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NATIVE COMMUNICATIONS IN CANADA:  
USES OF AND ACCESS TO THE BROADCAST MEDIA IN THE 1970's



by

Gordon Willis Hunter

A Thesis  
submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
through the Department of  
Communication Studies in Partial Fulfillment  
of the requirements for the Degree  
of Master of Arts at  
The University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

1980

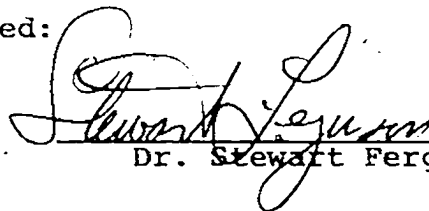
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1980

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Approved:



A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Stewart Ferguson".

Dr. Stewart Ferguson

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate Canada's native peoples' use of and access to the broadcast media of radio and television during the decade of the 1970's.

In September 1970 the native people of Canada were given an opportunity to express their views and concerns regarding native access to and use of the broadcast media. Convened in Yellowknife, the territorial capital of the Northwest Territories, this Northern Communications Conference was an important first step for Canada's Indian, Metis and Inuit peoples in their struggle to obtain an effective participation in the mainstream of Canadian society through the use of radio and television. Historically, the native peoples of Canada have felt excluded from the mainstream of Canadian life. They have lacked the necessary tools, the necessary skills to communicate either among themselves or with the non-native population. In an attempt to remedy this unsatisfactory situation, the native people embarked on a campaign of self-help through the use of the broadcast media. During this period they developed ways and means of not only gaining an acceptable degree of access to the broadcast media in Canada but they went beyond this stage and succeeded in controlling, operating and developing their own unique communications services.

This study, Native Communications in Canada: Uses of and Access to the Broadcast Media in the 1970's, traces the development of native communications in all of the geographic regions of the country, from the media rich South where large concentrations of natives are located to the newly developed regions of the mid-Canada corridor and the Yukon and Northwest Territories. This decade, the decade of the 1970's has been in retrospect the Golden Age of native communications in Canada and this thesis observes the rise of native communications from its essential infancy in 1970 to its high degree of sophistication at the end of the decade. Native reactions and opinions with respect to their participation in the broadcast media is an integral part of this study as are the attitudes and actions of governmental agencies in this native communications development.

The methodology incorporated in this study is essentially historical. In responding to this investigation, the following steps were taken: an examination of Canada's native peoples' attempts at gaining control over and thus access to and use of communications through their own native communications societies; a survey of the challenges and problems faced by these native communications societies as they sought to improve broadcast communications for Canada's original peoples; and finally the identification of the role of specific governmental institutions in aiding native attempts at gaining use of and access to the broad-



cast media in the 1970's.

The first area of investigation, native communications societies, looks at the attempts of the native people to develop their own communications services. Through the latter part of the 1960's and on through the 1970's, some eleven major native communications societies were established in Canada. Regional, local or community communications societies account for even greater numbers. Many of these societies developed their own radio production facilities and a few even ventured into the area of television production. One of this group of major societies became the first native organization in North America to have its own satellite project. All were developed to give native people the access and programming they felt necessary to enable them to survive in the future and to operate in the present.

The second area of investigation, challenges and co-operation, is a look at some of the many problems these native communications societies faced during this period. The issue of funding and the search for recognition within the native and the non-native populations are discussed here. Co-operation among the societies became the key element of their survival. Co-operation in funding, in the attempts at the development of national native broadcast systems, co-operation in training personnel for radio and television and even co-operation in the overall establish-

ment of the societies themselves is discussed in this section of the study.

The final area of investigation deals with the role of government in native communications. The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development gave support to several of the native communication projects. The Department of the Secretary of State, through its Native Communications Program, was vital in its funding of native communications. The Department of Communications and the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission also played very significant parts in this development. Perhaps the greatest contribution for native communications came from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, an institution both openly praised and condemned by native leaders for its actions in this field.

There can be no doubt that native communications evolved significantly during this decade. They evolved from ideas and concepts to become sophisticated, modern broadcast services providing the Indian, Metis and Inuit peoples of Canada with a substantial degree of participation in the broadcast media.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For his helpful suggestions and assistance, I thank Dr. Stewart Ferguson. Acknowledgement is also made for the contributions of Dr. T. F. Carney and Dr. G. Booth. Thanks and appreciation is given to Mrs. A. Zeleney for her care and concern in the typing of this work.

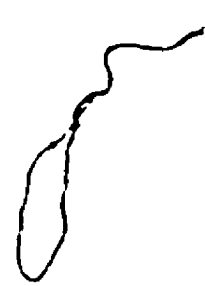
Deep gratitude and affection is extended to my parents, Rev. Thomas R. Hunter and Margaret R. Hunter, without whose continued support and understanding this thesis would never have been a reality. In recognition of this, I dedicate this thesis to them.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE, JUSTIFICATION, AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

"We want to create a Brotherhood of Man. How are we trying? Through the media of communications."<sup>1</sup>

There has been much written about the Indian and Inuit peoples of Canada. Their lifestyles, cultures and social problems have been looked at in great detail by sociologists, psychologists, ethnologists and anthropologists. The native people feel that they have been studied far in excess of any positive results that were supposed to occur as a result of these numerous studies. There are few areas of examination of native existence that are still presently welcomed by Canada's Indian and Inuit populations. Fortunately for the student of communications there is one area of contemplation that is still open, still welcomed, and that is the area of communications; a part of modern life that has really only come into its own for Canada's native peoples in the 1970's.

This study examines Canada's native peoples' perception of their communication needs and the steps they took to fulfill these needs during the 1970's. Although the Indians and the Inuit as well became very involved in a wide range of communication problems in the 1970's, this study will

restrict itself to the broadcast media of radio and television.

This study will explore and mark the native peoples' own views on the subject of their access to and use of the broadcast media. It will also attempt to gather existing information expressed by native people, native leaders and organizations, regarding their use of and access to radio and television, and put it into an ordered, compact and comprehensive statement. That is something for which the native people themselves have expressed a felt need. Spokesmen for the native peoples have frequently expressed a belief that utilization of the mass media is a necessary part of any effort to preserve or enhance their traditional culture. They have also stated that a political or bargaining base is dependent on the consolidated front, which good communications makes possible. This study will examine the degree to which the native peoples have been successful in building such a communications base.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate Canada's native peoples', that is the Indian, Metis and Inuit peoples', level of use of and access to the broadcast media of radio and television during the decade of the 1970's. It was in this decade that the native peoples of

Canada really became involved in the issues of native communications, because of this it is hoped that this study will be used as a possible yardstick for discussing native communications in the future, for measuring their use of and access to the broadcast media in the 1980's.

#### Justification of the Study

There are several reasons why a study such as this is justified, and the first is that next to the French speaking citizens of Canada, the native people are perhaps the most visible minority. The native people also make up the largest population inhabiting Canada's last frontiers, that is the vast regions of the North and the area geographically known as mid-Canada. They are also visible in most of the cities of the South. This study is also justifiable in that while making up a sizeable portion of the Canadian mosaic they have, to all intents and purposes, been the last cultural groups served by Canada's vast broadcast media systems.

Who are these people, these natives of Canada? They are the Cree, the Slavey, the Micmac, and the Dogrib. They are the Metis. They are the Inuit. They are the original Canadians. There are some five hundred and fifty Indian bands in Canada residing in over two thousand reserves.<sup>2</sup> According to the Toronto Native Times, there are one hundred and sixty-six reserves in Ontario alone



8  
ranging from Fort Severn in the North to Walpole Island in the South and St. Regis Akwesasne near Cornwall in the East to Shoal Lake in the West.<sup>3</sup> Indian people are found in all ten Canadian provinces and in the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

When endeavouring to give accurate statistics of the Indian population in Canada, it must be borne in mind that under law and in the eyes of the Indian people themselves, not all Indians are equal. There are two basic categories of Indian representation. The first is the status Indian and the second the non-status Indian and the Metis. Wherein lies the difference?

Status Indians are members of a band and hold certain rights under the Indian Act and individual treaties. They may be considered registered or treaty Indians. They use their father's treaty number until they are twenty-one years of age, at which time they receive their own number.<sup>4</sup>

It must be stated that status Indians are as subject to federal, provincial and municipal laws as is any other segment of the Canadian population.

Metis and non-status Indians are native persons who identify as Indians but are not legally recognized as such. Metis, in effect, are semi-natives with Indian and Scottish, Irish, English or French matrilineal or patrilineal backgrounds. Non-status Indians are either Metis who have never had any legal status or full Indians who for some reason have decided to give up their status

voluntarily. It is also possible that these natives were forced to give up their status, as is the case when an Indian woman marries a non-Indian. Both Metis and non-status Indians have no claim on government services under the Indian Act and are totally dependent upon provincial or territorial government benefits above and beyond those accorded to the general citizenry.

There are no accurate figures on Indian, Metis or non-status Indian population numbers. All attempts at the accurate cataloging of their numbers have failed, due to the isolation of some bands and the nomadic life of others. National estimates of status Indians were from two hundred and seventy-six thousand, four hundred and thirty-six as of December 31, 1975,<sup>5</sup> to two hundred and ninety-five thousand, eight hundred and ninety-eight in mid-1979.<sup>6</sup> Estimates of non-status Indians and Metis are open to conjecture, with figures ranging nationally from a low of four hundred and fifty thousand to a high of some seven hundred and fifty thousand. In any event, Indians and Metis comprise a sizeable portion of Canada's population. Their numbers are growing at a rate almost double that for non-native Canadians.

The Inuit are a unique people. While still part of the native tapestry, they are separate culturally. A conservative estimate places their numbers at or around

eighteen thousand five hundred. Here as with the Indians, however, any accurate count is not yet possible. Geographically they are separate as well in that they are endemic to the area above the tree line in the Canadian arctic regions. They are virtually non-existent outside of northern Labrador, northern Quebec and the Northwest Territories.

As this study is restricted to the native people's use of and access to the broadcast media, it is necessary to understand the problems encountered because of the many languages used by these people. "There are fifty-seven distinct aboriginal languages in Canada, fifty-two Indian and five Inuit."<sup>7</sup> These fifty-seven languages can be broken down into roughly eleven main families. For example, the Algonquin language incorporates the tribal languages of the Cree, Delaware, Ottawa, Micmac, Malecite, Ojibway, and others. The Inuit language is not quite so regionally fragmented as the Indian, but even here one finds differences. Inuktitut is the most common Inuit dialect, but this is also broken into some five groupings. There is the Labrador, the Outer, the Centre, the Caribou and finally the MacKenzie groups. This makes it not only difficult for interpersonal communications, but particularly hard for the accommodation of communications when initiated via radio and television. Because the Indians, Metis and the Inuit are culturally unique in Canadian society and because they are themselves different culturally and socially as native

groupings, they see their own needs, their own uses for and access to the broadcast media differently. This in itself justifies a study of this type.

The third justification for this particular study is that since the native peoples of Canada, the Indians, Metis and Inuit, are in effect an emerging people, they have problems characteristic of that position. They are torn between millennia of near zero growth in a cultural and social sense, and a new force which reaches out to take them forceably into the modern era. If they are to survive as unique cultural entities yet use the tools of our age as tools for their betterment, they must know what these tools are and they must know and learn how to use them effectively. Communications, the broadcast media, are among the most effective and the most efficient of these tools. Because of this effectiveness, the native peoples' interest in the media of radio and television has grown through the decade of the 1970's.

Any study of communications must consider the socio-cultural setting in which the principle agents of the study are found. This is especially so when looking at native communications.

The Just Society will be one in which our Indian and Eskimo population will be encouraged to assume full rights of citizenship through policies which will give them both greater responsibility for their own future, and a more meaningful equality of opportunity.<sup>8</sup>

This Just Society concept may have been a just, a noble goal upon which to set the sights of a nation, but it failed to materialize for the native peoples. Contemporary life for these people is tinged with tragedy. The native Indian people, whose rich cultural heritage gave us the canoe, the toboggan and the snowshoe, are in the midst of a seemingly ineffectual battle to preserve their culture. The lifestyle and conditions of the average non-native in Canada has grown through the years to become one of the highest standards of living in the world. The natives, the Indian and the Inuit, unfortunately but predictably, have remained among that anomaly known as the 'outcasts' and the 'have-nots'. "On treaty parchment, Canada's Indians are covered by a series of fourteen treaties and have more special rights than any other ethnic minority in the land."<sup>9</sup> The Indians and the Inuit are also among the most impoverished, poorly educated, and culturally deprived minority in Canada. This misery is seen in the fact that: "In 1969, the life expectancy of the Canadian Indian was 34 years against 62 for other Canadians. The death rate among Indian children was eight times that for white children."<sup>10</sup>

Along with material decline among the Indians of Canada, one finds a cultural decline. Bobby woods, the

Vice-President of the Allied Indian and Metis Society of Ontario, put it most appropriately when he said that: "Only the original Canadian, that is, the native Canadian, is floundering in the midst of a severe identity and cultural crisis. In point of fact, the native Canadian is a stranger in his own land."<sup>11</sup>

Events, however, are changing. The Indian and indeed all native Canadians apparently are not passively sitting back any longer and letting their culture and their past simply disappear. This action, this change in native peoples' attitudes towards their heritage, their cultural, social and economic status is the fourth justification of this study. This change is primarily being brought about by communications, native communications, and it will increase as the native people learn how to use the broadcast tools better and as they receive more access to the media.

The decade of the seventies has given rise to a new type of warrior. The first phase came in the form of an all-out battle against government intrusion or government inaction, evidenced by the 'Kenora Blockade', a demonstration in many ways similar to 'Wounded Knee' in the United States. The term 'Red Power' has evolved through the 1970's to become 'Indian Power', a power gained through education, technology, and especially through the use of the broadcast media. New methods such as radio and television are

being used as a catalyst for social change and as an agent for cultural preservation.

Canada's Inuit people have also lost a great deal in terms of culture. At this point in time, though, they do have some measurable chance of retaining what they still have left, and they are in the process of attempting to do so. They have begun this task of preservation and restoration by first of all changing their assigned social categorization from being 'Eskimo' to being 'Inuit'. In June 1973, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, the national organization representing Canada's Inuit, demanded from the government that its categorization and its classification be changed from 'Eskimo', which is a Cree Indian word meaning 'eaters of raw flesh', to the more traditional Inuktitut term 'Inuit', meaning simply 'the people'.<sup>12</sup>

The Inuit culture that gave the world the kayak, the dog-sled and the igloo and that has persevered for thousands of years against the most hostile environment imaginable is very afraid of cultural pollution. The very people who survived in this harsh climate may not survive the intrusion of outside cultures foisted upon them by a 'benevolent' but culturally disruptive 'foreign' society. Much of this cultural pollution is coming via the 'foreign' broadcast media, that is

Canadian radio and television.

Although northern native people form a majority of the population in the North, they are not politically powerful in the capitals, where the major policy decisions are made, because they form only a tiny minority of the total national and provincial populations.<sup>13</sup>

Just as the Indians are promoting the idea of 'Indian Power', so too have the Inuit seen the need to take a firm, united stand on the issues affecting them. They have taken a much more positive, even militant role in the 1970's to preserve their society and its culture.

We must review our situation in regards to the preservation of our culture, economics and our political development. If the government continues to introduce programs without consulting the people, it will not be able to meet its own goals. To be successful in the development of the North, it needs to involve the people, and to enable them to have control over their own lives.<sup>14</sup>

The most obvious attempts by natives in the North are seen in their 1970's declarations:

In July 1975, the delegates to a general assembly of the Northwest Territories Indian Brotherhood and the Metis Association of the Northwest Territories approved a major positional paper declaring themselves to be a self-determining nation within Canada to be called the Dene Nation.<sup>15</sup>

The Indian Affairs Minister Judd Buchanan rejected this idea out-of-hand claiming that it was no more palatable than the idea of French-Quebec separation. Almost a year previous to this 'Dene Nation' declaration, the Inuit of northern Quebec had produced a less volatile document entitled Tagramiut. This document, prepared in Fort Chimo,



Whale River and other Inuit communities, in effect called for a separate Inuit territory to encompass all of the Inuit within Canada. Less radical than the 'Dene Nation' idea, it, like its Indian counterpart, called for the complete control, among other things, of communications to be in native hands. This separate territory idea under native control was also rejected as was the 1977 Metis proposal for a separate territory in the MacKenzie District.<sup>16</sup>

How do the Indian and Inuit peoples in Canada feel with regards to communication systems, such as radio and television, in general? As this study is a look at native people and their use of and access to the broadcast media, it is very necessary to ask this question. According to UNESCO: "there is no right of access to the broadcast media in Canada."<sup>17</sup> This is so, whether through federal law or its agents such as the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission. Whether or not access is provided by law, the Indian and Inuit peoples of Canada during the 1970's definitely believed that access to both the media of radio and television should be fully accorded them as a means, perhaps the only means, of self-preservation. In November 1969, the National Indian Brotherhood, the Canadian Metis Society and the Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada presented a joint brief to the CRTC urging that radio and television both be used as agents

for social change. "The brief urges that they be used to bring the native people into the mainstream of Canadian life without destroying what they value in their present way of life and their heritage from the past."<sup>18</sup>

In reiteration of this need for access to the broadcast media, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians in a report on Indian communications in Canada stated that: "If our people are to be successful in breaking the barriers which have prevented them from participating in Canadian life, they must have access to adequate means of communication."<sup>19</sup>

Some Inuit are even more vehement in their denunciation of the lack of access and use of the media of radio and television services than are their Indian counterparts.

We now realize that it is dangerous to leave the planning of our communication systems to the government, the CBC and the telephone companies. We realize that if the Inuit culture is to sustain itself as a living entity, and not only sustain itself but grow and thrive then we must assume control over the communication systems that are changing our lives. We, the Inuit, would like to start making our own plans and carrying out our own communication projects.<sup>20</sup>

Canada has prided itself in the fact that although it is comprised of numerous ethnic and national groups, there is an essential harmony because the differences are celebrated rather than being isolated and stifled. Although this may be true with respect to foreign cultures intro-

duced to Canada, it is unfortunately not true for Canada's native peoples. Their differences are accentuated and their similarities ignored.

Much of the reasoning behind Indian and Inuit desires for both access to the broadcast media and use of this media lies in the portrayal of native people by the media. This is especially so in the realm of television. The Native Council of Canada, representing Canada's Metis and non-status Indians, voiced this opinion in a brief dated November 1972. "These days television portrays us as an unwittingly victimized, naive and primitively angry subculture. Not only are we frustrated and infuriated, we are bored with this asinine view of our people. So are the people who watch television."<sup>21</sup> Perhaps the strongest denunciation of the native portrayal on television comes from a brief prepared and submitted to the Government of Ontario's Royal Commission on Violence in the Communications Industry. Submitted to the Commission's April 29, 1976 Public Hearing by Robert Fox, the Executive Director of the Canadian Association in Support of Native Peoples, the brief stated:

Mentally Indian people have been crippled by the image they see of themselves reflected through the mass media. Their advancement in the modern world has been stifled because, historically, they have been treated in the media as savages who plundered, murdered and raped the so-called peace loving invaders.<sup>22</sup>

It is little wonder that the native people in Canada want the ability to use the broadcast media and have access to it in order not only to preserve their culture but to help them to progress towards the future; what they hope will be a future better than their unfortunate and unhappy past.

The final justification for this study is one of historical moment. The 1970's have been the turning point for the Indians, Metis and Inuit in their efforts to gain access to and use of the broadcast media. It has seen the rise of their own media and communication systems and the rise in their efforts to create a new image, a new lifestyle, a new future through this media. This study is justified as a measure of past accomplishments in native communications during the last decade and as a portent of what may well occur in the coming decade.

#### Research Methods and Materials

The method used in this study is essentially historical. Interviews were conducted via telephone and correspondence with officials in the Secretary of State Department, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the Department of Communications, and the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission. Interviews were also conducted, again via telephone and correspondence, with numerous radio and television stations and local, pro-

vincial, territorial and national Indian, Metis and Inuit organization officials.

Surveys were made of public hearing transcripts. The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission transcripts were studied from 1969-1979 inclusive as were other transcript materials such as the Government of Ontario's Royal Commission on the Northern Environment (also known as the Mr. Justice E. P. Hartt Hearings). Transcripts from the various native communication conferences, held throughout the 1970's, were also used and studied.

Government documents, federal, provincial and territorial in nature, were studied as were the numerous government department positional papers. Many native organizations also produced papers on native communications during this decade and these were searched. Media research papers, native and government news releases, speeches by important government and native officials and leaders regarding native communications were covered as well. Scholarly studies, dissertations, research projects and analyses were particularly helpful.

Periodicals were also used in this study. Government publications such as The Interpreter, published by the Department of Information of the Government of the Northwest Territories, North of 60°; Indian News, Inuktitut and others published by the Department

of Indian Affairs and Northern Development were used in this study. Native publications used were both numerous and varied. For example, use was made of: The Indian Voice, The Native Perspective, Kainai News, The New Nation, Toronto Native Times, The Native People and, Inuit Today.

#### Previous Research

It would be completely untrue to say that there has been little or no work done with regards to native communications. Indeed, there have been a considerable number of studies undertaken with respect to this issue. Dr. Jack Steinbring and Gary Granzberg did a joint study entitled Study of the Impact and Meaning of Television Among Native Communities in Northern Manitoba. It was done under contract for the Department of Communications and was completed in set stages over several years. Begun in 1972 and having a cut-off date sometime in 1980, this study looks at the impact of television in the northern Manitoba Indian communities of Jackhead, Norway House and Oxford House where television was introduced in 1970, 1973 and 1977 respectively. The latest part of this report, issued in 1979, suggests that the impact of television on a society will vary depending upon the beliefs and the culture indigenous to the society, that is, television will mean different things to different societies.

Professor Linvill Watson, again under contract to

the Department of Communications, did a similar study with the Inuit of Rankin Inlet. The title of this study was Television Among the Inuit of Keewatin: the Rankin Inlet Experience. Initiated in May of 1973, it was concluded in January 1975. This study looked at the problems associated with sixteen hours a day of live television upon a mainly traditional society; television that was imported from the South.

Gary O. Coldevin has done several studies with respect to media effects upon the native people of the North. He has written Satellite Television and Cultural Replacement Among Canadian Eskimos. Completed in April 1979, it looked at and compared adults and adolescents and their cultural reactions to television viewing and the resultant changes in culture brought about by the media of television.

Mr. Coldevin completed a study for the CRTC in December 1975, entitled Television Effects on Canadian Arctic High School Students. This particular study looked at the educational values of television upon native students in the North.

One of the most important studies with respect to native communications was undertaken by Charles Feaver as part of a master's degree for Carleton University in October 1976. His study, The Politics of the Introduction of Television to the Canadian North: A Study of the Conflict

Between National Policies and Needs of Native People in the North, describes the developments that led to the introduction of television into Canada's North and mid-North. It examines the extent to which national policies concerning northern development, satellites and bilingualism determined the development of television in the North.

The Northern Pilot Project: An Evaluation, undertaken by Heather E. Hudson for the Department of Communications, was completed in July 1974. This looked at the role of the Department of Communications in the development of reliable radio for native use in northwestern Ontario and the Keewatin.

The studies cited above are typical of the numerous studies undertaken in the 1970's. If there are so many studies then on native communications, what are the reasons for doing this study? To begin with, this particular study is an expression of the native peoples' views on the problems they have encountered during the 1970's in securing access to and use of the broadcast media. It is essentially different in that it is historical and descriptive instead of being pro-effect. A great deal of work has been done on the effects of radio and television upon the native peoples. Not quite so much has been done regarding how they have evolved, how their communications systems have evolved through the 1970's.



This study is also different in that it covers the entire decade of the 1970's. Most other studies have been periodical in that they have covered shorter time spans and have been more restricted in that they have dealt with specific communities instead of the native peoples in all parts of the country. While the predominant area of study seems to have been the North, this study also looks at the South, the East and the West.

Since many of these studies have been sponsored by government departments, they have invariably restricted themselves to departmental operations and views regarding communication needs for the native people. This study will attempt to look at the native peoples' point of view and how the natives view the various government bodies and agencies with whom they must interact in their attempts to gain access to and use of the broadcast media.

#### Conclusion

The structure of the study is as follows: Chapter II consists of an examination of the native people's attempts at gaining control over communications through their own native communications societies.

A reliable and accessible communications system can enable the people to share and discuss information they need to make decisions about matters which affect them. The communication system thus becomes a vital tool which enables native peoples to participate in their own development.<sup>23</sup>

There are eleven major Indian and Inuit communications societies in Canada. Some but not all have become involved in the broadcast media over the last ten years. Some of the larger native communications societies will be discussed with respect to their involvement in giving the native peoples access to and use of the broadcast media during the 1970's. The Alberta Native Communications Society, the Indian-News Media Society, Native Communications Incorporated of Manitoba, RAVEN of British Columbia and Nunatsiakmiut of Frobisher Bay are typical of the societies that this chapter will discuss.

Chapter III will look at some of the challenges faced by these various native peoples' communications societies. The issue of funding, native communication co-operation with respect to national conferences and attempts at the creation of national native communication systems as well as the problems associated with native media training and personnel will be studied. The community radio and television organizations that have evolved during this decade will also be examined.

After reviewing the results of a number of pilot projects, initiated by native peoples, I am convinced that native controlled and managed communication projects are an effective and a necessary ingredient for social change among native peoples.<sup>24</sup>

These words were delivered by the Secretary of State, Hugh Faulkner, to a Native Communications Conference held

in Edmonton in March, 1974. Chapter IV will look at how the native people view the roles of various government departments with respect to their attempts at gaining access to and use of the broadcast media in the 1970's. The Department of the Secretary of State, the Department of Communications, which has played a most vital role in this area with such projects as the Anik B native peoples projects, will both be discussed as will the role of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Chapter IV also deals with the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission's part in the establishment of access to and use of the media for the native peoples of Canada. It was not until the late 1970's that the CRTC even held a public hearing in the North. The Indian, Metis and Inuit people have differing views regarding the worth of the CRTC, and the CRTC itself has not been consistent in its development of native communication decisions and policies.

The Northern Service works in close cooperation with national and local native groups. It assists and encourages the development of broadcasting at the community level by giving assistance to community broadcasting groups in technical matters, and by helping with training in basic broadcasting skills.<sup>25</sup>

Chapter V deals with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The CBC is one of the primary reasons why Canada's native peoples have decided to form their own communications societies and organizations. The CBC has

been heavily criticized for its lack of native language programming, its lack of native production facilities (especially in the field of television), and its lack of native personnel. The CBC as a communications provider, however, has on occasion been praised by these same natives as the only media agency which allows them air time for their programming. This and other aspects of the native-CBC relationship will be considered within this chapter.

Chapter VI, the final chapter, will summarize the study.

## Chapter I - Footnotes

- <sup>1</sup>Barney Masuzumi, The Native Press, I, no. 2 (March, 1971), p. 2.
- <sup>2</sup>W. Jamieson, Tekawennake (September 10, 1970), p. 7.
- <sup>3</sup>Beth Perrott, Toronto Native Times, IX, no. 3 (March, 1978), pp. 10-11.
- <sup>4</sup>And What About Canada's Native Peoples? (Ottawa: Canadian Association in Support of the Native Peoples, February, 1976), p. 2.
- <sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 30.
- <sup>6</sup>Canada, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Annual Report - 1979 (Ottawa: DIAND, 1979), p. 1.
- <sup>7</sup>Robert J. Shannon, North (Ottawa: DIAND, 1978), p. 39.
- <sup>8</sup>"Statement by the Prime Minister on the Just Society," Liberal Party of Canada (Ottawa: Liberal Party of Canada, May, 1968), p. 2.
- <sup>9</sup>Tekawennake (April 7, 1971), p. 4.
- <sup>10</sup>"Anik Under Attack. . . A Fair Deal for the Eskimos?," Intermedia, no. 2 (London: International Broadcasting Institute, 1973), p. 13.
- <sup>11</sup>Bobby Woods, "As I See It," Toronto Native Times, VII, no. 2 (April, 1976), p. 7.
- <sup>12</sup>Frank Calder, The Native Voice, III, no. 6 (June, 1973), p. 8.
- <sup>13</sup>Charles Feaver, The Politics of the Introduction of Television to the Canadian North: A Study of the Conflict Between National Policies and the Needs of Native Peoples in the North (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1976), p. 5.
- <sup>14</sup>Tagak Curley, Indian-Eskimo Bulletin (March, 1971), p. 1.
- <sup>15</sup>Canadian Annual Review of Politics and Public Affairs, John Saywell, ed., (Ottawa: York University Press, 1975), p. 238.

<sup>16</sup>Carolyn Beaver, Tekawennake, III, No. 2 (April 20, 1977) p. 9.

<sup>17</sup>E. Rosen, and R. Herman, Access: Some Western Models of Community Media (Paris: UNESCO, 1977), p. 87.

<sup>18</sup>"Two Joint Briefs on Communication," Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada Bulletin, X, no. 5 (December, 1969), p. 4.

<sup>19</sup>Federation of Saskatchewan Indians: Indian Communications in Canada (Regina: FSI, NIB, and, the National Communications Workshop, February, 1973), p. 2.

<sup>20</sup>Leah d'Argencourt, "A Special Communications Report," Inuit Today, V. no. 7 (Ottawa: Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, July-August, 1976), p. 4.

<sup>21</sup>Tony Balcourt, Tekawennake (November 22, 1972), p. 5.

<sup>22</sup>Robert Fox, "CASNP: TV Damaging Image of Indian," The Native Perspective, I, no. 6 (May, 1976), p. 32.

<sup>23</sup>Ontario, Royal Commission on the Northern Environment: Issues Report, "Wa-Wa-Ta, Moosonee Submission," (Toronto: Government of Ontario, December, 1978), p. 3203.

<sup>24</sup>"Communications Policy is Released," Kainai News, VII, no. 2 (April 15, 1974), p. 1.

<sup>25</sup>"The Northern Service: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation," North of 60°: Facts and Figures for the Northwest Territories (Ottawa: DIAND, September, 1977) pp. 194-195.

## CHAPTER II

### NATIVE COMMUNICATIONS SOCIETIES

We listen to whitemen from the time we get up in the morning until we go to bed. Most of this is one-way communication. It is whitemen talk-Indian listen. We listen to radio, teachers, politicians, clerks in stores, television, music and so on. They are all salesmen trying to sell the whiteman's way. We don't have a chance to think, let alone a chance to answer. We do not expect the white people to understand and respect us unless we get an opportunity to talk and they are willing to listen. Radio, television and newspapers must contain certain programs and articles that are put together by Indian peoples. Even our own people have almost forgotten how to express themselves - it has been so long since anyone listened. We must find people who will train us so that we can learn to use the whiteman's tools.<sup>1</sup>

Historically, the native people of Canada have lacked the necessary tools and skills to communicate effectively either amongst themselves or with non-natives. Because of this lack of knowledge and skills in the various fields of modern communication, the Indian, Metis and Inuit have felt excluded from the mainstream of Canadian life. They have in fact considered themselves less than full Canadian citizens. The problems associated with the use of and access to the various communication tools evidenced in Canadian life have been most vigorously attacked by native peoples in the 1970's. This is especially obvious with respect to the broadcast media.

Chapter II is an examination of the major native communications societies in operation in Canada during the 1970's. A detailed look at the largest and most effective of these native communications societies will be undertaken in this section of the study. The role of each of these major societies in providing access to and use of the broadcast media for Canada's native people, the extent and development of their broadcast operations as well as an historical account of each will be discussed here in detail. From the most sophisticated, such as the Alberta Native Communications Society, to the simplest and most rudimentary, such as the RAVEN organization of British Columbia, all of these native communications societies will be studied in turn.

