lauded the relocation as an incredible success and something which "Canada and all Canadians can, and should, be proud."[68] The experience of the RCMP officers who were responsible for the day-to-day decisions also were proud of what they themselves accomplished, but they believed that the relocation project encountered challenges and that there was some deception involved in the program.

All of the experiences outlined in this chapter describe the conditions of Inuit from Ottawa, or as seen by those who were sent to the High Arctic by their employer; they are the experiences of those with agency over their circumstances, commenting on those without agency. Although the men who viewed the relocation from the North experienced the same climactic conditions as Inuit, but they did so with the knowledge that they would leave eventually. As Doug Wilkinson aptly summarizes:

> This was almost exactly the same kind of life the relocatees from Port Harrison were living on southern Ellesmere Island and Resolute Bay only about 200 miles away from me and during exactly the same winter.
> Today I remember my time on North Baffin Island as a highlight of my life, despite all the hardship and difficulty. But at least some of the Port Harrison Inuit remember their first winter in the high Arctic as a time of unmitigated suffering and misery.
> Why this enormous difference? After all, I was a southern-based *Kabloonak*, product of a culture far removed from the hunting culture I entered into on North Baffin Island where I had to learn a completely new way of life and a completely different kind of homeland.
> It seems to me that I had to undergo a much greater adaptation than any of the Port Harrison people. We were living in Arctic lands of similar geography, similar climatic conditions and with similar natural resources on land and in the sea. Why then is there such a huge difference in our memories?
> The answer to that question lies not in geography, no matter how different, and not in climate, no matter how cold or dark, not in food supply, no matter how abundant or scarce. It lies in the basic attitudes of the individuals involved. I believe that at least some of the Port Harrison Inuit, and particularly the ones who now remember their relocation experience in such violent terms, had no great desire to relocate North in 1953. They went because they were persuaded

[68]Gordon Robertson, "RCAP Testimony," 557-563.

to go, persuaded with a promise of a better life in a new hunting area.[69]

The experiences of government officials, in Ottawa and in the North, were fundamentally different than those of Inuit. While examinations of Inuit experiences of relocation are limited, there is almost no discussion of government experiences. The literature examining government decision making occurs at the highest organizational level, treating individuals and even branches of government as interchangeable within the structure of the federal government. While Cavell acknowledges some governmental politics occurring between the RCMP and Cantley on behalf of the HBC, her analysis is limited to examining the effect of this tension on problem identification.[70] Grant also acknowledges that there are incongruities of the approach between the DRD and the RCMP, though again these are limited to officials in Ottawa and to the formulation of the relocation project.[71] By examining the full range of decision making and the politics between organizations within the government, and the individual experiences of government officials, this chapter illuminates how knowledge of the "wicked" problem relocation sought to address, understanding of what was happening during the implementation of the program, and the agency to choose influenced the way individuals experienced conditions in the High Arctic. This in turn influenced how those involved perceived the success of the High Arctic Relocations, both at the time and in hindsight.

[69]Doug Wilkinson, "RCAP Testimony," 21-22.

[70]Cavell, ""Consolidation and Control of All Eskimo Income": The Motive for the 1953 High Arctic Relocation."

[71]Shelagh D. Grant, "Introduction to Errors Exposed."

Part III

Constructing the Myth: Political Representations of High Arctic Relocation

Introduction to Part Three

In the decades since the High Arctic relocations, there have been significant discussions among government officials, researchers, the public, and Inuit themselves about what happened, why it happened, and the effect of what happened on Inuit and the Arctic. There are many perspectives and many ways to interpret documents and related memories. Where there is agreement, the story has remained unchanged. In the many areas of disagreement, however the story has evolved and arguments have become entrenched.

The legacy of the High Arctic Relocations has been shaped over time by the sensational coverage of the 1993 RCAP testimony, by the memorial projects commissioned by Inuit survivors, and by the centring of the Arctic – and particularly Canadian sovereignty therein – in the political arena in the twenty-first century. The relocation has been used as an example of mid-century government paternalism and racism toward Indigenous peoples, as a commentary on the challenges of Arctic governance, and as an indicator of continuous Canadian presence in the High Arctic.

The narratives that have formed over the past thirty years about the High Arctic Relocations have illuminated the inherent challenges of governmental politics. The individuals responsible for making administrative government decisions and carrying out those decisions have multiple foci, with internal and external pressures that "help shape decision situations among players who can affect the government's choice and action."[1] Allison and Zelikow describe the challenges of governmental politics as a game in which the players are forced to make rapid decisions based on their perceptions of what is important and of

[1] Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, 255-256.

greatest priority.[2] The ability of individuals to make these decisions is largely based on the information that they receive and the heuristics each individual has developed to manage that information.[3] In order to explain why a government decision may have been made, Allison and Zelikow suggest that "it is necessary to identify the games and the players, to display the coalitions, bargains, and compromises" in which individual decision-makers participate. These "games" are not necessarily nefarious or flippant. They are necessary to the functioning of government officials who are under a great deal of pressure to manage a wide-variety of complex problems.

This is clearly evident in the case of the Arctic administration in the early 1950s. The small bureaucracy charged with managing the affairs of Canada's largest region had to decide about what needed to be done and in what order of priority. The individuals did not always agree, but they shared power and had to share the responsibility for the decisions that were made.

The discussion at RCAP in the 1990s illuminated some of the challenges caused by government bureaucracies. The testimony of government officials and researchers shed light on the large tasks set to the Arctic administrators. The testimony of Shelagh Grant illuminated some of the challenges that researchers had obtaining documents: some documents pertinent to the relocation were found in the obvious place, the archival files of the DNANR and the RCMP, but others were found in the DOT archives, and yet others in the DEXAF files. The small staff of Arctic civil servants were responsible for coordinating the High Arctic Relocations, the subject of which was never brought to Cabinet. The relocation project required coordination with several departments which civil servants had to manage in addition to their daily objectives of administering the Northwest Territories and working to implement an extensive restructuring and development of the department. While governmental politics was undoubtedly an important component of the development of the High Arctic Relocations in the 1950s, and certainly played a role in the ways in which the government addressed the allegations made by Inuit in the 1990s, the interplay between different government departments, and especially between the internal and

[2]Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, 258.

[3]Richards J. Heuer, *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis* (Indianapolis, IN: University of Indiana, 1999).

external affairs pertaining to the North, were instrumental in the government's response to the RCAP Special Hearings report that resulted in the 1996 financial settlement and the 2010 apology. The role of governmental politics in this final, recent period, is the focus of Part Three.

The ways in which the relocations have been portrayed in the decades since they occurred, simplify the challenges faced by Arctic administrators as well as the hardships endured by relocated Inuit. The attempts to simplify these experiences further distort the events, intentions, and experiences. These portrayals have the effect of "mythologizing" the relocations to "serve the political, rhetorical, and/or emotional needs of the present."[4]

While the relocations have become a powerful myth in the Canadian psyche, it was not necessarily intentional. The challenges of interpreting the available documentary and oral evidence led many researchers to form their own conclusions about what happened. More importantly, the limited explicit evidence above the Deputy-Minister level regarding what appears in hindsight to be a substantial decision, necessitated speculation.

As Cohen remarks, "what people believe . . . exerts a powerful influence on how they feel and think but also on their behaviour."[5] The power of mythologizing the relocations, whether done innocently or not, has influenced how Canadians view the North and their government's actions therein. The experiences of Inuit mobilized the Canadian public to feel remorse, if not guilt, for the actions of the 1950s federal government, prompting calls throughout the 1990s and early 2000s for the government to compensate Inuit and apologize for historical wrongdoings. This remorse, fuelled by the academic debate about the intentions of the government and by public discourse about government responsibility, led to the development of a national story about the history of the Arctic and about the relocations. This national story about the relocation as effort to assert Canadian sovereignty has been largely accepted by the Canadian public, regardless of whether it is based in concrete facts about government intention. It is, like many stories of national significance, much more complex.

Part Three explores the development of the High Arctic Relocations legacy through an

[4]Cohen, *History in Three Keys*, 213.
[5]Ibid., 212.

examination of the academic debate and the memorialization of the relocations and formal government apology. The contributions of these activities to the ongoing legacy of the relocations serve to mythologize the event and the intentions of the government officials responsible. As part of the exploration of the myth of the relocation, I analyze the governmental politics that contributed to the Government of Canada's decision-making about whether to accept responsibility for the High Arctic Relocations, to provide compensation to Inuit, and to offer an apology for historical wrongdoing.

Chapter 6

The Academic Debate

Introduction

The relocation to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord of fifty-four Inuit in 1953, and an additional twenty-four in 1955, has been the subject of many official reports, articles, and books since 1989,[1] in part because the government's motivations for the relocation are not clear to researchers, the public, or the government itself. The academic debate, outlined in the Introduction, centres on the question of *why* the government undertook the project of relocating Inuit to the High Arctic in the 1950s. The way in which this question is answered has framed the discourse for more than thirty years. While sovereignty and humanitarianism have intrigued Arctic scholars for decades, the original debate did not begin in academia, and much of its ongoing presence in scholarship stems from the societal interest in matters relating to the Arctic, especially sovereignty and Inuit welfare.

The academic discussion focuses on 1950s government decision-making within Northern Affairs. It seeks to understand government motivations, in part to address a question with no clear documentary answer, and in part to provide important context for the political debate over government responsibility for the effects of relocation. That government

[1]For an extended bibliography, see "Historiography" in the Introduction

motivations appear unclear in the documentary record is a direct reflection of the challenges the government faced in effectively identifying the real and perceived elements of the "wicked" problem it faced in the North.[2] The need to provide this historical context of responsibility in response to the government's own evaluations of the relocations in the 1990s, explains the development of academic discourse and its emphasis on a dichotomous explanation for government motivations. The complex nature of the "wicked" problems, ambiguously represented in official documents, and oral testimony nonetheless provide an ongoing puzzle for academic researchers.

A further focus of the academic debate evolves directly from the political one taking place in the late-1980s. The public interest in the High Arctic Relocations stems from the discussion of the relocations in the House of Commons in November 1990 and November 1992, as well as the 1993 RCAP Special Hearings and findings released in 1994. Societal interest was high: the Special Hearings of Inuit testimony were televised and newspapers in Canada and the United States covered the proceedings closely.[3] While the political

[2]See 1.

[3]The broadcast of Inuit testimony was a contentious element of the proceedings for the former civil servants who felt they were treated unfairly, though the RCAP Commissioners were clear that the televised broadcast was a choice made by the private media in response to what they perceived to be public demand.Rene Dussault, "Special Hearing Transcripts" [28 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):133. For additional reading, see "The Legacy of the 1990s Debate" below. For additional reading on the publicity of the Special Hearings, see Matthew Fisher, "Inuit 'Internal Exiles' want Ottawa to Pay $10 Million in Compensation," *The Globe and Mail*, January 2, 1987; Fisher, "Second Exodus Splits Families as Inuit Weigh Return to Village," *The Globe and Mail*, September 19, 1988; Richard van Loon, "Inuit Resist Return from High Arctic," *Toronto Star*, September 21, 1991; Loon, "Inuit Relocation not for Sovereignty," *Toronto Star*, November 2, 1991; "A Bad Experiment with Human Lives [Editorial]," *Toronto Star*, October 9, 1991; S. Grant, "Inuit Exiles Deserve an Apology"; Tim Harper, "Seeking Amends for an Inuit Tragedy: Were Natives Pawns in a Government Experiment?," *Toronto Star*, December 22, 1991; William Walker, "Inuit want Cash, Not Apology," *Toronto Star*, January 16, 1992; Rudy Platiel, "Rights Report Recommends Apology to Inuit: Promises Broken after move to High Arctic, Study Says," *The Globe and Mail*, January 16, 1992; William Clairborne, "Canada Admits Violating Rights of Inuit People," *The Washington Post*, January 16, 1992; Andrew Orkin, "Using the Inuit as Human Flagpoles INJUSTICE: When Ottawa Moved some Inuit Families to the High Arctic in the 1950s, it Started a Dispute that Continues Even Today," *The Globe and Mail*, December 4, 1992; "Canada Watch: Inuit-relocation Probe," *The Globe and Mail*, February 24, 1993; "Internal Exile," *The Globe and Mail*, April 8, 1993; Rudy Platiel, "Inuit Accused of Making False Claims for Compensation; Sovereignty not the Goal of Relocation, Commission Told," *The Globe and Mail*, June 30, 1993; Charles Trueheart, "The Inuit Arctic Dream," *The Washington Post*, July 19, 1993;

debate focused on the responsibilities of the federal government to the Inuit relocatees, the discussions and reports included observations about the federal government's intentions and how these may have exacerbated the results of the relocation project, or contributed to the government's exploitation of Inuit in the North. Academic involvement began with the interests of the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee (CARC) in the relocation, looking to ensure that the voices of Northerners were well represented. In 1990, CARC approached Shelagh Grant, an Arctic historian, and thereby drew academia into the discussion as an observing participant without the stakes of either the ITC and Inuit or the government, although Grant's stated motivation was to represent Northern voices.[4] Grant's research in the late-1980s focused on the role of the Arctic in promoting Canadian sovereignty and security.[5] This background allowed her to explore the relationships between the timing of the relocation and the newfound concerns of government about sovereignty.

Grant's research formed the basis of the sovereignty argument, and her work gained import in the political debate as it provided credibility to the ITC claims that Inuit relocatees were part of a sovereignty program.[6] The ongoing political debate, which led to the publication of political scientist Magnus Gunther's report for DIAND in 1992, accelerated academic discourse when Gunther's documentary analysis directly confronted Grant's sovereignty thesis, creating a point of contention focused on government intentions. Gunther's analysis suggested that government motivations were focused on economic concerns, specifically those related to the economic conditions at Inukjuak. Although Gunther con-

Derek Ferguson, "Compensation for Inuit Urged," *Toronto Star*, July 14, 1994.

[4]The mandate of CARC as described in its 1971 founding documents was to "ensure that decisions on Northern development are made in the light of adequate knowledge of social, economic, and environmental considerations," but by the 1990s, CARC had developed into a credible advocate that "sought to analyze power structures, critique policy, promote innovative solutions, and inform the Canadian public" by providing a voice for citizen advocacy on Northern issues. Clive Tesar and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, eds., *Lines in the Snow: Thoughts on the Past and Future of Northern Canadian Policy Issues* (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Arctic Resources Committee, 2021), "Acknowledgements".

[5]S. Grant, *Sovereignty or Security?*

[6]Questions of the House of Commons SCAA during both the 19 March 1990 hearing and the 19 June 1990 hearing suggest that committee members were particularly interested in the question of whether the government's decision to relocate Inuit was motivated by sovereignty concerns. Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 no. 20-32," 22:33. Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 3 no. 33-42," 40:44-67.

cluded that the government had intended the relocation project to be a primarily humanitarian mission, the economic arguments have evolved significantly since that time, including a recognition of the government's stated concerns about Inuit reliance on welfare.

These two main arguments about government motivations in the early 1990s share important commonalities. There is general agreement among most researchers that the execution of the relocation was problematic and that the government's actions (and lack thereof) led to undue suffering by the Inuit.[7] There is also general agreement that the government did not effectively abide by its promise to return relocated Inuit to Inukjuak if requested. While there is differentiation on the extent of the suffering of relocated Inuit (particularly in comparison to the level of suffering that would have been experienced if the government had not intervened) as well as the fiduciary obligations of the government, it is not as well-studied as the motivations for the relocations. Perhaps more interestingly, the debate centres on the same evidence, interpreted differently. All commentators rely on the same limited records of government agents, including memos and letters from Arctic Administrators Bent Sivertz and James Cantley, RCMP Inspector Henry Larsen, and DIAND Deputy Minister Hugh Young. The emphasis on government documentation in part reflects the desire to understand the motives of the government agents themselves, but it also reflects the privileging of written documentation over oral testimony/history in the 1990s. The main difference in evidence relates to Inuit testimony. Although all reports include some references to the testimony of the Inuit who appeared at the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs hearing on 19 March 1990, and some reference the written submission to that committee, this evidence is a secondary consideration, in part because it does not

[7]There is consensus within the literature that the initial months following the relocation were difficult, though some commentators believe that conditions improved quickly, based in part on reports by the RCMP and letters from Inuit available in the archives. These commentators rely on the documentary evidence available at Library and Archives Canada (LAC) (formerly the National Archives of Canada) and discount the testimony and oral history of Inuit. See: Gerard Kenney, "Testimony" [29 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada); Kenney, *Arctic Smoke and Mirrors*; Gordon W. Smith, *The Relocation of Inuit from Hudson Bay and Baffin Island to the High Arctic in 1953, and Subsequent Events, including Disputed Sovereignty Issues* ; Gunther, *The 1953 Relocations of the Inukjuak Inuit to the High Arctic: A Documentary Analysis and Evaluation (Second Edition)*; Magnus Gunther, "Testimony" [30 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada).

speak to the role or intent of government. Further, proponents of the sovereignty argument include interviews with Inuit at Inukjuak, Resolute Bay, and Grise Fiord as part of their evidence, though it is discounted by opponents who cite the age of these interviewees at the time of the relocation as negatively impacting the accuracy of their memories and their ability to interpret circumstances around them, as well as the lack of transcripts for these interviews provided by interviewers in their publication of findings.[8]

The clash between the arguments of "human flagpoles" and "humanitarian action" is a "significant – if often overlooked – debate in modern Canadian Arctic history."[9] The origins of this debate are not as well-documented. In this chapter, I explore the question of why an academic debate on the government's intentions for the relocation project exists, arguing that the academic debate evolves directly from the political one taking place between the government and Inuit over compensation and responsibility. This is a direct result of the political effectiveness of Inuit advocacy efforts in the 1980s and 1990s. I begin this chapter by providing a brief overview of the academic discourse, and then examine the development of Inuit advocacy, followed by the response of government to these advocacy efforts as the catalysts for academic discussion and debate.

[8]For reports that include interviews with Inuit, see Soberman, *Report to the Canadian Human Rights Commission on the Complaints of the Inuit People Relocated from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet, to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay in 1953 and 1955*; Shelagh D Grant, "A Case of Compounded Error: The Inuit Resettlement Project, 1953, and the Government Response, 1990."
Gunther specifically notes his unease in relying on Inuit memory. Gunther, *The 1953 Relocations of the Inukjuak Inuit to the High Arctic: A Documentary Analysis and Evaluation (Second Edition)*, 4-5.

[9]Lackenbauer, "Introduction to Human Flagpoles or Humanitarian Action?," vi.
For further reading on "human flagpoles", see Lowther, "An Exercise in Sovereignty"; Alan Rudolph Marcus, *Relocating Eden*; Shelagh D Grant, "A Case of Compounded Error: The Inuit Resettlement Project, 1953, and the Government Response, 1990." For further reading on "humanitarian action", see Gunther, *The 1953 Relocations of the Inukjuak Inuit to the High Arctic: A Documentary Analysis and Evaluation (Second Edition)*; Kenney, *Arctic Smoke and Mirrors*; Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*; Damas, "Shifting Relations in the Administration of Inuit."

The Academic Debate: An Overview

The literature discussing the High Arctic Relocations is relatively recent. Although there was public knowledge of some relocations during the 1950s and the 1960s,[10] academic analysis of the event did not begin until the late 1980s, when two students completed Master's theses on the subject.[11] Academic interest grew in the late 1980s and especially in 1990 when the issue of the relocations came to the foreground of government discussion, as a result of increased pressure by Inuit advocacy groups. CARC's interest in 1990 led to the publication of a lengthy article by Grant that supported the Inuit claims about the role of sovereignty in the government's decision-making regarding the relocation. Grant's article, published in the Spring 1991 issue of *Northern Perspectives*, appeared in the midst of the ongoing political discussion taking place at the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs about the government's ethical and financial obligations to the relocated Inuit. A series of official reports were completed under contract to/agreement with DIAND between September 1990 and August 1992, countering Grant's narrative that sovereignty was the primary reason for the relocation.[12] These reports constitute much of the evidence base of later work, and many of the themes present in these reports continue to appear in the literature. However, while these reports provide an effective foundation for understanding the events that took place in Ottawa (where decisions were made) and throughout the Eastern Arctic (where decisions were implemented) during the 1950s, the intent of the reports was to respond to government questions about its responsibility to Inuit relocatees in the 1990s. The completion of Gunther's report (under contract to DIAND) in August 1992, which

[10]Farley Mowat, *People of the Deer* (Boston, MA: Little Brown & Company, 1952).

[11]Lowther, "An Exercise in Sovereignty"; Alan R Marcus, "Out in the Cold: The Legacy of Canada's Inuit Relocation Experiment in the High Arctic, 1953-1990" (M.Phil. University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK, 1990).

[12]Hickling Corporation, *Assessment of the factual basis of certain allegations made before the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs concerning the relocation of Inukjuak Inuit families in the 1950s: Report*; Soberman, *Report to the Canadian Human Rights Commission on the Complaints of the Inuit People Relocated from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet, to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay in 1953 and 1955*; Gunther, *The 1953 Relocations of the Inukjuak Inuit to the High Arctic: A Documentary Analysis and Evaluation (Second Edition)*.

directly contested the conclusions of Grant and Marcus,[13] initiated the academic debate over the motives of government in the 1950s.

The primary concern of the academic literature on the 1950s Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord relocations is the development of the relocation project itself. While government and Inuit advocates in the 1990s focused on questions of financial compensation for broken promises and alleged inhumane treatment of Inuit during the relocation, academics were concerned with the rationale for *why* the government chose to move families from Inukjuak to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord. The initial thesis, promoted by Lowther, Marcus, and Grant, suggested that concerns about *de facto* sovereignty were the primary reason for relocation, thereby undermining the humanitarian arguments made by the government and justifying the compensation requested by the Inuit. As additional DIAND reports were completed and more academics contributed to the conversation in the early 1990s, the argument that the government's motives were inspired by a humane desire to improve the economic welfare of Inuit in Arctic Québec gained traction.[14] The academic debate, centred at Trent University in the 1990s,[15] responded to political developments in the ITC's quest for compensation and government apology, as well as the interests and motivations of the scholars studying the issue.

The report of the Special Hearing of RCAP in 1994 did not resolve the academic debate, though discussion about the government's intentions slowed with only a handful of books and articles published after 1995 discussing the relocations at all and even fewer challenging the primacy of the sovereignty narrative.[16] Despite the significant milestone of

[13]While both Marcus and Lowther made contributions to the sovereignty argument in their Master's theses, Marcus remained involved in the debate, publishing several papers (including a version of his thesis) and books on the relocations and providing testimony to the RCAP special hearing. See A. Marcus, "Out in the Cold"; Alan Rudolph Marcus, *Relocating Eden*; Alan Marcus, "Testimony" [30 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada). As a result, he is considered one of the main proponents of the sovereignty thesis, alongside Grant.

[14]David Damas, "Shifting Relations in the Administration of Inuit: The Hudson's Bay Company and the Canadian Government," *Etudes/Inuit/Studies* 17, no. 2 (1993); Tester, "Serializing Inuit Culture"; Kenney, *Arctic Smoke and Mirrors*; Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*.

[15]Grant, Gunther, and Kulchyski were all professors at Trent University, while Lowther attended Trent as an undergraduate and studied with Grant, inspiring the subject of his Master's thesis.

