

Inuit

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Canada's 18,000 Inuit, most of whom live in the Northwest Territories, Quebec and Labrador, are the concern of the federal Indian affairs and northern development department, the government of the Northwest Territories and provincial governments.

From 1966 to 1975 a northern rental housing program provided 1,505 three-bedroom houses for the Inuit. In April 1975 the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation became responsible for Inuit housing, and new accommodation since then has been supplied under National Housing Act building programs.

The national defence department offers employment at its station at Alert to civilian Inuit. A student centre for Inuit was established in Ottawa in 1974 and an Inuit orientation centre was planned for 1976. Inuit are involved in a departmental on-the-job training program to place them in middle management positions related to resource development and the environment. A special northern unit has been established by the Public Service Commission to improve employment and career possibilities for northern native people.

The Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (Eskimo Brotherhood) was founded in 1971 with financial assistance from the secretary of state department. Affiliated with Inuit Tapirisat are the Committee of Original Peoples Entitlement (COPE), serving native people in the Mackenzie Delta and the Western Arctic, the Labrador Inuit Association (LIA), and the Northern Quebec Inuit Association (NQIA). Other regional associations in the Northwest Territories have been established by Inuit Tapirisat in the Central Arctic, Baffin and Keewatin regions to facilitate local participation in domestic affairs.

In early 1976 the Tapirisat presented the Government of Canada *Nunavut*, a proposal for land claims settlement. In preparing this document, the Inuit Tapirisat did considerable land claim research, and produced the Inuit land-use and occupancy study, an environmental, geographical and historical work which the government has published.

Similar studies were undertaken by the Indian Brotherhood and the Métis Association in the Mackenzie region of the Northwest Territories, and by the Labrador Inuit Association. Northern native associations were provided financial assistance to participate in matters of northern development, such as the Mackenzie Valley pipeline inquiry.

Additional programs included an Inuit language commission, established to make recommendations on the revision and standardization of Inuktitut (the Inuit language) orthographies; the publication of a layman's guide to Canadian law entitled *Inuit and the law*; legal services centres in Frobisher Bay, NWT and Happy Valley, Labrador, to provide counsel and guidance for the Inuit; the support of an Inuit film-making society in Frobisher Bay formed to produce native language programs for broadcast on the CBC northern service television; and the development of a syllabic character typewriter element to meet the increasing need for written material in Inuktitut.

Inuit art and crafts are promoted by preparing interpretive exhibits for circulation to museums, universities and other institutions in Canada and abroad. Artists are protected against copyright infringement and competitive mass reproductions through a program of information to artists and the public, promotion of the "Canada Eskimo Art" trademark and support of legal action where infringements occur. Information on art and culture is conveyed to the public through booklets, articles and lectures.

The Inuit Cultural Institute based at Eskimo Point, NWT is a focal point for cultural concerns and programs related to traditional and present-day Inuit life. The institute also administers and oversees the work of the Inuit language commission.

As a result of the search for oil, gas and minerals in the Arctic, many Inuit are finding employment in petroleum and related industries. The petroleum industry reports for the 1974/1975 seasons that 761 northern residents accepted employment. Studies have been undertaken with a view to increasing native involvement in the mining industry, which is showing an overall decline. However, many Inuit still live by their traditional skills of hunting, trapping and fishing. One of the most successful enterprises is the production and sale of Inuit artwork — stone, bone and ivory sculpture and graphics. The industry is expanding and co-operatives are run by the Inuit.