The Indian and Metis communications societies will be looked at first, starting with the Alberta Native Communications Society followed by the Indian News Media organization. These two societies were placed at the beginning because the Alberta Native Communications Society was to become the model for almost all of the other native communications societies established during this decade. The Indian News Media communications society will follow because it was in effect a direct offspring of the Alberta Native Communications Society. After these two societies have been discussed, the rest of the Indian and Metis communications societies will be looked



at starting with the RAVEN Society of British Columbia and concluding with the Ye-Sa-To Communications Society of the Yukon. The major Inuit communications societies will conclude this portion of Chapter II's study of Canada's major native communications societies.

The order in which these native communications societies will be discussed then is as follows: the Alberta Native Communications Society, the Indian News Media organization, the Radio and Audio Visual Education Network (RAVEN), the Native Media Society of British Columbia, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians' Communications Program, Native Communications Incorporated of Manitoba, Kenomadiwin Incorporated of Northwestern Ontario, the Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society also of Northwestern Ontario, the Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia, the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories Communications Unit, the Native Communications Society of the Western Northwest Territories, and the Ye-Sa-To Communications Society of the Yukon. These will be followed by the Inuit communications societies: Nunatsiakmiut of Frobisher Bay, and Taqramiut Nipingat Incorporated of Quebec and finally, the Western Arctic Regional Communications Society of the Northwest Territories.

Before investigating broadcast media use by Canada's native people during this decade, one most important question

must be asked and answered. Why do the native people need to use and have access to the broadcast media? Indeed, why have they found it necessary to establish their own, distinct media systems, instead of merely utilizing those already established?

There are no definite, simple replies to this question. There are, however, sets of answers. Some are relatively open and straightforward. Others are more complex, more hidden and rooted in tradition and past values. Mr. Walter Stonechild, representing several native organizations throughout Saskatchewan addressing a CRTC public hearing, put it most effectively when he said:

Recently, native organizations have been developing a variety of self-help programs and pursuing a number of issues of special concern and of importance to native people, with governments and other organizations. If these new developments are to have an effect, we must develop a good system of communications. We must make the people aware of themselves, their problems and their needs. We must make them aware of the world around them,<sup>2</sup> and of the opportunities and resources available to them.

#### The Need For Native Communications Societies

The native people feel that there are three predominant reasons why they must use and must have access to the broadcast media. Each of these three reasons was very much in evidence in native communications concepts during the 1970's. The first reason is for the gathering and dissemination of information. The second is for the preservation of cultural integrity. The third reason is the necessity for a platform

or an outlet to issue positional statements.

Because the native people are in effect set apart from other Canadian citizens through such legislative processes as the Indian Act, they feel that they must be allowed to develop in accordance with their own unique attributes as well as government legislation, and that they must be allowed to respond to services provided. The problem is that many native people are totally ignorant of services available to them; services that could help in their development. They are ignorant through a lack of understanding and a lack of information. These people need some means of informing them of the resources and services available to them as native people. Somehow they must be informed about job situations, about job opportunities and job training. They need to be made aware of various governmental and native organizational services and programs. There are numerous native groups able to help the native people, groups such as the native youth, the native women, the urban Indian, the Indian, Metis and Inuit associations and centres. They, in short, need to be told about services and resources that are available to help them to confront life's problems.

The second reason for native communication systems, according to the native peoples, is for the preservation of their cultures. They believe that the broadcast media, if controlled by or at least accessible to native peoples, can

be used by them to prevent the erosion of their cultures. Television and radio can be used to break down many of the barriers between native and non-native Canadians. The media can be used to explain similarities as well as differences between these cultural groups. The broadcast media is also seen by them as the most effective method for the presentation of native history, culture and development. It is felt that these media tools are also the most positive methods for the promotion of mutual understanding, trust and respect between native and non-native communities.

Finally, the native peoples of Canada claim that they desire access to the broadcast media in an effort to put forth their platforms respecting issues relevant to them as a distinct people within the Canadian cultural mosaic. They want to use the media in order to relate current events, current problems, issues and concerns in a manner and language understood by the native people. They also see it as a means for responding to aboriginal rights issues and as a way to make the native people more politically aware.

It is evident from the above that Canada's native peoples have had legitimate reasons for seeking access to the broadcast media in the 1970's. They have sought this access through two often interrelated developments, the native communications society and community radio and television.

For some time now a number of Indian organizations have viewed the development of effective communication programs as a necessary aspect of any overall program designed to encourage and assist in the development of native communities and native people. This recognition has led to a variety of efforts and attempts by different organizations to develop communication programs specifically designed to meet the needs of native communities and people for whom they had a responsibility.<sup>3</sup>

As of December 1979, there were eleven major native communications societies operating in Canada. All have become involved, to some extent, in the broadcast media during the last decade. Nine of this group of eleven are controlled and operated by Indian organizations; the remaining two are Inuit societies. Scores of smaller communications societies work either independently or in conjunction with these major societies.

Because of its influence in the native communications field during this decade, the Alberta Native Communications Society will be examined first.

#### Alberta Native Communications Society

"If it were not for the dedication of native communication services like the Alberta Native Communications Society, Indian communities would still be lacking visual and verbal communications outside their reserve boundaries."<sup>4</sup> The native people of Alberta established during the 1970's the two most important, the most modern, and the most advanced native communications societies in Canada. These are the Alberta Native Communications Society and the Indian News

Media organization. Although not the oldest native communications society in Canada, the Alberta Native Communications Society (ANCS) has through the course of the 1970's become the largest and the most efficient. So efficient in fact that it has become the model for all other native communications societies in Canada during this period. With headquarters in Edmonton, the ANCS organization serves the Indian and Metis populations of central and northern Alberta.

Chartered under the Province of Alberta's Societies Act on April 1, 1968,<sup>5</sup> the prime objective of the society since its creation has been to focus attention on the needs and problems of the native people. It has also attempted to advance knowledge and appreciation of the Indian's culture and traditions through the use of modern broadcast media. Initiated in 1966 by Mr. Eugene Steinhauer as a pilot project, and funded by various provincial and federal agencies, ANCS grew from a fifteen minute Cree and English language radio program to become a leader in native radio and television during the 1970's.<sup>6</sup> Governed by a board of directors comprised of six Indian and six Metis members, the Alberta Native Communications Society is a non-political organization unlike some of the more recently established native communication organizations.

William Bull, President of ANCS, stated during the 1975 Annual Meeting, that: "We make every effort to use the power

of communications wisely and responsibly because we know how powerful it can be."<sup>7</sup> This idea is carried through the established aims and objectives of the Alberta Native Communications Society; a series of aims and objectives copied almost intact by the majority of native communications societies created during this decade. The aims and objectives of the ANCS are:

1. (a) To organize and develop comprehensive communication programs that are of relevance to the Native People of Alberta and to develop and encourage such programs in co-operation with all branches of the media and public relations industry.  
(b) To promote by communications the image of native people in the national scene and to create incentives for development of mutual understanding.
2. To communicate with and to broaden social interaction among other native groups from various parts of North America.
3. To promote, encourage and establish educational programs.
4. To procure and deliver information on subjects relating to social, educational, political, and economic issues facing native people in Alberta.
5. To co-operate and work with other individuals and organizations from the Canadian Society who may desire to help and work with the native people.<sup>8</sup>

Under its motto, "From Smoke Signals to Satellites," the Alberta Native Communications Society has evolved from its beginnings in 1966 to its present seven weekly radio programs broadcast over some eight private and CBC Network radio stations in central and northern Alberta. Broadcasting predominantly in Cree, English and often in Chipweyan, ANCS

on occasion does special programming in such languages as Stoney, Slavey and Beaver. Larry Desmeules, the Executive Director of the Alberta Native Communications Society, in addressing a Canadian Radio and Television Commission public hearing October 22, 1974, said: "We are confident that our mandate from the native people of Alberta, strengthened by our service to them since we began, gives us the right and the proven experience to choose the best means of fulfilling their communication needs."<sup>9</sup> Backed by this mandate, ANCS has increased its role in radio programming and has even entered into the production of television programs. In 1976 alone, the society produced a series of fifty-four radio programs for the Alberta School Broadcasts.<sup>10</sup> In 1973 the Alberta Native Communications Society was producing its own television programs on a regular basis showing them over three cable television outlets.<sup>11</sup> By the summer of 1974 ANCS began producing its first live television broadcasts which were aired over CFRN-TV in Edmonton. This production soon grew into a regular series entitled Full Circle which was still going strong at the end of the decade. Programs in this series have included: The Great Spirit, a documentary on creation in relation to Indian beliefs, and Ralph Steinhauer, an autobiography of Alberta's first Indian Lieutenant-Governor.<sup>12</sup>

The Alberta Native Communications Society has given



the Indian and Metis people of Alberta a platform to air their concerns through the media of radio and television. The society has been a major tool for native access to and use of the broadcast media all through the 1970's. James Ducharme of ANCS described it accurately when he stated: "It would appear strongly that our concept of a well informed public can make decisions based on knowledge through use of the tools of our Communications Media."<sup>13</sup>

The Alberta Native Communications Society was the first native organization in Alberta to give the native people of the northern and central regions of this province access to and use of the broadcast media. The society used its media facilities not only to focus native and non-native attention on the needs and problems of the native people of this part of the country but, in keeping with its aims and objectives, also helped to advance knowledge and an appreciation of the Indian cultures and traditions. The very fact that ANCS' broadcasting endeavours grew from a mere fifteen minute a week radio program in 1966, to a multilingual weekly radio programming schedule of some seven programs being aired over at least eight stations must be some indication of its value and its usefulness to the native people. It must have been meeting the native peoples' broadcasting needs in radio for it to have continued on to embark on television programming. Not only that, the Alberta Native Communications Society be-

came a model for many of the other native communications societies established throughout the country during this decade.

The Alberta Native Communications Society was not the only native communications society in Alberta in the 1970's attempting to meet the needs of the native people through allowing access to and usage of the broadcast media. The Indian News Media organization worked in co-operation with ANCS to fulfill these native broadcast needs. However, the Indian News Media Society was more prominent in the different tribal areas of the southern portion of the Province of Alberta while ANCS was basically operational in the northern areas.

#### Indian News Media Society

Officially incorporated August 10, 1970, under Alberta's Provincial Societies Act, the Indian News Media Society was originally an affiliate of the Alberta Native Communications Society.<sup>14</sup> Now a totally independent society, the Indian News Media Society (INM) has continued its close co-operation with its sister society. At INM's first annual meeting held in Calgary on May 7, 1971, Leslie Healy, the Executive Director and co-founder of the organization said: "Communications has been a great contribution to the native people of Alberta as far as development is concerned within our Indian society. It has opened the eyes of many. It has

shown others what can be accomplished through communications."<sup>15</sup>

The Indian News Media Society, co-founded by Leslie Healy and Ray Many Chief, aired its first radio program on Sunday May 11, 1969 over station CJOC in Lethbridge. Governed by a board of directors, the Indian News Media Society represents five Indian tribes covered by Treaty #7, and the Metis population of southern Alberta. Represented by a member each on the Board, these tribes include: the Blackfoot Indian tribe, the Blood, Peigan, Sarcee and Stoney Indian tribes. Although calling itself the Blackfoot Radio Department, INM is in fact located on the Blood Indian Reserve near Standoff, Alberta.

The establishment of the Indian News Media Society can be credited to many governmental agencies, particularly Native Affairs, the Department of the Secretary of State and as of 1979, the Alberta Department of Culture. Aided financially by these agencies, INM expanded its broadcast facilities during 1979 with the introduction of full radio production facilities on the Peigan Indian Reserve near Brocket, Alberta.<sup>16</sup> The basic decision by the Board of Governors to expand radio facilities was brought about essentially by the problem of languages. Each of the five tribes represented by INM speak different languages. Because of the location and size of the Peigan Reserve, it

was felt that this was the logical area for expansion. All future programming from this new facility will be aired under the title, 'Pikuni Radio'.

"It is not only our job to inform the native about what is happening in Indian country but just as important is that we are situated in the heart of 'Redneck' country in Canada. We are always under the pressure of realizing that we speak publicly on behalf of all natives."<sup>17</sup> The Indian News Media Society of Alberta does not have an established list of aims and objectives as does the Alberta Native Communications Society. Indian News Media does have one clear cut aim, however, and that is to promote the positive image of native peoples at the provincial, national and even international levels. It, according to its leaders, wishes not only to create a mutual understanding of trust and respect amongst the Indian and Metis people it serves, but also between the native and non-native peoples of Alberta and the rest of Canada.

The Indian News Media Society provides native people in southern Alberta with access to the broadcast media in two essential ways; the first is through radio and the second is via television. Television is not nearly as well developed in this society as in ANCS. However, the occasional native produced program is aired over the Alberta Educational Television Network and on the local CBC tele-

vision stations. Radio is the mainstay of this society. All radio programs are pre-packaged. That is, they are produced at INM facilities and aired over private stations or the provincial CBC Network. The Blackfoot Radio program, as well as the Treaty #7 program are aired over CJOC Lethbridge, CKTA Taber and CFAC Calgary on Sundays. These programs are different lengths on these various stations and total some two hours and fifteen minutes of programming per week. Topics covered include Indian issues, culture and sports. On April 1, 1979, a new radio program entitled Red Rock Radio was added to the list.<sup>18</sup> Aired on CILA-FM, Lethbridge, this one hour a week program features interviews with native personalities, native rock and roll, high school news and views and other items focused at native youth.

Speculating on the future of the Indian News Media Society as an avenue of access to the broadcast media for Alberta's Indian and Metis population, Marvin Fox, the President of INM, said:

I think that Indian News Media has a bright future because of the increasing amount of interest among native people with regards to development, economics, society and culture. There is a great demand for more information sought not only by native people, but the non-Indian as well with regards to what advances native people are making.

Indian News Media, as well as other native communication bodies, have done a great deal in presenting the real issues concerning Indians.<sup>19</sup>

The staff of the Indian News Media organization, including Marvin Fox the President and Leslie Healy the Executive Director, seem to feel that the society has done a great deal for the native people in the southern and central parts of the province. Both have repeatedly praised the communications organization for not only promoting the positive image of the native people and for meeting native demands for more information relevant to native, 'development, economics, society and culture'. Mr. Healy said: "It has opened the eyes of many." While not quite as advanced programming or even facility-wise as ANCS, the Indian News Media Society has still grown substantially over the years. It too was initiated with a fifteen minute radio programming schedule and, as of the writing of this study, regularly broadcasts some three and a quarter hours of radio a week. Not only has its programming schedule increased, so too has its range due to the development of new facilities on the Peigan Reserve near Brocket, Alberta. According to the leaders of this Indian News Media society, the society's future seems even brighter with more radio and perhaps even a regular television schedule in the years to come.

While the communications and especially the broadcast media needs of the native people of Alberta are seemingly being met, what about the needs of the native people in

other parts of Canada? What about the native people of British Columbia which also has two native communications societies, namely the RAVEN Society and the Native Media Society? Are the broadcast media needs of these native people being met even though their native communications societies are not as sophisticated as those of Alberta? A study of the various native communications societies may help provide answers to these questions.

#### RAVEN

RAVEN, which stands for Radio and Audio Visual Education Network, is the official communications society for the Indian people of British Columbia.<sup>20</sup> Established and designed in 1967, by Patricia Hindley and Gail Martin, two non-native professors at Simon Fraser University, RAVEN actually evolved from a pilot project. This pilot project called SCAN, or the Society for a Coastal Area Network, was intended to improve communications and to promote social change among rural people along the British Columbia coast.<sup>21</sup> It was not meant to serve the native people as such but all the coastal peoples of British Columbia. By 1971, with the assistance of provincial grants, the native people of British Columbia took over the project and established it as a permanent native communications society.

RAVEN is not a typical native communications society. To begin with, it is specifically committed to the use of

media for learning and change. Secondly it does not use the typical form of broadcast media in that it is not a mass broadcast system but a network of high frequency, single-sideband two-way radios.<sup>22</sup> Starting in 1971 with only a few of these radio units, RAVEN had by the end of the 1970's well over one hundred units scattered throughout British Columbia. This form of media was chosen because of the people it had to serve. Nearly half of the fifty thousand Indians of British Columbia live in the coastal area, scattered over approximately eight hundred small reserves comprising eighty-one independent bands. There are six major linguistic divisions and many dialects within each division.<sup>23</sup>

This form of media was chosen since the majority of the population was semi-literate, with a strong oral tradition. It also had to be simple to operate so that it could be easily maintained without the need of resident technicians and extensive training.

Although RAVEN does operate via a network of radio-telephone units, it is really a broadcast society. Aided by the Department of Communications, RAVEN has erected a radio network system capable of being used to broadcast from one community music, messages, discussions and so on to over one hundred communities simultaneously. With the radio unit located in a central location, the entire native



community can listen to it. Not only then, is it considered a broadcast media, it is even more pro-access in that it allows for a two-way dialogue. It is truly a 'community of the air.'<sup>24</sup> The RAVEN system has been copied by native peoples elsewhere in Canada and by various groups around the world as an efficient, effective media system.

Senator Guy Williams, the Chairman of RAVEN, said:

It is a society set up for our B.C. Indians. It is a society to assist our Indian people in this day of their emergence into your society. It is a society which will help to advance them education wise and into the other aspects of the Canadian way of life. Some of these communities, particularly on the West coast of Vancouver Island, just could not survive any longer without RAVEN.<sup>25</sup>

The Radio and Audio Visual Education Network not only represents the native people of British Columbia, it has been chosen by the native people as their official native communications' society. Initially established and developed by non-natives to, 'Improve communications and promote social change' among the rural inhabitants of the coastal areas of British Columbia, RAVEN, according to its aims and objectives, is still committed to the use of the broadcast media for learning and for the promotion of social change. The type of broadcast media this society utilizes, that is two-way radio with broadcast capabilities, was chosen because it would meet the needs of this area which is culturally and linguistically diverse as well as being semi-literate. Its pro-access or 'community of the air' format apparently does

meet the native peoples' broadcasting needs if the number of native communities involved in the society is any indication.

#### Native Media Society of British Columbia

British Columbia is also home to one of the newer, and smaller, native communications societies in Canada. Based in Vancouver, the Native Media Society of British Columbia had its first co-ordinating meetings in February 1977, and became a full scale organization by January 1978.<sup>26</sup> Hoping eventually to establish a native communications network throughout British Columbia, the society initiated plans in April 1978, to look at the possibility of establishing a weekly one-half hour radio program and the more ambitious plan for the production of a weekly one-hour television program. The objectives of this Native Media Society of British Columbia are very similar to the aims and objectives of the Alberta Native Communications Society. For example, Section (b) of the objectives states that the society has been erected to: "Improve communications and the flow of information to native people and native communities."<sup>27</sup> This society is still basically in its planning stages. However, barring unforeseen problems, such as funding, it may well replace the RAVEN Society as the official media society for the native peoples of British Columbia in the 1980's.

It is still too early to really know whether the Native Media Society of British Columbia is meeting or is even capable of meeting the broadcast media needs of the native people of British Columbia. Only a formal organization since January 1978, the society has only just begun to formulate plans for radio and television programming. The degree of access to and usage of the broadcast media that this society hopes to establish is also dependent on its future capabilities. One need that the Native Media Society does hope to fulfill or meet, is the establishment not only of a coastal network, such as is being undertaken by RAVEN, but also a provincial network linking all of the isolated native communities in B.C. together. However, what real needs this society will be able to meet is as yet only conjecture.

What is not conjecture though, at this point in time, are the capabilities of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian's Communications Program which will be discussed in this next section of Chapter II.

Federation of Saskatchewan Indians'  
Communications Program

The Province of Saskatchewan does not have a provincial native communications society. There is, however, a Communications Program directed and managed by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians. This Communications Program, established in 1965, has been the major avenue of access to

the broadcast media for the Indians of Saskatchewan all through the 1970's. Mr. Cliff Starr, representing the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians before a CRTC public hearing held in Ottawa, October 29, 1973, stated that: "The Federation of Saskatchewan Indians is an organization of the Indian people of the province that is working for the betterment of the Indian people through constructive programming and one of them is Communications."<sup>28</sup>

The aims and objectives of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians' (FSI) Communications Program, again, are very similar to the aims and objectives of any native communications society or organization in Canada. The basic aims are to keep the Indian and Metis peoples fully informed in terms of their rights as citizens of the Province of Saskatchewan and as Canadians. The media society is also supposed to instill in these native peoples an awareness of the demands and the nature of modern people society coupled with ways and means of coping with this type of lifestyle.

Above all, the objectives of the Communications Program is to allow the Indian the opportunity to identify himself with pride and dignity as an Indian and as a Canadian and to practice and cultivate his heritage within the scope of the noble history of the native rather than the recent history of poverty and depression.<sup>29</sup>

Although the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian's Communication Program began in 1965, it was not until

February 3, 1971 that their first successful radio series began. Called Moccasin Telegraph and aired over CKBI in the FSI head office community of Prince Albert, the program was broadcast in Cree and English. It was both an informative and an entertaining program and continued in this vein all through the decade. By 1973 the FSI Communications Program was producing five weekly one-half hour radio programs of Moccasin Telegraph. This was expanded so that by the end of 1979 eight radio stations in Saskatchewan and CFAR in Flin Flon, Manitoba, were using this program.

The Federation's first television programming commenced on May 1, 1971 with a program entitled The Silent Minority. This was followed on May 2, 1971 with another television special called The Show.<sup>30</sup> The native people of Saskatchewan were allowed their greatest access to the media of television when, during the month of September 1978, the FSI Communications Program aired four weekly television specials. The first looked at the goals and objectives of the FSI while subsequent programs looked at education, social problems and public participation in Federation programs.<sup>31</sup> Although the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians' Communications Program is the official native communication program for Saskatchewan's native peoples, it is not the only one. The La Ronge Communications Society is, in truth, far better known than its FSI counterpart. However,

as the La Ronge organization is essentially a local society, a community society, it will be discussed in the following chapter.

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indians' Communications Program is not only the official native communications society of Saskatchewan natives, it is also the oldest native communications society in Canada. To have survived for some fifteen years, despite major financial problems, this communications society must be of some appreciable use to the native people of Saskatchewan. According to its objectives, the Communications Program is meeting the native peoples' needs by informing them of their rights as native people and as Canadians and by helping them to adapt to the demands of modern society. It is doing this through long established radio programming which has expanded since 1965 to five weekly one-half hour programs and through its occasional television specials.

Although not the official native communications society of Manitoba, Native Communications Incorporated is the only major native communications society in that province. During the 1970's, this society created native access to and use of the broadcast media not only through its regular media programming, but also through its considerable involvement in community access media.

### Native Communications Incorporated

Native Communications Incorporated was incorporated in late 1971 to promote and facilitate communications in native languages throughout the Province of Manitoba by radio, television, newspapers and any other like form of mass communication.<sup>32</sup>

Acting as the sole native communications society for the Province of Manitoba, Native Communications Incorporated (NCI) evolved from repeated appeals by the native people to the provincial government to have at least some media broadcasting in native languages. The evidence of this need was strengthened with the 1971 Royal Centennial visit to Manitoba when many of the native people living in the remoter areas of Manitoba did not understand radio broadcasts of the events in the English language. As soon as this problem was brought to light, native leaders met with representatives from both the federal and the provincial governments and the Corporation was established in late 1971 with an operating grant of forty thousand dollars.<sup>33</sup>

With offices in Thompson, Manitoba, the organization was directed by a Board of Directors, comprised of seven members from the various Indian and Metis communities in northern Manitoba. As the society grew so did the Board so that by the end of the decade there were ten members. The Corporation has one basic, outstanding objective in its media undertakings: "To promote and facilitate communication in the native languages indigenous to Manitoba

and northern Manitoba in particular."<sup>34</sup> As its membership has grown through the 1970's so too has its responsibilities. Originally located in Thompson, the society has established two affiliate radio stations, the first at Cross Lake and the second at Norway House. Both of these are affiliate stations, both are also community radio stations. CFNC Cross Lake went on the air officially on July 4, 1973. It was the first low power AM operation of its kind in Canada. Mr. Allan Kielser of NCI stated at the official opening that:

If successful, we may have latched onto a most effective method of providing native peoples in northern Manitoba with the means of pursuing their own goals and aspirations in a manner which they agree upon. It is extremely important that communities and people in a state of cultural change have a flexible communication system. In the North, where unique barriers must be overcome, communication takes on special importance.<sup>35</sup>

Norway House, Manitoba, was accepted as an affiliate radio station in the latter part of 1975. Also a low power AM station, Norway House produced some seventy-five percent of its programming in Cree. With program content covering weather forecasts for trappers, information on land administration, employment opportunities, legends, music, news and general entertainment, Native Communications Incorporated had, by the closure of the 1970's given the native people of Northern Manitoba use of and access to the broadcast media to a degree only dreamed of in previous decades. Not only was this access available through the two affiliates.



but by end of 1979, regular NCI programming was being carried on CBC stations at The Pas, Dauphin, Flin Flon and Churchill. Future plans call for the entry of NCI into the media of television. That, however, will have to be decided upon in the 1980's or beyond.

Native Communications Incorporated was originally established to promote and facilitate communications in the various native languages of northern Manitoba. It evolved from repeated appeals from the native people to receive broadcasting in their own native languages. Its objectives, which again includes the promotion of native language programming, has been realized through a regular radio programming schedule over several CBC radio stations throughout the northern part of the province, and through the concept of community media. This community media, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter III, was established as a means of, 'pursuing their goals and aspirations'; that is the aspirations and goals of the native people. Over the years, NCI has expanded to reach even more native people in isolated communities with its informational radio; radio which not only gives programming on native cultural and social actions and attitudes but also basic informational programming such as weather and trapping and hunting advisories so necessary for survival in this harsh land.

Operating within the same type of harsh climate as

Native Communications Incorporated and with the same type of informational programming formats, both the Kenomadiwin and the Wa-Wa-Ta native communications societies of northwestern Ontario were also involved in meeting the broadcast needs of their native constituents through regular and community broadcasting.

#### Kenomadiwin Incorporated

The Province of Ontario has the highest percentage of native peoples in Canada. From 1970 through to the end of 1979, however, Ontario's native peoples only managed to establish two native communications societies. Both of these were founded by groups located in the northwestern portion of the province. During this last decade, the majority of Ontario's Indian and Metis peoples had no active role in either using the broadcast media or even having access to such facilities.

Few of the native communications societies established in the 1970's had as many problems in being recognized as did Kenomadiwin Incorporated. Formed in 1967 and registered as an association in 1968, it felt that in order to accomplish its tasks as a native communications organization it had to fulfill two basic requirements. The first was to be recognized by the Province of Ontario as a charitable organization under the Income Tax Act. Secondly it had to obtain not only one license but a series of licenses from the CRTC

in order to serve the ten or so native communities it represented. Because of unforeseen legal difficulties, two separate organizations had to be established. The first organization was called the Thunder Bay Communication Group, or, as it was legally referred to, the Foundation for Northern Ojibway Education. This particular organization was operated solely by a Board of Directors. Its mandate was to look after the general organization of the society and the educational use and development of radio programming. The other organization was called simply Kenomadiwin Incorporated and its role was to look after all technical matters and all but educational program organization.<sup>36</sup> Kenomadiwin Incorporated itself was unique in that it was a pilot project initiated by the Company of Young Canadians' Northwest Ontario Project.<sup>37</sup>

On January 13, 1969, Kenomadiwin submitted a brief to the CRTC for the purpose of obtaining a license, actually a series of licenses, for the erection of its proposed community radio system. That same year it also applied to the Department of Communications for approval to establish low power AM broadcasting antennae at ten different sites in northwestern Ontario. The DOC application was rejected because by regulation only the CBC and the military could be authorized to operate broadcast stations with a power lower than 100 watts.<sup>38</sup> However, backed by the Company of Young

Canadians, Kenomadiwin Incorporated was finally able, on an experimental basis, to get formal DOC approval to establish such a network. The society went before the CRTC on November 10, 1970, to plead its case for broadcast licenses. Mr. William John, the President of Kenomadiwin Incorporated, pleaded his organization's case by claiming that:

Because of the reserve system imposed upon them from without, my people have been left separated and isolated from one another and from the sectors within the external society which control the events which affect their lives. Our goal in northwestern Ontario is not to provide ourselves with the luxury of a radio station, but rather to break down the effects of our long isolation in order that we may more fully be able to participate in the solutions to the manifold problems which beset us.<sup>39</sup>

Kenomadiwin Incorporated was officially licensed by the CRTC on December 15, 1970 to operate radio broadcasting stations at Lake Helen, Pays Platt, MacDiarmid, Long Lac, Aroland, and Gull Bay, Ontario.<sup>40</sup> Radio Kenomadiwin Incorporated was unique in the problems it overcame in order to become operational. It was also unique in that although it did have six radio stations they were not what most people would readily recognize as stations at all. In truth, Radio Kenomadiwin was a society that operated out of a mobile radio station. Operated by a volunteer staff and funded by various government sources, the organization erected transmitter antennae in each of the six communities and simply hooked the mobile station into these transmitters when ready to broadcast to the separate communities.<sup>41</sup>

Kenomadiwin Incorporated had only been given a two year license by the CRTC and so in November 1972, the communications organization had to apply for the renewal of its broadcast license. Mr. E. C. Prinselaar, a staff member of the Company of Young Canadians, represented the native communications group. He stated that although there was considerable community support for the radio service, there were certain problems that had to be overcome if the concept was to be continued.

Unfortunately, I believe that in the development of the radio system, insufficient time and effort was spent to develop a strong enough board structure which would not only find its roots within the communities, but also be in a powerful enough position to give guidance and leadership. It has been somewhat of a failure in reaching its objectives, and that is to be a truly community communication system. Instead of that it is a recreational toy.<sup>42</sup>

The Thunder Bay Communications Group was almost dissolved by this time and the CRTC agreed to a license renewal if organizational changes were made. In 1974, Kenomadiwin Incorporated appeared before the CRTC for its second license renewal. This renewal was issued by the CRTC. However, Kenomadiwin Incorporated was forced by the CRTC, in its decision, to halt all mobile operations and establish a permanent radio broadcast station at Long Lac.<sup>43</sup> That station is still serving the Ojibway Indians of northwestern Ontario today.

That Radio Kenomadiwin tried to meet the broadcast

media needs of the native people of this area of north-western Ontario, there can be no doubt. Originally wanting to represent some ten native communities, the Kenomadiwin communications society was forced through financial and licensing pressures to reduce its network to six communities. This was further reduced under a CRTC decision to one community in 1974. The concept of Kenomadiwin Incorporated was well intentioned, the primary objective which was to be, 'a truly community communications system' was positive but the realization of this objective was an overall failure. Whether it was the society's failure to accurately perceive the needs of the native people or whether it was simply community disinterest in failing to become actively involved is open to debate. The society provided community access to the broadcast media but the community failed to respond. Kenomadiwin Incorporated was not successful during this decade, at least not successful in relation to the other major native communications societies in operation at this time in the rest of Canada.

While the native people refused to avail themselves of the access to the broadcast media provided by Kenomadiwin Incorporated, the native people served by the Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society took full advantage of it to meet their needs.

Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society

In most areas of the province, broadcasting services are not frills but key components of the quality of life. It is generally acknowledged that some choice of television and radio stations, particularly in more remote communities, can be a very important element of the community's social life.<sup>44</sup>

The key element in the above statement is the word 'choice'. In the early part of the 1970's the native peoples of northwestern Ontario had no choice of broadcast media. They had no media at all. With the establishment of the Kenomadiwin organization, several communities that never had the 'choice' between radio stations were given not only the ability to 'tune-in' but also to 'join-in' via community access. Despite this organization's attempts to bring the broadcast media to northwestern Ontario, a very high percentage of the native communities still did not have service of any kind by the end of 1972. They probably would still be without radio if not for Ontario's second native communications organization, the Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society.