[16]Book chapters and articles that examine the High Arctic Relocations since 1995 include Dick, *Muskox*

a government apology in 2010, academic publication on the relocations was largely limited in the years that followed until 2016 when Grant published *Errors Exposed* as a collection of documents related to her work on the relocations. The changing approaches to conducting historical analysis during the twenty-first century altered the debate, introducing a third argument related to the paternalism of government in making decisions *on behalf of* Inuit.[17]

Inuit Advocacy: The Quest for Recognition and Compensation

Canada's Indigenous peoples were active participants in the burgeoning civil rights movements taking place across North America in the 1960s and 1970s. Indigenous-led organizations advocating for the development of the rights of Indigenous people in Canadian society, as well as legal organizations articulating land claims arguments, developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s, including the Indian-Eskimo Association (IEA) and the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB). These organizations sought to address social issues, including the place and rights of Indigenous peoples in Canadian society, economic issues such as Indigenous welfare and housing, and legal issues, specifically regarding land claims and the rights to surface and sub-surface resources. The federal government's response to the development of these organizations predominantly took the form of social policy. The highly controversial 1969 White Paper proposal on Indian Policy sought to address the many problems faced by Canada's Indigenous communities by removing all legislative and policy delineations through the abolition of the *Indian Act*. The effect of doing so would be, in the view of government, to make Indigenous people equal to other Canadians with

Land; Damas, *Arctic Migrants, Arctic Villagers*; McGrath, *The Long Exile*; Wakeham, "At the Intersection of Apology and Sovereignty"; Slotta, "Phatic Rituals of the Liberal Democratic Polity"; Salter, "Arctic Security, Territory, Population"; Lackenbauer, "Introduction to Human Flagpoles or Humanitarian Action?"; Cavell, ""Consolidation and Control of All Eskimo Income": The Motive for the 1953 High Arctic Relocation"; Tester and Zawadski, *Inuit Relocations*. Only Slotta, Lackenbauer and Cavell challenge the sovereignty intention narrative.

[17]Slotta, "Phatic Rituals of the Liberal Democratic Polity"; Cavell, ""Consolidation and Control of All Eskimo Income": The Motive for the 1953 High Arctic Relocation."

the same rights and responsibilities. The White Paper elicited considerable backlash as Indigenous people viewed it as the government absolving itself of its historical promises and responsibilities.[18] Although Inuit were not included in the *Indian Act*, as per the SCC's 1939 ruling, the effect of the 1969 White Paper was to "bring things into focus" regarding the Government's assimilationist policies and Inuit desire for self-government.[19] The strong reaction of Inuit leadership to the 1969 White Paper and the success of the NIB in countering the government's proposal prompted the development of an Eskimo Brotherhood to represent the interests and concerns of Inuit.[20]

Following a meeting of the Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada in January 1970, the Inuit Tapirisat (Eskimo Brotherhood) of Canada was launched in 1971 to unite Canadian Inuit and "officially represent them in all matters affecting their affairs."[21] The ITC received funding from the federal government and quickly developed into a strong, national advocate for Canadian Inuit. From the beginning, the ITC was "a real hive of activity," particularly as it began work on developing land claims in Northern Québec and drafting proposals for the creation of Nunavut – a process for which there were no guidelines or Canadian precedent.[22] Although the ITC led the development of land claims in Canada, it also took on other tasks, including pursuing issues related to health, housing, game laws, and government regulations and laws.[23] With the completion of the first comprehensive land claim in 1975 came the development of the Makivvik Corporation, to administer the lands and funds obtained as part of the James Bay Northern Québec Land Claim Agreement.[24] Formed from the Northern Québec Inuit Association, Makivvik has taken an active role since its inception in promoting the economic and social well-being of Inuit, and particularly the Inuit of Northern Québec and the Eastern Arctic in what is now Nunavut. With the

[18] Weaver, *Making Canadian Indian Policy: The Hidden Agenda, 1968-70*.

[19] Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*, 73.

[20] "The Native Associations of Canada's Inuit," *Inuttituut (Department of Indian and Northern Affairs)* Special Supplement (May 1976): 26, https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2017/aanc-inac/R71-11-5-1976.pdf.

[21] Ibid., 3.

[22] Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*.

[23] Ibid., 74.

[24] Makivvik Corporate History, accessed February 14, 2024, https://www.makivvik.ca/corporate/history/makivik-corporation/.

formation of the ITC as a strong political negotiator on behalf of Inuit, and the development of Makivvik as a corporation with significant funding and legal prowess, the stage was set by 1980 for the Inuit to have a strong presence in Ottawa.

In 1981 John Amagoalik became president of the ITC. Amagoalik, who was relocated with his family from Inukjuak to Resolute Bay at five years old, believed that the relocations of 1953 and 1955 to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord were examples of the government acting in bad faith. Throughout the 1980s, Amagoalik worked with the ITC executive and Makivvik to consolidate Inuit requests for aid, developing political and legal arguments regarding the government's responsibility to the relocatees and a proposal for how the government should redress its previous wrongs.[25] Amagoalik recalls his father's persistence regarding the broken promises of returning to Inukjuak: "He kept saying, 'They lied to us, they mistreated us. They told us we could go back. They need to keep their promises.' So, he kept the conversation going."[26] Amagoalik's father was the most persistent and eventually, after he brought up the issue at every public meeting, "other people started to express their frustration as well and the story got bigger and bigger. We started talking about it more and more. The more we talked about it, the more we realized that a great injustice had been done."[27] The territorial government's insistence that there was nothing they could do and that it was the responsibility of the federal government served to escalate the issue.[28] The elections of Peter Ittinuar (1979) and Jack Anawak (1988) to Parliament provided an opportunity to bring the conversations to Ottawa and speak directly with the federal government who had ignored the relocatees for so long. With the help of Inuit MPs, the ITC (on behalf of the relocatees) and Makivvik (on behalf of the communities

[25] Although Amagoalik and the ITC maintained that their intent was to initiate redress for the hardships suffered as a result of the relocation, some have argued that the reason for Inuit political action was "to benefit from the James Bay Agreement," the rights and benefits of which the relocated Inuit were not initially able to enjoy. Graham Rowley, "RCAP Testimony," 557.
There is little written about the relationship between the Québec government and the High Arctic Relocatees. For further discussion of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (1975) and the High Arctic Relocatees, see: Hickling Corporation, *Assessment of the factual basis of certain allegations made before the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs concerning the relocation of Inukjuak Inuit families in the 1950s: Report*.

[26] Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*, 40.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid., 40-41.

who had been left behind at Inukjuak) began to push for opportunities for Inuit to tell their stories.[29]

The ITC and Makivvik spent much of the 1980s working toward two objectives: securing compensation from the federal government for Inuit who wished to return to Inukjuak, and an acknowledgement of the "Inuit exiles' contribution to Canada's sovereignty in the High Arctic."[30] For financial compensation for the relocatees,[31] the primary argument was of broken promises: the federal government had promised that it would return any relocatee who wished to return to Inukjuak but had not fulfilled this promise. The return of Inuit from Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord to Inukjuak was complicated by the incredibly high expense of moving people and objects throughout the High Arctic, and by the housing crisis in Inukjuak. Despite these challenges, many Inuit had returned on their own to Inukjuak at great personal expense, leaving behind many of their possessions. The ITC and Makivvik sought to provide financial compensation for both the moving expenses and the personal effects left behind.[32] A substantive attempt was made, particularly in 1987 and 1988, to ensure that DIAND and the government of Québec built additional housing capacity in Inukjuak.[33]

In addition to the tangible, monetary compensation for broken promises, the ITC and Makivvik asserted that the "relocations were primarily effected in order to assert Canadian sovereignty and not to promote the well-being of Inuit."[34] The claim that relocated Inuit had been used by the government to project sovereignty in the North was timely: a 1983 Environment Canada report noted that the presence of Inuit since the 1950s was a crucial element of Canada's ability to project sovereignty in the Arctic,[35] and it had become a talking point for DIAND ministers throughout the 1980s as Arctic sovereignty was

[29]Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*, 41.

[30]Government of Canada, "Annexes to Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs 34th Parliament Second Session vol. 2 no. 20-32" [1990], *Library of Parliament*, Queen's Printer of Canada:ITC-AGM Resolution 86-5 (April 1986) 22A:82.

[31]Ibid., Resolution No. 1984-M-1 22A:108.

[32]Ibid., Annex 5 22A: 68-72.

[33]Ibid., Annex 6 22A: 106.

[34]Ibid., Annex 6 22A: 108.

[35]*Environment Canada and the North: Discussion Paper*, 1983.

an ever-present concern of government, particularly following the 1985 *Polar Sea* affair.[36] Sovereignty was also an ever-present concern for Makivvik, based in Québec, as it managed land claim agreements and the development of self-government for Nunavik Inuit alongside the development of the Nunavut Territory and federal constitutional amendment discussions.[37] In this political context, Makivvik formally asked the government to acknowledge the Inuit role in protecting Canadian sovereignty.

While the government made some monetary gestures during the 1980s, and some houses were built in Inukjuak to help ease the housing situation, there was no acknowledgement of the wrongdoings of the federal government or the motivation of sovereignty.[38] As Makivvik lawyer Sam Silverstone comments, "We have been bounced from minister to minister. [Bill McKnight] was helpful [building ten houses in Inukjuak], but none of the other demands was addressed."[39] Although there was an opportunity for the ITC to appear before the standing committee in June 1986, it was not practical, given the preparation time required, and it took nearly four years to reschedule the committee appearance. This lengthy delay in hearing the Inuit testimony meant that the ITC could reference direct examples of apologies and compensation policies, including those provided to Japanese-Canadians in 1988 for racist government policies that had harmed these communities by relocating members of the community from one part of Canada to another. When the hearing took place, the federal government was in the midst of a very public process for developing an apology for Italian-Canadians and Chinese-Canadians.[40] As Markoosie Patsauq notes in his testimony,

[36]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 3 no. 33-42," 40:40.
On the *Polar Sea* controversy, see Rob Huebert, "Steel, Ice and Decision-Making: The Voyage of the Polar Sea and its Aftermath" (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS, 1994).

[37]Duffy, *The Road to Nunavut: The Progress of the Eastern Arctic Inuit since the Second World War*; Amagoalik, *The Life Story of John Amagoalik*; Makivik, "Annual Report, 1985-86" [1986], *Revues*, Société Makivik; Makivik, "Annual Report, 1986-87" [1987], *Revues*, Société Makivik; Makivik, "Annual Report, 1987-88" [1988], *Revues*, Société Makivik; Makivik, "Annual Report, 1988-89" [1989], *Revues*, Société Makivik; Makivik, "Annual Report, 1989-90" [1990], *Revues*, Société Makivik; Makivik, "Annual Report, 1990-91" [1991], *Revues*, Société Makivik; Makivik, "Annual Report, 1991-92" [1992], *Revues*, Société Makivik.

[38]See Chapter 7.

[39]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 no. 20-32," 22:21.

[40]For further discussion of the context of the Inuit request for an apology, see Chapter 7

"If Mr. Mulroney is going to come to an agreement with any of those people, like Chinese and Italians, they also should look at our problem."[41]

On 19 March 1990, the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs met to hear testimony from John Amagoalik, President of the ITC, Zebedee Nungak, Vice President of the Makivvik Corporation, Makivvik lawyer Sam Silverstone, and Inuit relocatees Markoosie Patsuaq, Andrew Iqaluk, and Samwillie Eliasialuk from the Inukjuak community, and Allie Salluviniq, Sara Amagoalik, and Martha Flaherty from Resolute Bay. The Standing Committee, as part of its mandate under Standing Order 108(2), heard evidence regarding the historical management and operation of DIAND.[42] Under oath, the witnesses provided testimony of their experiences of the relocation, noting that the government had withheld information from them before and during the relocation, and that they were mistreated by members of the Department and members of the RCMP while at Resolute Bay. The specifics of their experiences are examined in Chapter 4.

The witnesses also told the Standing Committee that they had been ignored by government and the RCMP for thirty-six years, with "every government agency and department ha[ving] denied responsibility."[43] In their comments and written submission, the witnesses and ITC explained that, in their view, the "purpose of this so-called experiment was clearly sovereignty."[44] By the conclusion of the hearing, committee members were appalled: Ray Skelly (Member of Parliament for North Island-Powell River)[45] exclaimed that "this is the most serious matter that I have heard in this House in the eleven years that I have been a Member of Parliament," noting that he believed the matter needed to be escalated to a royal commission and that the ITC would need to involve the United Nations to push for

[41]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 no. 20-32," 22:20.

[42]Government of Canada, "Standing Orders of the House of Commons (1990)" [February 1990], *Library of Parliament*, Queen's Printer of Canada.

[43]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 no. 20-32," 22:4.

[44]Ibid., 22:14.

[45]Ray Skelly was not a member of the House of Commons SCAA but was attending on behalf of his brother, Member of Parliament for Comox-Alberni, Robert E. Skelly. In a curious twist of history, Ray Skelly would lose their 1993 federal election to John Duncan, who would become MIAND in 2010 and apologize to the High Arctic Relocatees.

investigation and rectification.[46] After two-and-a-half hours of testimony and questions, the committee unanimously agreed to prepare a motion recommending that the government acknowledge the role of Inuit in Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay in protecting Canadian sovereignty, issue an apology for "wrongdoings carried out against the people of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay," and provide compensation in recognition of Inuit service and government wrongdoing.[47] Having finally managed to meet with government officials, the ITC and Makivvik Corporation, on behalf of the Inuit of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay, set in motion formal government processes that would require the government to investigate its actions and evaluate its program of relocations. The scope of the government investigation would evolve over the next four years, drawing in numerous lawyers and academics to respond to the allegations made by ITC and the Makivvik Corporation.

The Government Responds

The Government of Canada's rules of procedure for standing committees provide clear guidance on how to address concerns. The meeting on 19 March 1990 constituted a special hearing by the SCAA that came about as a result of ongoing Inuit pressure and petitioning by ITC and Makivvik throughout the mid-to late-1980s. Once the committee heard evidence and determined that it needed to report to Parliament, the government was required investigate. The results of the initial investigation were not deemed satisfactory by either the ITC/Makivvik or the standing committee, prompting additional reports and discussion.

The 19 March 1990 standing committee meeting ended with the decision to prepare a motion that would address each of the requests made by the ITC. As summarized by the Chair, the committee "made a commitment to word specific recommendations to the House and to report to the House."[48] This report, completed under the purview of Standing

[46]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 no. 20-32," 22:20.
[47]Ibid., 22:3.
[48]Ibid., 22:38.

Order 108(2) resulted in the submission of the Third Report, presented to the House on 19 June 1990. The summary of that report noted that the

> Committee has considered the latest information on current matters relating to aboriginal affairs and has agreed to report the following:
>
> - That the Government acknowledge the role played by the Inuit people who were relocated to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay in the protection of Canadian sovereignty in the North;
> - That the Government issue an apology for the wrongdoings carried out against the people of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay;
> - That the said apology be carried out in an official ceremony of due solemnity and respect;
> - That the said apology be accompanied by some form of official recognition of the contribution of the Inuit of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay to Canadian sovereignty—for example by the erection of an historic monument or marker and by the issuing of certificates recognizing this important and valuable contribution, to those relocatees still living or if deceased, their surviving family;
> - That the Government consider compensation to the Inuit of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay for their service to Canada and for the wrongdoings that have been inflicted upon them.[49]

Further, the committee requested: "That the government table a comprehensive response to this Report in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 109."[50] The request by the sub-committee *required* that the House respond to its report, and perhaps more importantly, that it do so within a set time frame of 150 days.[51] The submission of the Third Report in June 1990 and request for a comprehensive response escalated the issue of High Arctic relocation to Parliament for the first time.

[49]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 3 no. 33-42," 40:3.

[50]Ibid.

[51]In 1990, Standing Order 109 stated that "Within 150 days of the presentation of a report from a standing or special committee, the government shall, upon the request of the committee, table a comprehensive response thereto." Government of Canada, "Standing Orders (1990)."

In response to the Standing Committee's invocation of Standing Order 109, DIAND commissioned the "Assessment of the Factual Basis of Certain Allegations made before the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Concerning the Relocation of Inukjuak Families in the 1950s" Report (The Hickling Report), completed by Hickling Corporation in September 1990 and principally authored by Bud Neville, a former administrator of the DIAND, who spent much of his career in various locations of the Arctic.[52] The Hickling Report "responds to a request by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development for a study by an independent, outside consultant, mutually acceptably to Makivvik Corporation of Québec and the Department, to assess the factual basis of the allegations" made in March 1990.[53] The Hickling Corporation was careful to limit its scope to only activities carried out by DIAND and its predecessor department, the DRD, although the scope section of the report notes that this was sometimes challenging because of the way in which operations were carried out in the North during the 1950s, particularly regarding the involvement of the RCMP as Northern service agents.[54] The scope of the study did not include any allegations that "might be considered as offences under the Criminal Code," thereby removing any discussion of some of the more serious allegations made during the 19 March 1990 testimony to the Standing Committee.[55] The Report also did not study mistreatment related to Tuberculosis as this was a problem throughout the Arctic and not specific to the High Arctic Relocations. The Hickling Report's methodology was based on an examination of primary and secondary documentary evidence, and interviews with government officials who had knowledge of "the major Northern development policies of the period," and relocated Inuit. The Hickling Corporation did weight evidence based on its interpretation of the validity of oral testimony.[56] In attempting to focus on the "factual"

[52]Hickling Corporation, *Assessment of the factual basis of certain allegations made before the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs concerning the relocation of Inukjuak Inuit families in the 1950s: Report*; Bud Neville, "Testimony" [29 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada).

[53]Hickling Corporation, *Assessment of the factual basis of certain allegations made before the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs concerning the relocation of Inukjuak Inuit families in the 1950s: Report*, 2.

[54]Ibid., 4.

[55]These specifically included allegations made about tampering with mail, non-payment of wages, and sexual crimes.

[56]Hickling Corporation, *Assessment of the factual basis of certain allegations made before the Standing*

basis of Inuit claims the Hickling Report placed greater emphasis on "recorded statements made in situ by the project participants themselves" and less emphasis on "recollection of events" or on statements made about what Inuit felt and believed.[57]

The Hickling Corporation submitted its report to DIAND in September 1990. The so-called Hickling Report examined what it considered to be the three broad claims made within the allegations: the sovereignty issue, planning and implementation of the project, and promises made to the Inuit participants.[58] Within these broad claims, the Hickling Corporation did not find any evidence to suggest that the government was "motivated primarily by concern about its ownership of and sovereignty over the Arctic Islands when it actively encouraged Inuit families to relocate."[59] The Report also noted that the government made "reasonable efforts" to explain the project to Inuit prior to the relocation as well as to aid them in adjusting to life in the High Arctic; that the government had acted appropriately; and that both DIAND and the RCMP had provided the Inuit with more than had been promised, including providing for additional housing in Inukjuak and helping to reimburse the costs of return to Inukjuak into the 1980s, well after the intended period of return had ended in the late 1950s.[60] The Hickling Report concluded that an "apology by the government for the manner in which the relocation project was conceived" would be inappropriate and ultimately would "constitute deception on the part of the Government and would imply that the project was a failure, when, in fact, it was a reasonably successful

Committee on Aboriginal Affairs concerning the relocation of Inukjuak Inuit families in the 1950s: Report, 7.

The validity of oral history, and therefore of oral testimony, was considered by the RCAP in its deliberations over weighting of documentary and oral evidence, and was legally challenged as a legitimate form of evidence in Delgamuukw v. British Columbia (1997). See Julie Cruickshank, *The Social Life of Stories: Narrative and Knowledge in the Yukon Territory* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1998); Delgamuukw v. British Columbia, `https://decisions.scc-csc.ca/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/1569/index.do`.

[57]Bud Neville, "RCAP Testimony," 635-636.

For a full list of interviewees and the questions asked, see Appendices 2 and 3 of Hickling Corporation, *Assessment of the factual basis of certain allegations made before the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs concerning the relocation of Inukjuak Inuit families in the 1950s: Report*.

[58]Ibid., 5.

[59]Additional information about the Hickling Report and the government's response is found in Chapter 3 Ibid., 53.

[60]Ibid., 55-56.

endeavour."[61] The report recommended that the government support a proposal to "recognize the contribution made by the Inuit to the social, political and economic development of the High Arctic over the years," though the authors believed that the recognition should be broadly applied to Inuit and not tied to the High Arctic Relocations specifically.[62]

On 19 November 1990, three days after the 150 days allowed by Standing Order 109, the MIAND Tom Siddon tabled the government's official response to the Standing Committee's Third Report as part of routine business.[63] There was, the government said, no need for further action as the government had technically fulfilled its obligations. The following day, an incensed Robert Skelly, MP for Comox-Alberni, rose in the House of Commons to introduce a Motion of Concurrence to discuss the Hickling Report. In his view, "the so-called independent report done by the government in consultation with Makivvik Corporation is completely false in its conclusions. It is selective in its use of the evidence, and its intent was to whitewash the bureaucrats living and dead, retired and still working, who were involved in that incident."[64] He believed that the report "denied all of the evidence submitted by the Inuit witnesses who appeared before the committee or who were involved in the Grise Fiord-Resolute Bay relocations,"[65] and that DIAND had imposed the study and the consultant upon Makivvik, providing only three choices of consultant, two of whom had previously done "negative reports against natives in the past."[66] The debate over the motion lasted ninety minutes, ending when the House recessed. The motion was not voted on. The following day, during Question Period, Jack Iyerak Anawak, MP for Nunatsiaq, Northwest Territories (now Nunavut) asked Minister Siddon whether the Hickling Report was extensive enough to be definitive and conclusive and if he would "assure the Inuit people who were so adversely affected by the relocation that this study is not the final word

[61]Hickling Corporation, *Assessment of the factual basis of certain allegations made before the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs concerning the relocation of Inukjuak Inuit families in the 1950s: Report*, 56-57.

[62]Ibid., 57.

[63]Government of Canada, "House of Commons Debates: Official Report 34th Parliament Second Session (vol. 11)" [1990], *Library of Parliament*, Queen's Printer of Canada:15395.

[64]Ibid., 15444-15445.

[65]Ibid., 15444.

[66]Ibid., 15445.

on the subject, and that he is open to further discussions and negotiations with them."[67] Minister Siddon replied that he, as well as the government, found the report completely acceptable.[68] Parliament had officially accepted the Hickling Report and was ready to end discussions on the relocations.

If the Hickling Report had been accepted by all parties, it is possible that it would have been the definitive study regarding government motivations, thereby ending the academic debate before it had properly started. Although Grant's analysis differed, the Hickling Report was tabled as the official government response, purportedly based on an examination of all the available evidence. Its intent was to settle the claims of relocated Inuit and conclude the discussion on government responsibility and intent as per the motion of the House of Commons SCAA. Nevertheless, even though the mechanics of House procedure had been exhausted, the ITC did not let the matter rest. The government's decision to consider the matter closed meant that the ITC would need to resort to other avenues to achieve their aims. Though they had noted in their testimony to the Standing Committee that they preferred to avoid a legal battle and/or bringing the matter to the United Nations due to the time and costs, the ITC and Makivvik leadership believed that the government had left them no choice but to pursue non-governmental options.[69] The ITC and Makivvik appealed the findings of the Hickling Report by bringing the matter to the attention of the CHRC in January 1991. Although the High Arctic Relocations were outside the scope of what the CHRC could investigate (because they predated its creation), the government and the ITC/Makivvik coalition reached an agreement to allow Daniel Soberman, a lawyer and dean of law at Queen's University, to act as Special Reporter to the CHRC. He would "investigate the relocation of the Inuit People from Northern Québec to the High Arctic and to provide an opinion on the claims of the Inuit regarding the relocation" and, if feasible "explore the possibility of arriving at a conclusion mutually acceptable to the Inuit

[67]Jack Anawak was partially responsible for helping Inuit relocatees get a hearing at SCAA, and was present at the committee when they provided testimony in March 1990, though he was not a member of the committee.
Government of Canada, "House of Commons Debates (34:2) Vol. 11," 15525.

[68]Ibid.