In the fall of 1971, several groups in Ottawa, Toronto, and Sioux Lookout were attempting to find a means of meeting the communication requirements of isolated northwestern Ontario. These groups were the Northern Pilot Project of the Department of Communications, the Ontario Regional Office of DOC, and the Sioux Lookout Fellowship and Communications Centre.<sup>45</sup> They sought to ascertain the best

ways and the best forms of communication services for some twenty-five isolated, and mostly native, communities that lay between the Canadian National Railway line and Hudson's Bay. The largest of these communities being Fort Hope, Sandy Lake and Big Trout Lake.

Miss Donna Pace, a native, had been hired by the Department of Communications during the summer of 1971 to undertake a study of the communication needs for this region of Ontario. Her report included the recommendation that: "There should be provision for low power broadcasting stations for this area, with technical training and maintenance being provided, but with the initiative for programming coming from the people."<sup>46</sup> This, and other recommendations, would provide the basis for the 1972-1973 Department of Communications' Northern Pilot Project in northwestern Ontario. Because of this report, Miss Pace was hired by the Ontario Regional DOC Office early in 1972 to act as a project developer for the Northern Pilot Project. The problem now was; what type of media system should be erected? Indeed, what system would be the most beneficial for the native people in this area? Donna Pace's concerns regarding this problem were evidenced in one of her reports to the Department of Communications, which reads:

The fact is that we did not know which was the most effective means of making entry to the North. We knew only too well that in the past this has been handled with a lack of sensitivity by government and we were anxious not to repeat this mistake.<sup>47</sup>



In July 1972, Miss Pace co-ordinated the installation of the first high-frequency radio unit at Sioux Lookout, which had been chosen as the central base for the new radio system. The high-frequency (HF) radio communications package had been chosen over other communication means as the best tool to connect the large number of native communities that needed a reliable two-way radio service. This system worked very much like the RAVEN system in British Columbia and could, like RAVEN, be in effect used as a type of broadcast system. The radio system was expanded in several phases so that by December 1973, some twenty-four native communities were serviced.

Early in 1973, the Director of the Sioux Lookout Fellowship and Communications Centre discussed with Donna Pace the idea of forming a native communications society. It was to be an apolitical organization reporting to the SLFCC executive which would take over the responsibility for the radio network. It was felt that there should eventually be a communications centre in the North with the responsibility for co-ordinating all communication activities such as radio operations, VTR production, and training. The first step, it was decided, would be to hire someone to help set up the society. In July 1973, Frank Beardy, a native communications worker, was hired to develop a communications organization to operate the HF network. In September 1973, a meeting was held in Sioux Lookout for representatives from the twenty-four communities

served by the radio network and a board of directors was picked. Wa-Wa-Ta, which is a Cree Indian word meaning 'northern lights', was chosen as the name for this new native communications society and the Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society became a reality.<sup>48</sup>

The aims and objectives of the Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society upon its conception were:

1. To manage and direct the HF network in northwestern Ontario to ensure continuous operation of the system;
2. To raise appropriate funding for the above objectives;
3. To co-ordinate communication activities in northwestern Ontario, e.g., VTR programming and broadcasting; and
4. To keep the people in the remote communities of northwestern Ontario informed of communications, and of ensuing government policy which will affect them directly.<sup>49</sup>

The Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society continued through the 1970's to press for more native participation in the broadcast media. In September of 1977, the society cooperated with the CBC to produce native language radio programs. These programs in Ojibway, Cree and English were produced at Sandy Lake and broadcast over the CBC low power relay transmitters in northwestern Ontario. As the larger communities in this part of Ontario were connected via CBC LPRT's they attempted to form, under Wa-Wa-Ta guidance, community radio stations in the effort to establish a sort of

mini-radio network.<sup>50</sup> By October 1978, there were twelve such community radio stations linked together into a loose network system. These stations were the perfect answer to native use of, and access to the broadcast media. There was one problem, however, and that was that none of these radio stations was licensed. They were pirate stations.<sup>51</sup> Television is not, as yet, a priority for this society or even the native people of northwestern Ontario. However, when it does become a priority and a reality, the native people and the Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society want to have both access and control over programming.<sup>52</sup>

Before any form of broadcast media was introduced into this area of northwestern Ontario, a study was undertaken to ascertain the broadcast needs of the native people. Once this was realized, a system was developed that would best suit these needs. The type of system that was erected was much like that used by the RAVEN Society. High frequency radio with broadcast capabilities was chosen because it allowed the most comprehensive form of access while being able to link up the numerous native communities to each other. It was not merely community radio, it was regional radio. All along the 'initiative for programming' came from the native people themselves. While Kenomadiwin Incorporated and just about all of the other native communications societies developed during this decade were erected to develop a

broadcast media system, the Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society came about as a result of the establishment of a system. The native people apparently wanted a society or organization to co-ordinate their activities and to assure the continuation of this access to the broadcast media, and Wa-Wa-Ta did just that. It even helped to establish a loose network out of twelve of these community units and worked with the CBC to initiate regular native language programming. Access to and use of the broadcast media was not established by this society but it was maintained by it throughout the 1970's.

#### Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia

Native use of and access to the broadcast media during the 1970's became less and less in evidence the further east one went. Ontario, despite the fact that it had more native people than anywhere else in Canada, had only two native communications societies of any note during this period. The Indian and Metis people of Quebec were only in the process of planning a communication organization at the end of this decade; an organization still unattained at the writing of this study. Although featured on various radio and television programs throughout the province, the native people of New Brunswick were, and still are, no better off than their Quebec counterparts in the use of and access to the broadcast media. And, though the native people of Prince Edward Island had

access via a Charlottetown television station, they failed to form any kind of native communications society. This is also true for the native people of Newfoundland. Therefore, during the 1970's, from Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout, Ontario east to the Atlantic Provinces, few real efforts were attempted by the native people to use and gain access to the broadcast media. The only exception to this is the Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia.

Located in Sydney, Nova Scotia, the Native Communications Society of N.S. has been producing the radio program Micmac Magazine, aired over AM and FM stations throughout the province since the mid-1970's. The society's Executive Director, Roy Gould, said that unless increased funding for the organization was realized by December 31, 1979, the Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia would have to cease operations. In a letter written to the Secretary of State in December 1979, Mr. Gould stated: "I have asked the co-operation of my staff in phasing out operations beginning October 1, 1979, with the second phase initiated January 1, 1980 and the complete shutdown on March 31, 1980."<sup>53</sup> This was the first major native communications society in Canada to die in the 1970's.

The Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia died not from a lack of native participation or native interest or even because it was not meeting the broadcast needs of

the native people but from financial hardships. If it was not meeting the needs of its constituents, again this was due to a lack of funding more than from a lack of concern. Its limited funding only allowed it to produce one radio program but still this program was carried over many radio stations throughout the province and it was produced on a regular weekly basis for several years.

The Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia did not survive. Neither did the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories' Communications Unit. The Communications Unit, however, did not die or even decline in the usual sense from a lack of native interest or because it was not meeting the needs of the people. It, in fact, did not really die or decline at all but was subsequently incorporated into a larger more representative and more beneficial native communications society.

Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest  
Territories' Communications Unit

Even in the early 1970's the Indian and Metis people residing in the mid-to-southern part of Canada had at least some limited access to the broadcast media. This was not the case however for the Indian and Metis people living above the 60 th. parallel. The Yukon and the Northwest Territories were only beginning to be opened up at the beginning of this decade and the amenities of modern life, such as adequate

communications and access to facilities, was restricted to most non-native communities due to the geography and the lack of funding.

Because of the lack of access to adequate communication facilities, the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories decided to establish their own communication organization and program under the direction of Antoine Mountain. After several meetings with representatives from the twenty-five or so native communities in the MacKenzie River Delta region, the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories' Communications Unit was established in the summer of 1971.<sup>54</sup> The first task of this new organization was to determine the type of system they could afford and which would be the most effective for this area of the Arctic. After attending a communications conference in British Columbia in January 1972, Mr. Mountain submitted a plan to the Brotherhood which was, in effect, a duplicate of the design used by the RAVEN Society in B.C.<sup>55</sup> This particular design was chosen because of its simplicity, its reliability, its low costs, and because of the almost total isolation of some of the communities involved in the plan. A similar system had been installed at Rankin Inlet the previous year and because of its design the people of Rankin Inlet were able to use it as a community radio station. This was exactly why the Indian Brotherhood chose the two-way radio-

telephone system over other designs. They wanted a system that would allow the native people in each of the settlements to be able to talk with those in other settlements. They also desired a system that could be used to receive news and educational programming.

Interest grew and the Communications Unit grew with it. By the beginning of 1972, the Unit was producing a weekly one-half hour radio program which was broadcast over the CBC stations in the Delta. The Native Press Radio Program had to be dropped, unfortunately, due to the lack of funds in May 1972. The plans for the radio network also had to be postponed. On December 15, 1972, Wally Firth, the Metis Member of Parliament for this region, telephoned the Communications Unit with word that the federal government, under the Department of the Secretary of State, would sponsor the continuation of both the radio program and the radio network.<sup>56</sup> The Department of Communications also decided to help by giving the Communications Unit a number of radio units they were not using. Due to unforeseen circumstances, however, the DOC had to cancel that plan.

On January 12 and 13, 1973, a special meeting was held in Edmonton between the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories, the RAVEN Society and the Department of Communications.<sup>57</sup> At this meeting it was decided that the radio network should proceed. Plans were also detailed that



split up the twenty-five communities into divided areas with each area having a 'Big Station' acting as a central base for each area. The head office was located in Yellowknife with 'Big Stations' located at: Fort McPherson, Fort Franklin, Fort Simpson and Hay River. This new design covered much more than just the Delta Region and stretched to the eastern shores of Great Slave Lake and south to the Alberta border.

The radio network finally went on the air in October 1973.<sup>58</sup> The dream of the Indian Brotherhood's Communications Unit had finally become a reality. It meant the end of isolation for many of the Indian and Metis communities in the Western Arctic. It also meant that these native peoples had gained the use of and access to a media system that meant much in their development aspirations.

The Communications Unit of the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories was responsible for the establishment of radio broadcasting facilities in at least twenty-five of some of the most isolated communities in the Western Arctic. It took on this task of building a broadcast network because the native people had absolutely no access to any form of communications, not even a telephone system. The design chosen by the Communications Unit was the same design as was used by the RAVEN Society. This design was chosen because it gave both a telephone hookup as well as radio broad-

casting capabilities. While the broadcast needs of the native people such as the need for general information, for educational programming and so on, became evident as the system came into use, the first and foremost reason for its establishment was as a survival mechanism. The hunters and trappers needed basic weather information and the communities needed some means of contacting the outside world in the case of emergencies. As it developed however, it became apparent that its uses were multiple and the Unit was expanded to even include a weekly radio programming schedule.

The Indian Brotherhood's Communications Unit was subsequently incorporated into a larger native communications unit; one which was more representative of the different Indian and Metis communities in the Western Arctic and one which went well beyond meeting the mere survival needs of these native people.

Native Communications Society of the  
Western Northwest Territories

The Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories' Communications Unit was the first major communications group in the Arctic to study the possibilities of access to the broadcast media during the early part of the 1970's. There were others in the Arctic, however, who felt that the Communications Unit was not representative enough of all the native peoples in this area. On January 21, 1974, the re-

representatives of four native associations met in Yellowknife to discuss the formation of an independent society to improve communications in the western portion of the Northwest Territories.<sup>59</sup> These representatives included: Roy Erasmus from the Tree of Peace, an Indian cultural organization based in Yellowknife, Sam Raddi of the Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement (COPE), a political organization representing the Inuit peoples of the Delta region, and Richard Whitford, representing both the Metis and Non-Status Indian Association and the Indian Association of the Northwest Territories.

The reasoning behind the establishment of such an organization was best described by Roy Erasmus when he said: "This society will not only benefit native people but all levels of government that would normally have to deal with four or more sets of communication proposals."<sup>60</sup> The aim of the society was to create a type of communications organization that would improve communications between the peoples of the North, which would also inform the native people of the affairs of the North and which would give native viewpoints a stronger public voice.<sup>61</sup>

With its headquarters in Yellowknife, the Native Communications Society of the Western Northwest Territories began to rapidly make plans for the future. Although not officially incorporated, in late winter and early spring

of 1974, the Board of Directors, made up of the original representatives from the four co-operating native organizations, nevertheless proposed the establishment of a video and a radio unit.<sup>62</sup> The radio unit issued plans to provide programming in the Slavey, Dogrib, Chipweyan native languages, as well as in English. The video unit, formerly with the Tree of Peace organization, also began to concentrate their efforts at getting television programming produced. Altogether, nearly twenty people were involved in this new native communications society by the spring of 1974. On August 28, 1975, over a year later, the society received its first federal funding from the Department of the Secretary of State.<sup>63</sup>

The Native Communications Society of the Western Northwest Territories officially became a public organization following its first annual meeting at Fort Providence May 21-24, 1976.<sup>64</sup> Twenty-two delegates representing some thirty Indian, Metis and Inuit settlements met to discuss future plans for the society. There were three events that occurred at this meeting that held significance for the future of communications in the Western Arctic. First, the Communications Unit of the Indian Brotherhood relinquished its control over the radio network it had established. Secondly, a new Board of Directors was named to manage the new society. And finally, there was the start in the break-

down of communications among the membership that would eventually lead to the breaking away of the Inuit representation. The organization COPE or the Committee for the Original Peoples Entitlement, was actually a radical Inuit political group. They felt that the new society should be political as well as pro-communications, while the other members were opposed to this idea. Eventually, the Inuit group would split and form its own native communications society. However, at this meeting at least, it decided to stay on as a tentative partner. As of this date, the Native Communications Society of the Western Northwest Territories is still in operation serving the Indian and Metis people of the western Northwest Territories.

#### Ye-Sa-To Communications Society

The only other Indian and Metis communications society of note in the Arctic is the Ye-Sa-To Communications Society.<sup>65</sup> Established in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, in 1977, this organization produces a regular periodical but has only recently, at the end of this decade, started to look seriously at the broadcast media. Funded by the Secretary of State and aided technically by the Department of Communications, Ye-Sa-To will possibly establish itself in the 1980's as the official native communications society for the Dene peoples of the Yukon.

### Nunatsiakmiut

We feel that Nunatsiakmiut is the most important and the most exciting thing to happen to television in the North. This is the first time that the Inuit have organized a production centre and sold television programs to the CBC to be broadcast across the North. This group is making history.<sup>66</sup>

While the Indian and Metis peoples of Canada have been relatively successful in the implementation of their own broadcast ideas via the various native communications societies, the Inuit peoples have not been as fortunate. Because of their geographical isolation, scattered populations and numbers, the Inuit during the 1970's were forced by necessity to develop their broadcast media through smaller, more localized communication organizations. It is not surprising, therefore, to discover that during this decade only two relatively comprehensive Inuit communication organizations or societies were formed. The first of these was the Nunatsiakmiut organization located in Frobisher Bay. Unlike its Indian counterparts, Nunatsiakmiut is totally centred around the production of television programming.

The Nunatsiakmiut communications group whose name means 'People from the beautiful land', got its start at a Super 8 film workshop held in 1974 by the National Film Board to train Inuit film-makers. Led by a six member all Inuit Board of Directors, Nunatsiakmiut produced the first ever Inuit made television program which was aired on the CBC Northern Television Service January 23, 1976.<sup>67</sup> This native communi-

cations society established itself in order to preserve the Inuit culture which it felt was being destroyed by media influences foreign to Inuit lifestyles. Because of the introduction of television and radio as well as government activities, the Inuit apparently felt that they were in danger of losing their culture and language. Nunatsiakmiut was erected as a self-preservation measure.

Aided by various native and government departments, the Nunatsiakmiut organization prospered during the decade. Ian Creey, the Vice-President of Nunatsiakmiut, stated the problems of early organization when he said: "Nunatsiakmiut has gone through a lot of growing pains, but we feel that it has established itself. The quality of programs has increased steadily and the staff has expanded to two production crews with a third in the works."<sup>68</sup> With grants from the Local Initiatives Program, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the national Inuit organization, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada and with technical aid and advice from the National Film Board, Nunatsiakmiut was able to produce a series of Super 8 documentary films which touched on topics ranging from legal services to the Inuit land claims and the cultural depiction of the Inuit peoples.

Nunatsiakmiut came into its own as a native communications society when the CBC Northern Television Service decided to purchase this series and telecast it via satellite to the



entire north. Since that time, January 23, 1976, Nunatsiakmiut production quality has risen as has their CBC purchasing contracts and their popularity among the Inuit peoples. Their original fifteen minute series has grown into a regular weekly television series still being aired and in fact expanded at the writing of this study. With hopes and plans for expanding in the 1980's, Nunatsiakmiut has been seen as a champion for Inuit progress during the 1970's. Not content with Inuit participation in the broadcast media, this native communications society, although realistic, has pressed for more Inuit involvement in all aspects of radio and television in the North. Jens Lyberth summed up the organization's attitudes best when he presented a brief before the CRTC in which he said: "Let me say this, that so far things, in the way things have been happening, it is acceptable. We are happy for what has been happening, but it could happen in a more direct manner. If it could be directed to the peoples of the North, by the peoples of the North we would be more happy about it."<sup>69</sup>

Nunatsiakmiut was developed as a 'self-preservation measure'. According to its members, it was established to counteract the influences of the southern media, and especially the media of television, which was supposedly destroying Inuit culture, languages and lifestyles. The ability of Nunatsiakmiut to meet at least some of the Inuit peoples' broadcast needs can be measured, if by nothing



else, by the fact that it grew from one production crew to three in the matter of only a few years. The quality of its programming can also be measured by the fact that it went from being a special fifteen minute CBC sponsored television program to a regular weekly program being beamed across the entire North via satellite. It was also only one of two regular Inuit language television programs carried by the CBC for its Northern Service during this decade.

But, Nunatsiakmiut was not the only Inuit communications society in operation in the 1970's. At the latter part of the decade the Inuit people of northern Quebec developed their own native communications society to meet their various broadcast media needs. The name of this society is Taqramiut Nipingat Incorporated.

#### Taqramiut Nipingat Incorporated

The only other Inuit native communications society of any real consequence, other than the local community societies, established during the 1970's was the northern Quebec Inuit communications society of Taqramiut Nipingat Incorporated. Acting as the communications organization for the Northern Quebec Inuit Association, Taqramiut Nipingat Incorporated (TNI) was established only in late 1977. In their 1974 brief Taqramiut, People of the North,<sup>70</sup> the Inuit peoples of Quebec called for the establishment of suitable native language radio service in the Inuit settlements. This

document pointed out that radio was a far greater priority than television as radio could be used much more extensively as a local access tool. This same brief also asked the federal government for a grant to set up a local radio broadcasting and high frequency radio system similar to that used by RAVEN. The government at this time, however, felt that the CBC was providing services and that the Northern Quebec Inuit Association should check out such radio service possibilities with that organization first.

After spending several years arguing with the CBC, the federal government and the Quebec Provincial government, the Northern Quebec Inuit Association (NQIA) decided that, if any progress was to be made with respect to the establishment of an adequate Inuit broadcast media system, it would have to involve itself more in the problem. After several meetings with settlement councils, Taqramiut Nipingat Incorporated was established as a native communications society whose sole aim was to provide the Inuit peoples of northern Quebec with an adequate broadcast media system. Joseph Padlayat, one of the original organizers, was chosen as its first President.

The CBC in trying to help the Inuit here suggested that if the five settlements with populations over five hundred wanted, the CBC would establish transmitters allowing local access. Eventual affiliation for these stations would also be allowed if the Inuit so wished.<sup>71</sup> The plan failed, how-

ever, due to the lack of Inuit interest. Under the leadership of Joseph Padlayat, the Taqramiut Nipingat society kept up its repeated attacks on the government for its lack of funding and especially against the CBC for its lack of funding, services and native language programming. Mr. Padlayat reiterated his concern, in early February 1978, about the problem of funding when he said: "As president of a communications society, I was present at a recent meeting with senior officials of the CBC when the problem was under discussion. At that time the CBC stated once again that under no circumstances would it consider making funds available from its general revenue."<sup>72</sup>

Charles Watt, the President of the Northern Quebec Inuit Association spoke for the Taqramiut Nipingat Society before the CRTC when it held a public hearing at Fort Chimo, Quebec, on April 20, 1978.

To date, our efforts have had little success and a great deal of frustration. This is the only thing that we have been able to get out of the CBC at the present time. The problem is that we are here. They don't want to answer our needs at the present time because, they have difficulties with the government of Canada and the government of Quebec. There is an internal fight between the government of Canada and the government of Quebec, in regards to who is going to have control over the communications. That is the one big problem we have.<sup>73</sup>

The Taqramiut Nipingat Communications Society also claimed that it had requested from the CBC that it establish FM radio stations in each of the Inuit communities in northern Quebec but, that the CBC never bothered to look at this

problem. By the spring of 1978, TNI had managed to establish community radio facilities in nine out of the eleven Inuit settlements. The TNI had resolved the problem of local access and use of the radio media, however, the battle over television was just beginning. The CBC, it must be admitted, did help these community radio stations by training the personnel and providing a good deal of the equipment. The CBC, however, was still regarded as the villain in the matter of television. Because northern Quebec is under the CBC's French Services Division, and because the programming is not in the Inuit language, the Inuit people of this region have decided to forego the availability of satellite television services to date.

Because the Taqramiut Nipingat native communications society is so new its effects with respect to the establishment of a truly native, a truly Inuit broadcasting media system in northern Quebec, has yet to be felt.

#### Western Arctic Regional Communications Society

The decade of the 1970's was also the period of the establishment of one of the lesser known native communications societies, namely, that of the Western Arctic Regional Communications Society.

The I.O.I. is the Inuit Okangit Inungunun, it is a combination of the different dialects put together, representing the communities all the way east to Holman Island and all the way west to Aklavik. It means the I.O.I. is people talking to people, and it is also the Western Arctic Regional Communications Society.<sup>74</sup>

The I.O.I. initially established in April 1976, was an original partner in the Native Communications Society of the Western Northwest Territories. Led by their parent body, COPE (Committee for the Original Peoples Entitlement) a highly political Inuit organization, the seven Inuit communities in the western Arctic decided to strike out on their own and establish their own native communications society. Highly political and highly anti-CBC, the society has stressed the need for Inuit radio and television production facilities to be located throughout the Arctic. The President of I.O.I., Peter Green, stated before the CRTC that:

Our communications society I.O.I. strongly recommends to the CRTC, in the event that the CBC is allowed to maintain its monopoly, that we shall have forthwith a policy which will provide the financial and technical means to develop jointly with the Inuit people independent production facilities required to upgrade the northern service.<sup>75</sup>

Few Inuit leaders have openly supported I.O.I. because it is predominantly a fringe group. It failed during the 1970's to really involve itself in the production aspect of either radio or television programming and may only do so if it survives in the 1980's.

#### Conclusions

The phenomenon of the native communication societies was basically a phenomenon of the 1970's. They were developed and operated by the native people, for the native people. In looking closely at these societies, their aims, their objec-

tives, and their activities during this period, it is evident that they were developed for a multiplicity of reasons. They were developed because of a need. The three primary reasons according to the native people, and as indicated at the beginning of this chapter include: for the gathering and dissemination of information, for the preservation of native cultures and finally, to act as a platform or an outlet to issue positional statements.

Native communications societies were developed in part, again according to the native people themselves, as a tool for the gathering and dissemination of information; information pertinent to the development and even the survival of the native peoples. Whether living in the large cities of the South, in the isolated areas of the North or even on the tribal reserves, the native people are subject to the same needs as other Canadians. They must have adequate health care, they must have job opportunities and training, and they must receive educational information. The Indians, Metis and Inuit peoples must also respond to services and programs directed towards them as native peoples; programs initiated by the federal government, the provincial and territorial governments as well as their own native organizations. This response can only be assured if the native people receive the necessary information. The gathering and dissemination of information in general, has only become a viable concept

since the advent of the native directed, native operated, communications societies in the 1970's. Because of the growth of the major, and the smaller more localized native communications societies, the native people have apparently become much more aware of the services and the resources available to them as natives, and as Canadians.

There are other forms of survival that Canada's Indian, Metis and Inuit peoples claim that they have had to face during the last decade. One is the problem of social and cultural survival. Another is political survival. Native access to and use of the broadcast media of radio and television has not totally assured their survival as unique cultural entities but it has, many natives feel, at least given them a valuable tool in this struggle. For a long time now, Canada's original peoples have felt excluded from the mainstream of Canadian life. They claim that they have been relegated to the position of second class citizens. Their traditions, customs, and languages have been threatened by the same devices that may well help them to preserve their cultures in the future. Socially and culturally speaking the natives feel that the broadcast media has evolved from being a luxury to being a necessity for Canada's native peoples. Because it is seen as a necessity, they have felt, at least since the late 1960's, that it should be controlled by them for their benefits whether social or cultural in

nature. Thus their attempts at gaining control over the broadcast media via the development of native communications societies. Attempts that judging by the number and the sophistication of their communications societies have at least been partially successful. With radio and television under native control, the natives have been able to direct it towards the preservation of their cultures. They seemingly have used it as an alternative to the 'foreign' media, the non-native media that still surrounds many of them despite the native communications societies.

Finally there is the issue of political survival. Native communications leaders claim that native communications societies were developed during the 1970's as a means of being heard. These societies have been given a mandate by the native people to act as spokesmen to speak publicly on behalf of the native people. When 'Red Power' gave way to 'Indian Power', and technology and education replaced blockades and guns, the native people began to use communications, and especially the broadcast media, as a new tool for political advancement. This concept of media use for political means gave evidence of a new level of political sophistication to the native people. Through their native communications societies they began, during this period, to do what non-natives had been doing since the invention of radio and television, using it to get ahead politically.



Radio and television has apparently made the native people more aware of their rights as natives and as Canadians. It has given them an outlet to react to issues involving them as native people.

Native communication societies whether on a regional, provincial or even a local scale, were established and evolved because the native people saw a need for them.

Chapter II has been an examination of the major native communications societies in operation in Canada during the 1970's. The following chapter, Chapter III, will look at these native communications societies with respect to some of the issues and challenges they faced during this decade. The problem of these societies attempting to obtain adequate funding through individual and collective efforts, such as through the holding of native communication conferences, will be discussed. Also, some of the challenges they faced such as their attempts at creating native communication programs, the establishment of a national native communications network, and the development of community broadcast media projects will also be explored.

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### CHAPTER III

#### NATIVE COMMUNICATIONS SOCIETIES: CHALLENGES AND CO-OPERATION IN THE 1970's

As stated in the introductory chapter, the purpose of this thesis is to investigate Canada's native peoples' use of and access to the broadcast media of radio and television during the 1970's. Chapter II explored the reasons why the Indian, Metis and Inuit people found it necessary to seek access to the broadcast media during this decade. To summarize, they desired this access in order to: gather and disseminate information pertinent to them in their daily lives; to aid in the preservation of their cultural integrity and finally, in order to have an outlet for statements in response to issues affecting them as native people. Chapter II also introduced the concept of the native communications society. These societies were established by the native people themselves as a means for obtaining access to the broadcast media. Chapter II was a brief historical account of the nine major Indian communications societies and the two major Inuit communications societies developed during this period. Chapter III will look at these native communications societies in an attempt to review some of the more pertinent issues and challenges faced by them as providers of the broadcast media to the

native people.

Perhaps the most serious, the most overwhelming challenge faced by the native communications societies in Canada in the 1970's was the problem of funding. None of the major communications societies escaped this problem. Some were unable to cope and as a result disbanded. The first section of Chapter III will discuss the problems of funding faced by each of the major native communications societies. The Indian communications societies will be dealt with first followed by a discussion of the Inuit communications societies.

The second section of this chapter will look at the cooperative attempts made by the native communications societies to deal with common concerns, including funding, through the establishment of native communication conferences. Native communication conferences were evolved early on in the decade as a practical means both for airing common concerns and for finding, or at least attempting to find, solutions to these concerns. While some of the more important of these conferences were actually called by government agencies and not the native communications societies, native participation was evident as they attempted to seek a more relevant role for native people in the broadcast media. They negotiated for native access to the media of radio and television in order to meet the needs of the native people which have already been discussed in Chapter II.



The native communications societies also faced the challenge of obtaining native personnel trained in the broadcasting skills. This next section of Chapter III will attempt to provide insight into how these societies met this challenge through the development of native training programs. The native communications societies were aided in the development of training programs by several of the national native organizations such as the Canadian Association in Support of the Native People. This and other aspects of native training for the operation of the native broadcast media will be explored here as well.

The two final sections of Chapter III will look at native access to the broadcast media in slightly different ways. The first part will look at the native communications societies and their attempts, through the 1970's, to develop a national broadcast network. Because native people are found in all ten provinces as well as the two territories, native communications leaders felt that a national network comprised of the various native communications societies might afford the native people not only better access to the broadcast media but a more unified voice in defence of native ideals.

While the major native communications societies endeavoured to establish a national network in broadcasting, they also attempted and succeeded, in developing a more localized form of access through community radio and television. Not all of the

native communications societies were so engaged but enough of them were to necessitate a look at the issue. It is important to look at this development because community access in broadcasting is regarded as a fundamental objective.

This has been a brief introduction to Chapter III which will explore the issues, such as funding and the challenges, such as the development of community media, faced by the native communications societies in Canada during the 1970's.

The topics which will be discussed are as follows: Funding, Native Communication Conferences, Native Communication Training Programs, National Native Communication Developments, and Native Communications Societies and Community Access Media: Radio and Television.

#### Funding

Funding was a problem for all of the major native communications societies in Canada during the 1970's. Without adequate initial financing none of these societies could have been developed in the first place. It was the daily financial burdens however, that seem to have been the main problem for these native communications societies. The renting of office space, the buying of radio and television equipment, the training of personnel and the purchasing of air time all costs a great deal of money. Access to and use of the broadcast media was obtained by the native people

through their native communications societies but it was obtained at a price. It was a price, however, that the native people were willing to pay - at least in part.

Of the eleven major native communications societies discussed in Chapter II, only two were not subsequently supported by the Department of the Secretary of State during this time. These two societies were: Kenomadiwin Incorporated and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians' Communications Program. The Department of the Secretary of State announced its intention to provide financial assistance to native communications programs in March 1974. This was several years after a number of the societies had already been established. Still, this active role in financing by the government was welcomed in principle. The role of the Department of the Secretary of State will be discussed in detail in Chapter IV. It must be noted here however for clarification that it was a substantial role.

This section of Chapter III will look at the issue of funding for the native communications societies. Because each of these major societies were funded differently, each will be looked at separately. First the Indian communications societies will be discussed followed by the Inuit communications societies. These societies are: The RAVEN Society, the Alberta Native Communications Society, the Indian News Media Society, the Federation of Saskatchewan

Indians' Communications Program, Native Communications Incorporated, Kenomadiwin Incorporated, the Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society, the Chiefs of Ontario, the Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia, Ye-Sa-To Communications Society, the Native Communications Society of the Western Northwest Territories, and the two Inuit societies, Nunatsiakmiut and Taqramiut Nipingat Incorporated.

#### Radio and Audio Visual Education Network

The first native communications society to be examined here with respect to funding is the RAVEN native communications society of British Columbia. The Radio and Audio Visual Education Network (RAVEN) initially started as a communications project by Simon Fraser University in British Columbia. Because of this, the society was quite well financed from the beginning. When the Indian Brotherhood of British Columbia assumed control of the communication organization in 1971, much of the equipment had already been installed and some of the native personnel had been trained. Also, upon change of ownership, the Province of British Columbia gave the society annual grants for operating expenses. This was augmented by the financial assistance from the Donner Canada Foundation (which has also been generous with Inuit communications projects), the Centre for Social Research in Montreal and the Catholic Archdioceses of Victoria, British Columbia.<sup>1</sup> The Department of the Secretary of State has continually supported

RAVEN since 1974. As indicated in the previous chapter, RAVEN is a two-way radio-telephone broadcast system. Because of this type of system, native access can be gained much less expensively than through an ordinary broadcast operation. However, training, repairs or maintenance, and equipment still necessitates financial support above and beyond that which the Indian Brotherhood of British Columbia can manage alone.

#### Alberta Native Communications Society

The more sophisticated the operation, the more expensive it becomes. This has been the case with respect to the Alberta Native Communications Society which, during the decade, provided access to the native people of northern and central Alberta. The Alberta Native Communications Society (ANCS) and its sister organization the Indian News Media, were both funded in part by the Department of the Secretary of State during the 1970's. In fact: "The Secretary of State Department provided substantial funding for the Alberta Native Communications Society as a pilot project."<sup>2</sup> This was in 1972 when the State Department was looking into the possibility of financially helping the native people to finance their own communications systems. The ANCS was chosen by the Department as a pilot project hoping that if it worked here, then consent could be given for the establishment of permanent policy for funding native communication organizations. The Secretary of

State, Hugh Faulkner, at a native communications conference hosted by ANCS in March 1974, announced such a native communications funding policy. As stated before, this policy will be examined in further detail in Chapter IV.

When the Alberta Native Communications Society initiated its radio broadcast programming in 1969 as a means of giving the native people access to the broadcast media, it did not have the Department of the Secretary of State to give it assistance. It did, however, have the Alberta Human Resources Department Authority and the federal government's ARDA program which together gave ANCS some two hundred and ten thousand dollars in grants.<sup>3</sup> The cost over the years to operate ANCS has been substantial. The establishment of radio facilities was expensive but not nearly as expensive as the television programming undertaken by the society. Air time, production costs, equipment costs and even maintenance and training costs have meant that without outside funding ANCS would most probably never have developed into the model native communications society that it did during the 1970's. The spectre of funding will always be with this society, as it will with all other native societies, as they attempt to maintain a degree of excellence in their provision of access to and use of the broadcast media for native Albertans. William Bull, the President of ANCS, recognized this fact when he stated in August, 1975 that: "We do not expect to reach the stage where we can

operate without government funding but we are trying to raise a larger percentage of our budget each year."<sup>4</sup>

#### Indian News Media Communications Society

The Indian News Media communications organization has been providing access to the broadcast media for the Indian and Metis people of southern and central Alberta since its establishment in the late summer of 1970. Like its sister native communications society in Alberta, initially Indian News Media was faced with financial problems. Leslie Healy, the Vice-President of INM, stated in May 1973, that: "In order to do away with the problem of government cutbacks, the society should be self-sustaining. Once funding has been settled, we can enter into VTR, something which has been proposed for three years but which has been unable to expand due to funding."<sup>5</sup> This goal of self-funding has always been just out of reach for Canada's native communications societies. Because of this, the Indian News Media organization welcomed government support when it came from the Department of the Secretary of State in March, 1974. By March 31, 1979, the Indian News Media group was receiving substantial funds for its broadcasting operations. The vast majority of these funds came from the Province of Alberta. It also received that same year, one hundred and eighty-eight thousand, eight hundred and nine-two dollars from the federal government.<sup>6</sup>

### Federation of Saskatchewan Indian's Communications Program

While ANCS and INM received substantial government assistance for their operations, other native communications organizations, such as the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians' Communications Program, did not. Excluded by the Department of the Secretary of State for federal assistance, FSI has had to rely on other government agencies, including provincial government agencies, for its funding. Funding problems became so acute for the Federation at the start of 1973 that the organization decided to call a native communications conference to deal with the issue.

The recognition by Indians of their needs in the communications area led to numerous discussions among them. It also led to demands being made on the Federal Government and particularly on the Department of the Secretary of State to fund various communication programs. Some of these programs were funded and others were not, leading to expressions of dissatisfaction on the part of native organizations in general and Indian organizations in particular.<sup>7</sup>

This special national native communications workshop was chaired by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians at the insistence of the National Indian Brotherhood. It was held in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, in January 1973, and included representatives from all of the major native communications societies then in operation and from both provincial and national native organizations.

At the meeting a report was tabled by Gerry Kenney, a Department of Communications consultant, hired by the FSI



and the NIB to examine the problems native communications groups faced in funding native access to the broadcast media. This report looked at the role of the federal government in funding native communications. It also gave recommendations for funding mechanisms, sub-programs, and funding levels. Mr. Kenney devised a system based on the formula used by the Department of the Secretary of State for funding its core programs to various Canadian organizations. The conclusions that Kenney came to was that the federal government should set aside four and a half million dollars for national native communications programs.<sup>8</sup>

From this report, the FSI and the NIB, in conjunction with the other native groups attending this workshop, evolved a new funding formula whereby the native communications societies in each of the provinces and the two territories would receive a proportionate share of the available funds. At an annual rate of inflation of some eight percent, the total amount arrived at by these workshop participants was two million, two hundred and sixty thousand dollars. Far below the amount described in the Kenney Report.

Despite this workshop, its report and other funding meetings, the Secretary of State Department set its own policies for funding in March, 1974. When it was announced, the FSI was not included as it failed to meet all of the criteria as stipulated by the Department. The Federation

of Saskatchewan Indians' Communication Program was, however, still funded by provincial and other federal government agencies. Eventually, even the FSI was granted funding by the Department of the Secretary of State. It was, however, granted under one of its core programs and not its native communications funding program. This added funding helped the FSI to expand its broadcasting capabilities and because of this, native access to and use of the broadcast media in Saskatchewan was expanded.

#### Native Communications Incorporated

The native communications society, Native Communications Incorporated, located in northern Manitoba, was quite fortunate in its provision of the broadcast media for native usage. It, unlike most other native communications societies, was funded from the beginning. Formed in 1971, it was originally funded by the Manitoba Provincial Department of Northern Affairs. When the Department of the Secretary of State initiated its financing program, assistance was gained from there as well. Above and beyond this funding, Native Communications Incorporated was able to sell a significant proportion of its programming to the CBC both for use on the Northern Service and the mid-Canada network. Because of this relative financial security during the 1970's, NCI was able to expand its operations and establish a number of community radio stations in the northern part of the province. This community media

program benefitted the native people of northern Manitoba greatly and especially in their attempts to preserve their native cultures.

#### Kenomadiwin Incorporated

Ontario had only two major native communications societies established in the 1970's. The first, Kenomadiwin Incorporated which was located in northwestern Ontario, was never able to find the financial security of its sister society the Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society, also located in the northwestern portion of the province. Created under the Company of Young Canadian's Northwest Ontario Project, Radio Kenomadiwin had to rely on this organizations' backing as well as the Provincial Secretary of Ontario and the Minister of Citizenship for Ontario.<sup>9</sup> When the Company of Young Canadian's contract with Kenomadiwin Incorporated expired on May 30, 1973, the native communications society had to rely totally on grants from the provincial government and the various native organizations throughout the Province of Ontario.<sup>10</sup>

Because of its financial security, Native Communications Incorporated of Manitoba was able to expand. Because of its financial insecurity, Kenomadiwin Incorporated of northwestern Ontario had to scale down its operations. Initially servicing some six Indian communities with a form of mobile community access radio, Radio Kenomadiwin had to cut down its operations

to one permanent broadcast station at Long Lac. Funding, while not the only reason for this cut back, was a definite cause.

#### Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society

The loss of native access to the broadcast media at a time when native people were beginning to rely on the broadcast media as a means of self-identity, was common in Canada during this decade. The Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society of northwestern Ontario was a little more fortunate than most societies in the 1970's. Established as part of the Department of Communications' Northern Pilot Project, and the Sioux Lookout Fellowship and Communications Centre, the Wa-Wa-Ta society was able to establish a firm financial footing at the very start. Even after the Department of Communications ended its funding role, the society was able to receive enough funding from the Department of the Secretary of State, the Province of Ontario and the various native organizations throughout the province to not only continue but to expand into a loose network of community radio stations serving the native population of northwestern Ontario. Previously isolated native settlements are now linked together and have the added use of a community based broadcasting operation.

#### The Chiefs of Ontario

The native communications societies in Ontario were not

the only native organizations concerning themselves with the problems of funding at this time. The Chiefs of Ontario organization also saw the need for native access to the broadcast media and for native control of this broadcast media. This body of native chiefs also saw the problems encountered by the native people in gaining this much needed access due to a lack of adequate funding. In May 1976, The Chiefs of Ontario's Joint Indian Association published a report dealing with this problem.

This paper outlines a proposal that could potentially provide the much needed funding for a native broadcasting and communications industry. The purpose of this report is to provide us with information about the problem and the proposed solution so that we may be able to discuss the matter intelligently and make a proposal to the powers that be.<sup>11</sup>

With copies of the report being sent to the National Indian Brotherhood, the Native Council of Canada and the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, the Chiefs of Ontario's Association hoped that they would evoke some response regarding the funding difficulties encountered by the native communications groups in Canada.

The proposal put forth in this report to correct the situation would, the Association felt, give enough funding for a more than adequate native communications system. This proposal dealt with cable television, Canadian content and advertising. Put simply: "It is our proposal that we operate commercial deletion centres in major cities throughout Canada

and sell advertising to Canadian advertisers in place of foreign commercials on cable television."<sup>12</sup> Although the proposal called for the selling of advertising, the Chiefs of Ontario could neither sell their proposal to the CRTC nor to the major cable companies and the idea quietly died.

#### Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia

Despite the problems of funding most native communications societies, if they did not expand, were at least able to continue their operations in some form. At least native access was assured by the continuation of these native communications organizations. Most unfortunately, however, at least one native communications society succumbed to the failure of its funding. It was unfortunate in that this society, the Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia, was not only the sole society in Nova Scotia but the only native communications society for Indian and Metis people east of Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Funded through the Department of the Secretary of State under a cost sharing agreement, the society was forced to raise some fifty-five percent of its own budget. Unable to do so the Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia faced closure at the end of the decade. Having received less than three hundred thousand dollars out of its six hundred thousand dollar operating budget for the 1979-1980 fiscal year, Roy Gould the Executive Director of the society, ordered the

phasing out of the organization to be completed by March 31, 1980. In a letter to the Secretary of State, Mr. Gould said: "We are not prepared to play with people's lives or their futures with unrealistic budgets." He also said, however, that should there be any changes in the organization's financial criteria for cost sharing, that: "Another look could be given as to its future."<sup>13</sup> In an area that already has little or no native broadcast operations, this closure can only be seen as another blow to native actions in the preservation of their lifestyles and cultures and even futures.

#### Ye-Sa-To Native Communications Society

Northern native communications organizations have had an especially difficult time establishing native broadcast operations due to financial problems. Isolated communities, vast distances and the lack of private outlets has meant that extra help had to come from the various government agencies both provincial and federal, in order for these societies to operate effectively. Acting as the official native communications society for the native people of the Yukon, Ye-Sa-To has been funded by the Department of the Secretary of State since its beginning in 1977. Additional money also comes from the Yukon Territorial Government and from the CBC through its purchasing of Ye-Sa-To radio programming for its Yukon network.

Native Communications Society of the Western Northwest Territories

The final Indian and Metis native communications society to be discussed in this section of the chapter, is the Native Communications Society of the Western Northwest Territories. Acting as the sole major native communications society for the Indian and Metis people in the Western Arctic, this organization has provided access to the broadcast media to a people who had previously only had a non-media oral tradition. Because it was formed by the joining together of four separate native organizations which include: the Tree of Peace, the Indian Brotherhood, the Metis Association and the Native Association of the Northwest Territories, this Western Arctic communications society has had a broader financial base than most. Not only does it obtain funding from these four sources, it also receives a significant portion of its revenue from the Department of the Secretary of State.

While the native communications societies mentioned above all operate in the benefit for the Indian and Metis people of Canada, they are not the only native communications societies. They are not the only ones either to have faced the challenge of obtaining adequate funding for their continued operation and for providing their constituents with access to and usage of the media of radio and television. The Inuit people of Frobisher Bay and northern Quebec are also in control of native communications organizations.

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Nunatsiakmiut

Nunatsiakmiut, the official native communications society for the Inuit of Frobisher Bay also serves the Inuit people of the entire Northwest Territories. It does so by producing television programming that is beamed throughout the Arctic via the Anik satellite system. Because there are only two major Inuit communications societies, they have been able to obtain the funding they need rather more easily than their Indian counterparts, but, still more funding would be welcomed. Nunatsiakmiut, according to Jens Lyberth its President, was financed in its initial stages by various government and native sources. "We had a grant from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and from the Local Initiatives Program to start off and as of this new fiscal year we have been promised, through the Secretary of State, to get one hundred and fifty thousand dollars for a full year."<sup>14</sup>

From 1976 through 1979, Nunatsiakmiut was still getting grants from the Department of the Secretary of State. It was also being paid by the CBC for its programming aired over the CBC Northern Television Service. While in 1976 this native communications society was receiving three hundred and fifty dollars per fifteen minute program, it was receiving one thousand dollars per program in 1978.<sup>15</sup> Besides these two sources of funding, Nunatsiakmiut was also re-

ceiving a considerable amount of training and technical help free of charge from the National Film Board as well as monetary help from the national Inuit organization, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada.

#### Tagramiut Nipingat Incorporated

The last native communications society to be discussed here with respect to meeting the challenge of funding is the Northern Quebec Inuit society Tagramiut Nipingat Incorporated. Only formed in 1977, this particular native communications society has been totally financed through the Department of the Secretary of State and the Northern Quebec Inuit Association whose society TNI is incorporated under.

In conclusion to this section on the funding of native communications societies, it must be reiterated that without financial assistance not one of the eleven major societies could have either been established or could have survived during this decade. As it was, even with governmental aid, the Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia was not able to continue. Any form of broadcasting is expensive. It becomes increasingly expensive when applied to remote communities such as inhabited by the native peoples in the northern parts of the provinces and in the territories. It costs money for equipment, for the training of personnel, for air time, for production and even for projects such as community broadcasting. Because these major native com-

unications societies did receive funding, however, they were able to provide access to and use of the broadcast media for Canada's native people to a degree never before attainable. And because this access was provided, at least a partial preservation of native customs traditions, music, languages and cultures in general was assured.

Native communication conferences were held to find solutions to the problem of native communications funding.

#### Native Communication Conferences

Just as in other sectors of the communications industry, and indeed in the broadcast media itself, conferences are held periodically in order to: find solutions to common problems, discuss services, and, of course, make plans for the future. Native communications societies are no different. They too, periodically meet for the above reasons including looking at ways and means to increase native access to and usage of the broadcast media. This was very evident in the major national native communication conferences held during the 1970's. What was also evident about a significant proportion of these conferences was that the chief concern among the native communications leaders was the challenge of obtaining enough funding. This issue has already been discussed in this chapter but will be examined with respect to the native communication conferences where practical solutions for this and other problems were sought.

### Northern Communications Conference

Not all of the native communication conferences were sponsored by the native communications societies. Several very important conferences were called for by various federal government departments. Such was the case with the Northern Communications Conference held in Yellowknife from September 9-11, 1970. It was the first major native communications conference ever held and it was held in the North, the home of many of Canada's native people. Sponsored by the Department of Communications and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, it included representatives from Indian, Metis and Inuit groups all across the North and other parts of the country. Representatives from the Broeal Institute of the University of Alberta and the Arctic Institute of North America as well as the Yukon and Northwest Territorial governments were present.

The Northern Communications Conference provided the first opportunity for the people of the North to be heard on a variety of communication topics and issues. It enabled them to express their views and present their need for communication services. The Conference was intended to focus attention publicly on the relevance of communications to northern needs and aspirations.<sup>16</sup>

From the very beginning it was decided that the conference would be held in the North and that it should look at the problems of communications in the broadest terms. The conference was so structured that those attending could freely participate. With respect to the social potentials for communications, the report of the conference stated that:

The native people need access to communications for their education, training, and the maintenance of their own cultural heritage. They must be able to reach out to adjacent communities. The ownership, provision, operation and maintenance of communication facilities offers a fertile field for native employment, expression and development.<sup>17</sup>

Some of the areas discussed at this conference included: a look at community radio and television as a means for local access and expression for the native peoples, native broadcasting and information needs, present broadcast media access for natives and, a brief look at the native communications societies in existence at the time of this conference.

The effects of this Northern Communications Conference were still being felt six years later. For example, when the Inuit community of Pond Inlet approached the CBC about the possibility of establishing a community television facility, the CBC was reluctant to discuss the matter. Tagak Curley, a founder of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada and Executive Director of the Inuit Cultural Institute discussed the problem before the CRTC Public Hearing in Winnipeg, May 3, 1976. He said:

When a community such as Pond Inlet approaches the CBC with a request for information about community television the standard response is that radio not television is the priority of the Northerners. This policy seems to have been preserved in stone from the Yellowknife Communications Conference of 1970. A lot of things have changed in six years. The most significant factor is that television has arrived. It is a very different North from the North of the Yellowknife Conference.<sup>18</sup>

Sardis, B.C. Communications Conference

The next native communications conference of consequence took place at Sardis, British Columbia. Sponsored by the Department of the Secretary of State from January 12-14, 1972, the conference was attended by native communication representatives from across Canada, including the North. This particular conference was called by the Secretary of State because the federal government had no definite policy with respect to the funding of native communications programs. It was only an exploratory conference in that the Department of the Secretary of State was testing out some of its native communications policy ideas on the native representatives. With respect to a single policy covering all native communications societies, Cliff Starr the representative for the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians' Communications Program had this to say: "A program for Indians in Saskatchewan may be totally useless or fall far short of what is necessary for the native people of the Yukon or the Northwest Territories."<sup>19</sup> The majority of native representatives were against the idea of lumping all native communications societies and projects together and as a consequence they all rejected any further moves at that time to adopt a national policy and the meeting came to an abrupt conclusion.

### FSI and NIB Native Communications Conference

As already mentioned in the first section of this chapter, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians was asked by the National Indian Brotherhood to look at the problems faced by Canada's native communications societies. In response to this request, the FSI convened a native communications conference which was held in Prince Albert in January 1973. The main topic discussed at this conference was the problem of the funding of the native communications societies. The native societies could provide access to the broadcast media for the native people but they could only do so if adequate funding was available.

The FSI conference looked at the present communications programs found in all of the provinces and the territories. It also discussed the importance of communications in the lives of the Indian, Metis and Inuit people as well as the role of government in the funding of native communications programs. Recommendations, evaluations and assessments were made and a new funding mechanism was designed whereby the federal government would finance the native communications organizations in the future. It was one of the few native communications conferences in which the native people were able to reach a consensus over their common communication problems. It was also one of the most critical with respect to the role of government in financing the native communications process.

As a result of this conference, the FSI and the NIB in conjunction with the National Communications Workshop group issued a report dealing with the issues covered at the conference. One idea that was developed in this report was: "Native communications and their uses as a developmental instrument for native communities."

For some time now a number of Indian organizations have viewed the development of effective communication programs as a necessary aspect of any overall program designed to encourage and assist in the development of native communities and native people. This recognition has led to a variety of efforts and attempts by different organizations to develop communication programs specifically designed to meet the needs of native communities for whom they had a responsibility.<sup>20</sup>

Along with this idea, came the recommendation for the establishment of a national native communications network to bring all the native communications societies together to serve the total native population and to speak in a unified voice for these same people. This concept will be discussed in greater detail in the following section of this same chapter.

#### Alberta Native Communications Society's National Communications Conference

Probably the most important native communications conference was sponsored by the Alberta Native Communications Society. It was held in Edmonton on March 27, 1974. The theme of this conference was 'The Political Role of Communications in Native Affairs.'<sup>21</sup> It was at this conference



that Hugh Faulkner addressed the representatives of the various native communications societies and national organizations and announced a new communications policy for the funding of native communication organizations and societies. The Secretary of State also discussed the criteria by which all societies would have to qualify before funding would be made available to them. This announcement met with little real enthusiasm by the native representatives.

Several of the communications societies, such as the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians' Communications Program, were not sure at that time whether they qualified under the criteria or not.

Cliff Starr the FSI representative said: "It is just another attempt by the federal government to force programs on Indian people."<sup>22</sup> Reference to this new native communications policy and its criteria will be made in detail in Chapter IV when the Department of the Secretary of State is discussed.

Regardless of the criteria, however, the National Indian Brotherhood was definitely against the whole program as it went against the recommendations put forth at the FSI conference held in January 1973. The Indians did not like it as it included the Metis. The Metis did not care for it as it only gave them a secondary role. The Inuit were not really included in this new policy and would have to return home and wait until a new policy could be designed to include them and indeed the entire North.

At this same conference, Allan Adair the provincial minister responsible for northern development in Alberta, praised the work of the Alberta Native Communications Society and the Indian News Media organization. He said that both broadcast media societies were: "Significant examples of the willingness of status and non-status Indians to work together."<sup>23</sup> If such was the case, it was not evident at this conference.

This ANCS Native Communications Conference ended in much the same way as the Sardis, B.C. conference had ended, abruptly and without any real accomplishments, at least as far as the native communications leaders were concerned.

Since that particular conference, there have been several other native communications conferences held in various parts of the country and representing various native organizations. Almost all of the native communications societies held annual conferences and meetings throughout their history in the 1970's. None of these native communications conferences, however, could compare to the ones held during the earlier part of the decade. They could not compare either in scope or in magnitude to those held between 1970 and 1974.

The native communications societies could have possibly survived without their native communication conferences. However, these conferences were excellent opportunities for

the various Indian, Metis and Inuit communications leaders to get together to discuss issues of common concern. Without them, the bid for funding might have taken a considerably longer time because this was one issue, one challenge that was consistently brought up, discussed, and repeatedly established during these meetings. The FSI and the ANCS conferences pushed for better funding programs and the government was able to respond to these urgings by the development of a funding policy. These conferences did subsequently provide a better funding system and this in turn provided the native communications societies with the tools to face other challenges such as the costly business of establishing training programs and community broadcast operations.

#### Native Communication Training Programs

Funding helped the native communications societies to build the type of training programs they felt they needed if they were to keep their media operations truly native in character; and training programs proved to be very costly indeed.

The operation of any form of broadcast media necessitates the use of trained personnel. The native communications societies were especially vulnerable in this area during the 1970's. Coming from traditional, non-technical backgrounds, the native people had no large pools of trained communication talent at hand. Poor education, poor prospects and a different

lifestyle had kept all but a few from educational and training institutions such as the technical schools and universities. Those Indians, Metis and Inuit who were in large part responsible for the initial establishment of the native communications societies, had gained their training as employees for the CBC, the National Film Board or from the few private radio and television stations willing to train them at the company's expense. Some native communications workers learned from experience while others learned from those who had the experience and were willing and able to train them. Once established it was not long before the majority of these major native communications societies realized just how short of media trained personnel they really were. The development of training programs became a top priority by the middle of the decade. A position paper by the Yukon Indian Brotherhood stated it most clearly when it said: "We must find people who will train us so that we can learn to use the whiteman's tools."<sup>24</sup>

#### Alberta Native Communications Society

The native people did learn to use these tools; they learned to use them by the building of their own training programs. Leading the way, as it did in almost all native broadcast media practices during the 1970's, the Alberta Native Communications Society embarked upon a training program in the summer of 1975.<sup>25</sup> It was the first native communica-

tions training program of its kind in Canada. In co-operation with Canada Manpower's Department of Advanced Education, the society had ten young people put through a rigorous training program so that they could fill some of the empty technical positions within the society. The following year the program was expanded to include both more students and a more in-depth training schedule. This 1976 ANCS communications training program was created as a joint project between ANCS, Grant McEwin Community College and Canada Manpower. The program itself was conducted with fourteen native students and the training took place within the ANCS studios located in Edmonton. According to Angie Grandbois, an ANCS staff member: "In the first part of the year the trainees were taught journalism, photography, script writing, video taping and radio and television operational training."<sup>26</sup>

Carried on every year since 1975, the ANCS communications training program was placed in the hands of the Grant McEwin Community College in 1977. At the third annual graduation ceremonies for trainees from the program which was held in Edmonton on September 3, 1977, Ralph Steinhauer, the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta said: "Through this communications program, the image of the Indian has been altered; with the program we have promoted the 'Forgotten People' and their struggles. The ANCS has created awareness of the native's plight of injustices to the public."<sup>27</sup> Bill Williams, the President of ANCS, also stated at the ceremonies that:

ANCS is leading in the native communications field in North America. I am proud to be a part of ANCS. We had requests from other parts of Canada and from Germany and from Australia to enroll in our training program. This shows that ANCS is doing a great job in promoting training-on-the-job programs.<sup>28</sup>

Larry Desmuels, the Executive Director of the Alberta Native Communications Society in looking ahead to the future of ANCS said:

Communications is the strongest tool of social change known to mankind. I would urge any young, aggressive, native to get into the communications field not only for self-fulfillment and money, but the opportunities are tremendous. ANCS has long been regarded as a training centre for inexperienced natives to receive the basic groundwork in communications and to put that knowledge to work to aid others in smaller communities.<sup>29</sup>

The Alberta Native Communications Society was perhaps the most advanced society when it came to the training of natives for communications. However, it was not the only communications society involved in this work. Several of the other major native communications societies had programs for training natives, not only to fill vacancies within the societies but also to train native people to go out and work in isolated communities and to help develop different forms of community access, community based media.

#### Indian News Media

Both the Indian News Media and the RAVEN native communications societies had training programs during this period. While the INM training program was quite sophisticated and more akin to the ANCS program than the RAVEN training program,

both filled a very needed function in their respective areas. Starting only a few years later than ANCS, the Indian News Media communications organization was fully involved in an on-going training program for its radio department by 1977. This program, like the ANCS program, was sponsored in part by Canada Manpower. However, INM was also able to get financial assistance for this training program both from the Department of Indian Affairs and the Department of the Secretary of State. The ANCS program was not aided by these government departments. Most of the native personnel, also like ANCS, were trained for INM through a schedule offered by the Grant McEwin Community College.<sup>30</sup>

#### RAVEN

As already mentioned, the RAVEN communications society of British Columbia also established a native communications training program. The RAVEN Society established its radio network because of its great communications value as well as its relative simplicity of operation. Using two-way radio units with broadcast capabilities, Chief Reclma said this form of media was chosen because: "There are some people who can't read yet still know how to operate a radio."<sup>31</sup> Throughout the decade, the radio operators in each of over one hundred communities in the network received an initial period of training in the use of the radio equipment and were still receiving refresher courses from the

personnel who were in charge of the two mobile repair crews.

#### Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society

The only other Indian native communications society with a well defined training program during this period was the Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society. This society grew out of the Department of Communications' Northern Pilot-Project and because of its close relationship to the DOC, Wa-Wa-Ta personnel were able to receive much of their initial training from this department. Building upon this basis of early training, the leaders of this society carried on with a training program after the DOC's role ended. Indeed, one of the original goals of Wa-Wa-Ta was for: "The participation of native people in the delivery of communication services through training and jobs in communication equipment operation and maintenance, administration and media production."<sup>32</sup>

#### Nunatsiakmiut

The Inuit native communications societies were no less interested in meeting the challenge of training native people to operate their own communications systems. However, because both of the major Inuit societies were only established towards the end of the decade, only Nunatsiakmiut was able to establish a program before 1980. And even here, it is not a truly native communications society training pro-



gram in that most of the personnel of this organization are trained and have been trained directly either by the CBC or the National Film Board. The Inuit Tapirisat of Canada also helped Nunatsiakmiut by funding the training of some of its people at community colleges in the South.

While it is understandable that native communications societies become directly involved in training personnel to either fill vacancies within their own establishments or to help other communities to set up their own media systems such as community radio, it is surprising to note how many other native organizations not directly involved in communications also helped to erect training programs. These non-communication native organizations have helped to establish training programs by either funding groups that were doing this work or by directly creating training programs on their own.

#### National Indian Brotherhood

The National Indian Brotherhood has over the years helped to finance some of the training programs created by the native communications societies. As early as 1972, the NIB declared its concern with respect to the need for native radio and television production. "It is immediately necessary to enter into a serious effort to produce programs in the North inspired, created and produced by native people themselves; this commitment must be made immediately."<sup>33</sup>

The Brotherhood was still actively involved in pushing for and financing native communications training programs in 1979.

#### Canadian Association in Support of the Native Peoples

Few native organizations, however, could match the spirit of the Canadian Association in Support of the Native Peoples when it came to being involved in designing and operating such training courses. The CASNP became involved in the training of native communications personnel as early as December 1975. Also: "As part of a continuing communications program, CASNP sponsored a communications workshop for native media workers in Truro, Nova Scotia during the latter part of April 1976."<sup>34</sup> Although the theme of the workshop itself revolved around getting native achievements known to the media at large, an integral part of the CASNP communications program outlined plans for a native communications training program to be established in Toronto and Ottawa.

The program is to assist in the furthering of the already demonstrated talents of native people in media and public relations so that they can use these skills in improved communication with the established media, the general public and in various activities in their own organizations, reserves and communities.<sup>35</sup>

The recruitment of potential trainees began in late 1977 when advertisements such as the one below appeared in native publications. "The Canadian Association in Support

of the Native Peoples is looking for native communication trainees. The six month course is designed to give trainees skills in print, radio, television, VTR, public relations and photography."<sup>36</sup> This program is still in operation.

#### Other Native Training Programs

There have been other less ambitious communication training programs undertaken by various native organizations throughout the 1970's. The Native Canadian Centre in Toronto, under the direction of Peter Mendoshkin, and in co-operation with both the National Film Board and the Ontario Educational Communications Authority, presented a series of courses on the operation of video taping for television production. This series began in October 1975, but was not an on-going program and ended after the initial series was completed.<sup>37</sup>

The Department of Education for the Government of the Northwest Territories established a short term training program in early 1976. This program was not for technical trainees but for the ordinary Indian, Metis and Inuit people so that they could learn how to operate a television set. It sounds rather simplistic but to people who had never seen a television set before let alone set one up and operate it, it was most practical.<sup>38</sup> The course itself gave instructions in tuning, provision of an antennae and safety precautions.

A little more sophisticated type of training program was

established by the Native Friendship Centre of Winnipeg in October 1976. This was a limited program giving the native people a limited degree of television skills.<sup>39</sup>

The major native communications societies were established during the 1970's to give the native people of Canada at least some degree of access to and usage of the broadcast media in order to not only preserve their cultural heritage but to also help them to prepare for the future. In keeping with this attitude, the native communications societies kept their media under full native control by establishing in turn native communications training programs. With the native people both owning and operating their own unique media systems, they became free from outside influences and pressures. The only deterrent to this total native control was the influence from government regulatory agencies and government funding bodies. Still, this influence was minor in relation to the overall benefits accrued to the native people by their owning and controlling their own native communications societies.

While the challenges faced by the major native communications societies, such as funding and the training of native personnel, were mostly internal challenges; these societies were also faced with challenges beyond their own immediate concerns. Determined to provide as much access to the media of radio and television as they possibly could for the native

people, they embarked on two different avenues to meet this challenge. The first was the establishment of an overall national native communications system while the second was aimed at giving local communities access to this media. The results achieved in meeting these two varying challenges were as different as the challenges themselves. While successful in creating community media facilities, they were almost totally defeated in erecting a national network. The last two sections of this chapter will look at these challenges individually with a brief examination being made into their national native communications efforts first.