[69]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 no. 20-32."

and DIAND."[70]

Soberman conducted his study between August and December 1991 with the consent of both the ITC and DIAND. The complaint to the CHRC could not be formalized, making the investigation a non-binding tribunal. However, the conclusions provide valuable insight into the evidence available and the "informal employ[ment of] juridical norms in interpreting government responsibility."[71] Soberman's independent investigation served to bolster both sides of the nascent academic debate by underlining the multiplicity of potential motives, the lack of direct evidence, and the complex political environment of Northern Affairs in the early 1950s.

On the issue of sovereignty, Soberman notes that he did not find any

> direct evidence that, either immediately before or at the time of the relocations of the Inuit, the Government in Ottawa expressly decided to use them as a significant factor in reinforcing the Canadian claim to Arctic sovereignty. No document that I have examined coming from the highest levels of government, directly states that the reason — or a primary reason -– for relocating Inuit from Inukjuak to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay was to enhance Canadian claims to territorial sovereignty in the High Arctic. However, some civil servants at an intermediate level did make written comments which suggest that they perceived the Inuit relocations to be a means of increasing Canada's presence there. It may be that they were responding to oral statements emanating from higher levels. In any event, there is ample evidence to counter the stated recollections of some former civil servants that the sovereignty issue was never in their minds at the time of the relocation.
>
> Their awareness of the general worries in Ottawa suggests two reasons for their mentioning sovereignty: first, they may have added their own view that relocating Inuit in specific locations would be helpful in this regard; second, they

[70]Soberman, *Report to the Canadian Human Rights Commission on the Complaints of the Inuit People Relocated from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet, to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay in 1953 and 1955*, 1.
ITC and Makivvik were working together to pursue justice for the Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord relocatees since 1982 but made a noted effort to increase their joint efforts following the completion of the Hickling Report in 1991. See Makivik, "Annual Report, 1983-84" [1984], *Revues*, Société Makivik; Makivik, "Annual Report, 1990-91."

[71]Soberman, *Report to the Canadian Human Rights Commission on the Complaints of the Inuit People Relocated from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet, to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay in 1953 and 1955*.

> may have referred to sovereignty simply to gain support in Ottawa for their relocation proposals.[72]

However, Soberman does suggest that, although sovereignty is not

> the most important issue in the complaint of the Inuit . . .even if every other aspect of the relocation was entirely satisfactory, the question would remain whether the Government of Canada ought to acknowledge that sovereignty was not irrelevant or even insignificant, and whether the Inuit should be thanked for their contribution towards enhancing Canadian territorial sovereignty in the Arctic."[73]

Soberman's analysis did not conclude that sovereignty was the primary motivation for government decision-making, but he did note that it was nonetheless a sufficiently important contributor to the problem identification stage of program planning that it could not be discounted as *a* motivating factor – or at least a desirable outcome.

Soberman's complex analysis of the evidence, and especially the context of the evidence, introduced the idea of a non-linear decision-making process, which would become an important component of the academic debate.[74] The report also introduced the concept of a "culture gap" between civil servants in Ottawa and Inuit, which served to exacerbate miscommunication during the implementation of the relocations, and noted the overarching paternalism of the civil service, threads which were both developed in the second wave of academic debate in the 2010s.

At the same time as Soberman was conducting his investigation, DIAND requested an additional documentary study be completed regarding the High Arctic Relocations. Gunther, a professor of Political Science at Trent University, was contracted to conduct a documentary analysis and evaluation, which "examines the issues from the perspective

[72]Soberman, *Report to the Canadian Human Rights Commission on the Complaints of the Inuit People Relocated from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet, to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay in 1953 and 1955*, 5.

[73]Ibid.

[74]The concept of totalization (a complex way of understanding that government decisions are elements of larger societal goals) in relation to the High Arctic Relocations seems to take some inspiration from Soberman's analysis of complexity in government decision-making. See: Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*.

of government letters and memoranda . . . supplemented, occasionally, by other pertinent studies and reports and also recollections by some of those involved at the time."[75] Gunther's directive was to review the three recent reports that dealt with the relocation, namely Grant's "A Case of Compounded Error", Marcus' *Out in the Cold*, and the Hickling Report. His study was to be an analysis and evaluation of these reports, responding directly to their claims regarding the motives for carrying out the relocations and the way in which the relocations were planned and implemented.[76] Notably, Gunther's documentary analysis did not include Soberman's report, which had been completed by the time of publication but not at the time of contract. Though Gunther noted Soberman's report, his analysis is that Soberman's conclusions are based on "debateable [*sic*] speculations about the motives of Stevenson and Sivertz," thereby producing an "unnecessarily circumloquacious conclusion" about the influence of sovereignty on government motives.[77]

Gunther's report ultimately concludes that "despite the mistakes... these projects must be seen (at least as portrayed in the archival documents) as a limited but not insignificant success story,"[78] noting that the government put considerable resources into the relocation projects and undertook relocation because of a "concern to improve the living conditions of the overpopulated and over-concentrated Inuit population of Northern Québec."[79] The report went further toward exonerating the government than the Hickling Report, and refuted the claims by Grant and Marcus that the government's intent was to manage sovereignty in the North. Although it did not provide any recommendations, it provided the government with a strong position from which to table its response to the question of High Arctic Relocation in November 1992.[80]

[75]Gunther, *The 1953 Relocations of the Inukjuak Inuit to the High Arctic: A Documentary Analysis and Evaluation (Second Edition)*, 1.
[76]Ibid.
[77]Ibid., 75.
[78]Ibid., 378.
[79]Ibid., 376.
[80]For further discussion of the government's evaluation of the relocations, see Chapter 3

Academic "Critiques": A Catalyst for Debate

The Gunther Report ignited debate between academics. Whitney Lackenbauer observes that "Gunther's report offered as strong an exoneration of the government's overall motives and actions as Grant's had been an indemnification," and called into question the methods and motives of Marcus, and especially Grant.[81] Much of the language used by Gunther to describe Grant's arguments in his chapter on "US Threats to *de facto* Sovereignty and the Relocation to Resolute Bay" is dismissive, though his conclusion is emphatic that sovereignty did not play a role in government decision making. While Gunther's published critiques of Grant's argument are clear, Grant's unpublished criticisms of Gunther's report focus on Gunther's direct, literal reading of documents without accounting for the broader context of the 1950s, as well as on Gunther's misunderstanding of who was making the decisions for government.[82] Grant's critiques remained largely private, as she chose not to pursue further publication but to instead "give [her] report [to the RCAP] as a scholarly evaluation, but include the documents cited there and in other reports. This would avoid a 'critique' yet at the same time let the documents themselves show the serious flaws in the governments reports."[83] Grant's concern about the implications of the academic debate on the political debate (and ultimately the resolution of Inuit claims) helps to explain the somewhat limited academic discourse. However, the ongoing political debate and the Special Hearing of RCAP in 1993, to which both Gunther and Grant made submissions, fuelled the discussion that persists to the present day.

Although Grant would not publish again on the subject of the relocations until 2016 (at the prompting of Lackenbauer) and Gunther would not publish anything further, both were heavily involved in the RCAP hearings in 1994. Their contributions to the political debate helped solidify the two main factions of academic discourse, and the "sovereignty or not sovereignty" debate remains at the forefront of all academic discussions related to programs in the Arctic. Both Lackenbauer (2020) and Janice Cavell (2021) cite the highly

[81] Lackenbauer, "Introduction to Human Flagpoles or Humanitarian Action?," xiii.

[82] Shelagh Grant, "Handwritten Comments" [n.d.], *Gunther Report*, Unpublished.

[83] Letter to Terry Fenge, executive director CARC, 1994 cited in Lackenbauer, "Introduction to Human Flagpoles or Humanitarian Action?"

polarized debate as the foundation for RCAP and all future discussion of relocation, noting that Gunther's report drew lines between those academics who viewed the relocations as being for the purpose of sovereignty and the problems in implementation as a failure on the part of government to protect those protecting the country, and those who believed that the relocation was an emergency, humanitarian effort in which poor implementation still yielded a relative government success.[84]

The completion of Gunther's documentary analysis in August 1992 signals the beginning of the academic debate regarding the High Arctic Relocations. His report spoke directly to Grant and Marcus, as well as Soberman, refuting their conclusions, and formally developing the humanitarian/economic welfare side of the debate. While the ITC and government remained interested in the responsibility of government for providing compensation for hardships endured by relocated Inuit and the return of relocatees to Inukjuak, academics began to focus on the question central to the discussion taking place among Grant, Marcus, and Gunther, and which did not include Inuit or their struggle for compensation and recognition: What were the government's motivations for relocating Inuit?

The completion of multiple comprehensive studies of the relocations uncovered significant primary and secondary source evidence, but varied interpretations of the evidence resulted in no consensus on the issue of government motivations in the 1950s. The impending special hearing of RCAP made academic study of the relocations timely. The directness of Gunther's report had raised the stakes of the debate. According to Frank Tester and Peter Kulchyski, "the struggle over what had actually happened to Inuit relocated in 1953 had increasingly become a contest among academics defending their reputations in the face of criticism from other academics. In this 'contest,' Inuit voices were increasingly lost."[85] By 1993, the academic debate was fully underway. The intensity of research in the early 1990s led to the "historical records on the Arctic relocations [being] thoroughly combed" by researchers resulting in no *direct* evidence indicating that "Inuit were relocated as part of a deliberate, high-level scheme to strengthen Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic."[86] Yet,

[84]Lackenbauer, "Introduction to Human Flagpoles or Humanitarian Action?"; Cavell, ""Consolidation and Control of All Eskimo Income": The Motive for the 1953 High Arctic Relocation."

[85]Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*, 103.

[86]Ibid., 134.

after 1993, the academic community settled into a prolonged debate that continues to the present day over whether sovereignty was the primary motivator.

The Legacy of the 1990s Debate

Following the publication of Gunther's report, the academic debate about the motivations of government began in earnest. Although both Grant and Marcus had already advanced their thesis that the federal government had been motivated to act in response to concerns about its ability to project *de facto* sovereignty in addition to *de jure* sovereignty, others interpreted the documentary evidence in favour of the government's concerns about the economic and living conditions at Inukjuak. In the ten years after Gunther's report was published, eight books and articles were written focusing on the relocations and the government's motives.[87]

The academic literature in the early 1990s relied primarily on documentary evidence, as well as on the testimony provided to the House of Commons by the Inuit in 1990. Because the academic debate was centred on the question of government motivation, government documents related to the decision-making process of the relocations were favoured over evidence about the experience or effect of the relocations.[88]

Academics seeking to prove the "human flagpoles" thesis were generally disappointed by the evidence they found in the archives. There was no "smoking gun" to be found.[89] Available government records focus on the economic and lifestyle problems that the government perceived Inuit to be experiencing in Northern Québec.[90] Some point to the lack of evidence as an indication that the government had been trying to keep its sovereignty concerns quiet, while others held that the lack of evidence for a direct motivation suggested that the government was hasty and disorganized in its decision-making. The debate relies

[87]See: "Historiography" in the Introduction.
[88]For further discussion of the experiences of relocation, see: Part Two.
[89]Kenney, *Arctic Smoke and Mirrors*, 9.
[90]For further discussion of the documentary record, see Part One.

on disputed facts, including conflicting oral testimony and the interpretation of documentary evidence present in the archives, as well as the weighting of circumstantial evidence.

The Special Hearings on the High Arctic Relocation undertaken by the RCAP in 1993 and subsequent Report in 1994 did little to quell the debate. The inclusion of researchers in the June 1993 Special Hearings further publicized the debate, with Grant and Gunther testifying on the same day.[91] Furthermore, the inclusion of a "Sovereignty Panel" to contextualize the academic testimony only further complicated the proceedings. The panel, made up of sovereignty historian Gordon W. Smith, legal scholar Donat Pharand, and lawyer Marc Denhez, was intended to provide expert opinion on the sovereignty question and clarify statements made by Inuit, civil servants, and researchers. The panel indicated that there was no legal concern about Canadian Arctic sovereignty in the 1950s and no specific challenge, with Smith explaining that:

> for a time there was a renewal of Canadian concern over such matters, again, not so much caused by any fear that the Americans were going to try deliberately to take over the North and not that there was anything wrong with the agreements which had been made.
> They seemed to be quite air-tight and favourable to Canada. Again, there were repeated American assurances that they had no intention to interfere with Canadian sovereignty. Again, it was a fear of an actual takeover by the Americans in spite of all the arrangements that had been made. I think it is fair to say that Canadian fears on this score lessened as the cold war proceeded.[92]

Smith also mentioned that different civil servants would have different levels of fear or concern about these sovereignty questions,[93] with Denhez further emphasizing that "it simply may be that at any given time not all people in the federal government who were discussing the issue of sovereignty necessarily were of a common mind about everything at all times."[94] The acceptance that fears about sovereignty were not universal underlined

[91]Shelagh Grant, "Testimony" [30 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada); Magnus Gunther, "RCAP Testimony."

[92]Gordon Smith, "Sovereignty Panel Testimony" [28 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):297.

[93]Ibid., 337-338.

[94]Marc Denhez, "Sovereignty Panel Testimony" [28 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):315.

the challenge in determining government motivations. The fact that the DIAND operated in a highly decentralized manner further complicated the analysis.[95]

The panel also acknowledged that, even though there was no evidence of a direct, legal challenge to Canadian sovereignty, occupancy of the North was nonetheless beneficial in ensuring Canadian claims, with Pharand suggesting that:

> with respect to the consequence or effect of having a presence on the part of the state's population or part of a population, I would think yes, that the presence of Canadian citizens on an island claimed by Canada would help solidify the claim to sovereignty if that claim were ever challenged. Yes, I would think that one could consider that, therefore, as a contribution to the solidification, if the word exists in English, of, in this particular instance, Canada's Sovereignty.[96]

Smith, who noted that it was unclear whether or not the Louis St. Laurent government considered Inuit to be full-fledged citizens further emphasized this point, noting that "the occupation of Canadian subjects, even if they were not fully fledged Canadian citizens would not be without some weight."[97]

The sovereignty panel provided some clarification on the history of legal sovereignty, but it was inconclusive about the possible fears about political sovereignty. The RCAP Final Report on the Relocations noted that:

> there is evidence to indicate that some of those who played a role in the planning or decision making – namely, Stevenson, Cantley, and Sivertz – were concerned, in addition to social and economic issues, about sovereignty and saw the relocation as a way of addressing that concern. Their views cannot be treated as idiosyncratic. There was a long history to the view held in some quarters – and within living memory in the Department – that colonization of the High Arctic Islands by Inuit would contribute to the assertion of Canada's sovereignty over the islands. This is not to say, however, that sovereignty was a dominant or overriding consideration. Nor is it to say that sovereignty was necessarily of

[95]For a further discussion of the bureaucratic organization of the DIAND see Chapter 1.

[96]Donat Pharand, "Sovereignty Panel Testimony" [28 June 1993], *The High Arctic Relocation Special Hearings*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):343-344.

[97]Gordon Smith, "RCAP Sovereignty Panel Testimony," 354.

> equal rank with the economic concerns that drove the relocation. It is to say, however, that sovereignty was a factor that, in the minds of some people who played key roles in the project, reinforced and supported the relocation and contributed to the attractiveness in their minds of a relocation to uninhabited islands in the High Arctic.[98]

The proponents of the "human flagpoles" argument viewed the report's conclusion that sovereignty may have played *a* role in the planning of the relocations as an acceptance of their argument that it was the *primary* reason. Inuit also viewed the report as justifying their claims. Makivvik's Annual Report for 1994-1995 stated that RCAP

> concluded essentially that all of the allegations and claims put forward by the Inuit High Arctic relocatee witnesses before the RCAP Hearings of 1993 were both justified and accurate.[99]

The report was clear that the government owed Inuit compensation and an apology, and suggested an acknowledgement by the federal government of "the special contribution of the relocatees to the maintenance of Canadian sovereignty in the High Arctic."[100] This careful wording makes specific reference to the *relocatees'* contributions to sovereignty, not to the intention of government to project or maintain sovereignty though the relocation project. This distinction is nuanced and important, though it is generally ignored (or simply missed) in subsequent literature and public commentary.

The public nature of the RCAP hearings and its media coverage brought the academic debate about government motivations to the attention of the Canadian public. Newspaper articles and editorials abounded during the early 1990s, with a focus on the mistreatment of Inuit at the hands of government.[101] Many government officials considered the critical media coverage to be unfair, and researcher Gerard Kenney dedicated a chapter of his book *Arctic*

[98] Dussault and Erasmus, *Report on the 1953-55 Relocation*, 132.

[99] Makivik, "Annual Report, 1994-95" [1995], *Revues*, Société Makivik:65.

[100] Dussault and Erasmus, *Report on the 1953-55 Relocation*, 163.

[101] "A Bad Experiment with Human Lives [Editorial]"; S. Grant, "Inuit Exiles Deserve an Apology"; T. Harper, "Seeking Amends for an Inuit Tragedy: Were Natives Pawns in a Government Experiment?"; Walker, "Inuit want Cash, Not Apology"; Platiel, "Rights Report Recommends Apology to Inuit: Promises Broken after move to High Arctic, Study Says"; Clairborne, "Canada Admits Violating Rights of Inuit People"; Orkin, "Using the Inuit as Human Flagpoles INJUSTICE: When Ottawa Moved some Inuit

Smoke and Mirrors to his argument that the "media mislead the Canadian public."[102] Nonetheless, the sovereignty argument won out in the public forum, and continues to be the favoured explanation in public history discourse.[103]

Although the sovereignty thesis is now considered mainstream in societal discourse about the High Arctic Relocations, the academic debate about government motivations persists.[104] Some, including literary scholar Pauline Wakeham, accept the sovereignty thesis as foundational in order to offer insight into contemporary colonial government practices, using the relocations as an example of the federal government's ongoing practices of settler-state sovereignty.[105] Wakeham's contention that "both Inuit bodies and Inuit aesthetics have been co-opted in the service of bolstering Canadian Arctic sovereignty" relies on and further enshrines a narrative that lacks a factual basis.[106]

Other researchers continue to explore government motivations. In 2019, political scientist Mark Salter argued that the relocations were part of a population-oriented policy of High Arctic sovereignty, suggesting that the government's primary motivation was to occupy the High Arctic islands, drawing on contemporary ideas of political sovereignty. In doing so, Salter both accepts the sovereignty thesis and builds a larger argument about the government's use of Inuit in its pursuit of a security-focused Arctic policy, despite a lack of evidence that the government did so and a lack of sovereignty-as-security policy directing the DRD. Salter's work nonetheless further entrenches the relocations within the sovereignty-for-security narrative.[107]

In contrast, historian Whitney Lackenbauer notes that the history is more nuanced:

Families to the High Arctic in the 1950s, it Started a Dispute that Continues Even Today"; *The Globe and Mail*, "Canada Watch: Inuit-relocation Probe"; *The Globe and Mail*, "Internal Exile"; Platiel, "Inuit Accused of Making False Claims for Compensation; Sovereignty not the Goal of Relocation, Commission Told"; Trueheart, "The Inuit Arctic Dream"; Ferguson, "Compensation for Inuit Urged."

[102]Kenney, *Arctic Smoke and Mirrors*, 46-51.

[103]Samia Madwar, Inuit High Arctic Relocations in Canada; High Arctic Resettlement Experiment, accessed May 15, 2024, `https://www.historymuseum.ca/blog/high-arctic-resettlement-experiment/`.

[104]See "Legacy of the Apology" in Chapter 7.

[105]Wakeham, "At the Intersection of Apology and Sovereignty," 87.

[106]Ibid., 88.

[107]Salter, "Arctic Security, Territory, Population."

his compilation of reports about the High Arctic Relocations in 2020 accompanies Shelagh Grant's 2016 publication of her research papers and notes on the relocation, recognizing the ongoing nature of the debate and facilitating access to the documentary evidence about government intentions.[108] Lackenbauer emphasizes the challenges of interpreting historical documents and argues that there is no simple explanation for the motivations of government relocations, even though there is now general acceptance that Inuit, including the relocatees, have contributed to Canadian Arctic sovereignty.[109] Lackenbauer's approach acknowledges the available evidence and concedes that there is an important, if subtle, distinction between intention and outcome in government policy.[110]

In 2021, Cavell argued that the primary government motivation was to experiment on imposing income controls and "approved patterns of economic behaviour" on Inuit in remote communities.[111] Cavell's analysis strays from the traditional sides of the debate though she does suggest that sovereignty was a "convenient pretext" for other paternalistic government misdeeds.[112] While Cavell does refute the primacy of sovereignty in bureaucratic decision making, she nonetheless represents the ongoing legacy of uncertainty surrounding government motivations and the necessity of reevaluating the history of the relocations and the debate thereof.

Most recently, Tester and Inuk anthropologist Krista Zawadski's volume on Inuit Relocations in the *Righting Canada's Wrongs* series revisits Tester and Kulchyski's 1994 argument that the relocation was intended to reduce reliance on welfare payments and restore Inuit independence.[113] Tester and Zawadski also indicate that sovereignty played a role in the decision making process: "Larsen and Stevenson also saw this as an opportunity to strengthen Canada's claim to the Arctic Islands by having Inuit living there. Sovereignty was a secondary, but important consideration."[114] Although Tester previously

[108]Lackenbauer, "Introduction to Human Flagpoles or Humanitarian Action?," viii.
[109]Ibid., iii, xv-xvi.
[110]Ibid.
[111]Cavell, ""Consolidation and Control of All Eskimo Income": The Motive for the 1953 High Arctic Relocation," 118.
[112]Ibid., 138-139.
[113]Tester and Zawadski, *Inuit Relocations*, 29.
[114]Ibid.

conceded the possibility that sovereignty contributed to decision making[115] its inclusion in this abridged narrative intended for a primary school-aged audience further perpetuates a simplified examination of government intentions and a retreat from his previous, more evidence-based interpretations.

Conclusion

The academic debate about what motivated the federal government to relocate 15 families from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord beginning in 1953 persists to the present day. The debate itself emerged because the ITC insisted that the government should recognize its concerns. The government's unwillingness in the 1990s to accept responsibility for the relocations created additional narrative strands about its motivations and the context in which decisions were made in the 1950s. The publication of the Grant article for CARC and the Gunther Report for DIAND in 1992 created a direct point of contention between academics, fuelling a discussion that would take place alongside the investigation by RCAP in 1993 and 1994.

The academic debate has quietened in recent years. Following the RCAP report, academics converged on agreement about the mistreatment of Inuit in the implementation of the relocations and the subsequent broken promises for return. These government abuses and failures were the original catalysts for Inuit advocacy and redress but did not gain traction in the 1980s.[116] The Settlement Agreement that provided $10 million dollars for a Heritage Trust Fund in 1996 and the federal government's apology in 2010 reflected the government's belated acknowledgement of past wrongs. Neither explicitly outlined the historical intentions and previous government explanations (based on the Hickling Corporation and Gunther Reports) were rejected.

The legacy of the academic debate is the unresolved question of "humanitarian action or human flagpoles?" The question itself is at the centre of public beliefs about Canadian his-

[115]Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63*.

[116]For further discussion of Inuit political advocacy and the shift toward sovereignty arguments, see Chapter 7.

tory and the national narrative of government-Indigenous relations and Arctic sovereignty. The view of that narrative has influenced the willingness of the federal government to act on Inuit requests for reconciliation: the acceptance of one view by the Liberal government in the mid-1990s resulted in a government response that provided compensation but stopped short of an apology. The acceptance of another by the Conservative government in 2010 led to an apology that did not clarify the 1950s government's intentions but did associate relocatees with sovereignty, allowing the sovereignty thesis to become the generally accepted version of the national history.[117]

[117]For further discussion of government action and the national history, see Chapter 7.

Chapter 7

Apology

Introduction

On 18 August 2010, more than 57 years after the first relocatees boarded the *C.D. Howe*, and more than 16 years after the RCAP recommended that the government issue a formal apology, the Conservatives' newly-appointed MIAND John Duncan apologized in Inukjuak on behalf of the Government of Canada and all Canadians for the High Arctic Relocations. The apology marks a turning point in the relationship between survivors and their descendants, and the federal government.

By this time, most of the original relocatees had already passed away. The government officials who had been responsible for the relocation had also died. The RCAP Special Hearings that had prompted public outrage and disappointment in the government during the mid-1990s were long over. The 1996 High Arctic Relocation Settlement Agreement, which provided financial compensation to relocatees and prohibited future claims, acknowledged the government's responsibility for the hardships suffered by Inuit and their descendants – thus addressing many of the Inuit requests and RCAP recommendations – but stopped short of apologizing. Although Makivvik Corporation expressed approval of this agreement in its Annual Report for 1996, it committed to continuing to push for an apology.[1]

[1]Makivik, "Annual Report, 1995-96" [1996], *Revues*, Société Makivik.

In addition to its 1994 report on the High Arctic Relocations, the RCAPcompleted a final report on its overall findings in 1996.[2] The Commission recommended that the government establish an inquiry into the origins and effects of residential schools, as well as urging it to take remedial action, including through an apology.[3] As with the report and recommendations regarding the High Arctic Relocations, the Liberal government of Jean Chrétien accepted the Commission's report and offered only a general statement acknowledging abuses and offering financial compensation.[4] Indigenous leaders deemed this an inadequate response to the suffering caused by the residential schools and largely rejected this overture.[5] A decade later, Prime Minister Stephen Harper offered an official, formal apology in the House of Commons during a special joint session with the Senate, where Indigenous leaders and survivors were present.[6] The official apology followed years of pressure from Indigenous organizations and the ratification of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement in 2005, which provided broader compensation for survivors and developed a fund for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).[7] Indigenous leaders present in the House of Commons were overwhelmed with emotion and relief, noting that this was an important step toward reconciliation.[8]

The Indian Residential Schools apology marked the first official government apology for historical wrongs committed against Indigenous Peoples, opening the door for future

[2]Dussault and Erasmus, *Report on the 1953-55 Relocation*.
The RCAP also released two summary volumes of supporting evidence. See Dussault and Erasmus, *The High Arctic Relocation: Summary of Supporting Information, Vols. 1-2*.

[3]Dussault and Erasmus, *Report on the 1953-55 Relocation*, 133.

[4]Government of Canada, *Statement of Reconciliation* (Ottawa, ON: Queen's Printer of Canada, 1998); Government of Canada, *Gathering Strength - Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan* (Ottawa, ON: Queen's Printer of Canada, 1998), accessed March 14, 2024, `https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100015725/1571590271585#sec2`.

[5]The notable exception was the acceptance of the statement by Grand Chief Phil Fontaine.
Matt James, "Wrestling with the Past: Apologies, Quasi-Apologies, and Non-Apologies in Canada," ed. Mark Gibney et al., in *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 144.

[6]Government of Canada, *Statement of Apology to Former Students of Indian Residential Schools* (Ottawa, ON: Queen's Printer of Canada, 2008), accessed January 15, 2023, `https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1548170252259/1548170273272`.

[7]Government of Canada, *Statement of Reconciliation*.

[8]Beverley Jacobs, "Response to Canada's Apology to Residential School Survivors," *Canadian Woman Studies* 26, nos. 3,4 (2008): 223–225.

apologies for colonial practices. Political scientist Michael Byers noted this opportunity in his critical essay calling for the government to apologize for the High Arctic Relocations, which appeared in the *Globe and Mail* on the following day, 12 June 2008.[9] Although Inuit calls for apology had persisted in the years since the Settlement Agreement was signed, the Indian Residential Schools apology and the fifty-fifth anniversary of the original 1953 relocations in 2008 bolstered the effort and prompted an outpouring of Inuit artistic and cultural representations that commemorated Inuit sacrifice and contributions to Arctic sovereignty, including the development of Inuit-directed films and the Nunavut Tunngavik Arctic Exile Monument Project.[10]

Under the Conservative government of Harper, the federal government's resolve to promote its active presence in the Arctic increased dramatically.[11] The emphasis on human and environmental security that had characterized the Liberal government's approach to the North initially gave way to a focus on "hard security" through military and economic development.[12] Although the government had articulated an extensive program of Arctic activities and development, many for the purposes of establishing or defending sovereignty claims, in 2010, an apology for High Arctic Relocation was not on the agenda in the House of Commons, or the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs (INAN) subcommittee.[13]

This chapter examines the historical development of an apology for the High Arctic Relocations and the legacy of the 2010 apology. I argue that, although the government did not specify its historical motivations, the perception of the apology and its legacy have

[9]Michael Byers, "Mr. Harper, Apologize to the 'High Arctic Exiles'," *Globe and Mail*, June 12, 2008.

[10]Lepage, *Martha of the North*; Kunuk, *Exile*; Nunavut Tunngavik, Arctic Exile Monument Project; Amy Prouty, "How Art Brought About an Apology for High Arctic Relocations," *Inuit Art Quarterly*, 2016.

[11]Lackenbauer and Dean, "Introduction to Canada's Northern Strategy under Harper," xxxii.

[12]Lackenbauer and Dean, "Introduction to Canada's Northern Strategy under Harper"; P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "Toward a Comprehensive Approach to Canadian Security and Safety in the Arctic," ed. Wilfrid Greaves and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, in *Breaking Through? Understanding Sovereignty and Security in the Circumpolar Arctic* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2021); Government of Canada, "House of Commons Debates: Official Report 40th Parliament Third Session (vol. 145 no. 6)" [2010], *Library of Parliament*, Queen's Printer of Canada.

[13]See Government of Canada, "Speech from the Throne" [2010], *Library of Parliament*, Queen's Printer of Canada.

entrenched the myth that the High Arctic Relocations contributed to Canadian sovereignty. This chapter examines the theory and requirements of official apologies, provides historical context for the apology, analyzes the text of the apology itself, and examines the legacy of the apology in the national historical narrative.

Background to Official Apologies

Official apologies are a recent phenomenon, beginning in the mid-twentieth century as a response to the recognition of state-sanctioned inhumanity occurring before and during the Second World War.[14] While apologies began in 1945 with postwar Germany offering "moral and material reparations" to surviving Jews and to the state of Israel,[15] they have become a symbol of government moralism and a tool of the state in telling the national story. Although early apologies focused on recent government actions (or inaction) toward minority, civilian populations during wartime, national apologies have become an important element of postcolonial reconciliation between state governments with histories of settler-colonialism and Indigenous Peoples, including Canada.[16] The 2010 High Arctic Relocation apology is an expression of postcolonial reconciliation, though its meaning and the development of the apology differ significantly from other apologies offered in this context.

Official apologies are "statement[s] of regret presented by a representative of a state or a government . . . to a particular group of citizens . . . for wrongs committed against them by or in the name of the state or government."[17] Although this definition of official apologies seems straightforward, there is significant debate within the academic literature about the nature of apologies offered by and on behalf of governments. A dominant

[14]Melissa Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
[15]Ibid., 162.
[16]Ibid.
[17]Although official apologies can be given on behalf of any organization, including churches and not-for-profits, the focus of this chapter is on the actions of the federal government, and on apologies from the state toward members of its citizenry.
Lisa S. Villadsen and Jason A. Edwards, "Introduction," in *The Rhetoric of Official Apologies: Critical Essays* (New York, NY: Lexington Books, 2021), 2.

theme is the politics of apologies with many scholars suggesting that official apologies are political acts, given by political figures and resulting in a political outcome.[18] While an official apology must have, at its core, a deliberate statement of acknowledgement of a past wrong, Political Scientist Melissa Nobles suggests that an official apology is also a political statement: "political actors use apologies (or non-apologies) to express support for and advance the ideas and policies they favour. . .[An apology] is proof that the government recognizes its obligations to mend current disadvantages . . . [and is used as a platform] for announcing new policy directions and promoting societal reconciliation."[19] Nobles also suggests that a non-apology, or a refusal to apologize, has a similar political function in that it is a representation of a government's unwillingness to support the claims of a particular group or to recognize an obligation toward that group.[20]

Nobles argues that an attachment of apology to Indigenous peoples' demands for restitution, reparations, and self-governance exists, rooted in historical injustices. These present-day claims are political in that they request political action to be undertaken by governing officials. They are based on historical wrongdoing. Apologies are at the root of these requests, acknowledging and morally evaluating the historical wrongdoing, thus providing justification for Indigenous peoples' claims for contemporary restitution. It is not, Nobles argues, "a big leap from acknowledgement and moral evaluation of historical injustices to an expectation that some attempt at repair be initiated."[21] As a result, there is an inherent set of political stakes to official apologies.

Apologies are also moral acts. Political scientist Tom Bentley suggests that "even if other objectives are at play, apologies are in some part about pursuing forgiveness through recounting wrongdoing", arguing that forgiveness is a desired outcome of apologies, even if it is not the primary desired outcome.[22] Bentley suggests that this pursuit of forgiveness is not only about an attempt to reconcile between two sides, but that there is a desire

[18]Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies*; Villadsen and Edwards, "Introduction to The Rhetoric of Official Apologies."

[19]Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies*, 111.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Ibid., 29.

[22]Tom Bentley, "Settler State Apologies and the Elusiveness of Forgiveness: The Purification Ritual that Does Not Purify," *Contemporary Political Theory* 19, no. 3 (2020): 383.

by the apologizer for absolution, which cannot be attained without re-evoking the settler nation and histories of colonialism in appealing to this higher power, thereby undermining the quest.[23]

Ultimately, official apologies are intended to address past wrongs and move two sides – the government and those receiving the apology – closer together to improve the present and future, as part of a move toward reconciliation. Apologies are one of many "reconciliatory gestures" employed by the state as a means of reconciliation between the state and an aggrieved group, and redress for past wrongs committed by the state, according to English literature professor Jennifer Henderson and Indigenous studies scholar Pauline Wakeham.[24] However, the apology itself is a rhetorical act that contributes to an historical narrative about both the relationship between the two sides and the character of the state itself.[25] Henderson and Wakeham suggest that "the culture of redress does not simply amount to a dynamic of demand and response through which scores are settled, debts repaid, and apologies delivered; it effects a much wider epistemological restructuring, one that is not managed from any single vantage point or locus of control."[26]

Although rooted in a call for redress and righting past wrongs, apologies function as narrative devices in the construction of a nationally accepted version of history. Nobles argues that "political actors are guided most significantly by their ideological position on group claims and their related understandings of national history and its moral burdens... The 'winners' in apology politics are those domestic actors whose views about national

[23]For a further discussion of how apologies reproduce colonial structures, see Eva Mackey, "The Apologizers' Apology," ed. Jennifer Henderson and Pauline Wakeham, in *Reconciling Canada: Critical Perspectives on the Culture of Redress* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2013); Bentley, "Settler State Apologies and the Elusiveness of Forgiveness"; A. Dirk Moses, "Official Apologies, Reconciliation, and Settler Colonialism: Australian Indigenous Alterity and Political Agency," *Citizenship Studies* 15 (2011): 145–159.

[24]Jennifer Henderson and Pauline Wakeham, "Introduction," ed. Jennifer Henderson and Pauline Wakeham, in *Reconciling Canada: Critical Perspectives on the Culture of Redress* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 6-10.

[25]Jeremy Cox and Tiara Good, "Exceptional Histories and Obscure Gestures: The U.S. Government's Official Apology to Native Peoples," ed. Lisa S. Villadsen and Jason A. Edwards, in *The Rhetoric of Official Apologies: Critical Essays* (New York, NY: Lexington Books, 2021).

[26]Henderson and Wakeham, "Introduction to Reconciling Canada," 10.

membership and national history prevail."[27] Apologies begin with an historical injustice and a particular understanding about historical events, and result in "validat[ing] reinterpretations of history by formally acknowledging past actions and judging them unjust," leading to the "stregthen[ing] of history-centred explanations of minority disadvantage" and "advanc[ing] reconsideration of the obligations and boundaries of membership in the national community."[28] This viewing of "historical wrongs not just as processes or events but also as narrative constructions of the past" has the effect of "constrain[ing] or enabl[ing] contemporary understandings of political responsibility," argue political scientists David Myer Temin and Adam Dahl.[29] They suggest that "changing our narratives does not resolve the problem of historical injustice, but it does allow a polity to conceive of the problem to which it addresses itself in a different way."[30] Thus, apologies are both about the acknowledgement of *a* version of the past and historical injustices committed in that past, as well as the responsibilities and commitments of the present. They are rhetorical devices that signal an emotional direction. While an apology may have an effect on the victims, perhaps its largest effect is generating public discourse and debate about the national history.[31]

Fundamentally, apologies do not themselves alter legal status or change policy. Instead, they "ratify certain reinterpretations of history. National histories are reexamined; justifications are looked at anew; aspects of history that were ignored draw focus; and actions that were denied are acknowledged."[32] The contemporary political responsibility for historical wrongs may result in changes to legal status or to policy as a result of the historical narrative constructed and accepted by the existence of the apology. Temin and Dahl centre historical narratives as "both products and resources of political struggle rather than frameworks that exist prior to political contestation. In the course of political struggle, narrative forms of representing historical injustices either enable or constrain how political

[27]Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies*, 33.
[28]Ibid., 72.
[29]David Myer Temin and Adam Dahl, "Narrating Historical Injustice: Political Responsibility and the Politics of Memory," *Political Research Quarterly* 70, no. 4 (2017): 906.
[30]Ibid.
[31]Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies*, 112-138.
[32]Ibid., 29.

actors understand and attribute responsibility for addressing those wrongs."[33] In managing that responsibility, governments tend to take radically different approaches, which Nobles suggests occurs predominantly along partisan lines:

> The partisan differences, then, are reflected in the use and interpretation of symbolic efforts. For right-wing governments, the apology, even when given (often reluctantly) is direct and narrow in its intent. It is not viewed as applying to the whole of national histories. Nor is it an endorsement of larger political and legal aspirations. For left-leaning governments, the apology is often cast as an indictment of the historical record and as supportive, admittedly in ambiguous ways, of Aboriginal aspirations. Indeed, it is this general sympathy that makes the limited efforts of left-leaning governments more puzzling, while also explaining why they are judged more harshly.[34]

The use of apologies in constructing an historical narrative that meets the political needs of the governing party suggests that the act of apologizing does little to bring two sides together and is therefore only superficially an act of reconciliation.

There is also significant academic debate about the meaningfulness of apologies in the context of reconciling two parties. In discussing the rhetorical power of official apologies, communication scholars Lisa Villadsen and Jason Edwards question the value of apologies by individuals with no stake in the acts of wrongdoing in the past and the ability of that person to adequately express contrition. They conclude that apologies, if accepted, can "make us think and feel differently about events in the past and thereby they can be an element in the creation of a better present and future."[35] Nobles furthers this theory of apologies as tools of reparative justice by noting that apologies can have an effect on the membership of an aggrieved party within the state that has apologized.[36] Nobles also suggests that there is an opportunity for an apology to change the legal or political status of a group within the state, though the effects of apology can be limited by managing

[33]Temin and Dahl, "Narrating Historical Injustice," 907.

[34]Melissa Nobles, "Revisiting the 'Membership Theory of Apologies': Apology Politics in Australia and Canada," ed. Mihaela Mihai and Mathias Thaler, in *On the Uses and Abuses of Political Apologies*, Rhetoric, Politics and Society (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 134.

[35]Villadsen and Edwards, "Introduction to The Rhetoric of Official Apologies," 6.

[36]Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies*.

the scope of what is being apologized for and to whom the apology is directed.[37] As such, the precise wording of an apology is important in determining its effects, both for the recipients of the apology, and for the government who, in Noble's view, will apologize only on the basis of ideology. As Nobles suggests, apologies are "interpreted to suit [political elites'] larger policy and political agendas" and thus are given only when it is politically suitable for those in power.[38] Thus, a balance between competing interests of the present and the differing interpretations of the past must be struck when making an apology. Communications scholars Jeremy Cox and Tiara Good argue that "how historical time is conceptualized and narrated by a polity imposes certain limits on how an apology will be understood and accepted as a legitimate act of reconciliation."[39]

In the Canadian context, apologies as tools of reconciliation and redress are further complicated by settler-colonial narratives and the construction of an apology narrative within these pre-existing historical narratives.[40] Canadian reconciliation in the twentieth century focused on racial injustices committed during wartime, with an increasing list of reconciliatory gestures since the first Canadian apology in 1988 to Japanese-Canadians for the internment policies enacted under the *War Measures Act* beginning in 1942.[41]

The Canadian approach to the so-called "Age of Apologies" and national redress in the

[37]Nobles, "Revisiting the 'Membership Theory of Apologies'," 125.

[38]Ibid., 133.

[39]Cox and Good, "Exceptional Histories and Obscure Gestures," 182.

[40]For further reading on settler-colonial narratives and apology politics, see Jennifer Henderson and Pauline Wakeham, eds., *Reconciling Canada: Critical Perspectives on the Culture of Redress* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2013).

[41]Between 1988 and 2010, the Government of Canada has apologized for historic racially motivated policies in 1990 (Italian Canadians), 1998 (Statement of Reconciliation), 2006 (Chinese Head Tax), 2008 (Ukrainian Canadians, Residential Schools, and the Komagata Maru incident), and 2010 (High Arctic Relocations). Since 2010, the rate of apologies has increased. For further reading on the Japanese-Canadian apology and the context of Canadian redress policies in the years since, see Thomas Tomchuk and Jodi Giesbrecht, *Redress Movements in Canada*, Immigration and Ethnicity in Canada 37 (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Historical Association, 2018). For further reading on Canadian apologies, see Mark Gibney et al., eds., *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies*; Bonnie McElhinny, "Reparations and Racism, Discourse and Diversity: Neoliberal Multiculturalism and the Canadian Age of Apologies," *Language and Communication* 51 (2016); Freja Kjaerby, ""The Sorriest Prime Minister:" Apologies of Justin Trudeau," *Leviathan* 10 (2024): 26–37.

late-twentieth and early-twenty-first centuries has been somewhat inconsistent. Henderson and Wakeham suggest that Canadian initiatives have been "shaped by the shifting and ambivalent domestic forces of a series of different government administrations and policy changes, partisan one-upmanship, and domestic and international political pressure," leading to a series of actions that are neither internally self-consistent, nor effective in reconciling the state and the minority groups seeking apology.[42] Despite the inconsistencies in implementing apologies and redress and the perceived ineffectiveness of apologies for the goal of reconciliation, Henderson and Wakeham are clear that the culture of redress has had positive political consequences, shaping the narrative of Canada as a tolerant, multicultural beacon of moral leadership:

> The state has arguably framed its approach towards reconciliation as a more committed and coherent project than it actually is in order to shore up national mythologies of Canada's dedication to pluralism and to reinforce Canada's international reputation as a peacekeeping, peace-making nation. Like the project of "official multiculturalism" to which it is articulated, reconciliation has been appropriated by hegemonic discursive formations for the purposes of framing the Canadian nation-state as a leader in the "'globalization' of forgiveness," modelling values of civility and tolerance for the world.[43]

This narrative, in which Canada as a nation-state demonstrates its active engagement in historical reckoning and atonement for its historical injustices, serves domestic and international political purposes, reconstructing Canada as a committed partner to minority groups in moving forward in reconciliation. This "apologizing nation" myth functions as a foundation for the reconstruction of national history in each reconciliatory gesture.

In the case of the High Arctic Relocations, the approach to reconciliation in the 1990s is viewed in the literature not only as a non-apology, but as disrespectful. In 2008, political scientist Matt James argued that successive governments failed to apologize to Inuit for the "deceitful and humiliating relocations" in spite of what he believed to be strong evidence of government injustice and a bevy of official recommendations to do so.[44] He also

[42]Henderson and Wakeham, "Introduction to Reconciling Canada," 7.
[43]Ibid.
[44]James, "Wrestling with the Past," 143.

alleges that "the Inuit 'reconciled' under duress,"[45] by signing a "take it or leave it offer" of financial compensation made by the government in order to aid aging Elders before they died.[46] James argued that the "High Arctic Relocation Reconciliation Agreement is characterized by a difficult-to-access written record, refusal to acknowledge wrongs, failure to take responsibility or state regret, an imposed requirement of forgiveness, and inadequate publicity and ceremony."[47] It was, James insists, "an aggressively preemptive non-apology leavened by compensation."[48]

While James' critique of the government's political approach to the High Arctic Relocation non-apology is instructive, it relies on an argument that the government's lack of apology in the 1990s is of greater moral badness because of the nature of the injustice: the government not only forcibly relocated Inuit to a harsher environment, it did so "under a dubious and undisclosed rationale" which he views as more egregious than the relocations of either Japanese-Canadians or Italian-Canadians (groups which had already received full apologies).[49] James's underlying assumption that the relocations took place to "establish a human presence in Canada's sparsely populated far North to reinforce Canada's sovereignty there" reflects the 1990s academic and public discourse about government motivations rather than government documents.[50] James's reliance on Alan Marcus' "Out in the Cold" indicates the alignment of sovereignty-as-motivation narratives. This same reliance on the sovereignty narrative generated by the 1990s academic debate appears in Wakeham's 2014 article that postdates the apology. Wakeham's criticism of the government's apology begins from the foundational belief that sovereignty was a crucial element of government decision-making. By accepting the sovereignty thesis, both James and Wakeham focus on the government's failure to apologize for its exploitation of Inuit for state purposes.

[45]James, "Wrestling with the Past," 143.

[46]Jane George, "Canada unveils new Arctic foreign policy statement" [20 August 2010], *Nunatsiaq News*, Nunatsiaq News, `https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/98789_canada_unveils_new_arctic_foreign_policy_blueprint/`.

[47]James, "Wrestling with the Past," 143-144.

[48]Ibid., 144.

[49]Ibid., 149.

[50]Ibid., 143.

When the official apology was made in 2010, Wakeham noted that it was both a triumph for Inuit and an uneasy victory.[51] Wakeham asserts that the High Arctic Relocation apology "was transformed by the government into an opportunity to reassert Canada's Arctic claims in an era of global warming that is rendering the region a renewed site of international interest."[52] Although Wakeham acknowledges that the apology clearly held importance for many Inuit, it also served to "enlist the affective and performative force of an apology" in an "effort to manage redress claims."[53] She asserts that the "government quietly supplements the *mea culpa* with the reaffirmed master narrative of humanitarian intervention" by "shifting the question of motive to a Backgrounder that was not included in the performance of apology itself," thus transforming "an exploitative rationale that would irrefutably mark the relocations as a human rights abuse into an ostensibly benevolent recognition of Inuit 'contributions'."[54] This uneasy performance of apology undermines any reconciliatory intention of apology, Wakeham argues, which is further disrupted by the coordination of the High Arctic Relocation apology and the launch of the *Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy* two days later.[55]

The inherent tension of official apologies resides in the aggrieved party's desire for acknowledgement of and compensation for wrongs suffered and the government's desire for political reconciliation. Government apologies are necessarily political, occurring within the context of government interests and priorities. Advocates for apologies engage in this space, contributing to the political language and context. While critics of government apologies suggest that the use of official apology as a political tool undermines sincerity, it is necessary to understand apology as one element of a reconciliatory process in which both parties have a role. In the case of the High Arctic Relocations reconciliatory process, the apology marks the culmination of advocacy efforts and narrative building begun in the mid-1980s, reflecting both Inuit and federal government politicization of a humanitarian tragedy.

[51]Wakeham, "At the Intersection of Apology and Sovereignty," 86.
[52]Ibid.
[53]Ibid., 97.
[54]Ibid., 98.
[55]Ibid., 101.