#### National Native Communication Developments

Throughout the 1970's the native people of Canada had to devise ways and means of protecting their cultural integrity from the invasion of 'foreign' ideas and lifestyles. Much of this foreign intrusion came by way of the non-native broadcast media. As a result, native organizations attempted to halt the erosion of their cultures by introducing a revolutionary form of control. They introduced their own forms of broadcast media; media that was owned and operated by the native people for the native people. Thus came about the introduction of the concept of the native communications society. These native communications societies, however, could only protect the native people from a portion of this 'foreign' cultural intrusion as they operated only on a regional or a provincial basis. In order to provide a more

complete umbrella of protection, the native organizations and communications societies discussed the idea of establishing a larger native broadcast system, a national native broadcast system. This portion of Chapter III will explore some of the attempts made by both the native organizations and the native communications societies at establishing such a national native broadcast system during the 1970's.

#### National Communications Program

A three day workshop sponsored by the National Indian Brotherhood and hosted by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians' Communications Program, was held in Prince Albert from January 24-26, 1973. The reason for this meeting as discussed before in this chapter, was to look at the problems of funding native communications bodies across Canada.

There were representatives from eight provinces present. They were from the Union of British Columbia Chiefs, the Alberta Native Communications Society, the Indian News Media, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians' Communications Program, the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood, the Union of Ontario Indians, the Indians of Quebec Association, the Union of New Brunswick Indians, from the Union of Nova Scotia Indians, the Yukon Indian Brotherhood, the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories, and the National Indian Brotherhood.<sup>40</sup>

Besides discussions on the funding of native communications societies, one of the main topics looked at was the establishment of a national native communications program. All of the representatives present felt that this national program should be undertaken by the National Indian Brotherhood and

financed by the federal government. Some of the criteria that were recommended for this program include:

1. That a system of funding be used similar to that used for funding core programs of native organizations.
2. That the program allow for flexibility in programming to accommodate the needs and wishes of different Indian groups and organizations across Canada.
3. That resources be made available to secure the necessary hardware to set up effective communications programs, and,
4. That a variety of government departments and agencies with an interest and responsibility in the communications area should have a co-ordinated input into helping to develop an overall communications program and communications system for native people and native communities.<sup>41</sup>

This national native communications program as described above, failed to materialize. Government cutbacks, NIB financial problems and resource restraints as well as native communications society funding difficulties all contributed to the program being shelved.

#### National Broadcast Alliance

The next proposal of any consequence was initiated by the Chiefs of Ontario's Joint Indian Association Committee in May 1976. This provincial Indian organization attempted to gain the aid of the National Indian Brotherhood, the Native Council of Canada and the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, in forming a National Broadcast Alliance.

By utilizing existing technology, existing resources and existing demands for solutions to broadcasting problems

in Canada, we propose to form the Native Broadcast Alliance. This organization will pool resources to develop new services to native reserves, both in isolated as well as in populated regions of the country. Certain legal, social, and, economic conditions affecting Canadian broadcasting will make the NBA economically feasible and attractive to the industry and the CRTC.<sup>42</sup>

The whole scheme behind this National Broadcast Alliance was to erect commercial deletion centres in major cities throughout Canada and sell advertising to Canadian advertisers in place of foreign commercials on cable television. The funds realized from this operation would then be put into the establishment of a national native communications system. The plan may have looked good to the Chiefs of Ontario, but it failed to get very far with either the CRTC, the cable companies or even other native organizations. It too was shelved, but more from a lack of interest than anything else.

#### The Sydney, N. S. Meeting

Perhaps the most noted attempt at the establishment of a National native communications program came in 1977. Actually, this attempt dealt more with the erection of a national organization for the provision of news coverage for native broadcasting societies than for the designing of a national broadcast system. To those involved it was felt that the access to information for native media use was almost as important as access to the broadcast media itself. In December 1977, representatives from all of the major native communications societies met in Sydney, Nova Scotia



and decided to form a national federation to: "Present a unified voice in dealing with the federal government and to provide national news coverage to native broadcast media."<sup>43</sup>

A five member committee was appointed to draft a constitution for the new federation and to make proposals for funding. The five members included: Roy Gould of the Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia, Joseph Padlayat of Tagramiut Nipingat Incorporated, Donald McIvor of Native Communications Incorporated of Manitoba, Larry Desmuelts of the Alberta Native Communications Society, and Grafton Nyootle of Ye-Sa-To in the Yukon. Included in this federation idea, would be a national news service to improve the exchange of information between native communications societies and a national news agency so that the native broadcast media could obtain information relevant to the native people. This news agency would be an outgrowth of ANCS's Canadian Native News Service which, before it died due to financial troubles on August 15, 1978, had telex computers installed in the major native communications society offices across the country so that ANCS could use the news on its own radio and television programs.<sup>44</sup> The federation is still in operation and exchanges news information among the various native communications societies and organizations for broadcast use.

Native Communications Council

The final attempt at establishing a national native communications program came on September 22, 1978, when representatives from various native communications societies met in Toronto. This meeting was an attempt at establishing a National Native Communications Council.<sup>45</sup> Like its predecessors, however, it failed due to financial problems and a lack of interest on a nation-wide basis.

The 1970's was to be the decade of the native communications societies. It was not to be the decade of any national native communications program however. While the native people failed to erect such a system, they succeeded in realizing that such a concept was possible in the future should funding ever become available. It was also a success in that it proved that native communications societies could look at ideas beyond their own immediate borders and concerns to broader issues and challenges in order to meet the broadcast needs of their people.

Although the native communications societies were not able to succeed at the building of a national native communications network, they were very successful in the establishment of native community broadcast media. This final section of Chapter III will discuss this area of native communications with a look at both community radio and television projects and successes.

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Native Communications Societies and Community  
Access Media: Radio and Television

The development of community radio and television was a challenge faced by several of the major native communications societies at this time. Community media, however, was a concept of the smaller, more localized, native communications societies. This portion of Chapter III will look at some of the community media projects undertaken by both the major and the smaller societies. But before this is done, a brief discussion will be made about community media in general. This will be followed by a look at some of the more significant projects with respect to radio.

Following this discussion, a brief study will be made of community television.

Community Media: A General Review

There is no textbook definition of 'community radio.' What is a community radio station? How does it differ from a private local station or a network station? Basically, a community radio station is a non-profit broadcasting operation dedicated to providing programming specifically for residents of a designated community. However, forms of station ownership, operational structure, funding and programming may vary widely.<sup>46</sup>

While the above statement is a definition regarding the radio side of the community broadcasting concept, the same definition could easily apply to community television as well. Why would Canada's native people be interested in either community radio or television? What can be gained

by the establishment of such expensive, time consuming broadcast media facilities? The possible advantages to be gained by the use of these localized facilities are numerous. Community radio and television can be effective sources of local information. The awareness of community events and issues can be increased which may result in an increase in the participation of these community activities. Community broadcasting media can be used as a vehicle for the expression of public opinion on matters relevant to the existence and the operation of a community, be it native or non-native, by allowing everyone access to the facilities. It allows some focal point whereby the entire community, if it so wishes, can become involved. The operation of such facilities can be educational from a technical and administrative standpoint. It can aid in the development of skills that might benefit at least some members of the community. It can increase awareness not only of events inside the community but of the world at large of what other natives in the rest of the country are doing.

There are other important uses and reasons for the development of this form of broadcast media beyond those already mentioned above. Community broadcast media can, if used correctly, help to preserve a way of life while bettering that way of life. It can also be used simply as a means of entertainment, a distraction from the almost total

isolation with which many of the native communities are faced, especially during the long snow bound winters. What is so special about a community broadcast facility is that it broadcasts in a language the local native population can understand. It also preserves that language through constant usage, and this is especially beneficial when other 'outside' broadcast media can be picked up by the native community.

While praising the beneficial uses and attributes of the community broadcasting concept, it must be remembered that there are disadvantages to it as well. "Community media, whether radio or television, is not a panacea. Participation is not the answer to all problems."<sup>47</sup> In the early days of community media, the idea that 'with a VTR, I can change the world' evolved. It soon became evident that such was not the case. It was a shattering discovery to a traditional society like that of the native peoples' who had been led to believe that technology could alter everything for the better. For some it was their first introduction to broadcasting technology and many hoped their last. Many groups found that using the community media did not automatically solve a problem. It, in fact, often complicated it instead. This type of broadcasting medium cannot solve problems, social or otherwise, by itself. It can, however, become a very useful tool if used

properly in helping to solve many of the native community's problems.

In order to become successfully involved in community media, a group must be willing to devote a great deal of time to learn how to use the media well and then to produce the kinds of programs that will help them and their community to achieve their desired objectives. Some native communities have found that the time and energy required in order to use community media successfully could be put to better use in other directions. To combat this danger, a community broadcasting operations group must continually review its objectives.

#### Community Radio

Many, but not all, of the major native communications societies discussed so far in this study have over the years either become directly involved in the establishment of native community broadcast facilities, or have co-operated with native communities in the creation of such stations. This portion of the chapter will look at these major native communications societies and their relation to the development of community radio stations. It must be noted here, however, that none of the major societies were involved in community media television. The first society to be looked at here is the Alberta Native Communications Society.

Alberta Native Communications Society

The Alberta Native Communications Society initially became interested in the possibility of helping some of the native communities in northern Alberta to erect suitable community radio stations. In 1971 it was stated that: "The Alberta Native Communications Society is currently exploring the feasibility of developing a series of community radio stations throughout Alberta to ensure that all native communities are served."<sup>48</sup> In April of that same year, ANCS co-operated with three other native organizations to establish a community radio service at Wabasca-Desmaris in northern Alberta. The three other native groups were first of all the Kee-Wee-Tin Kunk Association which consisted of treaty and Metis people of the area. The second group was the local Metis Association, and the final group was the Band Council of Wabasca-Desmaris which represented the treaty Indians. Harold Anderson, the Director of ANCS's Radio Department, said at the opening of the station that: "The establishment of a community radio station at Wabasca-Desmaris will provide opportunities for extensive native involvement and participation. Community radio serving the people in a given area should inspire them to organize themselves in such a way that they can all participate in community projects."<sup>49</sup>

The Alberta Native Communications Society has even

helped non-native community radio stations to get established when there was a good possibility that the native people would be given a fair share of the air time. This was the case in St. Paul, Alberta, when 'OK' Radio was given its license for a community radio station by the CRTC on September 15, 1975. There were three separate submissions to the CRTC to establish a community radio station here, but: "What cinched the deal, thinks station manager Ken Sebryk, was the presentation to the CRTC hearing by a Ukrainian group, a French-Canadian group and by the Alberta Native Communications Society, all of whom would benefit from a community radio station here."<sup>50</sup> The ANCS had been looking for a radio station in this part of Alberta in order to broadcast their program The Voice of the Native People. There are four colonies of Metis and eight Indian reserves located in this northwest broadcast area. Through this station, ANCS was able to broadcast its various programs on a daily basis, an accomplishment they had been unable to achieve anywhere else in Alberta before.

Although the Alberta Native Communications Society was involved in the creation of native community stations at the early part of this decade, they withdrew their support of community media in general when the Wabasca-Desmaris station closed by the middle of the decade due to a lack



of interest by the natives in that community.

#### Native Communications Incorporated

The only other native communications society in the western portion of the country to become involved in community radio development during the decade was the Manitoba society Native Communications Incorporated.

The Cross Lake Community Radio Station went on the air July 4, 1973. This was to be the first of Native Communications Incorporated's community media efforts. It was the first low powered AM operation of its kind in Canada. In commenting on the radio station Mr. Allan Kiesler, the General Manager of Native Communications Incorporated, emphasized that:

A communications system taking into account a complete understanding of the life patterns of residents of Cross Lake and the role of information in their lives will facilitate the dissemination, acquisition and retention of varied information. Local programming information will help to equip listeners for personal and community decision-making and will provide a means for pursuing the peoples' social and cultural interests and thus enable an expression of their own capabilities.<sup>51</sup>

The Native Communications Incorporated society applied for a license in October 1975, for its second community radio station also to be located in the northern part of Manitoba. By December 1975, NCI had received its license for Norway House and the community radio station went on the air June 3, 1976.<sup>52</sup> Like Cross Lake, this Norway House was a low powered AM facility. Both Cross Lake and Norway

House became affiliate stations as community support grew and the NCI progressed in other directions.

The concept of community media has basically been a phenomena of the isolated regions of the country. Usually only areas that were unable at this time to get any kind of media service bothered with the problem of establishing such facilities. This was probably due to the fact that the Indian and Metis people of the southern parts of the country already had some degree of access that met their needs either through the major native communications societies or through the private, or public media systems. The establishment of community media and especially community radio was, however, considered an important tool in the more isolated regions such as in the northwestern part of Ontario. Here both the Kenomadiwin and the Wa-Wa-Ta native communications societies spent considerable time and effort to establish community radio stations.

#### Kenomadiwin Incorporated

Kenomadiwin Incorporated, which operated in northwestern Ontario, was until 1974 in effect an entirely pro-community type of radio operation. Obtaining its first license on an experimental basis from the CRTC on December 15, 1970, Radio Kenomadiwin operated a mobile community radio system.<sup>53</sup> The mobile radio station would hook into fixed transmitters located at Lake Helen, Pays Platt, Long

Lac, Aroland and Gull Bay turning each of these facilities into a community radio station. Because of problems and particularly because it was initiated only on an experimental basis, Kenomadiwin Incorporated was forced by the CRTC to cease its mobile operations and establish a permanent community radio station at Long Lac in 1974.<sup>54</sup>

#### Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society

The only other major native communications society in Ontario, the Wa-Wa-Ta society, was also active in the development of community radio facilities. Under the leadership of this native communications society, all of the major communities between the CNR railway line and the western shore of Hudson Bay had some form of community radio by December 1977. Of this number of some twenty-four native communities, twelve of them with the help of Wa-Wa-Ta joined together to form a type of mini radio network.<sup>55</sup> This loose network was completed by October 1978. There was one problem with this community radio network however. Not one of the stations had even bothered to apply for a license from the CRTC. They were, in effect, pirate stations. The CRTC did eventually give them licenses though to continue as community radio stations.<sup>56</sup>

All of the community radio stations mentioned so far in this portion of the chapter, were established either directly or indirectly with the help of the major native

communications societies. They were established in order to meet the needs of the isolated native communities especially in the northern parts of the provinces. They were established because no other media services were available and the communities needed them as a link to the outside world or as an internal force for the betterment of their lives. In those communities that did have other media services, they were developed primarily as an alternative to non-native programming; programming which was acting as a detriment to native cultures and especially native languages and lifestyles. The major native communications societies were not the only groups involved in this development. There were also literally dozens of Indian and Metis community radio stations established during the 1970's. One such community radio effort will be examined here.

#### Big Trout Lake Community Radio

Big Trout Lake is located in northwestern Ontario. With the help of Donna Pace, the Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society and the Department of Communications' Northern Pilot Project, the natives of this community formed the Aymowin Communications Society. With similar assistance, the Aymowin Society was able to apply for and receive a license for a community radio station in the fall of 1973. Operating a small FM transmitter with a broadcast range of some fifteen miles, the station is on the air for an average of seven

hours each day. Because most of the natives in this area are Cree, the languages used on the station are Cree and some English which is used for the benefit of the whites in the community. "At first the community people saw the radio station as just another imposition, a useless gadget from down south. Then the situation changed. It is hard to say why?"<sup>57</sup> One of the best possible descriptions for the use of such a small community radio station was explained by Paulette Jiles, a writer and broadcaster working temporarily for the Big Trout station.

A community radio is for the community; it is their voice, a night watchman, a kind of bell that tells the hours as they once did in medieval villages, an immediate messenger, a mercurial postage stamp that gets your messages across the settlement even to isolated cabins ten miles away, where people sit beside a wood stove and a kerosene lantern and a little FM transistor radio. When the snow is deep and it is fifty below outside, it is good to hear your friends voices coming over the airways.<sup>58</sup>

While the Indian and Metis native people in mid- and southern Canada have developed community broadcast facilities, they have in large part relied upon the services provided by the major native communications societies. The Inuit on the other hand, tended to go at providing services via a different route. Because there are only two major Inuit communications societies, Taqramiut Nipingat Incorporated of northern Quebec and Nunatsiakmiut of Frobisher Bay, and because of the great physical distances between Inuit communities, these people have tended to de-

velop their own localized community native communications societies.

It is easy to understand why the Inuit people so desperately needed some form of broadcast media during the 1970's. Theirs was a culture that had existed for thousands of years with little or no changes. Suddenly, by the middle of the twentieth century they were being inundated with not only a foreign culture but a highly sophisticated, highly technical culture. Broken up into small communities, separated by vast distances, these people were even more open to cultural intrusion than had they been located in larger communities with a larger population base. Unlike the Indian people of the South, who had been involved with this foreign culture for at least one hundred years or even more in some cases, the Inuit were only allowed a few decades to become accustomed to it. This foreign culture brought with it a technology that threatened to all but destroy the native peoples' traditional way of life. The biggest threat came in the form of the foreign, or southern, broadcast media. In order that their customs, their languages, traditions and lifestyles in general could survive, the Inuit people decided during the latter part of the 1960's and through the 1970's, that the only way to combat this intrusion was by the development of a broadcast media owned and operated by the native people themselves.

Because there were so many native community broadcast radio stations established by the Inuit during this decade, there is only space here to examine one of these efforts. The example chosen here is Baker Lake. It is representative of the community radio stations developed by the Inuit people all through the North, in places such as Pond Inlet, Rankin Inlet and Igloolik.

#### Baker Lake Community Radio

The community of Baker Lake in the District of Keewatin, tried to establish a community radio station as early as 1966. Until early 1971, however, work on the station never really gained momentum. This was mostly due to the fact that the people were transient residents and support was intermittent. In 1971, the community radio committee was enlarged and incorporated as a non-profit society under the law of the Northwest Territories. This body, called the Qamanittuap Naalauttaa Society, meaning the Baker Lake Radio Society, then applied for a license on behalf of the community. Donald Ingram, Chairman of the Board of Directors, in applying to the CRTC for a license said:

At the present time in Baker Lake we are poorly supplied with communication tools. The CBC Northern Service is poor at the best of times. It is made worse by auroral activity in the winter and virtually disappears during the long spring and summer days. Against this background we are now confident that our station can be successfully operated and can go a long way to overcome many of these problems. We are equally confident that the Qamanittuap Naalauttaa Society will be able to oper-

ate effectively in determining and programming the educational and entertainment needs of the people of Baker Lake.<sup>59</sup>

Although it truly was a community effort with the Resident's Association providing studio space and the Settlement Council giving financial aid, the Department of Communications helped out with the equipment and the training and the CBC helped greatly with the programming by lending program material, in Inuktitut, from their Frobisher Bay and Churchill radio stations.

The first local service to the Eastern Arctic was established at Baker Lake when the CRTC licensed the Baker Lake Community Radio Station on December 1, 1972. In granting the license, the CRTC stated:

The Commission noted that the station will produce three hours of local live programming a day, with a substantial amount in the Eskimo language. Eskimo personnel will be needed, and they will be encouraged by the station in all possible ways. The Commission has decided to issue a license on an experimental basis notwithstanding the participation of the Department of Communications because of the urgent need to encourage the extension of broadcasting services in this area and because this will only be a temporary solution.<sup>60</sup>

CKQN was officially opened on February 14, 1973, by the Minister of Communications, Gerard Pelletier. In his speech Mr. Pelletier said:

Baker Lake has many characteristics which make it an ideal model. It is close to the geographical centre of Canada. It is representative in size and degree of isolation, of many other northern, and indeed, of more southerly communities. I, and my other people in the South, will be watching Baker Lake Radio with close and deep interest. Community projects of this kind are by



no means easy. Difficulties of one kind or another are bound to occur. You will be able to tell us a great deal not only from your successes but from your problems and how you overcame them.<sup>61</sup>

When the CBC's Accelerated Coverage Plan began in October 1975 in this area, several community radio stations such as Cambridge Bay and Baker Lake decided to become included under the plan so that by December 1975, Baker Lake's CKQN became a CBC affiliate.

The major native communications societies had a fairly good record during the decade for the establishment of community broadcast facilities. This was especially so for the medium of radio. Because of these community stations, previously isolated native communities were put in touch with the rest of the country and the rest of the world. This was done, however, not at the expense of native cultures which were apparently actually strengthened by the access native people gained to the media. They were strengthened by the fact that native languages became the working language of the community stations. It was a unique means for the preservation of their traditional cultures and lifestyles.

#### Community Television

Community television was never able during this decade to either compete with or replace community radio. While community radio became an offset against southern radio, community television did not have the same effect on south-

ern television in those native communities where it was available. Most native communities could afford to establish community radio facilities but only a few could afford to become involved in community television. In those native communities where community television was established at this time, it was really used for the same purposes as was community radio. This final portion of Chapter III will look at the development of community television. Because there were only three examples of this form of community media created during the 1970's, the most significant and the best known of these efforts will be discussed here.

#### La Ronge Community Television

The best known community television project established by a native communications organization, was the La Ronge Community Television Project which was initiated by the La Ronge Communications Society. La Ronge was to become the model used for other community television projects; just as the Alberta Native Communications Society was to become through the years a model for many other native communications societies.

The roots of La Ronge community television lie in a community communications project initiated by Maureen Matthews and Chuck Feaver in the summer of 1971. The purpose of the project, sponsored jointly by the Anglican Church and the federal Opportunities for Youth Program was to experiment in the use of VTR to encourage community development processes.<sup>62</sup>

La Ronge is located in northern Saskatchewan and is the headquarters for the Provincial Department of Northern Saskatchewan. La Ronge is a complex community in that it includes the Village of La Ronge, a few unincorporated settlements and two major La Ronge Indian Band reserves. The majority of the population in this area are Cree Indians.

At the time that the La Ronge Communications Society was established in 1971, the CBC was operating a low power television rebroadcast station in the same area, programmed as a Frontier Coverage Package which broadcast four hours of videotape recordings a day. For the first year of the project, the people of the community treated the production of videotapes as just an interesting pastime and not a serious project endeavour. In the fall of 1972, Maureen Matthews and Charles Feaver decided to approach the CBC in an effort to gain access to the local CBC television transmitter. The CBC not only decided to grant this request for native access, but they also supplied some of the necessary video equipment.

The CBC was to cover the maintenance and hardware expenses. The operating funds, including salaries were to be found elsewhere. Over the course of the project, money came from various sources, with the federal Department of Health and Welfare footing a large part of the bill.<sup>63</sup>

The first community initiated television program was broadcast on November 1, 1972. Since that first program, the community television project has been broadcasting on an

average of from two to three times a week with programs lasting from five to thirty minutes.<sup>64</sup> Since the local native people have been involved in this project from the beginning, the programs are basically community-oriented. Many of the programs have included instructional segments on traditional native crafts such as the building and caring for canoes. Trapping, hunting and fishing information as well as songs, music and Indian legends have been focal points in many of the programs. Local Indian news, Band business, official elections, social issues and hockey games have become permanent fixtures in the scheduling.<sup>65</sup>

One of the stipulations in the agreement between the community society and the CBC, was that a representative community board would be established to manage the television project. This step was fully in keeping with the philosophy of the project and its aims to become an integral part of the community. The problem here was that the native people who understood both the project and its philosophy were already involved in numerous other administrative activities.

In the summer of 1973, an attempt was made to set up the community television board. It was decided to ask for representatives from each of the several organizations in the community including the La Ronge Village Council, the Native Youth Association and the staff of the community television project.<sup>66</sup>

The Board met twice in an unsuccessful attempt to get organized. Since that time, the operation has been run almost entirely by the La Ronge Communications Society made up of the staff of the project.

The project entered a new phase in July 1973, when La Ronge was changed from a taped Frontier Coverage Package station to a relay station broadcasting the complete English service received via microwave. This meant that the project was no longer broadcasting on unused air time but was interrupting the CBC network feed. This resulted in a uniform schedule instead of a haphazard interruption of CBC air time. With this regular viewing schedule, more people began to watch the native community access station.

As of the writing of this study, the La Ronge Community Television Project is still in operation and is still under the control of the La Ronge Communications Society. It still broadcasts its two or two and one-half hours of community television every week in Cree and English.

What makes a project such as this worthwhile to those who are involved are its intangible components. The skills required for even the simplest production involves analysis, observation and integration of community and culture. This kind of learning does not show immediate results, nor does it instantly lead to a core of dedicated staff for community television, but we feel it is one of the most valuable contributions that a project like this can make in a community where people have always been told, not asked what to think.<sup>67</sup>

The La Ronge Communications Society is not the only native communications society involved in community television. The Bella Bella Heiltsuk Television System in British Columbia is an Indian communications organization that has been operating community television since 1971. The Pond Inlet Community Television program, or PIC-TV as it is called, has been in operation in this Inuit community since October 1978. However, the La Ronge Community Television Project is still the most sophisticated of the three and the model upon which PIC-TV was built.

It is not totally accurate to say that without the help of the major native communications societies that none of the community radio or television stations would have been established. It is right to say, however, that without the help of these major societies many of the community access media stations would not have been developed. Also, while the majority of the community access broadcasting stations was created by the smaller societies, these smaller communications organizations not only modelled themselves after the major ones, they also sought technical and financial help from them. What about community media in general? Community media was one of the most successful, most helpful forms of media created or at least used by the native people in Canada during the 1970's to meet their needs as native people. It was used to: gather and disseminate

information, to preserve native cultural integrity and, as a platform or outlet for native opinion whether it be community related or further reaching with respect to such issues as land claim settlements. Community media was in essence the ultimate form of broadcast media access. It allowed entire communities to work together to preserve their lifestyles while at the same time bettering those lifestyles. Community media may have been developed by the native communications societies during this decade but it will remain a useful tool for the native people for a considerable time to come.

#### Conclusions

The native communications societies were established to meet the broadcasting needs of Canada's native peoples. They were established to: gather and disseminate information, to help preserve the native cultures, and finally, to act as an outlet for political or positional statements. In meeting these needs, the native communications societies were faced with certain challenges. Some challenges were problems that had to be met and overcome if the societies were to be effective in attaining their goals. Other challenges came in the form of projects that advanced the societies and helped them to serve the native people better. Many of the problems and challenges that had to be overcome by the native communications societies, problems such as

the gaining of recognition by their clients, had to be dealt with by these societies on an individual basis. Other problems, such as funding, and challenges, such as the establishment of a national native communications network, were tackled co-operatively with each society working in co-operation with its counterparts.

Clearly the most important challenge that faced the native communications societies was the problem of obtaining adequate funding. Operating the broadcast media has always been an expensive endeavour; one which the native people themselves could not bear alone. While many felt that it was a worthwhile goal to aim for, few were under the illusion that they could operate on their own financially for the foreseeable future. The amount and type of funding each society needed was determined by the media systems they operated. For example, RAVEN with its high frequency radio system was able to operate with much less funding than was the Alberta Native Communications Society with its sophisticated radio and television operations. While some societies were funded through projects, such as Kenomadiwin's help from the Company of Young Canadians, or Wa-Wa-Ta's backing by the Department of Communications, others had to totally rely on government aid. No native communications society was totally successful in obtaining the financial help they needed; al-



though by the end of the decade all but two of the major societies were receiving grants from the Department of the Secretary of State. The key to survival for these communications organizations can only be measured by the fact that during the entire decade the only major native communications society to fail due to finances was the Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia. While funding was a problem for each individual society, it was faced in a co-operative endeavour and it was faced to the degree that all but one established during this time are still in operation today.

It was with finances, among other things, in mind that the native communications societies at the beginning of the decade decided that co-operative efforts were more likely to succeed than individual efforts. These co-operative efforts usually culminated in native communication conferences where solutions to problems and new challenges were discussed all in the hope of meeting the needs, the broadcasting needs, of the native people. While some of these native communication conferences were established by the native people themselves, such as the FSI and NIB Native Communications Workshop held in Prince Albert in January 1973, and which was convened to discuss the problem of government funding, others were conducted by the government. Such was the case in 1972 when the Department of the

Secretary of State held a native communication conference at Sardiš, B.C. to examine the need for a native communications policy with respect to funding.

Whatever the reasons for these conferences, they gave the native communications societies an opportunity to get together to discuss issues and to find solutions or simply to explain new projects and achievements. The effects of the major conferences were felt long after they were adjourned. The Northern Communications Conference held in Yellowknife in 1970, established the need for radio broadcasting facilities throughout the North; a concept that was still being adhered to by the government at the middle of the decade despite growing native concern about the media of television. On the whole, these native communication conferences were successful. The government was moved towards a position of financial aid and problems, such as the training of native people in the skills of broadcasting, were brought to the fore and co-operatively, and successfully challenged.

Any broadcasting operation necessitates the availability of skilled personnel. The native communications societies at the beginning of the decade had no large pools of trained personnel from which to draw. Coming from a traditional, non-technological background, most natives were totally unfamiliar with radio and television equipment and its opera-

tion. Training, therefore, became a top priority of the societies if they wished to continue to give the native people adequate access to the broadcast media. Almost all of the major native communications societies had some form of training program by the end of the decade. The Alberta Native Communications Society was the pioneer in this field of native training when it initiated a program in 1975. While most societies did undertake individual programs, co-operative efforts were also evident. Both the National Indian Brotherhood and the Canadian Association for the Support of Native Peoples either financed courses or operated programs to train young natives in the skills of broadcasting. Workshops, programs and so on, were also conducted by the CBC, the DOC and the NFB in conjunction with the native communications societies. These native communications society training programs were most successful. They were able by the end of 1979 to place their own native people in positions of operating the broadcast media and did not have to rely on non-natives making their societies truly a media by the people for the people.

Besides the necessity to co-operate for financial reasons, the native communications societies worked together to meet one challenge that had been a dream of native broadcasters even before 1970. This challenge was the establishment of a national native communications network; a coast-to-

coast network of native communications societies working together to provide the natives of Canada with the most up-to-date information on political issues, cultural concerns and common-ideas. It was an attempt to bring the natives of the country closer together. Unfortunately, this concept was a total failure during the 1970's. It did, however, provide enough experience that should funds ever become available in the 1980's or beyond, the native people of Canada may yet be served on a national scale by a native broadcasting operation.

While the native communications societies sought to give the native people access to the broadcast media on a regional and even on a national scale, they also attempted and succeeded in establishing more community type services. The concept of community radio itself is one that can be either positive or negative in its application. It can unite a community, supply it with community information and preserve the integrity of its culture and language. However, it requires a lot of dedication as well as time and is not a panacea for all community problems. While some major native communications societies embarked on the building of community broadcast operations, societies such as Native Communications Incorporated, and found the results most gratifying, others like the ANCS concluded after several attempts that the results did not warrant

the effort.

Community radio, because of its lower costs and lower technical requirements, was the most popular form of community media in the 1970's. By and large these native community radio stations were successful until confronted with the intrusion of network television which all but ended the concept of community radio. Community television was also sponsored by the native communications societies but only on a local basis. None of the major native communications societies became involved in this idea feeling that it was either too expensive or unnecessary as it was already being undertaken by them on the provincial or regional levels. Community media was successful. It filled a need especially in those isolated areas that had no other broadcast media services.

The native communications societies were quite successful in their overall attempts to give the native people, the Indians, Metis and Inuit, access to and use of the broadcast media during the 1970's. While some of the societies were more successful than others, all but the ill-fated Nova Scotia society survived the decade to continue to serve the native people in the 1980's. They learned to work together for the best results and they learned to work with both non-natives and various government departments during this time. Chapter IV will look

at the relationship that not only the native communications societies but the native people in general had with these government agencies in providing the native people of Canada with access to the broadcast media during the 1970's.