Context for the High Arctic Relocation Apology

The requests by Inuit for redress for the suffering and hardship caused by the High Arctic Relocations began almost immediately. There is evidence that some Inuit asked to be returned from Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord to Inukjuak and Pond Inlet beginning in 1953, with government documents showing requests to finance a return throughout the 1970s and 1980s.[56] As Ben Sivertz explained in his testimony to the RCAP Special Hearing in June 1993, these requests were made by individuals, not by the group or family unit, which Sivertz used to justify his denial of the requests.[57] By the 1980s, Inuit had organized into political groups, including the Makivvik Corporation and the ITC, providing them with the organizational mechanism to advocate to the government on behalf of the group of relocatees for acknowledgement and compensation. By organizing into political and legal groups, Inuit were able to gather the resources necessary to bring High Arctic Relocation to the attention of the federal government in Ottawa and engage with the institutional mechanisms of the government, thereby initiating a political and legal process that would take more than 25 years.

Inuit advocacy for acknowledgement and compensation began as informal discussions in the early 1980s between Inuit, represented by Makivvik, asking MIAND John Munro to facilitate a return of Inuit from Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord to Inukjuak.[58] DIAND initially delayed taking any action, arguing to Makivvik that nothing could be done until the Secretariat dealing with Northern Québec Inuit issues was set up within DIAND's Ottawa office in 1984. In the meantime, Makivvik passed a resolution to use its organizational resources to engage on an institution-to-institution level with the federal government to ensure that the government paid for the return of Inuit to Inukjuak and to compensate those who had already returned at personal expense.[59] The operative clause of resolution 1984-M-1 outlined Makivvik's mandate:

[56]See Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 for detailed discussion of the requests to return.

[57]Bent G. Sivertz, "RCAP Testimony."

[58]Makivik, "Annual Report, 1983-84," 49-50.

[59]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 Annexes," 22A:108-109.

THAT this Assembly request Makivik to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that the federal government;

a. fully finance the relocation of Inuit back to Inukjuak, as requested, without further delay;
b. compensate Inuit for damages suffered, particularly those Inuit who have already moved back to Inukjuak on their own, leaving their personal property behind; and
c. reimburse Makivik for all costs incurred in ensuring that the federal government fully resolve this unjust situation, with a renewed sense of urgency and commitment.[60]

The resolution called for the federal government to financially compensate High Arctic Inuit so they could return to Inukjuak upon request. Thus the initial calls for acknowledgement and compensation were based entirely on the broken promise of the right to return to Inukjuak from the High Arctic. The request relied on an economic argument rather than a moral argument for compensation, emphasizing that the government has a fiduciary responsibility to relocated Inuit to return them to their home communities which it had not yet fulfilled.

In response to the call for financing a return, Munro committed in 1984 to undertaking research to investigate what Makivvik termed the "displacement of Inuit in the 1950s" with the intent of developing a "a strong argument to bring to the federal Cabinet in support of federal financing for a move of Inuit families from the High Arctic back to Inukjuak."[61] The investigation centred on the question of whether or not the federal government had promised to finance the return of displaced Inuit in 1953 and 1955. At this time, Makivvik specifically used language around displacement.[62] The study, completed in August 1984 and released that October, ultimately determined that a promise had been made by the federal government, and that even if such a promise had not been given to Inuit by the

[60]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 Annexes," 22A:108-109.
[61]Makivik, "Annual Report, 1984-85" [1985], *Revues*, Société Makivik:56.
[62]Ibid., 56-57.

federal government, federal officials did not discourage anyone from thinking that they did.[63]

Despite this progress, the turmoil of federal politics resulted in Cabinet changes that meant a new Minister succeeded Munro in June 1984, and a federal election that autumn saw the Liberal government fall. The new Conservative MIAND, David Crombie, took over negotiations, meeting with Makivvik in spring 1985 to begin the process of securing federal government action to assist the displaced Inuit.[64] By December 1986, Makivvik and Crombie had agreed to compile a comprehensive list of demands by relocatees, along with the development of new housing in Inukjuak to accommodate the returning population.[65]

The federal government believed that it had a limited financial obligation but, alongside the government of Québec, was prepared to provide funding for additional housing in Inukjuak to support the influx of Inuit population, as well as to cover some of the "removal costs" incurred by those who chose to move back to Inukjuak from Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay.[66] In February 1986, the DIAND called for a minimum of ten housing units to be built in Inukjuak that summer and agreed to receive a detailed list of compensatory and other measures requiring government action from Makivvik. In 1987, yet another MIAND, Bill McKnight wrote to Makivvik President Mark Gordon, informing him that the government had committed to providing funding:

> Your legal counsel, Mr. Sam Silverstone wrote to me on January 21 forwarding a comprehensive list of compensation items you are seeking on behalf of those people who moved to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord in the 1950's, including housing for those who have moved or wish to relocate back to Inukjuak.
>
> There have been ongoing discussions with Québec housing officials on the provision and erection of the housing units which I, as well as my predecessor, have promised for Inukjuak. In this regard, I am now pleased to be able to inform you that approval has been received to provide the required funding for the ten

[63]Makivik, "Annual Report, 1984-85," 56-57.
[64]Makivik, "Annual Report, 1985-86," 51-52.
[65]Ibid.
[66]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 Annexes," 22A:10.

> units in question. We will be moving quickly to complete the agreement with Québec in order that the housing can be constructed next summer.
>
> In regard to the relocation costs, I believe that I had indicated the Department would be willing to consider reasonable removal costs which were incurred (or which will be incurred) by people relocating to Inukjuak. Authority has been received to provide up to $50,000 in the current year to compensate those families who have already moved and a further $150,000 for those who move back in 1988-89.[67]

This commitment to compensation was a step forward, but was neither enough to cover the costs of moving, nor was there sufficient housing created in Inukjuak to support the number of Inuit returning to that community.[68]

By this time the conversation about compensation had changed. At a November 1986 meeting in Iqaluit, Makivvik met with representatives of the relocatees and decided that "a compensatory trust fund of $10 million would be the minimum which the nineteen original families relocated in the 1950s could reasonably consider" as compensation for hardships endured.[69] Representatives at the meeting also concluded that it was necessary to tabulate the costs incurred by those who had already moved back to Inukjuak and who were owed reimbursement by the government.[70] Given the slow movement of the DIAND in resolving these claims and the constant turnover of ministers, they also agreed to develop a comprehensive position paper on the relocations for immediate submission to DIAND.[71] The January 1987 position paper by Makivvik Corporation, ITC, and the Kativik Regional Government reflected Inuit desire for an affective compensation for the hardship and suffering, as well as a formal acknowledgement of the same.[72] The position paper identified the financial compensation requests in detail, and included a section on the development of a Heritage Trust Fund:

[67]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 Annexes," 22A:10.
[68]Ibid., 22A:111-118.
[69]Makivik, "Annual Report, 1986-87," 36.
[70]Ibid., 36-37.
[71]Ibid., 36-39.
[72]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 Annexes," 22A:66-80.

> Canada should establish and fund a Heritage Trust Fund of $10 Million as compensation to the original nineteen (19) families relocated by the Government of Canada to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay from Inukjuak (and Pond Inlet). This Fund would be administered by a Board of Trustees made up of representatives drawn from the original nineteen (19) families as well as Makivik representatives.
>
> Terms and conditions of administration of the Fund would include restrictions limiting withdrawals from the Fund to only income of the Fund. The capital of the Fund would not be drawn upon but would remain as a perpetual fund producing revenues for the nineteen (19) original families and their descendants. These specific terms and conditions would be discussed with and established by the original nineteen (19) families in consultation with Makivik.
>
> The $10 Million would be payable into the Fund by Canada in one sum upon the signature of an agreement providing for all the remedial and compensatory measures contained in the present section of this Statement.
>
> The Heritage Trust Fund would compensate Inuit of Grise Fiord, Resolute Bay (and Pond Inlet where relevant) on a once and for all basis, in addition to the other measures provided for here, for the suffering and injustice which they underwent due to Canada's "experiment" of the 1950's.[73]

The Heritage Trust Fund reflected the requests of other aggrieved groups' requests for redress and would provide a monetary acknowledgement of the suffering and hardship.

The 1987 position paper also included the first requests for formal acknowledgement, requesting that:

> Some form of special and formal recognition must be undertaken for Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay Inuit and for their special contribution to assisting Canada in establishing its sovereignty in the High Arctic. It is suggested that such special recognition take the form of a specially minted silver or gold medal to be given to each of the original families and each of their descendants in the context of a special ceremony to be conducted by the Prime Minister of Canada.
>
> Additional forms of recognition could involve installation of special bronze plaques in Resolute Bay, Grise Fiord, Pond Inlet and Inukjuak to commemorate the contribution of these people to Canadian history. An appropriate

[73]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 Annexes," 22A:72-73.

> inscription of such plaques could easily be worked out between Canada and these Inuit.
>
> One other possible additional form of recognition in this regard could be the printing of a special Canadian stamp recognizing the historical importance and contribution of these Inuit.[74]

This request for formal recognition of Inuit contributions to Canadian sovereignty is important for two reasons: First, the request signals the beginning of Inuit argumentation that the relocation was conducted for the purpose of the Canadian state establishing and maintaining sovereignty in the High Arctic. This argument is an important articulation of Inuit beliefs in the 1980s about the motivations of government in undertaking the relocation in the 1950s. Second, the request for recognition does not specify an apology. The request's focus is on artistic representations of Inuit contributions to sovereignty, reflecting Inuit practices of cultural resilience within Canadian heritage practices.[75] By the following year, the request for formal recognition was part of the comprehensive list of compensatory and remedial measures that were demanded to finally resolve the grievances: official government recognition of the significant contribution made by Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay Inuit to Canadian history was included in the demand, though not in the response of

[74]The request for recognition in the form of a coin or a stamp is particularly interesting, as the Canadian government has often used stamps and money to mark important historical moments in Canadian history as well as to commemorate important events in the history of human rights. Examples of this include Josiah Henson's 1983 stamp, and, more recently Viola Desmond on the $10 bill. Of particular importance is that the High Arctic Relocations had previously been commemorated on both stamps and the $2 bill. Daniel Dumas has argued that 1955 *Eskimo Hunter* stamp issued by Canada Post is connected to the High Arctic Relocations and is a subtle reinforcement of Canada's "physical and visual effective occupation of the region."Daniel Dumas, "Place Them on a Stamp: Inuit, Banal Colonialism, and the 'Pioneer Experiment' of the High Arctic Relocations," *Political Geography* 105 (2023): 9. Furthermore, the Canadian $2 bill circulated between 1974 and 1979 featured Joseph Idlout, a relocatee, and his family preparing for a hunt just before they were relocated from Pond Inlet to the High Arctic. Andrew Friesen, "'Human Flagpoles': Dark Story behind Inuit Scene on $2 Bill," *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation - Online*, May 6, 2014, accessed April 20, 2021, `https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/human-flagpoles-dark-story-behind-inuit-scene-on-2-bill-1.2632380`.
Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 Annexes," 22A:77.

[75]For further reading on Inuit art as cultural resilience, see Heather Igloliorte, "Inuit Artistic Expression as Cultural Resilience," ed. Gregory Younging, Jonathan Dewar, and Mike DeGagné, in *Response, Responsibility, and Renewal: Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Journey* (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2009), 123.

the government in September 1987.[76] While the two sides had mostly agreed in principal on financial measures in the previous years, and had achieved a $200,000 compensation agreement and the construction of ten housing units in Inukjuak in 1988, the recognition of contributions to Canadian history was a point of tension.[77]

The compensatory measures requested by Inuit in 1987 for a recognition of Inuit contributions to Canadian history evolved to a request for a recognition of Inuit contributions to Canadian Arctic sovereignty in 1989. The Makivvik annual report for 1989-1990 noted that a hearing in Ottawa for March 1990 had been obtained, and that there was a national broadcast in September 1989 of the *Fifth Estate* Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) program on the High Arctic Relocations. The annual report suggests that the broadcast provided some historical background to the current problems facing these Inuit but also noted that the program "failed to address the question of Canadian Arctic sovereignty, a principle motive for compelling Québec Inuit to move to the High Arctic in the 1950s."[78] Makivvik Corporation 1st Vice President Zebedee Nungak articulated this request for some "form of special and formal recognition" in his March 1989 letter to yet another newly-appointed MIAND, Pierre Cadieux.[79] Although Nungak is explicit that "Grise Fiord/Resolute Bay Inuit have already indicated that such special recognition would only be acceptable if it formed part of a comprehensive remedial and compensatory agreement and that, in itself, would be inadequate," he is not explicit about what the special recognition ought to be, referencing only the position paper which included examples of physical commemorative objects.[80]

By 1989, the motivations for requesting acknowledgement and recognition are directly

[76]Makivik, "Annual Report, 1987-88," 35.

[77]In 1988, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) provided $50,000 to reimburse travelling expenses for families who returned to Inukjuak at their own expense during the 1960's and 1970's and $150,000 to pay for returning Inuit to Inukjuak from Grise Fiord during the summer of 1988. INAC also paid for ten housing units in Inukjuak to accommodate returning Inuit, with maintenance costs to be paid for by the Québec government.
Makivik, "Annual Report, 1988-89," 35.

[78]Makivik, "Annual Report, 1989-90," 35.

[79]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 Annexes," 22A:115-116.

[80]Ibid.

tied to compensation, although Inuit relocatees increasingly desired an affective and political response from government, in the form of acknowledgement. As the request for recognition transitioned from general "contributions to Canadian history" to the specific "contributions to Canadian sovereignty," so too did the language used to describe Inuit relocatees: Makivvik annual reports from the early-1980s refer to Inuit relocatees from Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, but in 1990 begin to use the term "High Arctic Exiles" which signalled the politicization of the compensation and apology effort.[81]

The increasing politicization of the effort is represented by Makivvik's interest in 1989 in securing a meeting with the House of Commons SCAA. In part this escalation reflects Cadieux's lack of engagement with Makivvik during his first year as minister. The growing desire for affective and political acknowledgement of the hardship and suffering also develops out of the context of other political actions undertaken by the Canadian government. In September 1988, the federal government provided its first formal, official apology to Japanese Canadians for the policy of internment during the Second World War. The apology included a redress settlement and an acknowledgement of historical wrongs committed by the federal government. The links between the Inuit of the High Arctic Relocation and the Japanese-Canadians who were forcibly relocated from their homes to other parts of Canada, away from their home communities, for the purpose of Canadian security and defence, appeared evident. Furthermore, the apology to Japanese-Canadians was accompanied by discussion of other potential apologies, including apologies to Italian-Canadians for their treatment as war-time aliens, and Chinese-Canadians who had been advocating for redress for the Head Tax policy since 1984.[82]

The apology to Japanese-Canadians marked a dramatic shift in federal government redress and reconciliation policy. This first official apology by the Canadian state signalled a willingness by the federal government to engage in apology politics and to have conversations about historical wrongdoing. The entry of the Canadian government into apology politics in 1988 indicated that the Conservative government of Brian Mulroney was willing to acknowledge past mistakes, accept responsibility, offer compensation on the basis of

[81]Makivik, "Annual Report, 1989-90," 35.
[82]Henderson and Wakeham, *Reconciling Canada: Critical Perspectives on the Culture of Redress*.

moral guilt, and offer an explicit apology to survivors and their descendants. It was an important moment in Canadian human rights history and presented a pathway for other aggrieved groups to engage with the federal government to alter their membership within Canadian society and improve their contemporary lives after historical injustice.[83]

Although Inuit had requested recognition in various forms in previous years, the request for an official government apology for the High Arctic Relocations came shortly after these developments, when Inuit were finally able to testify in front of the House of Commons SCAA in March 1990. President of the ITC John Amagoalik concluded his introductory remarks by reflecting on the contemporary trends in official apologies by the federal government and formally requesting an apology and compensation for the High Arctic Inuit:

> In conclusion, we note that the Japanese Canadians have been apologized to and they have been given $280 million in compensation. We note that the Chinese Canadians are about to be compensated, and there is now talk of Italians being compensated. Now, we are not arguing against that. We agree that Canadians have suffered injustices and that these things need to be put right. So we are not arguing that Japanese Canadians and Chinese and Italians should not be compensated for past injustices; we agree with that. But we also say we deserve that too, perhaps more so.
>
> Basically, we are asking for three things. We want the Government of Canada and the nation of Canada to acknowledge that these things happened and that the purpose for these things was to assert Canadian sovereignty. We want the Government of Canada to acknowledge this unequivocally. We want the Government of Canada to apologize. We want them to say they are sorry. And we want compensation.[84]

Amagoalik and the High Arctic Exiles' request for apology and compensation drew directly from contemporary examples of the government recognizing historical wrongs and offering to reconcile. In short, the context of the 1990 request differed from the 1987 and even 1989 requests because of the developing landscape of Canadian government apologies.

[83]For discussion of apologies in Canadian history, see Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies*; Gibney et al., *The Age of Apology*; Henderson and Wakeham, *Reconciling Canada: Critical Perspectives on the Culture of Redress*.

[84]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 Annexes," 22A:16.

As discussed in Chapter 6, the SCAA's 1990 report to the House of Commons insisted that the government had committed historical wrongdoings and that an apology ought to be made, making three recommendations:

> first, it recommends that the government acknowledge the role played by the Inuit people of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay in the protection of Canadian sovereignty in the North; secondly, that the government issue an apology for wrongdoings carried out against the people of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay; and thirdly, that the government compensate the Inuit of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay for their service to Canada and for the wrongdoing inflicted upon them.[85]

In November 1990, following the commissioning of the Hickling Report, MIAND Tom Siddon rejected these recommendations. The government's response reflected the Hickling Corporation's definitive conclusion: the government had no further responsibility to Inuit relocatees. In contrast, Makivvik described the Hickling Report as conveying misinformation about the relocations and alleged in its annual report that the Report was highly problematic in its conclusions.[86] The government's dismissal of Inuit requests for compensation and recognition in the House of Commons, combined with the work of Shelagh Grant and Marcus in 1991 that substantiated the allegations of the role of sovereignty in the relocation heightened the political divergence between the federal government and Inuit leaders.[87] Makivvik's embrace of Grant's and Marcus' work also strengthened the link between apology and contributions to sovereignty.

The academic and government debate about the intentions of the High Arctic Relocation persisted over the following four years, with Inuit repeatedly demanding compensation and a Heritage Trust Fund, alongside an apology. The basis for compensation and an apology was discussed at length in the Soberman Report, which focused on the human rights abuses by the Canadian government in relation to the relocation, concluding that the gov-

[85]Government of Canada, "Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs Minutes and Evidence (34:2) Vol. 2 Annexes," 22:36.
[86]Makivik, "Annual Report, 1991-92," 55.
[87]Ibid.

ernment should formally apologize and provide compensation.[88] In contrast, the Gunther Report, which was completed on behalf of the DIAND to assess the documentary evidence of government motives, did not recommend either apology or compensation.[89]

Following the tabling of the government's official response in November 1992, the ITC made a formal request for a RCAP Special Hearing, which was granted and conducted in Spring 1993. During these hearings, the requests for acknowledgement and compensation as well as a formal apology were emphasized. The March 1994 written submission by the ITC to the RCAP specified the need for formal acknowledgement and apology:

> The Makivik Corporation and the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada believe that the truth of the Inuit testimony before the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples is unassailable, and that the Government of Canada must therefore offer the High Arctic Exiles a sincere acknowledgement and apology.
>
> The Makivik Corporation and the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada fully support the Exiles' demands not only for acknowledgement and apology, but also for financial compensation. The Exiles' pain and suffering was a direct result of a flagrant violation of the federal government's duty of care – a duty owed to the Inuit relocatees arising both from the fiduciary relationship between the parties and from Canada's international obligations. Financial compensation is an appropriate form of redress for this breach of fiduciary responsibility.[90]

The RCAP commissioners ultimately agreed with these calls in their Final Report:

> Great wrongs have been done to the relocatees, and it is incumbent on the government to accept the fundamental merit of the relocatees' complaints. This acceptance is the only basis upon which reconciliation between the Inuit and the government is possible.
>
> The process of reconciliation will be assisted if the parties are able to come to terms with each other. This requires the government to meet with representatives of the relocatees to negotiate in good faith and settle redress. The

[88]Soberman, *Report to the Canadian Human Rights Commission on the Complaints of the Inuit People Relocated from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet, to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay in 1953 and 1955*.

[89]Gunther, *The 1953 Relocations of the Inukjuak Inuit to the High Arctic: A Documentary Analysis and Evaluation (Second Edition)*, 376-77.

[90]ITC, "Inuit Tapirisat of Canada Submission on High Arctic Relocations" [March 1994], *ITC Submission*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada):100.

> measures it has adopted to date are not adequate. The inadequacy of the redress offered to date, and the government's decision that an apology would not be appropriate, reflects the fact that the government has not recognized the full extent of the wrongs done to the Inuit.
>
> An acknowledgement of the wrongs suffered by the relocatees and their families, as well as their communities, coupled with an apology is warranted.
>
> An acknowledgement of the special contribution of the relocatees to the maintenance of Canadian sovereignty in the High Arctic is appropriate.[91]

The Commission also agreed that Inuit relocatees were entitled to compensation by the government for the purposes of re-establishment in their home communities, visits between families separated by the return from the High Arctic, funding for additional services for those affected, and settlement of individual claims.[92] The Commission formally recommended that the government "acknowledge the wrongs done to the Inuit and apologize to the relocatees" as well as negotiate compensation measures.[93] Makivvik, which had announced it would rely on RCAP to come to a definitive conclusion about the High Arctic Relocations and the government's responsibilities, accepted the RCAP's conclusions and contributed to the ensuing Working Group that focused on housing needs, compensation for property loss claims, and details concerning acknowledgement, recognition, and apology, as well as other remedial measures and compensation.[94]

Ultimately, the government's response to the recommendations was underwhelming: the government chose neither to adopt the RCAP recommendations nor to apologize to Inuit for the High Arctic Relocation. The RCAP released the *Special Report on the High Arctic Relocations* in May 1994, but was never discussed in the House of Commons. The RCAP final report was tabled in the House in November 1996, but high level political discussions made no further mention of the High Arctic Relocations. The Liberal government of Prime Minister Chrétien did not seem to be interested in pursuing an apology to Inuit relocatees.

Instead, the government shifted its focus to the request for compensation. New policies on Aboriginal Housing had been proposed in the House of Commons beginning in 1994,

[91]Dussault and Erasmus, *Report on the 1953-55 Relocation*, 162-163.
[92]Ibid., 163.
[93]Ibid.
[94]Makivik, "Annual Report, 1994-95," 67.

and the intent of the housing policy was to address shortages of housing, particularly in Indigenous communities such as Inukjuak.[95] Although the housing policy was not a direct response to the RCAP final report, it did address some of the grievances brought forward by relocatees who had returned to Inukjuak. More importantly, the government began work on a compensation agreement that would address the financial concerns of Inuit. In March 1996, the federal government and the Makivvik Corporation concluded the High Arctic Relocation Settlement Agreement. The parties agreed:

- to give power of attorney to the Makivik Corp., meaning they relinquish to Makivik all power to act on their behalf with respect to the settlement agreement;
- to give up all future claims, including any type of lawsuit, against the Government of Canada or any government official for any grievances arising from the relocations;
- to accept a $10 million, tax-free contribution from Canada, to be paid into a trust fund controlled by Makivik through a board of trustees;
- to give up all future claims, including any type of lawsuit, against the Government of Canada for any fiduciary or trust issue related to management of the trust fund;
- that "government officials of the time were acting with honourable intentions" when they planned and executed the 1950s relocations;
- that before signing they received "independent" legal advice, from an Ottawa lawyer called Sally Gomery.[96]

The agreement was signed by Liberal MIAND Ron Irwin, Makivvik Corporation President Zebedee Nungak, and the surviving relocatees and their descendants in Inukjuak during the 1996 Makivvik Annual Meeting. The settlement agreement addressed many of the claims made by the ITC and Makivvik on behalf of Inuit relocatees in the 1980s and 1990s, including the development of a Trust Fund, but it did not include an apology. In

[95]Government of Canada, "House of Commons Debates: Official Report 35th Parliament First Session (vol. 129)" [1994], *Library of Parliament*, Queen's Printer of Canada:8197.

[96]Jim Bell, "Quebec court to ponder big changes to High Arctic exiles' ailing trust fund" [5 April 2010], *Nunatsiaq News*, Nunatsiaq News, `https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/8789_Makivik_trustees_want_access_to_3_million_of_principal/`.

fact, the settlement agreement specifically did not include an acknowledgement on the part of the federal government of any wrongdoing or an acceptance of responsibility.

The government and Inuit agreed on a "'Statement of Reconciliation' to recognize the "hardship, suffering and loss' in the initial years of relocation because of poor planning and implementation by the government."[97] The agreement includes language that the government was acting "with honourable intentions in what was perceived to be in the best interests of the Inuit at that time."[98] According to Larry Audlaluk and Markoosie Patsauq, themselves relocatees and active participants in the negotiations with government, it was a "'take it or leave it' deal, and . . . they, like many of the exiles, accepted it because elders wanted to see some positive outcomes from the years of telling their story – although they were upset that it did not include an apology."[99] For Inuit relocatees, it had already been more than forty years since the relocation, and many of the original relocatees had died. There was a strong desire for some kind of settlement to occur during the lifetime of the remaining relocatees.[100] For Inuit, the political considerations for accepting the Settlement Agreement included this temporal pressure. Makivvik considered the agreement a success given the previous decade's advocacy efforts, despite having failed to secure an apology.[101] Although Makivvik committed to continuing to push for an apology and various other forms of appropriate and fair recognition of the important role of the High Arctic relocatees in establishing Canadian sovereignty, Inuit leadership turned its attention to other priorities.[102] For the government, there was no direct connection to the decisions made by previous governments and therefore no moral inclination to admit guilt. There was also no perceived political or strategic benefit to offering more than financial compensation to make the issue disappear from public consciousness.

[97]Jack Aubry, "Inuit Receive $10 Million for Arctic Relocation," *Toronto Star*, March 8, 1996.

[98]Ibid.

[99]Jane George, "Canada says sorry to High Arctic exiles" [18 August 2010], *Nunatsiaq News*, Nunatsiaq News, `https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/1808101_canada_says_its_sorry_to_the_high_arctic_exiles/`.

[100]Aubry, "Inuit Receive $10 Million for Arctic Relocation."

[101]Makivik, "Annual Report, 1996-97" [1997], *Revues*, Société Makivik:65.

[102]Although Makivvik's annual reports featured an update on the High Arctic Relocatees every year from 1983 to 1997, these updates stopped after the Settlement Agreement was signed in 1997.
Ibid.

Although Inuit in attendance at the 1996 Makivvik Annual Meeting expected an apology, the politicization of the apology within the debate about government motivations – which tied government misdeeds to sovereignty – undermined these efforts. Documentary evidence did not support the claim that sovereignty issues drove the relocations. Apologizing in this context, and on these grounds, would have created new problems. Although sufficient evidence exists about government mishandling of both the initial relocation and Inuit requests to return to their home communities, it is unlikely that Inuit would have accepted an apology crafted to apologize only for these well-documented issues and lived experiences. The Statement of Reconciliation, while not satisfactory, attempted to manage this tension.

The push for compensation had taken more than a decade and the request for an apology was entering its sixth year of negotiations when the Settlement Agreement was signed in 1996. Inuit relocatees and their descendants were still deeply affected by the initial relocation, as well as by the so-called "second exodus" in 1988 of Inuit from Resolute Bay/Grise Fiord to Inukjuak that once again severed family ties between Arctic Québec and the High Arctic. Between 1980 and 1996 the political party in power in Ottawa had changed three times, with each government struggling to manage a host of domestic and international pressures, including a constitutional crisis and the fall of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the DIAND had been led by eight different ministers in the sixteen years between March 1980 and March 1996.[103] These Ministers were initially sympathetic to Inuit requests, particularly when they focused on financial compensation and housing. As the requests became increasingly political, the ministers became increasingly less willing to negotiate with Inuit or to take responsibility for historical misdeeds.

The Public Debate

News coverage of the Inuit quest for compensation and apology in the 1980s and 1990s reflects the growing link between Inuit mistreatment and a disingenuous attempt to main-

[103]See Table A1 on page 337.

tain sovereignty. In January 1987, the *Globe and Mail's* coverage of a meeting of the self-described "Internal Exiles" held the year before described Inuit demands, citing compensation and a public apology and "official acknowledgement that what the Liberal government of Louis St. Laurent did was wrong."[104] The article also includes the claim that the operation was "designed to assert Canadian sovereignty," thereby drawing the first direct connection between the relocation and sovereignty assertion in a public forum.[105] A September 1988 article about the "Second Exodus" also claims that the federal government moved Inuit to "help assert Canadian sovereignty in the high Arctic" and showcases the ongoing human impact of the relocations detailing the anguish of Larry Audlaluk as his family wrestled with the decision about whether to return to life in Inukjuak or to stay in Grise Fiord where they had built their home.[106] While the article notes that the federal government had made an offer of "free transport and housing" to return Inuit to their original homes, the focus of the article is on the grief and anxiety experienced by the community as a result of 1950s sovereignty manoeuvres.[107]

While extensive evidence exists regarding the hardships experienced by Inuit and the inter-generational trauma caused by the relocations, including testimony from the House of Commons and later RCAP, the majority of newspaper headlines focused on the debate between Inuit and the government regarding the crucial question of sovereignty as an intention of the relocation. An October 1991 editorial in the *Toronto Star* suggested that the relocations were "a bad experiment with human lives" in which "sovereignty was an important factor."[108] The editorial is clear that "a proper apology, and compensation, are both overdue."[109] Shelagh Grant's November 1991 opinion piece in the *Toronto Star* argued that sovereignty was a part of the decision-making process and that ultimately the government owed Inuit an apology.[110]

In response to these editorials, Richard van Loon, Senior Assistant to the DIAND

[104]Fisher, "Inuit 'Internal Exiles' want Ottawa to Pay $10 Million in Compensation."
[105]Ibid.
[106]Fisher, "Second Exodus Splits Families as Inuit Weigh Return to Village."
[107]Ibid.
[108]"A Bad Experiment with Human Lives [Editorial]."
[109]Ibid.
[110]S. Grant, "Inuit Exiles Deserve an Apology."

Deputy Minister wrote multiple letters to the *Toronto Star* outlining the government's position and insisting that the relocation was not for sovereignty purposes.[111] Van Loon's letters accused the *Toronto Star* of biased reporting, suggesting that "none of the research carried out by independent researchers or by the department provides compelling evidence that the relocation of Inuit families to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay was undertaken for any other reason than to remove them from a serious physical and mentally dispiriting set of circumstances and thus enable them to resume a traditional, more self-reliant way of life."[112]

Despite van Loon's efforts to get the *Toronto Star* to report the government's story, the newspaper continued to run stories supporting Inuit sovereignty claims. The feature piece on 22 December 1991 presented the issue as a program that "has begun to receive unfavourable international attention among scholars who study aboriginal affairs and Northern issues," noting that there "are signs that some type of justice could be finally forthcoming" with the submission of the Soberman report to the Canadian Human Rights Commission.[113] The *Globe and Mail's* article on Soberman's report indicated that, despite acceptance of the report by both Inuit and government representatives, there remained a crucial debate over whether Inuit were used as human flagpoles.[114] Meanwhile, the *Washington Post* reported, erroneously, that the government said it "will formally apologize to the native Inuit... who were coerced into leaving their homes . . . to serve as 'human flagpoles' to assert Canadian sovereignty over the region."[115] The coverage in 1993 focused on the back and forth debate at the RCAP hearings,[116] but the stage had already been set: the public debate centred on the question of the morality of the government relocating families and children for the purposes of asserting sovereignty over the Arctic.[117]

[111]Loon, "Inuit Resist Return from High Arctic"; Loon, "Inuit Relocation not for Sovereignty."

[112]Loon, "Inuit Resist Return from High Arctic."

[113]T. Harper, "Seeking Amends for an Inuit Tragedy: Were Natives Pawns in a Government Experiment?"

[114]Orkin, "Using the Inuit as Human Flagpoles INJUSTICE: When Ottawa Moved some Inuit Families to the High Arctic in the 1950s, it Started a Dispute that Continues Even Today."

[115]Clairborne, "Canada Admits Violating Rights of Inuit People."

[116]*The Globe and Mail*, "Canada Watch: Inuit-relocation Probe"; *The Globe and Mail*, "Internal Exile"; Platiel, "Inuit Accused of Making False Claims for Compensation; Sovereignty not the Goal of Relocation, Commission Told"; Trueheart, "The Inuit Arctic Dream."

[117]The fairness of the media in their portrayal of the relocations during the RCAP Special Hearings

Renewed Push for Apology

Although the government had, in its view, addressed the concerns of Inuit relocatees by signing the 1996 Settlement Agreement, the missing apology constituted an emotionally-charged issue for Inuit. Although the terms of the Settlement Agreement meant that Makivvik and national Inuit leaders could no longer directly advocate for an apology or other compensatory measures, individual Inuit and researchers could still discuss these issues in public fora. The non-apology was a contentious issue for many Inuit who believed that they were owed an apology for their hardships, and public opinion seemed to support them. The non-apology in 1996 resulted from a misalignment between Inuit goals/timelines and government willingness to take responsibility.

According to Nobles, the determinants of apologies are rooted in transitional justice and the mechanisms that propagate memory and resentment over extended periods of time.[118] Nobles identifies four determinants: actors, motivations, resources and constraints, and organizational and institutional mechanisms.[119] These determinants contribute to the decision on whether or not to offer an official apology.[120] In the case of the High Arctic Relocations, the principal actors in the first push for apology were the government, Inuit relocatees and their political organizations, including the ITC and Makivvik Corporation, and the researchers who contributed significant written analysis of the 1950s relocations. Although these researchers were divided on the legitimacy of Inuit claims for apology, the conclusion of the RCAP report and subsequent published work signified a general support for apology, if not a consensus on government motivation.[121]

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has been strongly criticized by Gerard Kenney in *Arctic Smoke and Mirrors* but there is relatively little discussion about the role of media in the public or government response to the High Arctic Relocations. See Kenney, *Arctic Smoke and Mirrors*; McGrath, *The Long Exile*.
There is also little indication that public opinion has a measurable effect on a government's decision to apologize. Although apologies are political, it is unclear whether there is a correlation between public opinion, electoral fortune, and government apologies. See Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies*.

[118]For extended reading on transitional justice, see Jon Elster, *Closing the Books: Transitional Justice in Historical Perpsective* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[119]Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies*, 14-32.

[120]For further reading on these determinants, see Ibid., 21-26.

[121]For a thorough examination of the academic debate, see Chapter 6.

The government's motivation underlining whether to offer an apology in the 1990s was based in morality. Collective guilt for past historical actions, accompanied by feelings of responsibility are typical motivations for governments to issue an apology,[122] but motivations are complicated by ideology. In the 1990s, it is clear that the Liberal government was not motivated by collective guilt or responsibility. MIAND Ron Irwin insisted that the government was not responsible for any wrongdoing associated with the High Arctic Relocations.

In the 2000s, two important shifts occurred in the determinants for a High Arctic Relocations policy: first, the Liberal government fell in 2006, replaced by the Conservatives under Harper who brought a new approach to Arctic and Indigenous affairs.[123] Second, Inuit were no longer constrained by time as relocated Elders had received monetary compensation for their hardships. Although the political and legal organizational efforts of the ITC and Makivvik were no longer as active in the push for an apology, Inuit found new opportunities to tell the stories of relocation.

The Harper government's early approaches to the Arctic focused on what it viewed as hard security threats to the Canadian Arctic, framing its Arctic policy as one of securitization of Canadian Arctic lands and resources.[124] As a result, Arctic policy during Harper's first term was highly militarized, with concerns about security dominating the discourse about Arctic sovereignty and the military playing a leading role in the implementation of Arctic policy.[125] By 2007, the Harper government's approach to the Arctic began to shift slowly away from hard security toward stewardship of the Arctic with a greater focus on Arctic people, including Inuit. Whitney Lackenbauer and political scientist Ryan Dean suggest that Harper's "use it or lose it" approach had "frustrated and even offended some

[122]Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies*, 21-22.

[123]See Ryan Dean, P. Whitney Lackenbauer, and Adam Lajeunesse, eds., *Canadian Arctic Defence Policy: A Synthesis of Key Documents, 1970-2013*, Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security 1 (Calgary, AB: Centre for Military; Strategic Studies, 2014).

[124]For further reading on Harper-era securitization, see Petra Dolata, "A New Canada in the Arctic?: Arctic Polices under Harper," *Canadian Studies* 78 (2015); Dean, Lackenbauer, and Lajeunesse, *Canadian Arctic Defence Policy*; Lackenbauer and Dean, "Introduction to Canada's Northern Strategy under Harper"; Wilfrid Greaves and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, *Breaking Through: Understanding Sovereignty and Security in the Circumpolar Arctic* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2021).

[125]Dolata, "A New Canada in the Arctic?"

Northerners, particularly Indigenous people," resulting in a shift away from sovereignty-as-security and toward a more comprehensive approach to sovereignty measures that included Indigenous people.[126] The 2007 Speech from the Throne emphasized development and co-operation with Northerners, suggesting a new era of Arctic policy that fostered a more respectful relationship with Inuit.[127] In the context of the government's changing perspective on Arctic policy and a stated intention to embrace Inuit and their contributions to a broader definition of sovereignty, a new opportunity for advocating for an apology emerged.

Inuit storytelling about the High Arctic Relocations in the 2000s took the form of artistic representations of Inuit experiences, tied to renewed apology-seeking objectives, a strong contrast to the direct government advocacy efforts of the 1980s and 1990s. In 2008, to commemorate the fifty-fifth anniversary of the relocations, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI)), on behalf of Inuit relocatees, commissioned two monuments, one for each of Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, with the following objectives:

- To commemorate the Inuit who sacrificed so much as a result of the Government relocation of 1953.
- To promote and preserve this moment in Nunavut's history through the building of two permanent monuments.
- To involve the communities of Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord with the creation of the monuments and an unveiling ceremony, a feast, and presentations and activities in each community.
- To develop a national and international audience by exposing media to this moment in Nunavut's history.
- To develop a committee that can use this project as a stepping-stone to organize an annual day of commemoration for the Inuit who suffered as a result of relocation.

[126]Lackenbauer and Dean, "Introduction to Canada's Northern Strategy under Harper," xxxiii.
[127]Ibid., xxxviii.

- To show the world that Canada's claim on the High Arctic remains strong because Canadians continue to live and prosper in its most Northern communities.
- To gain an apology from the federal government.[128]

These monuments sought to tell the Inuit story of relocation through traditional art.[129] They represent a version of the physical commemorative objects that the ITC had requested of the government in 1987, and subvert the colonial mode of remembrance – the public monument – to tell the story of anti-colonial resilience.[130] The first five objectives work together to use the monuments as a form of storytelling and to provide a physical reminder for youth in Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord of the hardships experienced by their ancestors.[131] The monuments' personal forms – a man looking southward across the Arctic Ocean toward his home in Resolute Bay, and a woman and child gazing over the water at Grise Fiord – reflect the deeply emotional history of relocation and the separation of families over vast distances.

The sixth objective indicates the centrality of Canada's sovereignty in the story of relocation. The Background to the monuments makes the link between the monuments and sovereignty explicit:

> At a time when 'Canadian sovereignty' is on the minds of politicians, the media, and opportunistic businesses who look forward to an ice-free Northwest Passage, there is no better time to issue this reminder: this land belongs to Canada not because of the lines drawn on a map, but because of the Inuit who sacrificed everything to live here.[132]

[128]Tunngavik, Arctic Exile Monument Project, "Objectives".

[129]For further reading about Inuit art in storytelling and anti-colonial resistance, see Igloliorte, "Inuit Artistic Expression as Cultural Resilience"; Igloliorte, "Curating Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Inuit Knowledge in the Qallunaat Art Museum," *Art Journal* 76, no. 2 (2017): 100–113.

[130]Prouty, "How Art Brought About an Apology for High Arctic Relocations."

[131]Gabriel Zarate, "After decades of anguish, High Arctic Exiles monument unveiled" [9 September 2010], *Nunatsiaq News*, Nunatsiaq News; CBC North, "Resolute monument honours High Arctic exiles" [9 September 2010], *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation; CBC North, "High Arctic monument unveiled in Grise Fiord" [10 September 2010], *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, `https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/high-arctic-monument-unveiled-in-grise-fiord-1.890884`.

[132]Tunngavik, Arctic Exile Monument Project.

The Inuit belief that the relocations contributed to Canadian sovereignty is underlined by the monument project. The plaques that accompany the stone monuments reinforce this message:

> In memory of Inuit who landed here in 1953 and 1955, and those who came after. They came to these desolate shores to pursue the Government's promise of a more prosperous life. They endured and overcame great hardship, and dedicated their lives to Canada's sovereignty in these lands and waters.[133]

This wording, which explicitly ties the relocatees to sovereignty, "take[s] control of a historical narrative that has long been denied."[134] The wording of the plaques is carefully constructed: the plaques tie the relocations to the concept of sovereignty, but do so in a way that does not explicitly link sovereignty to the *objectives* or *motivations* of government. Instead, they speak to the *outcome* of the relocations. The presence of Inuit relocatees at Grise Fiord is a documented Canadian activity on Ellesmere Island in 1956, and the Inuit relocatees at both Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay are a documented contribution to Canadian sovereignty beginning in 1960.[135] The relocatees themselves have, as a consequence of their presence in the High Arctic, contributed over time to sovereignty, which the plaques' wording acknowledges. In mentioning sovereignty, the NTI project evoked the refrains of the 1990s debate, while subtly tying the story of relocation to contemporary government motivations.

The final objective of the NTI's Monuments Project was to secure an official apology. There was hope that an apology might be taken seriously by the federal government in November 2009, when the *Toronto Star* ran an Insight Article on the history of the relocations and the Monument Project.[136] This story sought to captivate its audience by interspersing descriptions of the monuments' construction with Inuit remembrances of hardship, broadly constructed Inuit administrative history, and an underlying assumption that Inuit

[133]Prouty, "How Art Brought About an Apology for High Arctic Relocations."
[134]Ibid.
[135]G.W. Rowley, "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister"; C. Bolger, "Memorandum for the Director."
[136]Paul Watson, "Inuit were moved 2,000 km in Cold War manoeuvring" [29 November 2009], *The Toronto Star*, The Toronto Star, `https://www.thestar.com/news/insight/inuit-were-moved-2-000-km-in-cold-war-manoeuvring/article_25c5b8a8-1091-5139-aa87-a395966beef7.html`.

had been "duped" into settling the two Northernmost communities "by a government desperate for "human flagpoles" in a vast wilderness coveted by the U.S. and Soviet Union."[137] Although the article makes several false claims (including that the United States or Soviet Union coveted the barren tundra of Ellesmere Island in 1953) it does provide a clear depiction of Inuit experiences and their desire for acknowledgement and an apology. The article also notes that it seemed unlikely that a representative from the federal government would come to the unveiling, let alone apologize.

The monuments were ultimately successful in achieving this objective, however as the apology came just one month before the monuments' unveiling. Art historian Amy Prouty notes that the narrative of sovereignty and Inuit sacrifices "was reinforced in the months leading up to the unveiling ceremonies, with NTI encouraging media outlets to cover the events in order to get the monuments' message to a broader audience and force the Government to pay attention."[138] The media coverage of the monuments and their unveiling dovetailed with the coverage of the official apology in early-September 2010, further reinforcing the Inuit-led narrative and re-centring the story of High Arctic Relocations in the national consciousness.[139]

In addition to the monuments, Inuit memorialized the stories of the relocations in film as part of the effort to retake control of the narrative and to push for an apology. *Martha of the North* was released in 2008 by Marquise Lepage and provides the best depiction of Inuit children's experiences of the relocation by focusing on Martha's memories and lost childhood. The film effectively tugs at the heartstrings of viewers, asking "why send us way up there? . . . why send families?"[140] The film also focuses the narrative on sovereignty by providing an explanation for these questions. First, quoting John Amagoalik, the film argues that "it was decades later that we learned the real reason was that they wanted to affirm Canadian sovereignty."[141] A voice-over also tells the viewer that "an international

[137]Paul Watson, "Inuit were moved 2,000 km in Cold War manoeuvring."
[138]Prouty, "How Art Brought About an Apology for High Arctic Relocations."
[139]For further reading about the role of the monuments in eliciting an apology, see Wakeham, "At the Intersection of Apology and Sovereignty."
[140]Lepage, *Martha of the North*.
[141]Ibid.

tribunal had ruled that only the presence of permanent citizens could affirm a country's sovereignty in a given territory. Relocating Inuit from Northern Québec to the High Arctic seemed an ideal way to deal with the issue of the vast, uninhabited Canadian North."[142] The film begins and ends with discussions of Canadian sovereignty practices, providing a convincing argument that the questions surrounding the motivation for the High Arctic Relocations can only be answered by sovereignty concerns.

The 2009 film *Exile* by Isuma Productions focuses on the narrative of broken promises and deception.[143] The film emphasizes the Inuit desire for an apology, with Martha Flaherty explaining that Inuit deserve an apology from the government. Simeonie Amagoalik, who sculpted the Resolute Bay monument for NTI, also talks to the camera about wanting to forgive if the government "can just admit they were wrong."[144] The film's focus on the Inuit desire for an apology and to reconcile emphasizes the government's precarious position as both the perpetrator of suffering and the party unwilling to negotiate. Martha Flaherty's final line in the film also directly links the relocations to the motivations of the Harper government to project Arctic sovereignty, noting that if it were not for the relocatees, "this wouldn't be part of Canada."[145] Both *Martha of the North* and *Exile* were screened at the annual Makivvik Corporation meeting in Inukjuak in April 2009, centring the continued grief faced by the relocatees and their communities, and further reigniting calls for an apology.[146]

The Inuit request for apology was also bolstered by the peaceful focus of the international community on Canada and its Indigenous Peoples during the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver. The games centred Indigeneity, including the use of the Inukshuk symbol and displays of Inuit culture.[147] While the Olympic games provided and opportunity for Indige-

[142]Lepage, *Martha of the North*.
[143]Kunuk, *Exile*.
[144]Ibid.
[145]Ibid.
[146]Emanuel Lowi, "'I get tears in my eyes when I think of my mother'" [2 April 2009], *Nunatsiaq News*, Nunatsiaq News, `https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/I_get_tears_in_my_eyes_when_I_think_of_my_mother/`.
[147]Patricia D'Souza, "The Inukshuk, the People, and the Celebration of a Lifetime: The 2010 Olympics Bring the World to Canada and Inuit Culture to the World" [Summer 2010], *Inuktitut Magazine*, Inuktitut

nous peoples, and particularly Inuit, to share their culture with southern Canada and the world, the games also provided an opportunity for Canadians to rethink their relationship with Indigenous people and their commitment to reconciliation.[148] This was particularly important given the political decisions to vote against the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 2007 at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), and to establish the TRC in 2008 following the apology for Residential School survivors.[149] The Olympic torch also stopped in Resolute Bay on its journey to Vancouver, re-igniting the contentious relationship between Inuit and the federal government, as well as reflecting the shifting relationship between the Harper government and Inuit as stewards of the North.[150] A renewed interest in comprehensive Arctic policy, effective Inuit storytelling, and an international spotlight on Canada's colonial relationships set the stage for a long-awaited apology.