## Chapter III - Footnotes

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## CHAPTER IV

### THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN NATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

The emphasis of this study so far has been on the development of Canada's native peoples in attempting to secure both access to and use of the broadcast media during the decade of the 1970's. Chapter II looked at Indian, Metis and Inuit activity in the provision of adequate native access to radio and television through the development of native communications societies. These societies were successful in many respects in giving the native people this access in order to meet their individual and collective needs such as for the gathering and dissemination of information. Chapter III continued this study of native involvement in the media of radio and television. Examination was made of the native communications societies and their efforts in meeting many of the problems and challenges faced in providing this access. Problems such as the issue of funding were detailed as were some of the challenges such as the establishment of community media in many of the isolated native settlements across the country. To say that the native people conducted this effort for access to and use of the broadcast media entirely through their own efforts would be both remiss and

unfair to those non-native organizations and institutions which worked side by side with the native people towards the realization of their goals.

The role of these non-native institutions and bodies in helping the native people to achieve their broadcast media goals must neither be underestimated nor ignored. Chapter IV will undertake to look at the role of several of the federal government departments with respect to this issue. The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development which is mandated by Parliament to help the native people to develop their potentials while at the same time retaining their past traditional values, will be studied with respect to its role in helping the native people to gain access to the broadcast media. This will be followed by an examination of the involvement of the Department of the Secretary of State. The Department of the Secretary of State had a very significant role in the development of native owned and native operated media systems. It was this department that, as mentioned in Chapters II and III, was responsible for much of the funding which allowed both the development of many of the native communications societies and also their continued operations. The third part of this chapter will look at the Department of Communications. The DOC also had a very substantial part to play in the development of native communi-

cations during this decade. Under its sponsorship and guidance, numerous projects were established that provided many native areas with their first, and often only, broadcast media service. It was one of the few government agencies openly praised by the natives for its efforts on their behalf. The final section of Chapter IV will concentrate on the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission's position in the development of native communications during this period. The CRTC under its policy making and regulatory capabilities and especially its public hearings, did take an active part in the whole question of native access to and use of the broadcast media. However, many natives felt that the role could have been greater than it was. This too will be discussed in Chapter IV.

Because of its unique relationship to broadcasting in Canada the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation will be the sole subject of Chapter V.

The government departments and the order in which they will be discussed in this chapter are as follows: the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the Department of the Secretary of State, the Department of Communications and, the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission.

The Department of Indian Affairs  
and Northern Development

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) has the responsibility under the Indian Act to ensure the preservation and the betterment of native lifestyles and in helping the native people to cope with the allengenges of modern life. Having played a paramount role in land claim settlements, especially in the North; the DIAND played a relatively minor role in native communications during the 1970's. It played a much more insignificant role than a native oriented body probably should have played at such a critical period in native communications development. Failing to develop a native communication program of its own, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, when it did become involved in native communications, did so usually as a minor partner in co-operation with either government bodies or with native organizations. Still, DIAND was involved in projects, studies and native communications in general to some extent during this time.

DIAND: Northern Communications

Although the DIAND's jurisdiction includes all of Canada, it's most obvious area of concentration with respect to native communications has been in the North. It was the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, along

with the Department of Communications, that sponsored the 1970 Northern Communications Conference held in Yellowknife in September, 1970.

Initial meetings to discuss the holding of a Conference on Northern Communications were held in the summer of 1969 and involved primarily government officials. By the fall of 1969 a commitment had been taken by both the Department of Communications and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to share the financial expenses of a Conference on Northern Communications. By the autumn of 1969, a program committee composed of officials from the Department of Communications, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the Boreal Institute of the University of Alberta and the Arctic Institute of North America met in Ottawa.<sup>1</sup>

The participation of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development unfortunately did not go very far beyond the initial co-sponsoring of the conference. The real governmental role at the Yellowknife Conference was carried out by the Department of Communications, not the DIAND. This side line participation was a practice carried out by DIAND during the entire decade in dealing with native communications.

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development only became interested in native communications in Canada with the advent of satellite broadcasts to the North and then that interest only pertained to that one geographical area of the country. In 1969, Jean Chretien, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development stated that:



Anik has tremendous importance for Northern Canada, for its inhabitants and especially for the Indians and Eskimos. For the first time in their whole life, once the system is established, these people will really be in a position to communicate with each other, with other Canadian citizens and to take part in all aspects of Canadian life.<sup>2</sup>

Some eight years later, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada still condemned the Minister's statement as a portrayal of events that never really happened since the satellite allowed only a one-way dialogue, from south to north, with virtually no native access or input allowed. In a special communications report, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada stated: "Anik is bringing television to fourteen Inuit communities. Television that is entirely in English, with some French and only thirty minutes a week of Inuktitut. Television that teaches Inuit children about cops and robbers and living in the suburbs."<sup>3</sup>

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development did not relegate its activities to mere ministerial statements however. The DIAND undertook several studies and projects and involved itself to at least some degree in the issue of native communications development. Again this involvement was almost completely centered in the northern part of the country. This portion of the thesis will look at some of these studies and projects as well as the DIAND's participation in native communications development.

DIAND: Northern Studies and Projects

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development concluded a study in 1970 entitled Communications in the North.<sup>4</sup> Directed by Desmond Loftus, a consultant to the Department of Communications, the study traced the role of communications in the North from 1924 to 1970. Minor reference was made to native access to the broadcast media, however, and this was simply because at that point in time native access in the North was almost non-existent. Despite the fact that the study was commissioned by the DIAND, little mention was made of the Department's activities with respect to native communications development. This was because DIAND had no real role to play in native communications at that time.

In the year 1953 two events took place in southern Canada that were to have a big effect on the lives of the Canadian Inuit in the years ahead. One was the establishment of the Department of Northern Affairs, the other was the introduction of television to most major cities in the South.<sup>5</sup>

To commemorate this anniversary of sorts, the Department decided to conduct a study in 1976 under the direction of an Inuit DIAND member, Peter Tapatai. It was a study into how modern life had changed the Inuit of Baker Lake since the establishment of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. One area that this study dealt with was television in the North. A wide range of Inuit age groups were looked at with respect to broadcast

media usage. How people reacted to southern television programs, commercials, native participation in television; how it affected their lifestyles and how it affected the entire community, were some of the issues and topics covered. While Peter Tapatai concluded that: "It is much too early for anyone to predict what effects the introduction of English language television will have on the people of the Arctic;" one of the people he interviewed felt that: "It could destroy us if we let it destroy us." Yet another claimed that: "Unless more Inuit programs are put on television we will lose out."<sup>6</sup>

While these studies did little, if anything, to help the native people to gain more access to the broadcast media they at least showed that the DIAND was concerned about the problem. In a more practical manner, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development became the Chairman, with Cabinet approval, of the Advisory Committee on Northern Development. In its role as Chairman, the DIAND has been responsible for looking at the activities of all federal government agencies in the North. Each year, the Department issues a substantial report on these various governmental activities. The title of this annual report is Government Activities in the North.<sup>7</sup> Native communications with respect to the CBC, the Department of Communications and also the National Film Board are recorded as are DIAND activities

in this area. Looking through this record, one immediately sees that the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development has played only a cursory role in the development of native communications. This, however, is not to say that the Department was totally excluded from native communications development. This is just not the case as can be seen in at least two major projects it assisted in during the latter part of this decade. Both of these projects will be looked at here.

DIAND: Northern Projects

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development became involved in two very important projects in the North during 1978. One of these projects involved the native communications society Taqramiut Nipingat Incorporated, representing the Inuit of northern Quebec. This particular project was sponsored both by the Department of Communications and DIAND. Hugh Faulkner, as Minister for the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, introduced the project by saying that: "The project will use Canada's Anik B satellite to introduce television programming to Arctic Quebec in a way that is sensitive to the Inuit culture and language."<sup>8</sup> The DIAND gave some nine hundred and eighteen thousand dollars towards this project which linked some five northern Quebec Inuit communities together via a closed circuit satellite television transmission cable system. Through

this satellite link, town hall style meetings could be held between communities hundreds of miles apart. Started in 1978, the project is scheduled to last until 1982.

The other project involving the DIAND at this time was one that also involved the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada and the Department of Communications. In September 1978, Hugh Faulkner announced a one million, nine hundred thousand dollar grant to be spent on an Inuit Tapirisat Satellite Communications Project. "This experiment in encouraging increased communication among northern communities, will greatly emphasize the role of Inuktitut as a living, working language. It is expected to re-orient existing north-south communication lines allowing for considerably greater social and cultural interaction between the people of the Eastern and Western Arctic."<sup>9</sup> Earth stations were constructed in one central base area and five other smaller communities. This three year experiment, which started in 1978 and which will conclude in 1981, has allowed general Inuit language broadcasting, teleconferencing, and educational programming. It must be noted, however, that DIAND's participation in both of these projects has been totally of a financial nature. The whole question of access to and use of this form of broadcast media has been left up entirely to the Department of Communications in consultation with the native organizations involved.

While the CBC and even the Department of Communications.

have had a history, especially during the last decade, of close relations with native communications organizations, this has generally not been the case with the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Outside of giving financial assistance to the Inuit communications group Nunatsiakmiut when it was just getting started, DIAND has had practically no influence on these native communications societies either in the North or the South. Despite this history of non-involvement in native access to the broadcast media, it must be recognized, however, that without this financial backing many of these native peoples' communications projects would never have been initiated let alone been successful. Through its participation especially in the Northern Communications Conference, through its limited but still useful studies and through its financial assistance for native communications projects, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development did have an important role to play in native communications during the 1970's. There were other federal government departments that had much greater roles to play in the development of native communications and in helping the native people to gain access to and use of the broadcast media than did DIAND however. Such was the case with the Department of the Secretary of State.

Department of the Secretary of State

The Department of the Secretary of State (DSS) first became involved with native communications when at the request of several of the native communications societies and national native organizations it sponsored the first totally national native communications conference in Canada. This Native Communications Conference was held January 12-14, 1972, at Sardis, British Columbia.<sup>10</sup>

DSS: The Sardis, B.C. Conference

The Sardis, B.C. Native Communications Conference was requested by the native communications societies and the various national native organizations simply because at that point in time native communications was emerging as a valuable tool for native progress and because the government had no definite policy for the funding of native communications programs. Almost all of the then existing native communications societies attended the conference as did the majority of the provincial, territorial and national native organizations. Several government agencies and even Bell Telephone sent representatives to the conference. It was a good opportunity for the native people and their respective communications and organizational bodies to reach a consensus with the federal government over a national funding policy. It failed to materialize however. After the Secretary of State's representative outlined a possible national native communications

funding policy, the natives rejected the whole concept of a national funding policy program. One native representative stated the problem when he said:

As is the case with all bureaucratic institutions, the government is demanding that all native communication programs be cast from the same mold ignoring the vast differences in native peoples and their situations. A program for the natives of Saskatchewan may be totally useless or fall far short of what is necessary for the native people in the Yukon or the Northwest Territories.<sup>11</sup>

The native people and especially the native communications societies had a great fear that these so-called proposals would end up as rigid, unchanging policies unadaptable to either the various native communications societies, their situations, such as being Indian, Metis or Inuit, or even their geographical locations. It was believed that such a policy could not be flexible enough to differentiate between the needs of those living in the more populated, more industrialized South from those living in the relatively isolated, more traditionally minded areas of the North. In any event, the native organizations attending the conference completely rejected any moves towards adopting such a national policy and the meeting came to an abrupt end. It was not to be the end, though, of native attempts to get more funding from the federal government and especially from the Department of the Secretary of State. The next attempt came from the National Indian Brotherhood and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians.



DSS: FSI and NIB Native Communications Conference

Governments have often taken the position that they are not responsible to fund communication systems and programs. However, we believe that the situation of our people provides compelling arguments as to why Governments should accept this responsibility. Our need for communication programs are basically related to the coming of the white man and the kind of society he has built around us and is now attempting to impose upon us. Therefore we feel it is no longer tenable for the Government to argue that it does not have a responsibility in this area.<sup>12</sup>

The above statement was incorporated into a submission presented by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians to the National Indian Brotherhood in August 1972. The presentation of this submission led to the approval of a resolution that the FSI undertake to chair a National Communications Workshop.

Be It Hereby Resolved That:

Saskatchewan would endeavour to hold a meeting within sixty days of the communications resource people from each Provincial Organization with a view of coming up with a national policy that will be acceptable to the Provincial Organizations of the National Indian Brotherhood.<sup>13</sup>

On this basis, the Saskatchewan Federation of Indians undertook to call a National Communications Workshop which took place in January 1973, in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. There were representatives from eight provinces and the two territories as well as representatives from the national native organizations and the Department of the Secretary of State.

Gerry Kenney, a consultant with the Department of Communications, was hired by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians on behalf of the National Indian Brotherhood to establish a new and possible means for funding the native com-

munication organizations. In making a case for the funding of native communications, Kenney drew on documents prepared by the Department of the Secretary of State which specifically set out new citizenship objectives. He identified three very pertinent objectives which included the following:

1. The need for programs to enable the citizens of Canada to formulate their views and develop program proposals of urgent concern to themselves.
2. To preserve human rights, fundamental freedoms, and thus increase and promote citizenship participation. And,
3. To enable disadvantaged people to become organized and to exercise their rights as Canadian citizens as well as to meet their obligations within the Canadian society.<sup>14</sup>

It was also suggested at this Federation of Saskatchewan Indians' Communications Workshop that: "The Secretary of State Department program for funding native communications be a co-ordinated program."<sup>15</sup> Co-ordinated in that it should be done in conjunction with the Department of Communications, the CBC and other governmental agencies including the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. But that was not all. The representatives to this conference made one further recommendation with respect to the Department of the Secretary of State and native communications development.

We recommend that a native person be hired by the Secretary of State Department and that he be given responsibility to provide the important link and dialogue between the native organizations and Ottawa and also to carry on such co-ordinating and liaison activities as are necessary. We would further recommend that this individual in consultation with the provincial organizations have a role in recommending adjustments to any policy adopted by the Secretary of State Department, in light

of new experiences and information, to ensure that the development of native people through the communications programs are not stifled or blocked by unnecessary or rigid policies, rules and Regulations.<sup>16</sup>

Whatever its reaction were, the DSS decided not to comment on any of the recommendations, proposals or even criticisms resulting from this native communications conference. Despite this silence, however, some of the recommendations were examined and included in subsequent policy decisions regarding native communications developments. The next most important native communications conference which included the Department of the Secretary of State took place in the Province of Alberta.

DSS: The ANCS Conference and the Native Communications Program

The Alberta Native Communications Society sponsored a conference in Edmonton from March 27-29, 1974. The theme of the conference was The Political Role of Communications in Native Affairs.<sup>17</sup> The Hon. Hugh Faulkner, the Secretary of State, addressed the over two hundred delegates at which time he announced the long awaited native communications policy. In his opening remarks Mr. Faulkner said that:

The native people of Canada are the most disadvantaged economically, socially, culturally - part of our Society. What I am saying is that the problem has changed. After reviewing the results of a number of pilot projects, initiated by the native people, I am convinced that native controlled and managed communications projects are an effective and a necessary ingredient for social change among native people.<sup>18</sup>

Before outlining the new native communications policy, the Minister of State emphasized that:

It is clear that a native communications system can weave a unity among native people. It is also a process which encourages native leadership to be responsive to the wishes of native people. Native communication systems are the means by which native people can communicate with the larger society. It is essential that there be native people with skills and resources necessary to communicate with government, schools and businesses. Without this, native peoples will continue to run against prejudice and discrimination.

I am pleased to advise you that the government has accepted my recommendations to initiate a new program of support of native communications activities.<sup>19</sup>

The policy behind this newly announced Native Communications Program was not merely the type of policy that allowed any and all native groups wishing to become involved in native communications to obtain the type and amount of funding they so desired. There were stipulations that had to be met, criteria that had to be obliged in order for any native organization to receive government funding through the new funding policy program. To begin with, the government, that is the Department of the Secretary of State, would consider funding only 'Resource Organizations' that would carry out communication activities in co-operation with each and all of the various native groups. These 'Resource Organizations' in turn would have to fulfill certain requirements before being given any funding. The first criteria was that there could only be one resource group in each area of the country or each region to be more precise. These regions would be determined by culture, linguistic and geographical factors but, could extend beyond the borders of a province. Another

criteria was that the resource organizations must be sponsored by a service group serving all natives, both Indian and Metis in each region, and must have the support and involvement of the larger native community. There also had to be an attempt by the native resource organizations at involving the private sector in that they must obtain funding sources besides the federal government. Also, these organizations, within a reasonable amount of time, must be prepared to lend any native group in their region such equipment as it may reasonably require and provide the necessary training and assistance in this regard. Finally, it was stipulated that applications for funding would only be considered by the DSS when made by the persons directly involved with operating the proposed 'Resource Organizations', and that they would be considered solely on their merits and that funding would not be available by formula.<sup>20</sup>

The Secretary of State, Hugh Faulkner, concluded his policy announcement by saying that:

It is my hope that at a later date an announcement will be made with respect to the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. As you are aware the issues surrounding a communications policy in the far North are different than the issues for the native people in the South. Therefore, this policy at present will not apply in these two areas. Where in the South the central issue is one of the native people developing communication programs which will assert their strength as a minority. In the far North, where the native people are not a minority, the issues are related to cost, technological developments, and isolation. I am confident that a policy will soon be worked out which will respond to these needs.<sup>21</sup>

A much more localized and community oriented native communications policy was later released by the Department of the Secretary of State with respect to the native communication organizations both in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

Native reaction to this new native communications policy was mixed. The new funding policy was made in defiance of recommendations made to the Department of the Secretary of State by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians and the National Indian Brotherhood at their joint communications workshop held in Prince Albert in January 1973. The National Indian Brotherhood had recommended a grant formula that would recognize a variety of regional needs and a diversity of interests between the Indian and Metis organizations. This new policy lumped the Indian and Metis groups together in that the 'Resource Organization' had to recognize both groups in each region. The NIB had also recommended that grants for communication projects and programs be made directly to recognized native organizations who would decide for themselves the nature and scope of their programs. The new policy stipulated that funds be distributed through a 'Resource Organization' and not directly to native communications groups.<sup>22</sup> Other native communications leaders were more positive and optimistic upon receiving the announcement. Leslie Healy, the Executive Director of the Indian News Media organization, said: "The announcement gives the communica-

tions media a chance to plan for future use in five-year projects on programs in the future fiscal year."<sup>23</sup>

This Native Communications Program developed by the Department of the Secretary of State was established to provide assistance to communications projects so that the social development of Canada's native peoples could be expanded and progressed. This ideal is very evident in the objectives for the program as laid out by the Secretary of State. For example, the program was designed to:

1. Extend the social development programs for citizens of native origin in accordance with the priority assigned by them to communication activities.
2. Extend the scope and impact of native communications models which have demonstrated their worth to their client groups, in terms of information exchange, cultural preservation, social development and training, and to apply the knowledge and experience gained through developing these projects to the similar needs of the native groups. And,
3. Broaden the base of meaningful participation by citizens of native origin by providing access to professional and financial resources and training in all levels of communications among themselves, with other groups, with the larger society, and with decision-makers.<sup>24</sup>

The Department of the Secretary of State attempted to adhere to these objectives when providing financial help to the various native communications societies throughout Canada during this time. This next section will look at the relationship of the DSS with respect to this funding of native communications societies.

DSS: Native Communications Societies

Since 1974, the Native Communications Program has provided funding towards the operation of eleven native communications societies across Canada. The Native Citizens Directorate Resources for Development, which is part of the Citizenship sector of the Department of the Secretary of State, is responsible for implementing the Native Communications Program. Established in March 1974, this program has worked on a five-year term basis after which consultation would be held on whether the program should be made renewable or redundant. In March 1979, the Treasury Board agreed to extend the mandate of the program for one more year until March 31, 1980.<sup>25</sup> This latest renewal came about after a series of meetings between the various native communications organizations and the Secretary of State, and between the Secretary of State and the Treasury Board. For example, in October 1978, a meeting was held between Alexa Deweil, representing the DSS, and representatives of the native societies included under the program. At this meeting Ms. Deweil stated that: "The new policy will consider how better to dispense with the few dollars we have. Actual amounts are not known, so we have to make a very tight proposal."<sup>26</sup>

The Department of the Secretary of State dispensed some one million, seven hundred and twenty-six thousand dollars to native communications societies through its Native



Communications Program in 1975.<sup>27</sup> By December 1979, some eleven native communications societies were receiving one million, seven hundred and forty-one thousand dollars. According to Raymond Hatfield, the Native Communications Program co-ordinator, this came out of the Department's Core Funding Program which supported some thirty-two provincial and territorial and three national native peoples organizations. "Grants totalling \$9,488,000 helped to defray operational costs, salaries, employee benefits, office and administrative expenses, meeting and conference expenses, professional services and staff training."<sup>28</sup> While the number of native communications societies increased from 1974 to 1979, the amount of money they received grew only marginally. And out of the total budget for native programs the native communications societies were most definitely not getting that much, considering the cost of providing access to and use of the broadcast media during this period.

Although the relationship between the Department of the Secretary of State and the various native communications societies was not always cordial during the 1970's, without the DSS the majority of Canada's native peoples would have little or no access to the broadcast media. The Alberta Native Communications Society received substantial funding as a pilot project for further State Department funding programs. William Bull, the President of ANCS said in a tenth

anniversary message that: "Since 1968, the federal and provincial governments have generously provided us with funds to maintain Canada's model of Indian accomplishments. With these funds we have been able to provide communications and promote unity to Alberta's natives."<sup>29</sup> Mr. Walter Hlady representing the Secretary of State at the sixth annual meeting of the Indian News Media Society said: "Communications is the key word in the development of the native media in Alberta. Alberta is the leader in the area of communications and it shows how much work has been done in this field."<sup>30</sup> The Indian News Media has always recognized this fact but even though they have always depended heavily on the Department of the Secretary of State for financial support, this same native communications society has rarely ever felt that this support was sufficient. For example, Louis Soop, the Executive Director of INM at the eighth annual meeting of the society stated that: "Secretary of State funding doesn't allow for capital expenses - only operating expenses."<sup>31</sup> This lack of funding was reiterated in May 1979, when Hank Shade, the Blackfoot Radio supervisor said: "We have been mandated by the Secretary of State and Alberta Culture to cover Treaty Seven with a budget of \$83,000 - compare that to the salary of a CBC broadcaster who makes \$125,000 annually."<sup>32</sup>

The vulnerability of these native communications so-

cieties to the funding policy of the Department of the Secretary of State is most visible when looking at the problems of the Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia. Roy Gould, the Executive Director, in a letter to the Secretary of State in December 1979, explained this problem to the Minister and told him that: "As of March there will be nothing unless the changes are made in the funding arrangement."<sup>33</sup> Because of its difficulties in raising its revenues, the society asked the Minister to re-evaluate the cost sharing arrangement it was under and to replace it with a more equitable, long-term arrangement. Mr. Gould also stated that the society managed to meet the Department's criteria even though it drained the society's funds making it impossible for the staff to work on areas of expansion and become a self-supporting and a profit making venture.<sup>34</sup>

Other native communications societies that have received funding from the Department of the Secretary of State have included the Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society which, according to the Annual Report-1979 of the DSS, was:

"Serving some thirty-five isolated communities in northern Ontario and assisted in developing twelve local radio transmitting stations."<sup>35</sup> Another State Department supported society has been the Native Communications Society of the Western Northwest Territories. Even when this society was

part of the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories' Communications Unit in 1972, it received funding to produce a weekly radio program. In fact, its 1972 funding came to one hundred and sixty-nine thousand dollars. Unfortunately, that money had run out by May 1972, and the program went off the air.<sup>36</sup> Still, when the Communications Unit joined with several other native communications groups to form the Native Communications Society of the Western Northwest Territories, that new society was also funded by the Department of the Secretary of State.

On August 28, 1975, the Secretary of State agreed to fund the Society to the amount of \$178,000 for the 1975-1976 fiscal year. The funds will be used for the continued publication of the Native Press; to maintain the radio network of the Indian Brotherhood and to train people for radio in CBC Yellowknife and Inuvik.<sup>37</sup>

This society has been financed annually by the Department of the Secretary of State since that time as has the rest of the eleven native communications societies in Canada which seek to open up the broadcast media for the Indian, Metis and Inuit peoples of Canada.

The history of the Department of the Secretary of State in relation to the native communications societies during the 1970's has been one of ups and downs. The same could be said with the relationship of the Department to the national native organizations, at least regarding native communications. The National Indian Brotherhood has generally opposed the DSS in its communications policies. After the communications

conference at Sardis, B.C., the NIB joined with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians in 1973 to establish a new funding formula. This new formula was rejected by the DSS and Tony Belcourt, the President of the National Indian Brotherhood began to see a dismal future for native communications.<sup>38</sup> This distrust between the two bodies continued after the March 1974 announcement by the Secretary of State about the Native Communications Program and its new funding policies and is still evident at the writing of this study. The national Inuit organization, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, has had a better relationship with the Department. Perhaps this is because the ITC has not depended quite so heavily on funding from this government agency as has the NIB.

The Department of the Secretary of State has had a most definite influence on native communications development in Canada during the 1970's. Unlike the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the DSS became more than a mere collaborator in helping the native people to obtain access to and use of the broadcast media. This Department was responsible, directly responsible, for the establishment of many of the native communications societies, especially after the introduction of its Native Communications Program in 1974. It was also the means for many of these same societies to continue their operations during the rest of the decade. Without DSS help, the native people of Canada may have been

able to erect their own societies but none would have been able to meet the needs of their clients to the extent they did without this financial support. Although praised by some and condemned by many, the Department of the Secretary of State did have a most obvious, a most substantial role to play in native communications in Canada. However, it was not the only governmental department to do so. The Department of Communications, which will be studied next, also had an important part to play in this development.

#### Department of Communications

I find it impossible to over-emphasize the vital importance of ensuring that Canadians can communicate with each other cheaply, quickly and efficiently. I mean all Canadians from east to west and from our southern borders to the upper limits of our northern islands and this also means Canadians involved in all sorts of activities and occupations, in big cities or small towns. As much as possible we must work to give Canadians greater access<sup>39</sup> to the most modern and diverse communication services.

The Department of Communications has played a substantial role in offering the native peoples of Canada access to and use of broadcast facilities during this past decade. Not mandated as the CBC is in this regard, not equipping itself with a separate native communications program as the Department of the Secretary of State has and not responsible policy-wise as is the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, the Department of Communications (DOC) has probably done as much if not more than most other governmental departments or agencies in providing access

to the broadcast media facilities for Canada's native peoples. This support for native communications is evident through the attitudes and actions, with respect to speeches, activities and policies, of the Department's various ministers; through the projects, studies and relationships with native communications groups they have undertaken during this period.

DOC: Ministers of Communication

Throughout this entire ten year period, the various ministers of DOC have visibly supported native communications via their overall communications policies, their activities and even their speeches. Robert Stanbury, the Minister of Communications announced on February 28, 1972, that his ministry was interested in helping the native people across the country to establish radio-telephone units such as was in use by the RAVEN Society of British Columbia. At this date he also announced that his office would make available sums of money to help the native peoples with the establishment of community radio stations and videotape units for television production.<sup>40</sup>

The Department of Communications had opened the decade when it co-sponsored, along with the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the Northern Communications Conference at Yellowknife in September 1970.

The Conference was intended to focus attention publicly on the relevance of communications to northern needs and aspirations. Active participation was encouraged and information sought to guide and affect policy formulation.<sup>41</sup>

Native peoples from all across the North and the South went to this conference and aired their views on services, broadcast facilities, and access to such facilities. Radio broadcasting, television, community radio and other areas of communication were looked at in detail in hope that the DOC might be able to formulate a communications plan for the North, and especially for the natives of the North, for the next decade.

Speaking in Inuvik on February 27, 1972, Robert Stanbury reiterated his concern about communications in the North and the role of the native peoples in this service. "Northern communications, in my view, demands urgent national attention. The pace of change is rapid and care is needed to see that our communication initiatives are in harmony with northern circumstances."<sup>42</sup> The Minister went on to discuss the attitudes expressed by the natives at the Yellowknife Conference:

At this conference, northern people expressed themselves on a number of issues that were of vital concern to them. They told us then that some of our priorities and plans had a southern bias and that they left untouched some fundamental deficiencies in communications which should have received first attention. Their criticisms were not taken lightly. One of my first actions as Minister of Communications was to order a fresh look at existing plans for the North.<sup>43</sup>



Mr. Stanbury was concerned about communication services in the North and he also paid particular attention, through subsequent projects and programs such as the establishment of a DOC District Office at Fort Smith, to the needs of the natives living in isolated northern communities.

This concern over native involvement or access to communication services such as the broadcast media, was further explained when he spoke at the Annual Conference of the International Communications Association on April 21, 1972, in Atlanta, Georgia. Addressing the delegates at the conference, Mr. Stanbury said:

Our field of concern here in northern Canada, is about the 200,000 people in the Canadian North who need either new or improved communications. A particular aspect of the problem is that a large proportion of the population is native with distinct cultural and social needs.<sup>44</sup>

Several programs were outlined to the delegates but the fourth program he listed held perhaps the most promise for native access to the broadcast media.

A fourth program is that of a Citizens Communications working group under the joint sponsorship of my Department, the Secretary of State (responsible for cultural affairs) and the National Film Board. The purpose of this group is to examine ways by which the Government might encourage citizens' groups, native associations and local organizations to make effective use of new technology to promote community development, citizen participation and self-expression.<sup>45</sup>

When Gerard Pelletier became the Minister of Communications, he carried on the ideals as well as the practices of his predecessor. In March 1973, Mr. Pelletier issued

a Green Paper entitled Proposals For A Communications Policy For Canada. Long overdue, although only a proposal for a policy for communications in Canada, this Green Paper explained the need for Canadian communications to become more closely in tune with the mandates established in the Broadcasting Act.

There is a gathering urgency to state and follow a communications policy which is national in scope, which will have the support of all Canadians, and which will permit that shared knowledge of Canada and of the world which is not a luxury but a necessity. It is an established philosophy in Canada that the unity of the country can only be based on a recognition of diversity.<sup>46</sup>

Although this Green Paper did not openly specify the need for native access to the broadcast media it did, like its later partner, call for a general access to the media for the Canadian people, which would include the native peoples.

This 'later partner' mentioned above was another Department of Communications' proposals or position papers. This one, also issued by Gerard Pelletier, was entitled Communications: Some Federal Proposals and was made public in April 1975. Again general in terms of application like its antecedent, this paper did stress the need for access, at least of services:

All Canadians, regardless of their origin or language or place of residence, share two fundamental demands for efficient and economical telecommunications:

1. They wish to be able to make direct contact with other people, not only in Canada but throughout the world. And,

e 2. They wish to have access to information and entertainment, both local and Canadian in character as well as the best that the world has to offer internationally.<sup>47</sup>

Replacing Gerard Pelletier as the Minister of Communications, Jeanne Sauve carried on this tradition of concern about native communications. For example, in speaking at the Annual Meeting of Canadian Telecommunications Carriers in Saint Andrews, N.B. on June 21, 1976, Ms. Sauve discussed the problems of communications in the North and the need for the best possible facilities and services. "Given the importance of good communications to these remote communities, the Federal Government would like to see across the North, a level of basic communication services that approaches the standards in southern Canada."<sup>48</sup> The Minister continued by saying:

Do not get me wrong. I am not saying that the villagers on Grise Ford on Ellesmere Island should have the latest in cable-TV converter service. I do not think they would want 15 southern TV channels which have little to do with their needs or way of life.