The Apology

The Apology for the Inuit High Arctic relocation made on behalf of the Government of Canada on 18 August 2010 took place in Inukjuak, outside of the House of Commons and during a parliamentary break. Duncan had only been appointed as MIAND twelve days earlier.

The government's apology was long awaited and addressed the key concerns for which Inuit had advocated in the previous few decades. It was, for many Inuit, an opportunity

Magazine, `https://www.itk.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/2010-0108-InuktitutMagazine-IUCANS-IULATN-EN-FR.pdf`.

[148]For further reading on the 2010 Olympic Games as a symbol of reconciliation, see Natalie J.K. Baloy, "Our Home(s) and/on Native Land: Spectacular Re-Visions and Refusals at Vancouver's 2010 Winter Olympic Games," *Streetnotes* 25 (2016).

[149]United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, 2015; Government of Canada, *Residential School Apology*, accessed January 15, 2023, `https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1548170252259/1548170273272`.

[150]Gary Mason, "The Flame Arrives, But Inuit Still Await an Apology," *Globe and Mail*, November 10, 2009.

to begin the healing process. In form, the apology outlined an acknowledgement of the historical injustice and an acceptance of government responsibility. It also included an explicit apology. The speaking notes for the apology are reproduced here in their entirety:

> Elders, Inuit leaders, ladies and gentlemen, and especially those of you who were directly affected by the relocation; thank you for being here.
>
> This is my first trip to the North as Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and I am very honoured to be here for this historic event.
>
> You may recall that my predecessor, Minister Strahl, also had his first trip as Minister to Nunavik when he attended the Katimajiit summit in Kuujjuaq almost exactly three years ago.
>
> I am familiar with the North and I look forward to visiting the North regularly, and to working closely with Inuit communities and organizations during my mandate.
>
> Over half a century has gone by since the relocation of Inuit from this community to the High Arctic. I am here on behalf of the Prime Minister, the Government of Canada, and all Canadians to offer an apology for these events.
>
> Today's ceremony is an important step towards healing and reconciliation. Please accept the apology I am about to offer on behalf of all Canadians. I hope that it will form the basis of a strengthened relationship with the Government of Canada.
>
> On behalf of the Government of Canada and all Canadians, we would like to offer a full and sincere apology to Inuit for the relocation of families from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay during the 1950s.
>
> We would like to express our deepest sorrow for the extreme hardship and suffering caused by the relocation. The families were separated from their home communities and extended families by more than a thousand kilometres. They were not provided with adequate shelter and supplies. They were not properly informed of how far away and how different from Inukjuak their new homes would be, and they were not aware that they would be separated into two communities once they arrived in the High Arctic. Moreover, the Government failed to act on its promise to return anyone that did not wish to stay in the High Arctic to their old homes.
>
> The Government of Canada deeply regrets the mistakes and broken promises of this dark chapter of our history and apologizes for the High Arctic relocation

> having taken place. We would like to pay tribute to the relocatees for their perseverance and courage. Despite the suffering and hardship, the relocatees and their descendants were successful in building vibrant communities in Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay. The Government of Canada recognizes that these communities have contributed to a strong Canadian presence in the High Arctic.
>
> The relocation of Inuit families to the High Arctic is a tragic chapter in Canada's history that we should not forget, but that we must acknowledge, learn from and teach our children. Acknowledging our shared history allows us to move forward in partnership and in a spirit of reconciliation. The Government of Canada and Inuit have accomplished many great things together, and all Canadians have benefited from the contributions of Inuit to our culture and history. We must continue to strengthen our connections and deepen our understanding and respect. We must jointly build a stronger, healthier and more vibrant Inuit Nunangat and, in turn, build a stronger, healthier and more vibrant Canada.
>
> The Government of Canada hopes that this apology will help heal the wounds caused by events that began nearly 60 years ago and turn the page on this sad chapter in Canada's history. May it strengthen the foundation upon which the Government of Canada and Inuit can build and help keep the True North Strong and Free.[151]

The apology, which Nunatsiaq News labelled a "measure of emotional satisfaction" showed the willingness of the federal government to both admit its past mistakes and take ownership of the harm it had caused to generations of Inuit in Inukjuak, Resolute Bay, and Grise Fiord.[152] The initial apology was delivered in Inukjuak to relocatees and their descendants, and was delivered again in Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord in the following months.[153] It was also accompanied by MIAND Duncan's attendance at the unveiling of the NTI monuments; another symbolic gesture of the government's stated commitment to partnership and reconciliation.

[151] Government of Canada, *Apology for the Inuit High Arctic Relocation*.

[152] Jane George, "Canada says sorry to High Arctic exiles."

[153] Although there is debate about whether official apologies ought to take place in the House of Commons, the responses to the 2008 Residential Schools apology indicate that apologies are highly symbolic acts, making the location of their delivery important to recipients. There is no publicly available explanation provided by government for the choice to apologize in the North. For further reading on the symbolic importance of location, see Henderson and Wakeham, "Introduction to Reconciling Canada."

Inuit leaders welcomed the long-awaited apology, with Nunavut premier Eva Aariak calling it "an historic day for Inuit of the High Arctic, Northern Québec, and indeed for all Canadians" and NTI president Paul Kaludjak expressing that the "apology brings some relief to the surviving Inuit who were forcible relocated, and to the family and community members who struggled with the inter-generational effects this terrible experience caused."[154] The emotional experience of receiving an apology fifty years in the making cannot be understated, as Markoosie Patsauq said the following year, "It was very, very... good to hear that the federal government was finally ready to listen to our demand and finally wanting to apologize for what they done."[155] The apology itself however, functions in a political space, and text analysis of the apology and analysis of the motivations for the apology are important for understanding the context of the apology.

The Four A's of Apology: Acknowledgement, Acceptance, Assurance, Apology

In form, the apology met the basic criteria which, according to political communications scholar Kevin Coe, include four components: acknowledgement, acceptance, assurance, and explicit apology.[156] While acknowledgement entails three components, "the act occurred, the act was harmful, and the act was immoral,"[157] Coe notes that acceptance can be varied, including full or partial acceptance of responsibility. Crucially, apologies must come with an assurance that the act will not recur, and an explicit apology, using the words or derivatives of "apology."[158]

The High Arctic Relocation apology is clear in its acknowledgement of the historical wrongs. The apology-proper begins with an explanation of the event as a "relocation

[154]Jane George, "Canada says sorry to High Arctic exiles."
[155]Markoosie Patsauq, "Interview" [2011], *Iqqaumavara Project*, Iqqaumavara Project, `www . iqqaumavara.com`.
[156]Kevin Coe, "Audiences and the Normative Dimensions of Official Apologies," ed. Lisa S. Villadsen and Jason A. Edwards, in *The Rhetoric of Official Apologies: Critical Essays* (New York, NY: Lexington Books, 2021), 66-70.
[157]Ibid., 71.
[158]Ibid., 72.

of families from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay during the 1950s."[159] It continues by outlining that there was "extreme hardship and suffering" directly resulting from the relocation, including separation from communities, inadequate shelter and supplies, and a lack of information.[160] The apology is also clear that the government failed to fulfill its promise of return.

The apology represents a formal recognition of the RCAP Special Report. The apology includes an acceptance of the government's "past mistakes and broken promises" without shifting blame or attempting to contextualize historic injustices. This language represents a strong departure from the previous government position on the relocation, expressed in the Settlement Agreement. This full acceptance of responsibility is a crucial component of the apology.

Finally, the apology includes explicit language: Duncan offers "a full and sincere apology to Inuit for the relocation of families" on behalf of the government and all Canadians.[161] Crucially, the apology is on behalf of the government and, in its role as a representative body, the state and its citizens. The apology is also to all Inuit, not only to those who were relocated, or those left behind, or their descendants. It is an acknowledgement of the community-based harms resulting from government actions, as well as the communal nature of the request for apology by the ITC in the late-1980s and early-1990s.

The apology does not include any assurance that relocation will not happen again. As relocation in the Arctic had been abandoned as a government policy by the 1980s, this is a curious exclusion from the apology text. Nobles suggests that official apologies, which are primarily emotional, are not necessarily effective by themselves and may require changes to policy or law, or entail financial compensation, suggesting that the High Arctic Relocation apology relied both on the previous compensation agreement and on the emotional closure it would provide in order to be effective.[162] In terms of a reconciliatory approach, the lack of assurance greatly narrows the effect of the apology as well as the scope of acceptance

[159]Government of Canada, *Apology for the Inuit High Arctic Relocation*.
[160]Ibid.
[161]Ibid.
[162]Nobles, *The Politics of Official Apologies*, 112-113.

– the apology is an acceptance of responsibility for a specific relocation, not of a general policy of relocation.[163]

Motivations for the Apology

Motivations for the apology are unclear. The apology had been asked for and recommended several times during the 1990s, and yet the government refused to apologize then. Wakeham argues that the 2010 apology resulted in part from the pressure exerted by Inuit through the monuments project and in part because of the government's desire to re-focus on Arctic security efforts.[164] While Inuit storytelling through the NTI monument project and through films certainly provided a renewed interest in the human element of the High Arctic Relocations, the government's Arctic policy was also shifting to include a more comprehensive view of Arctic sovereignty, that included the human dimension of the North.[165] The text of the apology does not explicitly explain the decision to apologize, and there is no publicly available documentation that outlines the government's thinking.[166] While the first half of the apology carefully outlines the widely-accepted history of the relocations, it does so without addressing the motivations of government or the conditions in Arctic Québec that had precipitated the move. There is no mention of any of the elements of the "wicked" problem that the government used the relocations to seek to address in the 1950s,[167] removing humanitarian action from the apology entirely. Doing so allowed the government to more fully embrace acceptance of its moral wrongs, but also raises questions about the government's acceptance of the motives of relocation and, subsequently, the motivation for the apology. A careful reading of the second half of the apology and exam-

[163]The narrow scope of this apology is relevant as a second apology for Arctic relocations was given in 2019.
Government of Canada, *Ahiarmiut Relocation Apology*.

[164]Wakeham, "At the Intersection of Apology and Sovereignty," 101.

[165]Lackenbauer, "Toward a Comprehensive Approach to Canadian Security and Safety in the Arctic."

[166]Wakeham references a *Backgrounder* to the apology (that is no longer available) in which the government reflects the wording of the 1996 non-apology, tying the relocation to humanitarian action and noting the important "presence" of Inuit in the High Arctic, but sidestepping a direct link to sovereignty. Wakeham, "At the Intersection of Apology and Sovereignty."

[167]See Chapter 1.

ination of the political context in which the apology was given offers clues about possible government motivations for the apology in the absence of official government discussion.

The apology notes that the relocation is a "tragic chapter in Canada's history" that must be learned from and taught, allowing the government and Inuit to "move forward in partnership and in a spirit of reconciliation."[168] This paragraph continues by acknowledging the "many great things" which the government and Inuit have accomplished together and the "contributions of Inuit to our culture and history."[169] This acknowledgement reflects the government's then-recently articulated Arctic policy goals of fostering a respectful relationship with Inuit as stewards of Canada's North.[170] Following the backlash to the Conservatives' 2006 "use it or lose it" Arctic policy (which offended Inuit by intimating that they were not effectively "using" the Arctic), the Harper government in 2007 and again in 2009 sought to extricate sovereignty from security by placing more emphasis on the human dimension of sovereignty.[171]

In the context of the government's move from hard security to soft security as a means of projecting Arctic sovereignty, and its interest in fostering relationships with Indigenous people to meet those goals, 2010 was an opportune moment for the Harper government to address the Inuit call for a High Arctic Relocation apology. The apology provided an opportunity for the government to "acknowledge [a] shared history" that would allow the government and Inuit "to move forward in partnership and in a spirit of reconciliation," reflecting the Arctic policy goals.[172] The final sentence, which hopes that the apology will "strengthen the foundation upon which the Government of Canada and Inuit can build and help keep the True North Strong and Free" evokes a the idea of sovereignty, reflecting a forward-thinking attitude grounded in a renewed definition of sovereignty-as-stewardship.[173]

[168]Government of Canada, *Apology for the Inuit High Arctic Relocation*.
[169]Ibid.
[170]Lackenbauer and Dean, "Introduction to Canada's Northern Strategy under Harper."
[171]Lackenbauer, "Toward a Comprehensive Approach to Canadian Security and Safety in the Arctic," 138.
[172]Government of Canada, *Apology for the Inuit High Arctic Relocation*.
[173]Ibid.

Crucially, the apology does not specifically mention that the relocation took place to promote Canadian sovereignty in the High Arctic, nor does it acknowledge any rationale for why the relocation took place, carefully avoiding the contentious issues that have plagued government, researchers, and RCAP commissioners. The policy objective of this part of the apology is not to articulate or confirm motivation, but to focus on the human aspect of the relocations – the tragedy and the resilience. This focus on the human aspect of the relocations is particularly important because so much of the literature has glossed over the experiences of Inuit relocatees and their descendants.[174] Where the apology does reference sovereignty, it does so implicitly: "recogniz[ing] that these communities have contributed to a strong Canadian presence in the High Arctic" and hoping that the government and Inuit can work together to "build and help keep the True North Strong and Free."[175] In both instances, the implicit references suggest that the contributions to Arctic sovereignty are made by the *Inuit relocatees* rather than by the *"act of a sovereign" in relocating* Inuit. This is an important distinction that both indicates a government acceptance of Inuit agency and autonomy in the years since the relocation, and a subtle rejection of the claim that the 1953 government acted out of concern for sovereignty (for which the earlier chapters in this dissertation showed there is no archival evidence). The careful crafting of the apology's wording removes the contentious and politically-charged issue of motivation from the text of the apology, while allowing space for the apology to be interpreted as conceding the sovereignty narrative.

The Legacy of the Apology

Many Inuit, including Markoosie Patsauq, accepted the 2010 apology and were relieved by the government's acknowledgement of its past mistakes and the hardships suffered.[176] The apology marked an "historic event" which suggested to many Inuit that the government accepted Inuit contribution to Canadian society. For example, Qikqtani Inuit Association

[174]For further reading on the literature and an examination of the Inuit experiences, see Chapter 4.
[175]Government of Canada, *Apology for the Inuit High Arctic Relocation*.
[176]Jane George, "Canada says sorry to High Arctic exiles."

president Okalik Eegeesiak stated "Now it is time to finally recognize the tremendous role played by Inuit in asserting Canadian sovereignty, and put a difficult chapter in Canadian history behind us. Let us move forward based on the principle that sovereignty is based on socio-economic and cultural development and well-being."[177] *Inuktitut Magazine*'s December 2010 issue also reflected the long-held Inuit desire for acknowledgement of "the great sacrifices [Inuit] made to help assert sovereignty."[178]

Newspapers in southern Canada also drew a political connection between the apology and sovereignty. On 19 August 2010, the *Toronto Star* ran a half-page story under the headline "'Tragic Chapter': Inuit finally get their apology", noting that the apology "caps a remarkable shift in Ottawa's views on the issue."[179] The article suggested that MIAND Duncan "couldn't have sounded more contrite," despite not knowing what the government motivation was for moving the families.[180] The article explained that "the move was ostensibly to enable the families to get off welfare and return to a traditional lifestyle living off the land. But many suspected that the federal government was trying to use the families to help enforce Canadian sovereignty in a barren and unforgiving patch of territory."[181]

The CBC reiterated this statement, suggesting that

> It is widely believed that the Inuit were relocated to Resolute and Grise Fiord in the government's bid to assert Canada's sovereignty over the Arctic.
> The government at the time denied that claim [of asserting sovereignty], instead promising the Inuit better conditions and plenty of wildlife they can hunt. They were also promised they could return home after one or two years, if they were not happy in the High Arctic.[182]

The media coverage of the apology in 2010 references the entrenched narrative that the relocations took place to promote sovereignty – despite using passive voice to avoid identifying

[177] Jane George, "Canada says sorry to High Arctic exiles."
[178] "A Full and Sincere Apology," *Inuktitut Magazine*, no. 109 (December 2010): 67–68.
[179] Bruce Campion-Smith, "'Tragic Chapter': Inuit Finally Get Their Apology," *Toronto Star*, August 19, 2010.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Ibid.
[182] CBC North, "Resolute monument honours High Arctic exiles."

from whom or where this belief came. This narrative, raised on suspicions by researchers in the 1990s and carried forward by Inuit into the 2000s, is directly "impressed into the service of the present," contributing to the myth of the High Arctic Relocations.[183]

While the apology was very political, it was also very emotional. For many Inuit, the apology was made too late, as many of those who experienced the worst suffering had already died.[184] For others, the apology came with mixed emotions. Rynee Flaherty, who was relocated to Grise Fiord from Inukjuak, explained in a 2011 interview that she "was grateful for it but not grateful for it at the same time," remembering the hardships she and her family suffered and the challenges of convincing the government to acknowledge their sacrifices.[185] For some Inuit, the apology was merely words.[186] The differing responses of Inuit to the apology is indicative of the complex nature of apologies – they both must be accepted by the recipients and are only a step toward reconciliation. The combination of compensation in 1996 and apology in 2010 provided the opportunity to begin to move forward. As many Inuit expressed, the compensation and apology allowed for the healing process to begin.

Perhaps the most evident legacy of the 2010 apology, however, is the formation of a nationally-accepted narrative of the High Arctic Relocations. Inuit stories about the relocations, including those memorialized in the monuments and Radio-Canada's *Ullumi* series, have contributed to this legacy of the national story.[187] The telling of Arctic sovereignty history using the High Arctic Relocations as a story-telling device further entrenches the narrative as an accepted history.[188] While academics remain divided over the intention

[183]Cohen, *History in Three Keys*, xii.

[184]Gabriel Zarate, "For Grise Fiord's exiles, an apology that came too late" [11 September 2010], *Nunatsiaq News*, Nunatsiaq News, `https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/110910_for_grise_fiords_exiles_an_apology_that_came_too_late/`.

[185]Rynee Flaherty, "Interview" [2011], *Iqqaumavara Project*, Iqqaumavara Project, `www.iqqaumavara.com`.

[186]Lizzie Amagoalik, "Iqqaumavara Interview."

[187]Isabelle Chapadeau, "Episode 4: THe High Arctic Relocation of Inuit" [7 July 2023], *Ullumi*, Ullumi, `https://www.rcinet.ca/eye-on-the-arctic/2023/07/07/ullumi-episode-4-the-high-arctic-relocation-of-inuit/`.

[188]Dana Bowen, "In the Name of Sovereignty," *Up Here Magazine* 2022 (2022): Web Article.

of the 1950s government,[189] public opinion is set. The ongoing news coverage of the Relocations, including coverage during the seventieth anniversary in 2023, centres the contributions of Inuit to Canadian Arctic sovereignty.[190] Guides to the history of relocation, including the *Canadian Encyclopedia*,[191] and the Canadian Museum of History's website[192] also include statements suggesting that the intent of the relocations was to "establish" or "bolster" Canadian sovereignty in the High Arctic.

In the years since the 2010 apology, the government has also contributed to the story of relocation-as-sovereignty, using this historical narrative to promote Arctic reconciliation. The 2023 Report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security, Defence and Veterans Affairs report encapsulates this:

> In the past, some Government of Canada actions aimed at increasing military security in the Arctic, such as the forced relocation of Inuit to secure Canadian Arctic sovereignty during the Cold War, have harmed Indigenous communities in the region. For that reason, decisions relating to Arctic security and defence must be made with the full involvement of local and Indigenous governments.[193]

The sovereignty narrative is now entrenched within public and government spheres.[194] The development of the narrative in the late 1980s and early 1990s developed out of a political objective to bring attention to an indisputable human tragedy and a government unwilling

[189]See Chapter 6.

[190]Jane Sponagle, "We Called it 'Prison Island': Inuk Man Remembers Forced Relocation to Grise Fiord" [30 June 2017], *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation; CTV, "Canada's History in Inukjuak" [3 November 2022], *CTV News*, CTV News - Montreal; Isabelle Chapadeau, "" CBC Docs, "'The Canadian Government Forced This Woman - and Many Others - to Move 2,000 km North in the '50s" [18 September 2023], *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, CBC Docs; APTN News, "High Arctic Relocation in the '50s Still Lingers with Inuit Elders" [21 November 2023], *APTN News*, APTN News, `https://www.aptnnews.ca/national-news/high-artic-relocation-in-the-50s-still-lingers-with-inuit-elders/`.

[191]Madwar, Inuit High Arctic Relocations in Canada.

[192]High Arctic Resettlement Experiment.

[193]Government of Canada, *Arctic Security Under Threat: Urgent Needs in a Changing Geopolitical and Environmental Landscape* (Ottawa, ON, 2023), 11.

[194]The wide-spread acceptance of the sovereignty narrative continues to contribute to political manoeuvring in the Arctic, as individuals use the narrative as a justification for political action. See Erin O'Toole, "Connectivity Equals Sovereignty [Opinion]," *The Hill Times*, October 30, 2024, 19.

to admit to its mistakes. That political objective was achieved with the 1996 Compensation Agreement and the 2010 apology, but the narrative myth remains.

Conclusion

The more general legacy of the apology is a perpetuation of the public belief that the relocation was about sovereignty – even though the apology did not assign this motivation to the government's role. MIAND Duncan's admission that "there's no doubt that their presence contributed to sovereignty," when asked about the intention of the 1950s government in establishing the communities of Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, underscores the importance of sovereignty in the narrative of the High Arctic Relocations, while maintaining a nuanced separation between government motivation and program outcome.[195]

The apology linked the communities to sovereignty over the years since their creation, tying the relocation and its legacy to the politics of sovereignty. In the twenty-first century, national narrative supersedes the evidence of the relocations. The sovereignty myth succeeded in achieving Inuit political objectives and continues to draw a political and public audience. The real and inter-generational harms caused by the relocations ought to dominate the historical narrative, given that the government's mistakes and broken promises are sufficiently evidenced in both the documentary and oral history records. The apology acknowledges both the harms and the government's contributions to those harms. It does not verify the sovereignty claims, but it also does not deny them. In so doing (and not doing), the government's apology, in serving its own political purposes, carefully constructed fact to evoke myth.

[195]Gabriel Zarate, "For Grise Fiord's exiles, an apology that came too late"; Jane Sponagle, "We Called it 'Prison Island': Inuk Man Remembers Forced Relocation to Grise Fiord."

Chapter 8

Conclusion

The initial event of the High Arctic Relocations in 1953 stems from a government desire to address socio-economic concerns in Northern Québec. The government's analysis of economic and living conditions throughout the Arctic indicated a direct need for intervention, particularly in Northern Québec. That the government's analysis was obscured by paternalistic views of Inuit, by a series of "known unknowns and unknown unknowns" throughout its Arctic territory, and by the challenges of multiple interconnected "wicked" problems does not alter the government's underlying intention. These failures of analysis resulted in a poorly planned and executed relocation of Inuit to the High Arctic with devastating consequences for relocatees, the left behind, and their descendants.

The documentary government evidence of the formulation and planning of the relocation project indicates that the government clearly made, and broke, promises to Inuit, notably that relocatees would be returned to Inukjuak if they wanted. The effects of these broken promises have had a tremendous effect on Inuit. Furthermore, there is significant evidence that the High Arctic Relocations were a failure of government policy in the Arctic. The government's records show that, while it believed the relocations had some positive effects, the experiment was not worth repeating.[1] These failures, and the devastating effects thereof, should be the focus of the historical discussion and understanding of the High

[1] C. Bolger, "Memorandum for the Director."

Arctic Relocations.