There is also a great need for local programming, but I will not go into that, despite my great interest in it.<sup>49</sup>

The Honourable Robert Stanbury, Gerard Pelletier, Jeanne Sauve, and all the Ministers of Communications during the 1970's showed a great deal of interest in native communications and access to these communication services and facilities. Although the Department of Communications talked a great deal about native communications and its ideals, they

practiced these ideals even more than they talked about them. They practiced these ideals in the form of solid, useful projects; projects in which the native peoples themselves were the focal points.

DOC: Project Snowgoose

One of the first projects that the Department of Communications became involved in during the early part of the decade was Project Snowgoose. Initiated as a DOC project through the Department's Ontario Regional Office, Project Snowgoose was a concept originally developed and designed by staff of the Ryerson Polytechnical Institute. It was conceived in line with a brief presented by the National Indian Brotherhood, the Canadian Metis Society and the Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada to the special Senate Committee on the Mass Media held in December 1969. At this meeting a conclusion was arrived at that research should be undertaken into the possibility of providing each northern settlement with a radio station operated by the local people.<sup>50</sup> The Ryerson Institute had already begun to develop a new low cost, low power broadcast facility designed for operation in isolated areas. In March 1972, the DOC accepted a proposal by Ryerson for assistance to continue the program and to conduct Snowgoose field trials.

Meetings were held to develop a program for the use of this new equipment with Indian associations, the Government

of Ontario and the Department of Communications. At these meetings it was decided that:

To be of any value Project Snowgoose should be extended past the technical stage, and that a full project should be implemented to determine the socio-economic factors that would be associated with any expanded program at a later date. Also, it was the general opinion that in the early stages the Union of Ontario Indians would be able to provide the type of interface necessary for the commencement and eventual success of such a program.<sup>51</sup>

Negotiations with the Union of Ontario Indians began in December 1971, and continued through the end of March 1972. At the same time as Project Snowgoose was beginning to take shape, the Department of Communications had become involved in a much larger project called the Northern Pilot Project. This pilot project incorporated most of the area that Project Snowgoose was supposed to have serviced and because of this overlap it was decided that the two projects be incorporated. By April 1972, this incorporation was getting underway and Project Snowgoose was for all intents and purposes abandoned as a separate concept.

#### DOC: Cominterphone Project

Another, more successful program involving the DOC, took place in Rankin Inlet in 1972. Code named Cominterphone, this experimental project included the DOC, the CBC and Bell Canada.

What they have done essentially is to connect a telephone conference call system with an unattended radio broadcast station so that if a person wishes to be heard on the radio in the village all he has to do is dial a certain number and he or she then has access to the radio network.<sup>52</sup>

It was decided by the participants in this project that, the system would be an open system in that the native people themselves would establish the purposes for its utilization. One remarkable fact that came out of a study on this experiment was that the language used most of the time, in fact some ninety-two percent of the time, was Inuktitut which was considered quite unusual since the language used for most other purposes in the community was English.<sup>53</sup> In any case, the project was a total success in that it allowed total access to the broadcast media by the Inuit population of Rankin Inlet. The project itself became part of the Northern Pilot Project and was eventually replaced with a CBC low power relay transmitter and finally a full CBC radio production centre late in the 1970's.

DOC: Northern Pilot Project

The Department of Communications undertook its largest native oriented project of the decade in the fall of 1971.

By the fall of 1971, DOC had become aware that improved communication services were required to meet the needs of native people in the North. Northern residents were ready to state their priorities but said that they had never been consulted by the communications agencies. The frontiers of the North in communication terms had turned out to be much farther south than most people realized.

Much had been written and said but little had been done to meet the communication needs of native people in remote areas. In an effort to respond to these needs and at the same time to learn what media and approaches were most suitable, the Department of Communications embarked on a Northern Pilot Project.<sup>54</sup>

The project was to be in operation for approximately eighteen months but that was later expanded to two years. Overall, it was designed to provide a range of media facilities and services which would meet the communication needs and requirements of the native peoples in two pre-selected areas, namely the northwestern area of Ontario and the District of Keewatin in the Northwest Territories. The purpose of the project was to enable the native people to take part in the planning of their own future by participating in the planning and provision of communication services which would benefit them the most.

The objectives and aims of this Northern Pilot Project included:

1. To determine communication needs and priorities in isolated regions by implementing pilot projects built upon the basis of existing knowledge.
2. To test the effectiveness of various communications media in meeting social communication needs, particularly those of indigenous peoples in remote areas.
3. To demystify the media, in preparation for the introduction of more sophisticated technology (e.g., television).
4. To provide experience for residents of selected communities in setting up and operating a local communications project.
5. To provide training for residents in operation and maintenance of equipment. And,
6. To provide recommendations on whether or not such communication media should be provided to other isolated communities. 55

The initial step in the introduction of this project was to determine the needs in each of these two areas and to select the communities to participate in the project. Fieldworkers Paddy Gardiner and Donna Pace visited the Keewatin and the northwestern part of Ontario respectively during March and April, 1972. On the basis of Paddy Gardiner's report, the project team decided to proceed with the preparation for a community radio broadcasting station in Baker Lake and with the installation of an High Frequency radio network linking the settlements of Baker Lake, Eskimo Point, Chesterfield Inlet, Rankin Inlet and Whale Cove.<sup>56</sup> Because of Donna Pace's report, Sioux Lookout was chosen as the main operations centre for northwestern Ontario and the communities of Big Trout Lake, Fort Severn, Round Lake, Sachigo Lake and Sandy Lake as sites for the six available HF radios. Later, the Cree community of Big Trout Lake was chosen as the site for the FM radio broadcasting station.<sup>57</sup>

The technologies chosen to meet the expressed needs of these communities included: high frequency radio for communication among isolated communities with the ability to adapt some of these units to broadcast facilities, FM radio broadcasting stations or community radio, and portable video-tape units for use within communities and for the exchange of tapes between communities.<sup>58</sup> By the end of 1973, some twenty-four HF units were in operation in northwestern



Ontario and five in the Keewatin.

The Department of Communications funded the Northern Pilot Project as a two year experiment in evaluating means of providing communication services in remote areas. The Department made no commitment to supporting the project activities after the end of the project period. By the end of 1974, the project had in effect been disbanded. However, the facilities erected during the period of the experiment were kept in operation. The only real difference was that the two major FM radio broadcasting stations came under the direction of native communications societies, the Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society in northwestern Ontario and the Baker Lake Radio Society in the Keewatin, both of which were formed under the guidance of the Department of Communications during the term of the project. The other difference was by way of financial backing. At the end of the specified project period, DOC slowly withdrew its financial support from all the broadcast services involved. The Wa-Wa-Ta Society then came under the Native Communications Program of the Department of the Secretary of State and the Baker Lake Society then operated on Settlement grants. The HF and VTR units in both the Keewatin and northwestern Ontario were then funded by the provincial and territorial governments and by the various local, and regional native associations.

The Northern Pilot Project did more for broadening native use of and access to the broadcast media than probably any other single project or development during this entire decade. It covered huge areas of the country, gave guaranteed access to available facilities and established a system and a base from which the native peoples in these two areas could build on for the future. Without the NPP there probably would not be any form of broadcast media in the majority of these native communities even today because of government cutbacks, CBC policies, and general neglect from the provincial, territorial and federal agencies responsible for native communications.

DOC: Project Iron Star

The list of Department of Communications' projects involving the native peoples of Canada was quite impressive during the 1970's. Next to the Northern Pilot Project, perhaps the best known was Project Iron Star which involved the DOC and the Alberta Native Communications Society. As early as June 1974, ANCS was asked to submit a possible proposal by the Department of Communications in the event that it was chosen as a participant in an upcoming satellite experiment.

Called the Communications Technology Satellite Experiment, the project is designed to bounce audio-visual programming between Edmonton and rural points by a sophisticated hardware system that will include a joint Canadian-U.S. satellite. It is the joint project of the Department of Communications and the National

Aeronautics and Space Administration. Started this year, 1975, the ANCS project is scheduled to run until the end of 1978.<sup>59</sup>

Funding for this project came from the federal and the Alberta governments which also supplied most of the hardware for ANCS' part in the satellite project. Native reaction to this experiment was most enthusiastic. William Bull, the President of ANCS said: "We are excited about the opportunity CTS offers us to use the most modern means to serve our people. And we are especially excited because we will be participating on our own terms. We see it as a means of helping our native people more rapidly gain their rightful place as full citizens, with all the benefits and opportunities that includes."<sup>60</sup>

The Communications Technology Satellite was launched on January 13, 1976, from Cape Canaveral, Florida. Designed to operate for two years, this sixty million dollar satellite was created to serve as a social, technological and experimental device by various groups on both sides of the border. Through established arrangements, eighteen Canadian groups were asked to participate in the experiment; ANCS was one of these groups. Code named Pewapskickakis, or Iron Star, the project proposal received approval from the ANCS Board of Directors representing the Metis and Indian people of Alberta. It was ANCS' first satellite project and also the first one of its kind ever controlled and planned by a North

American native organization.<sup>61</sup>

Two full programming periods were included in the project format. The first was an audio phase with simultaneous voice-return. These radio broadcasts were produced in ANCS' Edmonton studios and beamed via satellite to Peerless Lake and Fort McKay in northern Alberta. This audio phase was commenced on October 19, 1976 and ran until February 23, 1977.<sup>62</sup> The video phase of programming began August 1, 1977 and continued until December 15, 1977. The video portion of the experiment was beamed to three other native communities in northern Alberta. These three communities were: Wabasco-Desmaris, Fort Chipewyan and Assumption. From August until December, there were seventy-six video broadcasts totalling some one hundred and forty-two hours. During the entire period, almost forty-five hundred people received Iron Star broadcasts in these three project communities.<sup>63</sup>

There were three separate voice signals entering each of the three participating communities, allowing for language services in English, Cree and in either Slavey or Chipewyan. Each community had a voice return path. This allowed for immediate spontaneity and members of the communities were able to directly respond to the broadcasts while in progress.<sup>64</sup>

A committee was set up in each community comprised of community members who encouraged involvement in the development, selection and viewing of programming. Programs included: native heritage and culture, community communications, an exchange of news and information among various

communities, news and sportscasts, job opportunities, educational programming and institutional discussions. A facilitator was trained and assigned to each community to expedite the maximum utilization of the facilities. Dr. A. D. Fisher and L. Morose of the University of Alberta headed up an assessment team to look at the positive and negative effects stemming from the project. As the project concluded, Dr. Fisher stated:

Iron Star's life has ended but it demonstrates that satellite transmissions to isolated or semi-isolated native communities can be done successfully with an all-native staff. It also indicates that the transmission of public affairs information and discussions have an impact in native communities.<sup>65</sup>

The Alberta Native Communications Society and the Department of Communications both felt that Project Iron Star was successful and both began working shortly after the conclusion of this first ANCS satellite project on a second project, this one to be undertaken in the 1980's with the Anik B satellite program.

#### DOC: Studies

Keeping in tune with the need to look at the social aspects of communications technology, the Department of Communications not only facilitated native access to and use of the broadcast media in this decade, they also undertook several in-depth studies on the impact of the media upon Canada's native peoples. Gary O. Coldevin,

under contract to the Department of Communications, looked at the impact of the CBC Frontier Television Service on the Inuit community of Frobisher Bay.

This study was undertaken during April 1973, a date that marked the hiatus between one year of exposure to the four hour Frontier Coverage Package and the introduction of full television service relayed directly from Halifax via the Anik I satellite. The initial survey was intended as both an evaluation of the impact of the Frontier Service and as baseline data towards monitoring the developmental effects of full service television.<sup>66</sup>

Professor Linvill Watson of the University of Saskatchewan was commissioned by the Department to study the impact of television upon the Inuit population of Canada. Rankin Inlet was the community chosen for the study which ran from May 1973, until January 1975. The report was not tabled, however, until March 1977. This research report looked at the coming of television and the early stages of the experience with respect to the people of Rankin Inlet. Particular attention was given to certain key issues such as the impact of television on language and lifestyles.<sup>67</sup>

Finally, Jack Steinbring and Gary Gransberg of the University of Winnipeg did a longitudinal study that began in 1972 and will end in 1980. They issued their latest report in May 1979. This study entitled Study of the Impact and Meaning of Television Among Native Communities in Northern Manitoba, looked at the impact of television in the northern Manitoba Indian communities of Jackhead, Norway House and Oxford House where television had been introduced

in 1970, 1973 and 1977 respectively. Like the studies mentioned above, this one was designed to look at the impact of television on previously traditional societies. The final report of this study was only released on March 1, 1980.<sup>68</sup>

The Department of Communications through its various ministers, probably did more for native access to the broadcast media than any other governmental body during the decade. While most of its projects and experiments were never meant to be long-term, on-going activities, many of them did continue on after the project expiry dates. Those that did are still providing access to the broadcast media for Canada's native peoples and even those that did not last gave the natives either some experience or stimulation in the development of their own facilities. Without the DOC, literally dozens of native communities, particularly in the northern parts of the provinces and in the territories, might still be without adequate broadcast services.

While the projects and studies undertaken by the Department of Communications were easily assessed by the native people because they were concrete, observable actions, the activities of the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission were not so easily assessed. They were not directly observable because they were more policy oriented. It was because of this that the CRTC's role in providing the native people with access to and use

of the broadcast media came under criticism during the 1970's. This final section of Chapter IV will look at the role the CRTC played in native communications in Canada at this time.

Canadian Radio-Television and  
Telecommunications Commission

Without a forceful mandate, the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission would be hopelessly handcuffed in its attempts to regulate all the multifarious broadcasting activities present in Canada - some public, some private, some motivated by commercial gain and entertainment, some motivated by general interest and citizen enlightenment - let alone attempts to tie all these diverse activities together to form a single, effective Canadian broadcasting system.<sup>69</sup>

This mandate was provided to the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission when the CRTC was brought into being by the Broadcasting Act of 1968. This Broadcasting Act bestowed upon the CRTC two basic types of regulatory powers. The first was the power to grant, refuse or revoke radio and television licenses. And the second was to set content quotas, influence formats and limit the amount of advertising.<sup>70</sup> Of the two regulatory measures, licensing is the more severe sanction. This regulatory power applies to all public and private broadcasting organizations, including native communication organizations.

CRTC: Policy and Native Communications.

In Canada, the concept of access to the broadcast media has really arisen from two directions, community organizers on the one hand and the media professionals on the other.



For the community organizer, and especially if it is a native organizer, access to the broadcast media is very important because it places the emphasis where it belongs, on the user, the native user, and his needs. The CRTC has over the last decade responded, on its own and from native pressure, to some of the problems faced by Canada's Indian, Metis and Inuit peoples in participating in the broadcast media. In 1971 for instance, the Commission issued a public announcement regarding Broadcasting Services to More Remote Areas, which included most of the communities where Canada's native peoples reside.

The Commission is determined to maintain a priority for the establishment of broadcasting services in important but often geographically remote communities. A similar necessity prevails in the northern portions of all the provinces from Quebec to B.C. as well as the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

The Commission will welcome submissions from interested parties with constructive views on how the problems of coverage may be solved more rapidly.<sup>71</sup>

When the Commission decided to review the issue of FM licensing policy with respect to the private sector, native pressure was most evident. Cliff Starr representing the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians was anxious that the native communications leaders have some role to play in the formulating of any new FM policies.

We feel that our programs are considered a tune-out factor by the AM stations and consequently adequate times are not available to us. It is our intention with this brief to have the Commission consider the Indian people when you formulate the new policy for FM radio in the

private sector. The introduction to your CRTC brief states that FM radio should provide both a renewal of radio and an expression of broadcasting opportunities in Canada. We believe a renewal of radio policy could help the Indian people who have been long forgotten by this media. We ask the Commission to please consider carefully our request for the inclusion of Indian programming in the new FM policy.<sup>72</sup>

Even some of the most basic requirements of native communications groups in obtaining access to the broadcast media, as stipulated by the CRTC, are confusing. For one thing, when a native communications group decides it wants to establish a community radio station it enters into a long complicated procedure, much of which appears meaningless to people with no administrative or technical background. The requirements for licensing is difficult to understand in a remote community. Many of the criteria seem irrelevant, the procedure is difficult to understand and the services of professionals to prepare technical briefs are expensive. Because of these and other problems, the CRTC has appeared at times to be both a friend and an adversary of native communications leaders.

#### CRTC: Native Relations

The relationship of native organizations, including native communication organizations, towards the CRTC over the last decade has been one of ups and downs. The Indians and Metis have generally felt that the CRTC has been a useful instrument in helping them to gain access to the broad-

cast media. The Inuit on the other hand have demonstrably concluded that this institution has not been so much a hindrance as simply another bureaucratic jungle incapable of effectively establishing its mandate. Suggestions made to the CRTC by both groups of native peoples have, however, been very similar in content. Both the Indians and Inuit have consistently felt that privately owned radio and television stations serving native communities should be required as a condition of their licensing to produce programming by local native groups. They have also attempted to push, through the CRTC, for better CBC coverage especially for remote areas and for more native input into the national network's programming content.

While concessions have come to the native people by way of the CRTC, they have not come easily, some have not come at all. A case in point for this argument was the 'Taming of the Canadian West' controversy. On March 21, 1970, the CTV network aired a special entitled The Taming of the Canadian West. The title was taken from a book of the same name by Frank Rasky, a Toronto writer. It was supposed to be an historical look at the opening up of Canada's golden west. According to the natives, it was more humiliating than accurate. Complaints to the CRTC were made by the National Indian Brotherhood, the Union of Ontario Indians, the Institute of Indian Studies and

the Ontario Native Development Fund. They also attempted to get the CRTC to put a stop to a rerun of the program scheduled for July 18, 1971. In their submission to the CRTC The Taming of the Canadian West was described by the Institute of Indian Studies as being: "Inaccurate, superficial and blatantly racist." "Indians", the submission stated, "along with other people, are entitled to feel basic human dignity. Native people are repeatedly depicted as savage, cruel, drunken, degenerate and gullible. Obviously the Indian has no more title to these traits than any other race."<sup>73</sup>

The Union of Ontario Indians sought a court injunction against the reshowing of this program and even Jean Chretien, the Minister of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, felt some concern over this problem. Mr. Chretien wrote a letter to Mr. Murry Chercover, the President of CTV stating that: "In light of the strong objections which have been raised by the native people, I ask that you review your decision to re-screen the film in July."<sup>74</sup> By late June 1971, the Council for the CRTC stated that it could not halt the use of this film by the CTV. Consequently the film was shown again on July 18, 1971, and consequently the estimation of the worth of the CRTC went down in native eyes.

Gentlemen, we would first like to thank you for calling this meeting, as we believe that this demonstrates the good faith of the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunication Commission in meeting a tense situation

prior to it reaching crisis proportion.

Perhaps the term 'crisis proportion' is too strong, but we believe that if the role of broadcasting in the life of the Indian people and the way in which the networks are carrying out their responsibilities are closely examined, then it is a situation which is potentially explosive.<sup>75</sup>

The above was the opening of a statement presented to the CRTC in 1972 by the National Indian Brotherhood concerning the native peoples and the role of broadcasting in their lives. The statement outlined several areas of concern including the problem of the stereotyped image of Indians on television, the need for a more balanced system of public affairs broadcasting, the usage and impact of Anik upon native peoples in the North and the problem of native access to regional and local broadcasting facilities. The latter area, the problem of access, was of the greatest concern to the NIB.

There are a great many areas in this country where the native people form either a majority or a significant minority of the population, but the programming of interest to Indians and in the native languages is minimal. The local stations, both TV and radio, must be made aware of their responsibilities in this field of local programming. The CRTC should take steps to enable these people to make known their concerns in this regard to local programming by providing some kind of assistance.<sup>76</sup>

The relations between the major Inuit organizations and especially the national Inuit organization, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, and the CRTC, were relatively cordial and sympathetic at the beginning of the decade. Near the end of this period, however, this relationship all but disintegrated. On

May 3, 1976, Tagak Curley, the first President of the ITC and the Executive Director of the Inuit Cultural Institute, addressed the CRTC at a CBC Northern Service Licence Renewal Hearing. In his opening address, Mr. Curley stated:

I come before the CRTC today in a fight to preserve the Inuit culture from the devastating impact of southern media.

We are fighting for our cultural lives and request your assistance in this battle.

Mr. Harry Boyle, the present Chairman of the CRTC had the courage to call a spade a spade when he referred to the Northern Quebec's Inuits' rejection of southern television as a request for protection from cultural genocide.<sup>77</sup>

Relations between the ITC and the CRTC began to sour in early 1977 over the problem of the CBC's service to the Inuit communities in the North, and over the lack of real Inuit participation in northern programming. In October 1976, the ITC sent a petition to the federal Cabinet asking it to reconsider a ruling by the CRTC that renewed the CBC's television licenses in the North. The petition was sent because this renewal was issued without ordering the CBC to make any major changes to either improve native participation in programming or improving services.

We appealed this decision on the ground that it was not consistent with government broadcasting policies and the communication needs of the North. The cabinet refuses our appeal, saying in effect that the CRTC had already done all that it could by sending a letter to the CBC president and drawing his attention to Inuit concerns.<sup>78</sup>

The ITC was not alone in this condemnation of the CRTC as the Minister of Communications, the Minister of the

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the Minister of the Department of the Secretary of State all decided to back them in pushing for changes in northern communications.

This tension was further aggravated when the CRTC again refused to order the CBC to make changes in its programming during a Decision Hearing in March, 1978. Meeka Wilson, representing the ITC said that:

The CRTC's non-decision is a further blow to their regulatory credibility. I seriously wonder how long the Commission can point to some future date when they will deal with such a shameful situation as the CBC's Northern Television Service and hope to have the confidence of northerners. They will be lucky if anyone turns up at their next hearings.<sup>79</sup>

When the CBC appeared before the CRTC in a full network license renewal hearing in October 1978, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada refused to intervene or even submit a brief. Eric Tagoona, President of ITC, explained his organization's position in a letter sent to CRTC Chairman Pierre Camu dated September 28, 1978.

Past experience leads us to believe the CRTC will not do anything to compel the CBC to increase its northern programming content. We have found that the CRTC has no effective power over the CBC through moral suasion. The Commission's failure to take further action also forces us to conclude that the CRTC has no effective legal power over the CBC.

I urge the CRTC to publicly declare the limits of its power and discourage groups such as mine with limited resources from participating in a process from which they can expect no returns.<sup>80</sup>

Whether or not the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada will change

its mind in the future to attend and intervene on behalf of the Inuit people before the CRTC is a question to be answered only in the 1980's.

CRTC: Public Hearings

While some native groups, such as the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, have found little real benefit in using CRTC public hearings in gaining access to and usage of the broadcast media, other native communications groups have openly and consistently used this forum as a means for obtaining such access. There is an extremely long list of Indian, Metis and even Inuit communications and organizational groups appearing before these public hearings during the decade; groups who, apparently felt something was being gained or else why the effort and the expense? The CRTC holds these hearings because:

Broadcasting undertakings, both CBC and private, make use of public frequencies under licenses issued to them by the CRTC on behalf of the people of Canada. Licensees are accountable for their use of these frequencies and the public hearings of the Commission are intended to provide the forum in which the performance of licensees is publicly discussed and evaluated.<sup>81</sup>

The CRTC had a history during this period of at least listening to native demands and of showing a considerable degree of concern about native access to broadcasting facilities when licenses were being applied for in areas with heavy native population concentrations. This was especially the case when Mrs. Pat Pearce was acting as a Commissioner



or Chairman. For example, when Mr. Edward Rawlinson applied for an AM English language radio license for The Pas, Manitoba, where some seven thousand natives reside in the general area, Mrs. Pearce subjected him to a severe bout of questioning.

Mr. Rawlinson, what plans do you have for allowing the native population for getting into this station?

Not what are you going to have from Flin Flon, or Thompson or anywhere else but from the Pas area to cope with the situation of native access there? How many hours a week are you going to get in there? Is it one hour or is it one-half hour?<sup>82</sup>

Mr. Rawlinson was subjected to the same kind of questioning when he represented an organization attempting to obtain a television license from the CRTC for Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Before he received permission to go ahead with this new television operation, Mr. Rawlinson had to give a detailed account of how his radio stations located in The Pas, Flin Flon and Thompson had fared in allowing native participation and access through native programming. Assurances also had to be given that this new television operation would also allow a degree of access to the various native groups in the area, an area that has one of the largest concentrations of natives in Saskatchewan.<sup>83</sup>

One basic criticism that all native groups, communication and otherwise, have had with respect to the CRTC are the settings of its public hearings. The native people in the larger centres can often afford to present formal briefs

whereas those from the remote areas often cannot. It takes a great deal of time and effort and money to travel from some of these areas, especially in the northern parts of the provinces and the territories to attend such hearings.

Chief Michael Roy, President of the Union of Ontario Indians, presented a brief, a general statement, before the CRTC in Toronto on December 7, 1976. One of the points he stressed was the need for the Commission to pick better locations for their meetings. He was against having had to previously attend hearings in Halifax that dealt with communication issues for northwestern Ontario. He even suggested to the CRTC that it scale down its hearings and spread them throughout the country.

We recognize that some matters are more urgent than others and that financial restraints come very much into the picture, especially when one is dealing with the northern communities. However, we suggest that a small hearing could be easily conducted with only a few members and that it could be conducted in such a way as to fully register the views of these communities.<sup>84</sup>

The native people in the North were especially concerned about the location of hearings that concerned native communications. It was not unusual for participants to leave their isolated communities days before a public hearing only to arrive after the hearing had closed. The Inuit Tapirisat of Canada had pushed for northern public hearings ever since its beginning in February 1971. This dream finally came true in April 1978, on the tenth anniversary of the establishment

of the CRTC. These hearings, or series of hearings, were held in the North in April 1978, as part of an inquiry into the CBC's full network license renewal to be held in Ottawa in October 1978. Mrs. Pat Pearce opened these northern hearings with a meeting in Inuvik on April 7, 1978. Subsequent hearings were held from this date on through April 21, 1978 at Yellowknife, Cambridge Bay, Rankin Inlet, Pond Inlet and Frobisher Bay in the Northwest Territories, and Fort Chimo, Quebec, and finally at Goose Bay, Labrador. Numerous native groups interested in both access and northern services presented briefs at these special public hearings.

The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission through its broadcasting policies, through its public hearings and decisions at least attempted to help the native people of Canada to obtain access to and use of the broadcast media. Its success in terms of native appreciation is rather hard to establish. While numerous native communication organizations utilized the facilities of the CRTC in their efforts to create a more accessible system, few native leaders could find reason to praise the CRTC. This was especially the case with Inuit communicators. In any event, policies tend to take a considerable time to become effective, whether that effect be good or bad. To say that the CRTC played a significant role in helping to develop native communications is perhaps being

a little too optimistic, however, the CRTC did play a reasonable role in this effort. Perhaps its real significance will only be visible when many of its policies come to fruition in the 1980's.

### Conclusions

It is quite possible to say that without the support of these four government departments, the native people of Canada would have had much less access to and usage of the broadcast media than they were able to attain during the 1970's. Not all four of these agencies were equally involved in this effort to give the native people access to the broadcast media, but each did play a significant role in their own right in this attempt. And while native criticisms have been more pronounced against some of these than others, it is necessary to bear in mind that only one, the CRTC, was really mandated under law to even involve itself in the broadcast problems of the native people.

How successful was the part played by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in helping the natives to achieve their communication goals? Considering the fact that the DIAND was not a communications oriented body, it played a relatively useful role. It was not an active participant as such, but it did give a good degree of help either through its funding of native communication projects or its sponsoring of communication conferences both of which

did measurably help the native people in their broadcast media endeavours. For example, the Northern Communications Conference, co-sponsored by the DIAND and the DOC, had a profound effect upon native communications in the North, an effect that lasted well into the middle of the decade. Some of the Department's projects, such as its ITC and TNI projects, will undoubtedly have an effect into the 1980's. Overall, The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development did have an important role to play in native communications during this period.

The Department of the Secretary of State was very active and very successful in its native broadcast media activities. It alone was responsible for the financing of the majority of the major native communications societies. While native leaders often blamed the DSS for their financial problems, this Department in large measure was responsible for the establishment and continuation of these native communications societies through the decade. None of these major societies would have survived financially without DSS support. Through its Native Communications Program, millions of dollars annually have been distributed to the various native communication organizations in an attempt to give the native people an alternative form of access to the broadcast media. While the native people may not agree, the Department of the Secretary of State did play an important,

a substantial, and a successful role in native communication activities during the 1970's.

Although the Department of Communications had no established native communications program, it was still very active in native communications at this time. Through a succession of Ministers of Communications who visibly supported native communication development, the DOC undertook several projects in the 1970's that were aimed at giving the native people both access to and use of the broadcast media. The Department of Communication's Northern Pilot Project, for example, not only developed native access to the broadcast media for native settlements in northwestern Ontario, it was also directly responsible for the establishment of the Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society. Under its Project Iron Star, the Alberta Native Communications Society became not only the first native communication organization in Canada to use a satellite for radio and television broadcasting, it was the first native communication organization in the whole of North America to do so. This and other projects, studies and activities, made the Department of Communications a most successful partner with native groups in bringing Canada's native people the type of broadcast media they wanted and needed during the decade of the 1970's.

The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission was involved in native communications at this time in a policy-making role. Unable to erect or develop

native communication services on its own, it was bound by its mandate to make sure that the native people had at least as much, if not more, access to the private and public broadcast media throughout the country as did other Canadians. Through its public hearings, the native people were given an outlet for their opinions on the state of communications in Canada and how the native people should be accommodated by both the private and the public sectors of the broadcast industry. Not as popular it seems as the Department of Communications, not as practical in terms of benefits as the Department of the Secretary of State, the CRTC was both praised and condemned by the native people during the 1970's for its lack, or at least its apparent lack of real power. However, the very fact that these same natives were given access to air their opinions on communication matters, is something that cannot be overlooked or underestimated. Also, many of the decisions issued by the CRTC favoured native access to and use of the broadcast media and indeed, protected the native people in instances where they would have otherwise been ignored or totally forgotten.

The role of these various government departments in either directly or indirectly aiding the native people of Canada to obtain access to and use of the broadcast media for their specialized needs during the 1970's was significant.

So significant in fact that without the help of these government agencies native communications would never have advanced nearly as far as it did. Those government bodies mentioned above, however, were not the only ones involved in this challenge. While all did play important roles, none was as significant as that played by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The CBC's provision of both facility and programming services is the topic of the next chapter, Chapter V.



Chapter IV - Footnotes

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- <sup>27</sup>The Native Perspective, I, no. 2 (October, 1975), p. 44.
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<sup>82</sup> Canada, CRTC, Public Hearing Transcript, "License Application: AM Radio Station for The Pas, Manitoba,"  
(Vernon, B.C.: October 10, 1973), pp. 9-11.

<sup>83</sup> Canada, CRTC, Public Hearing Transcript, "License Application: Community TV Ltd." (Regina: February 11, 1976), pp. 757-766.

<sup>84</sup> Canada, CRTC, Public Hearing Transcript, "General Presentation: Union of Ontario Indians," (Toronto: December 7, 1976), p. 787.

## CHAPTER V

### CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

"Anything that can be said about Canada can also be said about the CBC."<sup>1</sup>

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has always had the greatest influence of any governmental institution upon native communications in Canada. . Because of its unique role as a public provider of both service facilities and programming, the CBC has been especially open to criticism by native communications leaders. Mandated by Parliament under the authority of The Broadcasting Act, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has had to provide facilities and programming not only in the media rich southern portion of the country but also in the sparsely populated, culturally and linguistically diverse regions of the North and mid-Canada. Due to market conditions, the CBC had become over the years the only provider of radio and television services in the majority of Canada's remote communities; communities which in many instances are populated almost entirely by native peoples.

Chapter V will study the role of the CBC over the decade of the 1970's with respect to the provision of facilities and programming to Canada's native peoples. Because of its singular position in the northern areas

of the country, emphasis will be placed upon the role of the CBC's Northern Services division.