The initial Inuit push for compensation in the 1980s focused on these failures of government, seeking funding and supports for a return of relocatees to Inukjuak. The revelation of broken government promises are central to the initial reports and Inuit requests for compensation, with Inuit and government officials agreeing that a fiduciary responsibility was owed to the relocatees who wished to return to Inukjuak, even thirty years after the initial relocation. When government actions slowed in the late-1980s and Inuit were unsuccessful in their bids for compensation, the advocacy process grew to include politicized narratives relating to sovereignty concerns. These got political traction and Inuit concerns were heard, not only by bureaucrats and Ministers, but by Parliamentarians and public audiences more generally. This relocation-as-sovereignty-project narrative took root in large part because linking stories of abuse and allegations of the government's intention to use Inuit as "human flagpoles" made for a simple and compelling story of government perfidy – despite the conspicuous lack of evidence to suggest that sovereignty was a government motivation. Nevertheless, that the SCAA report to the House of Commons, focused on allegations of abuse and sovereignty, indicates the importance of this narrative to Inuit political objectives.

As the evaluation of the High Arctic Relocations became increasingly politicized in the 1990s, the focus shifted away from the outcome of the relocations and the effect on Inuit in Inukjuak, Resolute Bay, and Grise Fiord, and toward the motivations of the federal government in 1953. This shift in focus is important: the event of relocation, and specifically the decision-making that led to the event, took precedence over the lived experiences of the people affected by the event and a sober assessment of the outcomes of government action. In shifting away from the experiences and the broken promises, the individual stories of Inuit hardship, trauma, and resilience were marginalized.

The development of the sovereignty narrative stems from an assumption about the unified, rational actor model of government in which the concerns of one part of government are assumed to be the concerns of all of government. Cabinet-level concerns voiced by then-Minister of External Affairs Lester B. Pearson[2] were extrapolated by researchers to

[2]Peter Kikkert, Adam Lajeunesse, and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "Lester Pearson, the United States,

apply to all government policy in the North during the early 1950s, even though the individual departments and bureaucrats responsible for Northern Affairs neither voiced nor indicated acute concern with either *de jure* or *de facto* sovereignty during this period. While worries about sovereignty would permeate the DNANR in the following years,[3] these were not primary concerns in late-1952 and early-1953 when planning for the relocations was underway. Furthermore, understanding the organizational process of government decision making clarifies that the DRD did not include sovereignty concerns in its decision to relocate Inuit, nor did it consider sovereignty in its initial evaluations of the relocation's success.[4]

The evaluation of the High Arctic Relocations evolved to focus on the false dichotomy of government motivation as sovereignty/humanitarian action as a continuation of the political narratives seeking, respectively, to support Inuit claims for compensation and acknowledgement, and a government wanting to abdicate responsibility. These competing narratives both centred the government in a story about Inuit, judging the morality of the intention of government action. The sovereignty thesis held that the government used Inuit for its own purposes and sought to deceive Inuit in addition to exposing them to harsh conditions. The humanitarian action thesis suggested that the government intended to provide aid to Inuit though did so poorly. In the first instance, the government was both unjust and immoral. In the second, the government was unjust and had questionable morals. The evidence suggests a much more nuanced reality that became increasingly challenging to articulate in the politicized environment of the House of Commons, news media, and the RCAP Special Hearing.

The divergence of narratives regarding the motivations of the High Arctic Relocations resulted in a bevy of official and unofficial reports for the government and Inuit organizations. Despite using the same evidence base, the reports came to fundamentally different conclusions about the intentions and responsibilities of government. In part, these differ-

and Arctic Sovereignty: A Case of Un-Pearsonian Diplomacy?," ed. Galen Perras McKercher Asa and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, in *Mike's World: Lester Pearson and Canadian External Relations, 1963-1968* (Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press, 2017).

[3]Jean Lesage, "Memorandum to Cabinet."

[4]See Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*.

ing conclusions are a product of differing assumptions about the decision-making machinery of government, but they also stem from differing concepts of sovereignty. Crucially, sovereignty-as-security and sovereignty-as-"Canadianization" are conflated in many readings of the documentary evidence.[5] Furthermore, the timelines of decision-making and implementation are blurred: discussion of "Canadianization" in August 1953 post-dates the decision-making for relocation, as does the re-organization of Northern Affairs when the DNANR formed in December 1953. As a direct result of these blurred lines and conflated concepts, the RCAP evaluation of the High Arctic Relocations was forced to consider the allegations related to sovereignty as a motivation. The question of sovereignty was put before Inuit, government officials and agents, and an expert panel in the Commission's quest to determine what, if any, role sovereignty played in the government's decision-making process and if it was also guilty of deceiving Inuit. Despite several weeks of hearings related specifically to the relocations, the Commission only heard from one individual who was present during the decision-making – Ben Sivertz. Sivertz's testimony was emphatic that sovereignty was not part of the motivation for government action and that, although "Canadianization" became an element of the evaluation, it was not a material part of the government's program.[6]

In the end, RCAP found that sovereignty was a "material" consideration in the relocation but that it was not a primary consideration.[7] There was every opportunity for RCAP to assert that the government acted out of sovereignty concerns: both Shelagh Grant and Alan Marcus (the primary academic proponents of the sovereignty thesis) presented their research findings, including submission of all of Grant's research notes and documents in an appendix to the Commission, and Inuit related their experiences of contributing to sovereignty projects.[8] All of the documentary evidence used to develop the sovereignty thesis was presented to the Commission, and yet it was found insufficient.

[5]Shelagh D Grant, "A Case of Compounded Error: The Inuit Resettlement Project, 1953, and the Government Response, 1990"; Alan Rudolph Marcus, *Relocating Eden*.

[6]Bent G. Sivertz, "RCAP Testimony."

[7]Dussault and Erasmus, *Report on the 1953-55 Relocation*.

[8]Shelagh Grant, "RCAP Testimony"; Alan Marcus, "RCAP Testimony"; Dussault and Erasmus, *The High Arctic Relocation: Summary of Supporting Information, Vols. 1-2*.

Instead, the Commission found the government to be responsible for significant short- and long-term harms to the Inuit communities in Northern Québec and the High Arctic. It suggested an apology and compensation was warranted and that the government had acted immorally. Makivvik Corporation considered the *Final Report* a successful conclusion to its advocacy efforts, even though the report did not explicitly support its political narrative that sovereignty motivated government action.[9]

Despite RCAP's dismissal of the sovereignty narrative as a motivation for the relocations, this narrative prevailed. The debate, publicized by RCAP, fizzled while the sovereignty thesis – which seemed to fit the meta-narratives of colonial coercion and oppression now framing most scholarship on Indigenous Peoples in the 1990s[10] – became entrenched in public and academic discourse. Where "sovereignty" did not factor in the event of 1953 relocations, it dominated the event of 1993 relocation evaluations. In the decades that followed, the sovereignty thesis became tethered to discussions of High Arctic Relocations, with sovereignty erroneously forming the foundation for future academic work and public discourse.

The success of the political narrative of sovereignty over the evidence narrative of socio-economic challenges reflects the highly successful advocacy by Inuit and a small coterie of academic allies in the early-1990s and of the complex nature of the relocations and the "wicked" problems that the federal government was attempting to solve in the early-1950s. The sovereignty narrative simplifies the problems of the 1950s while also removing the nuance of motivation and effect. It allows for a broad discussion of Arctic policy and Inuit treatment by government without the messiness of historical reality. It is also difficult to disprove entirely: despite finding no evidence to support the claim of sovereignty, the RCAP's conclusions acknowledge that there was a possibility that some conception of sovereignty concern was in the mind of decision-makers and so it could not be ruled out

[9]Makivik, "Annual Report, 1994-95."

[10]See, for example, the debate over Robin Brownlie and Mary-Ellen Kelm, "Desperately Seeking Absolution: Native Agency as Colonialist Alibi?," *Canadian Historical Review* 75, no. 4 (1994); Douglas Cole et al., "Notes and Comments: Desperately Seeking Absolution: Responses and a Reply," *Canadian Historical Review* 76, no. 4 (1995): 628–642. and Alan Cairns, "Aboriginal Research in Troubled Times," ed. Myra Rutherdale, Kerry Abel, and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, in *Roots of Entanglement: Essays in the History of Native-Newcomer Relations* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2018).

entirely as a contributing factor. Furthermore, the acknowledgement of government in the years since the relocations that Inuit in the High Arctic have contributed to Canadian sovereignty further conflates the issue: Inuit forming communities following their relocation by the government does contribute to Canadian sovereignty in the present day. That it is the *people* who contribute to sovereignty and not the *action of government* is a nuanced difference that has continued to ground the official narrative, but which is missed by most academic commentators.

The sovereignty narrative is also aided by the telling of the story of High Arctic Relocations. The individuals advocating on behalf of the sovereignty narrative are more sympathetic characters: Inuit who were undeniably harmed by government action, who experienced a harsh and unforgiving environment and broken promises deserved compensation and acknowledgement of their hardships and of their resilience. That they used the "sovereignty" argument as a political tool to achieve their political objectives is reasonable. In contrast, the government officials and researchers who refuted this "sovereignty-as-motive" narrative in the 1990s are largely unsympathetic. The (perhaps justifiable) anger of Sivertz and Gordon Robertson, whose reputations were attacked in a public forum, creates tension between their testimony and the evidence they present. Furthermore, the paternalistic approach to the evidence and Inuit experiences of researchers Gerard Kenney and Bud Neville reinforces the disconnect between the government's intention for the relocations and the harmful results that they produced for Inuit.

Although the sovereignty narrative is not grounded in verifiable evidence, a rejection of the sovereignty thesis does not exonerate the government. The documentary record and oral histories still suggest that the government acted in bad faith, broke promises, and subjected Inuit to unnecessarily horrendous conditions in the High Arctic. That the government did not deceive Inuit about "sovereignty" does not absolve the government of poor decision making or of carrying out a project with insufficient information about the potential human effects. Basing a critique of the government's decision-making on substantiated evidence is a greater indictment of wrongdoing than a circumstantial case.

The success of the political narrative around sovereignty developed in the 1990s remains present in contemporary constructions of the 1950s event. The present academic reliance on

the 1990s narrative event, rather than the 1950s evidence event, undermines the reliability of contemporary academic narratives of the High Arctic Relocations. Analysts who assume that sovereignty motivated government action lack engagement with the primary evidence from the relocation and rely on secondary sources from the narrative debate. Yet, the preponderance of academic work that follows this pattern indicates an important need to evaluate and reconstruct the meta-narrative that permeates academic and public discourse about the High Arctic Relocations.

In reconstructing the High Arctic Relocations meta-narrative through an examination of the event, experiences, and myths of the relocations, I contend that we should re-centre Inuit experiences, including experiences that have been previously overlooked such as those of women and children as children. An examination of the relocations as violations of universal and Indigenous human rights, separated from security justifications, is warranted, as is an analysis of Inuit resilience in building communities that now contribute to Canada's economy and stewardship over its Arctic lands, waters, and resources.

While the framing of the relocations as a narrative of suffering on behalf of a government concerned about sovereignty lacks a factual basis, it gained political traction in the 1990s and retained that traction throughout the 2000s. The continual development of the sovereignty narrative in the Harper-era aligned with the Harper government's own concerns about security and sovereignty, making the 2010 official apology the obvious, albeit long-delayed, conclusion to the story of advocacy efforts for recognition and compensation. The evolution of the sovereignty narrative is encapsulated in *Martha of the North* when the narrator questions the reason for government actions and Inuit suffering.[11] The acceptance of the sovereignty thesis provides some meaning to the historical and ongoing hardships suffered by Inuit and to the perceived callousness of government action by providing a tangible justification.

Despite the success of the sovereignty narrative in achieving a political end, the public and academic embrace of this narrative is problematic. The evolving nature of sovereignty definitions over time results in the "reading backward" of contemporary definitions of

[11]Lepage, *Martha of the North*.

sovereignty. The federal government's definition in 2010, rooted in a desire for cooperation and stewardship of land, differs from that of the government in 2007, when sovereignty was tethered to hard security definitions. This shift in a short period reinforces the constantly evolving nature of Arctic sovereignty discussions in Canada. The government policy definitions and the political definitions of sovereignty change over time, with more or less emphasis on legal or security definitions. The questions related to sovereignty in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the sovereignty narrative developed as part of the political process of Inuit acknowledgement and compensation measures, reflected the government's recent embrace of Inuit as partners in Canadian sovereignty,[12] while acknowledging a predominantly security-based definition. This security definition is not applicable, however, to the decision making at the time of the High Arctic Relocation event in 1952-53 when decision makers confronted a different security environment and a different climactic environment. The importance of political sovereignty – of effective control over activities taking place within Canadian territory, and "being seen in a position of influence and control" – in the years since the High Arctic Relocations is often conflated with the concerns of government officials in the early-1950s.[13] This is ahistoric. The approach of the early-1950s was rooted in legal definitions and adhering to international legal standards of territorial acquisition and management. Furthermore, the bureaucrats of the 1950s were more concerned with the "Canadianization" of the North – of employing Canadian citizens to do the work of Northern Affairs – and to "act as a sovereign." As Robertson described at the RCAP hearings, "If a country has sovereignty, it should be in a position to act as sovereign, to do the things that a country ought to expect to do for its own territory."[14] In his remarks, Robertson made clear that Canada in 1953 did not have concerns about its legal title in the Arctic, nor about a possible security threat in the Arctic. The concern related to any concept of sovereignty was Canada's ability to act as a sovereign in its own territory, which the relocation of Inuit families would not and did not accomplish.[15]

The 2010 apology alluded to sovereignty without explicitly mentioning the role of

[12]Joe Clark, House of Commons *Debates,* 10 September 1985, 6463 quoted in Coates et al., *Arctic Front*.
[13]Erik B. Wang quoted in Lackenbauer and Kikkert, *Lessons in Northern Operations*, 85.
[14]Gordon Robertson, "RCAP Testimony," 118.
[15]Ibid., 123-124.

sovereignty in the motivations or outcomes of relocation. It avoided confirmation of the narrative while allowing readers to internalize what they wanted to hear or to read. Most importantly, it acknowledged the history and harm caused to Inuit.

In the years since the apology, the sovereignty narrative has persisted, continuing to centre the actions of government in a story that should centre Inuit resilience. It pervades academic and public discussions about the North and challenges historical understanding of an otherwise rich and complex history. The focus on sovereignty has squeezed out important narratives about broken promises, misuse of government funds and loan programs, and the development of Northern communities. It is my hope that by tracing the history of the High Arctic Relocation as an event responding to a "wicked problem", as experiences too often overlooked, and as a myth created for political gain, that future scholarship can examine the High Arctic Relocations in greater detail and re-centre the people and lived experiences of relocation and its aftermath.

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Appendices

Table A1: Relevant Northern Affairs Departments and Ministers (1948-2010)[1]

Department	Minister	Start Date	End Date	Prime Minister
DMR	James A. MacKinnon	11 June 1948	15 November 1948	William L. M. King
DMR	James A. MacKinnon	15 November 1948	31 March 1949	Louis St-Laurent
DMR	Colin W. G. Gibson	1 April 1949	17 January 1950	Louis St-Laurent
DRD	Robert Winters	18 January 1950	16 September 1953	Louis St-Laurent
DRD	Jean Lesage	17 September 1953	15 December 1953	Louis St-Laurent
DNANR	Jean Lesage	16 December 1953	21 June 1957	Louis St-Laurent
DNANR	Douglas Harkness	21 June 1957	18 August 1957	John G. Diefenbaker
DNANR	Alvin Hamilton	22 August 1957	10 October 1960	John G. Diefenbaker
DNANR	Walter Dinsdale	11 October 1960	22 April 1963	John G. Diefenbaker
DNANR	Arthur Laing	22 December 1963	30 September 1966	Lester B. Pearson
DIAND	Arthur Laing	1 October 1966	20 April 1968	Lester B. Pearson
DIAND	Arthur Laing	20 April 1968	5 July 1968	Pierre E. Trudeau
DIAND	Jean Chretien	5 July 1968	7 August 1974	Pierre E. Trudeau
DIAND	J. Judd Buchanan	8 August 1974	13 September 1976	Pierre E. Trudeau
DIAND	Warren Allmand	14 September 1976	15 September 1977	Pierre E. Trudeau
DIAND	James H. Faulkner	16 September 1977	3 June 1979	Pierre E. Trudeau
DIAND	Jake Epp	4 June 1979	2 March 1980	Joe Clark
DIAND	John Munro	3 March 1980	29 June 1984	Pierre E. Trudeau
DIAND	Doug Frith	30 June 1984	16 September 1984	John Turner
DIAND	David Crombie	17 September 1984	29 June 1986	Brian Mulroney
DIAND	Bill McKnight	30 June 1986	29 January 1989	Brian Mulroney
DIAND	Pierre Cadieux	30 January 1989	22 February 1990	Brian Mulroney
DIAND	Tom Siddon	23 February 1990	24 June 1993	Brian Mulroney
DIAND	Pauline Browes	25 June 1993	3 November 1993	Kim Campbell
DIAND	Ron Irwin	4 November 1993	10 June 1997	Jean Chretien
DIAND	Jane Stewart	11 June 1997	2 August 1999	Jean Chretien
DIAND	Bob Nault	3 August 1999	11 December 2003	Jean Chretien
DIAND	Andy Mitchell	12 December 2003	19 July 2004	Paul Martin
DIAND	Andy Scott	20 July 2004	5 February 2006	Paul Martin
DIAND	Jim Prentice	6 February 2006	14 August 2007	Stephen Harper
DIAND	Chuck Strahl	14 August 2007	6 August 2010	Stephen Harper
DIAND	John Duncan	6 August 2010	17 May 2011	Stephen Harper

[1]Collated from Library of Parliament, *Parliamentary Information: Departments and Committees*, 1948-2011.

Table A2: Timeline of events, 1952-1953. *Indicates approximate date.

Date	Event
5/16/1952	Idea of relocation first discussed at First EAC Meeting
10/16/1952	Relocation discussed in-depth at Second EAC Meeting
3/16/1953	Eskimo Loan Fund, including funding for Relocation projects is approved
4/14/1953	Telegrams sent to RCMP to request a list of potential relocatees
5/26/1953	Selection of Inuit by RCMP completed; information sent to Ottawa
7/[late]/1953*	Departure from Inukjuak
8/10/1953	Federal Election
8/[late]/1953*	Arrival at Craig Harbour
9/7/1953	Arrival at Resolute Bay
12/16/1953	DNANR formed; R. Gordon Robertson becomes Deputy Minister

Table A3: Inuit relocatees by family group by origin, destination, and year of relocation. Collated from the *High Arctic Relocation: Summary of Supporting Information, Volumes 1-2.*

Surname	**Given Name**	**Origin**	**Destination**	**Reloc. Date**	**Reloc. Age**
Aqiatusuk	Paddy	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	
Aqiatusuk	Mary	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	
Killiktee	Minnie	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	13
Audlaluk	Larry	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	3
Eliasialuk	Samwillie	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	17
Nungaq	Anna	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	26
Nutaraq	Elijah	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	21
Aqiatusuk	Joadamie	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	
	Ekoomak	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	
	Lizzie	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	
Novaligna	Philipusie	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	
	Annie	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	
	Pauloosie	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	
Nutaraq	Elisabee	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	10
Amagoalik	Thomasie	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	
	Mary	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	
	Alex	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	
	Salluviniq	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	
	Charlie*	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	
Akpaliapik	Simon	Pond Inlet	Grise Fiord	1953	32
	Tatigak	Pond Inlet	Grise Fiord	1953	
	Ruthie	Pond Inlet	Grise Fiord	1953	
	Inutsiak	Pond Inlet	Grise Fiord	1953	
	Muckpa*	Pond Inlet	Grise Fiord	1953	

Arnakallak	Samuel	Pond Inlet	Grise Fiord	1953		28
	Qaumayuk	Pond Inlet	Grise Fiord	1953		
	Tamarisee	Pond Inlet	Grise Fiord	1953		
	Rhoda	Pond Inlet	Grise Fiord	1953		
	Phoebe	Pond Inlet	Grise Fiord	1953		
	Jonathan	Pond Inlet	Grise Fiord	1953		
	Mukpanuk	Pond Inlet	Grise Fiord	1953		
Amaraulik*	Jaypettie	Pond Inlet	Resolute Bay	1953		18
	Kanoinoo	Pond Inlet	Resolute Bay	1953		
	Muckooloo*	Pond Inlet	Resolute Bay	1953		
	Ekaksak	Pond Inlet	Resolute Bay	1953		
	Sippora	Pond Inlet	Resolute Bay	1953		
	Merrari	Pond Inlet	Resolute Bay	1953		
Amagoalik	Simeonie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953		20
	Sarah	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953		16
	Paul**	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953	B. 1953	
	Jaybeddie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953		38
	Nellie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953		
Patsauq	Alex	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953		
	Edith	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953		
	Markoosie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953		12
	Lizzie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953		
Amagoalik	John	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953		8
	Jimmy	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953		
Salluviniq	Daniel	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953		
	Sarah	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953		
Salluvinik	Allie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953		4
	Louisa	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953		

	Jeannie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953		
Nungak	Levi	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		
	Alici	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		
	Annie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		7
Nungaq	Minnie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		5
	Philipusie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		3
	Anna	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955	6 mo.	
Echalook	Johnnie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		
Allakarallak	Minnie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		39
	Sara	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		20
Amagoalik	Lizzie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		16
	Rynee	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		14
Pudluk	Dora	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		13
Eckalook	George	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		9
	May	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		4
	Lizzie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		1
Attagutaluk	Mary	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		5
	Leah	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		
Iqaluk	Andrew	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		26
	(Mother?)	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		
	(Sister?)	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		
Iqaluk	Jackoosie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		22
	Mawa	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		
	Martha	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		
	Emily	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		
	Mary	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955		
Flaherty	Josephie	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1955		
	Rynee	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1955		27

	Peter	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1955	
	Martha	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1955	5

Table A4: Inuit Witnesses to the RCAP Special Hearings. Collated from the *High Arctic Relocation: Summary of Supporting Information, Volumes 1-2.*

Surname	**Given Name**	**Birthplace**	**Destination**	**Relocation Date**	**Age at Relocation**
Akpaliapik	Simon	Pond Inlet	Grise Fiord	1953	32
Allakariallak	Minnie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955	39
Allakariallak	Elizabeth	Resolute Bay		b. 1957	
Amagoalik	Paul	*C.D. Howe*	Resolute Bay	1953	0
Amagoalik	Jaybeddie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953	18
Amagoalik	John	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953	6
Amagoalik	Sarah	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953	16
Amagoalik	Simeonie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953	20
Amagoalik	Lizzie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955	17
Amaraulik	Jaypettie	Pond Inlet	Resolute Bay	1953	38
Arnakallak	Samuel	Pond Inlet	Grise Fiord	1953	28
Arrugutainaq	Maina	Inukjuak	Arctic Bay, Grise Fiord	1955	11
Attugutaluk	Mary	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955	5
Audlaluk	Larry	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	3
Eckalook	George	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955	9
Eliasialuk	Samwillie	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	17
Epoo	Johnny	Inukjuak		Not Relocated	
Epoo	Lazarusie	Inukjuak		Not Relocated	
Flaherty	Martha	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1955	5
Flaherty	Rynie	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1955	27
Idlout-Paulson	Leah	Pond Inlet	Resolute Bay	1955	15
Iqaluk	Andrew	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955	26
Iqaluk	Jackoosie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955	22
Killiktee	Minnie	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	13
Nungaq	Anna	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	26
Nungaq	Minnie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955	5
Nutaraq	Elijah	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	10
Nutaraq	Elisapee	Inukjuak	Grise Fiord	1953	10
Patsauq	Markoosie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953	12
Patsauq	Bobbie	Resolute Bay		b. 1960	
Pudluk	Dora	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1955	12
Salluvinik	Allie	Inukjuak	Resolute Bay	1953	4
Salluvinik	Susan	Pond Inlet	Resolute Bay	1955	2