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation:  
Facilities and Services

There were few areas in southern Canada by the end of the decade that did not have access to either radio or television facilities through the publicly owned CBC, through privately owned stations or networks or both. In those more remote areas, even in the northern parts of the provinces, excepting the Maritime Provinces, native communications societies often preceeded the arrival of CBC network services. With the advent of satellite communications via Anik I in 1973, broadcast services from the CBC were virtually assured to all remote southern communities including native communities. This was not the case, however, in either the mid-Canada area of the provinces or the territories. Due to the CBC's service and funding policies, numerous small remote native settlements were still without services at the end of this decade.

CBC: The Northern Service

In 1956, the CBC submitted a plan for a radio service in the North to the Fowler Commission on Broadcasting, and in 1958, Parliament voted funds to establish it. The Northern Service came into being as a result.<sup>2</sup>

The real breakthrough for northern communications



came when the CBC, under an Order in Council dated October 10, 1958, established radio broadcasting stations at Whitehorse and Dawson City in the Yukon and Aklavik, Yellowknife, Hay River and Fort Smith in the Northwest Territories. Radio stations were also established at Churchill, Manitoba, and in Goose Bay, Labrador.<sup>3</sup> All of these stations had either been privately owned community radio stations or military operated facilities before the CBC was ordered to establish ownership and control over them. In 1961, the sub-regional production concept was established. Dawson City then became a low power relay transmitter (LPRT) fed from Whitehorse, while Hay River and Fort Smith became LPRT's fed from Yellowknife. The Inuvik radio production centre was established at this time to serve the native communities of the MacKenzie Delta and the station at Aklavik reverted to an LPRT status operation. A new radio production facility was also built at Frobisher Bay, on Baffin Island, to service the entire Central Arctic region. The Eastern Arctic was either serviced from Frobisher or the CBC shortwave system from Montreal with its transmitters located in Sackville, New Brunswick.<sup>4</sup>

The objective of the Northern Service is to provide a broadcasting service to meet the particular needs of the people living in the North -- Dene, Inuit and Metis and non-natives -- and give them a sense of identity with their fellow Canadians in the rest of Canada.<sup>5</sup>

The servicing of facilities, as directed by the objectives of the CBC Northern Service (CBCNS), was implemented during the decade by a series of predominantly northern service programs. The three most important of these programs were: the Frontier Coverage Package, the Accelerated Coverage Plan and the Northern Broadcasting Plan. All of these plans or programs were directed towards establishing radio and television services throughout the country and the northern parts of the provinces and the Arctic in particular. All dealt specifically with facility services except the Northern Broadcasting Plan which dealt primarily with programming services.

CBC: Frontier Coverage Package

The Frontier Coverage Package was a television servicing program. At the 1970 Yellowknife Conference, the native peoples had suggested that radio was more important to them than television, at least at that particular point in time. Andrew Cowan, the Director of the Northern Service, had earlier assessed the situation regarding both television and radio facilities in the North and had concluded that from his department's point of view radio was not only the most important of the two services but also the most likely to be initiated due to cost factors.

It (radio) is the more persuasive in its coverage, cheaper and easier to transmit and receive, more flexible in its programming. Television is more expensive to transmit and receive, more complicated in its operation and inflexible in its programming.<sup>6</sup>

The non-native population in the northern parts of the provinces and in the territories, however, did want television services as a means of entertainment during isolation of the long winters. Therefore, in 1966, the CBC initiated a study to develop a 'Frontier Coverage Package' which would allow them to service the remote communities in the North.<sup>7</sup> Because of the financial restraints of constructing land lines or microwave facilities, and also because the CBC was becoming interested in the possibilities of satellite communications for serving Canada's remote areas, the Corporation designed a servicing program that would be the least expensive and yet the most useful if the time came when it would have to be incorporated into a future satellite system. This new, interim service made use of videotape equipment and unmanned or automatic television relay transmitter stations.

It consists of a transmitter and antennae system of sufficient radiated power to provide a satisfactory signal in the service area. The CBC emphasized, when it introduced the FCP system, that it was only a partial and interim service.<sup>8</sup>

The first FCP operation was installed in Yellowknife and became operational on June 7, 1967. The videotapes were usually four hours in duration, were produced in the South, and "bicycled" on a one to four week delay to the North for playback over the local television transmitters. Between 1967 and the end of 1972, some twenty-one remote communities in the provinces and the territories were ser-

viced by FCP. The communities were chosen by criteria such as population, needs of the community, existing broadcasting services, remoteness, and importance of the community as an industrial area.<sup>9</sup>

The Board of Directors of the CBC met in Yellowknife in July 1970, and visited Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk as well. A corporate study group was appointed as a result of the Yellowknife meeting and reported to the President of the CBC late in 1970. As a result of this and other initiatives, plans for improving the television service provided in the North by the Frontier Coverage Package were placed before the Board and approved in March 1971.<sup>10</sup> One improvement that was made was to move all FCP operations to Calgary where the videotapes could be assembled faster and where they could be sent by plane to the receiving communities earlier.

One could wish that the Original Peoples of the North were as articulate in expressing their demands and as effective in having them realized as their white fellow citizens. The fact that they are neither demanding nor critical of the broadcasting service does not mean that they neither desire nor deserve it.<sup>11</sup>

Throughout the entire life of the Frontier Coverage Package, there was little or no concern with respect to the native peoples. Although a considerable number of native people did live in areas serviced by the FCP, there was never any native programming available to them. This was due to financial constraints within the CBC. Not that this

lack of native programming on television really mattered since at this time few natives, even those in signal areas, could afford to buy television sets. The vast majority of Indian, Metis and Inuit communities were just too isolated, too remote to receive the signal and therefore their comment on the system and its service was almost non-existent. When the Frontier Coverage Package was replaced by the Accelerated Coverage Plan and satellite broadcast facilities, then the natives did become much more vocal. All natives, however, did not lose out by the establishment of the FCP. Under the system the natives of La Ronge, Saskatchewan, were able not only to get television services but participate in it by way of the La Ronge Community Television Society and its involvement in community television.<sup>12</sup> La Ronge became a model for other native groups, such as the Pond Inlet Community Television Society, in the latter part of the decade.

CBC: Accelerated Coverage Plan

In the 1968-1969 Annual Report of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, concern was expressed about the lack of radio and television broadcast services to communities with less than two thousand people. The concern was not about native people but English and French speaking communities. In this same annual report, the CBC announced a new coverage policy which called for: "The provision of CBC services, in the appropriate language, to all areas with a population of 500 or more."<sup>13</sup>

Again, the policy was in terms of English and French speaking communities, not those of the native peoples. The CRTC took this policy one step further when on April 29, 1971.

it issued a public announcement entitled: Broadcasting Services to More Remote Areas.

Canadian Broadcasting services in remote and developing areas contribute not only to cultural and recreational amenities which are less abundant in such areas than in other parts of the country but they are also vital to economic and resource development.

The Commission will accordingly accelerate its discussion with the CBC, Telesat, and the communications carriers in formulating plans to expedite the extension of services as rapidly as possible.<sup>14</sup>

Even here, however, no mention was made of the establishment of broadcast services or facilities for native access to, or use of the services of either radio or television. The CRTC seemed to be more concerned about areas of development than native communities.

In 1972, the federal government announced its intention to support an acceleration of broadcast services to the more remote areas of the country. This announcement was made in the Throne Speech.

It is a matter of concern to the government that at this moment many communities do not receive the national broadcasting service. The government proposes, therefore, that the CBC be authorized to extend its services in a comprehensive fashion to utilize the capabilities of Canada's pioneer satellite communications system to assure, within a five year period, that at least 98% of Canadians are served.<sup>15</sup>

Upon the government's request, the CRTC, the CBC, DOC, the Department of the Secretary of State, Telesat and other

governmental departments and agencies formed an inter-departmental committee to act upon and initiate a plan for incorporating this request. A budget was established in which the CBC allotted some twenty-five million dollars for capital costs with the Cabinet allocating another twenty-five million dollars, and an annual operating budget of some twelve million dollars was arrived at so that the entire plan could be completed within a five-year period. On February 14, 1974, the Accelerated Coverage Plan was announced by the Secretary of State following its approval by the Cabinet.<sup>16</sup>

A formula was developed by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to determine which communities of five hundred population or more would be the first to receive this new ACP. The formula was based on both geographic and cultural isolation with the extent of the latter being determined in part on the availability of media in the community. Because of the isolation, the North was chosen as the first area to receive this accelerated coverage.

Less than six days after the announcement of the ACP, native leaders in the North were letting their concerns over the plan be known to the CRTC. On February 20, 1974, the Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement, a political Inuit organization from the MacKenzie Delta, the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories, the Metis Associa-

tion of the NWT and, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada all appeared before the Commission at a public hearing in Ottawa. This was no ordinary public meeting as the CBC was appealing for its entire network license renewal; and doing it only for the second time before the CRTC. James Arvaluk, the Director of Communications for the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada said at this hearing that:

The CBC presentation does not reassure us that high priority is about to be given to expanding and improving its services to those Canadians who need the services the most, the Northerners, and especially the native Northerners.

We seek assurances that the so-called ACP and the Northern Broadcasting Service will place priorities on northern needs.

The CBC has been irresponsible in informing northerners about their plans. We get the negative feeling that the North runs low on CBC's priorities, that the North is just an afterthought of not much importance. We don't want poor mouthings, we want information and what northern settlements without any service at all can expect over the next 3-5 years. We don't want promises, we want definite commitments from the CBC.<sup>17</sup>

On July 1, 1974, La Ronge, Saskatchewan, received the CBC English service radio by means of a low power relay transmitter, marking the completion of the first ACP project.<sup>18</sup> By December 1975, there were eight FM radio and twelve television LPRT's established and fed into the Anik I satellite which began broadcasting CBC's Northern Service programming on February 5, 1973 to Inuvik and on February 7, 1973 to Frobisher Bay.<sup>19</sup> December 1975, was also the month that the CBC announced that due to government cut-backs the ACP would probably be delayed for two or three



more years. Later, that same month, however, Norman Moore, the Director of ACP felt that it possibly would be able to meet its 1977 completion data after all.<sup>20</sup>

Douglas Ward, who was appointed Director of the CBC Northern Services in August 1976 had stated as early as May 3, 1976, before the CRTC in Winnipeg, that: "We are now providing broadcasting services in radio now in some 45 communities, in TV in some 30 communities."<sup>21</sup> Ronald Fraser, the Vice-President of Corporate Affairs, also concluded at this same hearing that:

The ACP as far as the North is concerned, is I think finished. We have all the television transmitters up there now that we have funds for under the ACP. We either have them or they are going in, one of the two.<sup>22</sup>

Funding was a problem for the ACP. It was also a problem for the native peoples who had to rely on the Northern Service for broadcast usage. They wanted native language programming to be included under ACP instillations but the CBC kept reiterating that ACP was only funded for hardware not programming and that some other plan, the Northern Broadcasting Plan possibly, would have to look into the needs of native programming. The CBC was still defending its position that the ACP was a coverage plan and not a programming plan at the total network license renewals in October 1978.

The Accelerated Coverage Plan was not restricted to the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. It covered many native communities in the provinces and especially the northern areas

of the provinces. In March 1978, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation inaugurated television services to Stoney Rapids and Fond Du Lac in northern Saskatchewan. Chief Allan Bird, representing the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians told the natives of Stoney Rapids that it was a great thing for them to receive television due to its educational value.<sup>23</sup> On May 31, June 1, and 2, 1978, the CBC also inaugurated television and radio services to the native communities of Montreal Lake, Pinehouse Lake and Stanley Mission in that order, in northern Saskatchewan. A CBC advertisement in The Saskatchewan Indian heralded the ceremonies by proclaiming the virtues of the ACP.

Montreal Lake, Pinehouse Lake and Stanley Mission are the most recent Saskatchewan communities to receive CBC broadcast services under the Corporation's Accelerated Coverage Plan.

CBC television and radio is coming to hundreds of communities like these across the country where it never reached before. And it is happening because of the Accelerated Coverage Plan.<sup>24</sup>

The Accelerated Coverage Plan was for all intents and purposes finished in the North, that is the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, by the end of May 1978. All of the Indian and Metis communities in the territories with a population of five hundred or more were serviced by CBC television and radio. This included some fourteen Inuit communities, except Igloolik which requested radio but not television. Igloolik was the unique factor in ACP. In March 1975, Igloolik was offered television and radio services by the Northern

Services under the ACP. The community decided to reject the offer of television.

The decision came in a referendum held last week in this high Arctic settlement of 611. Fifty-three said 'NO TV', 47 said 'YES' and 26 wanted more time to study the effects of television on their children and on their way of life.<sup>25</sup>

While only one hundred and twenty-six out of the over six hundred inhabitants of the community even voted, the vote for 'NO TV' stayed. Some of the reasons why the Settlement Council accepted the 'NO' vote include:

1. The children of the community are taught English all day in school and if we had television they would hear English all evening as well. Eventually they may not learn their own language.

2. Most community organizations (there are 18) hold their meetings in the evenings and where television has come in, these have quickly died out. We want to keep these organizations functioning because they do a lot of good for the community.<sup>26</sup>

The Igloolik Settlement Council presented a brief to the CRTC on May 7, 1975, in support of the CBC Northern Services' application under the Accelerated Coverage Plan, to establish an FM radio service at Igloolik. The intervention presented by the Council stated:

The community fears the effects of radio's cultural and emotional influences, unless these influences are tempered by local input reflecting local values and traditions. It is because of this legitimate fear that the community rejected free television service.<sup>27</sup>

The Igloolik Settlement Council had already met with the CBC in January 1975, even before the vote against television, to draw up an agreement for radio services. The agreement

stated that the CBC would allow community access to its radio transmitter in Igloolik. The agreement said in part that:

The CBC believes that to make broadcasting in the North meaningful to the people, there must be a provision for local programming and is therefore prepared to provide access to its transmitter for this purpose.<sup>28</sup>

As a result of this agreement, the Settlement established the Igloolik Radio Society to be responsible for programming on the access station. Approval by the CRTC for this arrangement came in June 1975.<sup>29</sup>

#### CBC: Community Access

The ultimate form of broadcast media usage and access for Canada's native peoples has come in the form of community access radio or television facilities. These facilities have generally either been owned by a community or owned and maintained by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The Indian and Metis peoples in southern Canada adopted this community access concept early on in the 1970's. Several such facilities were erected by the various native communications societies all across the country in response to a demand, especially by the native peoples in the northern areas of the provinces, for better media service. While general access has been more available to southern based natives, those living in the North have had to rely on either CBC service programs or establish their own community facilities. The need for radio facilities especially was evident in the North

even before 1970. It was in 1970, however, at the Northern Communications Conference held in Yellowknife in September 1970, that native concerns were formally stated.

Radio broadcasting is very important to native residents. Each community should have a radio program service for education, information, entertainment and social action purposes. This service might be established by a low power community operated radio station. Full participation and operation by local people is recommended. Low power community broadcast stations should be connected intra-regionally, inter-regionally, and to the national radio CBC network.<sup>30</sup>

By 1974, the CBC was seriously considering the use of its radio transmitters as a means for allowing community participation and access. The Corporation even went so far as to establish a Community Radio Office.

The CBC's Community Radio Office in Toronto, in cooperation with the CBC Northern Service, is developing policy recommendations on community broadcasting, and in the meantime has provided program and technical information to some twenty community radio operations across Canada. Low power relay transmitters are invaluable in carrying CBC network radio to small or remote communities, their only disadvantage being the lack of local input. In the past few years experiments have been conducted to bring a local production capacity to LPRT communities.<sup>31</sup>

Experiments with CBC LPRT's were carried out in native communities and especially in native communities in the North such as Rankin Inlet and Fort Good Hope, in the Northwest Territories.

Community access had been provided to several native communities both in the northern parts of the provinces and the territories by January 1976. There were, however, conditions that a community had to meet if access was to be pro-

vided. To begin with they had to form an association, such as a radio society, with a constitution establishing the responsibilities of the community respecting the operation of input into the local CBC transmitter. Approval for such an operation also had to be gained from the CRTC. Once approval was gained from both the CBC and the CRTC, an agreement, or a type of contract, was drawn up giving access to the community for a given number of hours a day at established set periods of time. Then and only then would the CBC provide the necessary equipment and would assist in the training of personnel. The cost for each access unit in 1976 was approximately six thousand dollars per community.<sup>32</sup> Between 1976 and 1977, the CBC Northern Service developed a package called FLIP, short for Facility for Local Input Package. This was a self contained community access unit especially developed for remote communities. It was installed in several northern and mid-Canada communities during the latter part of the decade in continued response for community access by the native peoples of these areas.<sup>33</sup>

In 1978 there were six community access programs being undertaken by the CBC Northern Service; with at least twenty-four other communities, having their own community radio stations.<sup>34</sup> The CBC did help community access during the 1970's which facilitated native use of and access to the broadcast media. While only radio access has been discussed

here, the CBC was instrumental in allowing both La Ronge and Pond Inlet to gain access to the CBC television transmitters. Both of these community access television projects have been noted in Chapter III.

#### CBC: Production Centres

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation had radio production facilities both in the North and the South in most major population centres by May 1978. As of this date there were ten major television production centres in Canada, all were located in the South. Half of this number were located near large concentrations of native people, namely in Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg and Toronto.<sup>35</sup> The CBC Northern Service operated six manned radio production centres in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories as of March 31, 1977.<sup>36</sup> Specific local or even regional production centres for native use and access were never established in the South for either radio or television. The native peoples in the South had to use existing facilities located in the large population centres. Only the Northern Service established radio production facilities specifically for native communities during this decade. There were no television production centres for network feed or inter-regional feed built in the North during this period. Those radio production facilities that were established in the North as well as

the lack of television production facilities here was the point of much contention between the native peoples and the CBC.

The Network Control Centre for Northern Services Television opened in Toronto in September 1973. This facility made available to the NS those program periods that are common to all southern CBC network stations; namely the periods allocated by the national network to CBC stations for local service. The Northern Service is responsible for providing programs for those periods and for station breaks.<sup>37</sup>

The lack of northern television production facilities began to concern the native communications leaders from the start of television service via Anik on February 5, 1973. Wally Firth, a member of Parliament for the Northwest Territories stated before the CRTC at a public hearing held in Ottawa in February 1974, that: "There is no northern programming; none whatever, and that is something that I would like you people to consider, and that there should be television production facilities in the North."<sup>38</sup> Mr. Firth did admit though that the native peoples were very successful in gaining access to and use of the radio production facilities at Inuvik. "In the Inuvik area, we have had very good success. There has been more participation of the local people in the station in the Inuvik area than in other parts that I know of."<sup>39</sup> Mr. Laurent Picard, the President of the CBC, reiterated at this hearing that with respect to television production facilities for the North: "We have a plan to have production



for the North, made partly in the North, and partly maybe in the studio in Ottawa, to be transmitted from Ottawa to the North."<sup>40</sup> This arrangement was not well received by the native communications leaders in the North who were hoping for a full production centre to be located either in the Yukon or the Northwest Territories or even one in each area.

In 1977 there were radio production facilities at Whitehorse, Churchill, Inuvik, Yellowknife and Frobisher Bay. 1977 was also the year plans were instituted to re-direct the resources of the production centre in Churchill, Manitoba, and to re-establish them at an as yet undetermined location in the Central Arctic. Finally, a television production centre, of sorts, was announced for the North in April 1978. It was not to be a full television production centre but a packaging centre where videotapes and films would be completed and then shipped to the South for re-broadcast via satellite to the North. Opposition to this semi-production unit was most evident from the native people of the North.

Whitehorse and Yellowknife were the first CBC radio production centres in the North. They were established shortly after the Northern Service came into being in 1958. Frobisher Bay became a sub-regional radio production centre in 1961.

From 1961 we have had a radio station, a radio production centre, in Frobisher Bay but it has not been able to be heard by communities in this area. Only with the introduction of the Anik satellite, in the early 1970's was it possible to bounce the signal from Frobisher Bay off the satellite and into communities such as Pangnirtung and even into communities in the Keewatin like Baker Lake, Resolute Bay and Igloolik.<sup>41</sup>

The Frobisher Bay radio production centre, since the introduction of Anik, was the mainstay for native programming in the Central Arctic region until facilities were constructed in the Keewatin in 1978.

Inuvik was the only radio production facility in the MacKenzie Delta all through the 1970's and as stated before, it was one of the most successful in terms of native access and participation. In February 1979, Inuvik received a new radio production centre, one which it is hoped will advance native access and communications even further in the Delta and the Western Arctic.<sup>42</sup>

Asked why the CBC Northern Service was operated from Ottawa instead of the North, Andrew Cowan, the Director of the Northern Service answered:

If we located the regional headquarters in the Yukon, the people of the Northwest Territories would hardly speak to us. And should we locate in Yellowknife, those of the Yukon would have nothing to do with us.<sup>43</sup>

The native peoples in the North, the Denes, Metis and the Inuit always felt that the headquarters of the Northern Service should have been in the North. Wally Firth stressed this point at a CRTC public hearing in Ottawa in 1974 when

he said: "CBC Northern Service top management should live in the Northwest Territories."<sup>44</sup> The native peoples were even more concerned about the fact that the CBC planned in early 1979 to erect a small radio production centre in Ottawa to provide tapes for the North. The CBC established the facility in Ottawa because they felt that "Ottawa remains the most important southern city for Northern news, because of the many government agencies there that have northern responsibilities."<sup>45</sup> The native leaders felt that it should have been built in a northern community instead, where northern consumption would have been more beneficial.

Much of the one hundred and thirty-three hours of radio programming each week originates from the Montréal Production Centre.

A production centre for the Northern Service was set up in 1960 in Montreal because facilities were available for recording national network programming for shipment north. At that time the northern stations were dependent upon tape-delay national network programming.<sup>46</sup>

The Montreal Production Centre is also responsible for all shortwave radio service to the northern portion of Quebec and the Eastern Arctic. This service began in 1958, and up until the mid-1970's was the only media source received by many Indian and Inuit communities along the eastern Hudson's Bay, Labrador, and the lower Eastern Arctic regions. Even after the introduction of Anik I in 1973,

MPC's shortwave service was the only available CBC service to many of the smaller communities not covered under the Accelerated Coverage Plan. In 1958 the MPC shortwave service broadcast eight and a half hours a day on a thirty Kilowatt transmitter. In November 1973, it changed to nineteen hours a day at two hundred and fifty Kilowatts. The languages broadcast are English, French, Cree and Inuktitut. The transmitters are located in Sackville, New Brunswick.<sup>47</sup> Many natives especially in the remote areas of the Eastern Arctic region have continually complained that Radio Moscow and the Voice of the Andes are picked up better than the shortwave services from Montreal. The system will slowly be replaced as new CBC service programs are introduced.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation appeared before the CRTC in Winnipeg on December 13, 1977, to obtain approval for amending the broadcast license for their radio station in Churchill, Manitoba. Ronald Fraser, the Vice-President of Corporate Affairs, explained to the Commission why the CBC wanted the license amended.

The Churchill application proper, Mr. Chairman, has two major facets evolving out of the broadcast role of Churchill as the CBC sees it. For many years Churchill has been part of our Northern Service but we believe the time has come for it to become a full part of the Northern Manitoba Provincial Service.

The Northern Service we believe should now go to the Keewatin.<sup>48</sup>

Douglas Ward, the Director of the Northern Service,

supported the change by saying that: "Now the Northwest Territories government has moved from Churchill to Rankin Inlet. It is important that a Keewatin production centre, to serve the people of the Keewatin be in that area."<sup>49</sup>

The Inuit Tapirisat of Canada felt that the move had been long overdue and also gave its support to the CBC at the hearing.

Whereas no such facilities presently exist in the Keewatin, we wish to inform the CRTC that we are in support of the CBC plans to move the Churchill radio production centre into the Keewatin to produce Inuktitut programming consistent with Inuit information needs, education priorities and political development.<sup>50</sup>

The CRTC gave its approval in March 1978, for the move. At a meeting between the communities in the Keewatin and the Northern Service in April 1978; the vote was in favour of Rankin Inlet becoming the central production facility for the region. In June 1978, the Churchill station was closed and moved to Rankin Inlet. A project development officer was placed in the new centre in August 1978, and the Rankin Inlet CBC Radio Production Centre began its broadcast schedule in the fall of 1979.<sup>51</sup>

In the fall of 1977, the CBC met in Yellowknife with over forty Northerners, many of them being natives, to discuss the problems of television in the North. Because of that meeting, the CBC decided to establish a television packaging centre as well as a training centre, in Yellowknife before the end of the decade. When the CRTC

held its first hearings in the North in April 1978, one of the main topics discussed by the native peoples was the proposed Yellowknife Production Centre. At the CRTC hearing in Inuvik on April 7, 1978, the Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement complained that the cost was far more than the probable value of the centre.

The CBC Northern Service has a total of \$500,000 to spend this year on the Northern Television Service. The packaging studio will cost \$250,000. There will be \$250,000 allocated to purchasing northern programming. The capital costs are so high that the funds presently allocated for northern programming will undoubtedly end up being cut. The amount of programming is so small that the native film makers will obviously not be able to earn a living from CBC contract work. Even the transportation and communication difficulties between Yellowknife and the remote communities is so great that Inuit communities will find it difficult if not impossible to participate in producing local programs and therefore, it is unlikely that many local programs will ever be developed.<sup>52</sup>

Despite native concerns, the CBC announced the plan to develop a production centre in Yellowknife on May 19, 1978, in a news release. The announcement stated that:

A film and video packaging centre is being set up in Yellowknife to assemble programs for television. It will cater exclusively to the needs of all northerners from the Canada/Alaska border to Baffin Island. Programs will start in the 1978-1979 season. The new productions will represent as many of the communities in the North as possible and they will be recorded in the natural languages of the area, often by native people.<sup>53</sup>

The Yellowknife Production Centre was equipped and ready for first trial production in March 1979. It had been built against repeated native objections. The suc-

cess, or failure, of this production centre with respect to native access and usage of the television media will have to be seen in the light of the 1980's.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation both in its southern and northern services did try during the 1970's to provide the type of facilities that would assure native usage and access to the broadcast media. In the South it provided facilities through its regular network radio and television stations and production centres. In the North, it provided radio facilities and television services through its Frontier Coverage Package and its Accelerated Coverage Plan. Radio and television via Anik and shortwave all gave varying degrees of access to the native peoples of the North and mid-Canada, the areas where broadcast media was probably the most needed but the least established. Through its community access program for both radio and television, the CBC did achieve some degree of success in providing access for the native people. Native reactions to the Corporation were mixed.

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation:  
Native Programming Services

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is the only broadcast media system in Canada that reaches into every geographical region of the country. It is the only broadcast system that represents Canada to Canadians. It is the only broadcast system in Canada that does these things;

it does them because under its mandate as defined by the Broadcasting Act, it has to.

Canada must surely be the most culturally fascinating nation on Earth. We have a complex of cultures. There are the various regions of the country and also our national groupings such as the English, the Italians, and Germans, the Ukrainians and Chinese, the Caribbeans, Portuguese and Polish. It is through awareness, a cultivation, and joy in our many identities that we Canadians forge our national unity.<sup>54</sup>

The above statement, issued by Albert Johnson, the President of CBC, failed to recognize the role of Canada's native peoples in the Canadian mosaic. A failure the Indian, Metis and Inuit peoples have felt has denoted their position in much of the CBC's programming schedule in both radio and television. The native peoples of Canada did gain an appreciable degree of access to the broadcast media through CBC facility services during the 1970's and this was most evident in the North. The growth of facilities and access to them, however, has not necessarily meant a growth in native related programming. This section of Chapter V seeks to relate the CBC's activities in the area of native programming and native reaction to these activities.

#### CBC: Southern Programming

With considerable public support behind them in the South, Canada's native peoples have become increasingly assertive in recent years. The CBC, like other institutions, has been feeling the heat, and this year intends to go further than it ever has in trying to satisfy the legitimate claims of the native people. The CBC faces two problems in its approach to native



programming. First, is programming to the native people themselves. Second is programming about the native peoples to the general Canadian audience listening in on the English and French networks. The French and English television networks have not really tried to bring the native people to the general Canadian audience on a sustained basis.<sup>55</sup>

Native programming in southern Canada has been primarily left up to either the provincial or regional network centres of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The CBC national network, whether radio or television, has generally restricted itself to all but the most peripheral of native program scheduling. Major CBC radio and television production centres when located near large native populations in the South have over the years allowed native access for special programming. Sustained or regular native programming in the South, however, has been noticeably absent and with respect to native language programming almost non-existent.

In October 1973, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians appeared before the CRTC in an attempt to get the Commission's support for native language programming in the advent of the introduction of a new FM radio policy. The FSI wanted more native programming on all AM and FM radio stations and especially on the publicly owned CBC radio network. Three radio programming areas were discussed by the Saskatchewan organization at this hearing and these included: human interest programming, backgrounding and native music programming. FSI reaction to

native music programming was indicative of how they felt towards the other two topics as well. "Indians do have their own music, which would be of special interest to all. But, unfortunately, we are plagued with the 'tune-out' factor label and we are, therefore, forced to play contemporary music."<sup>56</sup> Regina, a city with over twenty thousand native inhabitants at that time had only one CBC regional radio program for the native people. It was sponsored by the CBC and the University of Saskatchewan and was totally musical in content. The natives wanted a more substantial native programming schedule which was produced by natives for the native peoples.

Other centres with large native populations were much like Regina in that CBC radio and television programming for native people was clearly lacking. It was not until the establishment of native communications societies in the various provinces that the CBC really became involved in programming for the native peoples. The native communications societies had been originally established simply because of this lack of native programming. The native peoples felt that if there was to be any real increase in native programming then they would have to produce it themselves and hopefully sell it to the CBC radio and television stations. While hesitant to produce native programming on their own, once produced by the native peoples, the regional CBC centres did co-operate and use

the material. In fact, the CBC was in most cases the only broadcast media organization to carry native communications society programming.

The national radio and television networks of the CBC have been accused of being extremely lax over the last decade in providing adequate native programming. The CBC, the native peoples and other institutions have all recognized this lack of programming but this has still not kept the CBC from having to defend itself on the issue. At the last full network license renewal hearing before the CRTC in October 1978, the CBC network had a lot of explaining to do on this concern. Commissioner Gagnon was persistent in his attempts to deal with the problem.

During your visual presentation I noticed that some references were made to the North, and the Inuit, and I understand that the North is not your immediate responsibility.

On the other hand, most of the Indian reservations are located within the provinces, and this, of course, is the responsibility of your service.

Looking at The National very rarely will I see an item concerning the Indians living there, whether in Ontario, or the West, or in the East.

What attention do you pay to these reservations, to the people living there, and their contribution to the Canadian way of life, if they make any according to your judgement, and how many times last year for instance, have you done something concerning the Indians on the reservations?<sup>5</sup>

Knowlton Nash in responding to the Commissioner's questioning listed a very limited number of programs carried by the national network dealing with Canada's native peoples and concluded by saying that: "There is,

I think, a fair reflection of the Indian community, the Metis community, within the programming, including the specialized programming."<sup>58</sup>

Provincial and national Indian and Metis organizations have been increasingly critical of CBC programming regarding native people. The National Indian Brotherhood on several occasions has attempted to bring the problem to light in search of a solution.

It has been exceptionally difficult to get any coverage of native stories that we would care to have viewed by the public and our own people on the air. We feel that the CBC particularly has a duty in its public affairs programming to present many views of the alternate cultures in Canada to the public. It would appear that there is a great deal of apprehension on the part of the CBC's management in putting Indians on the air who are critical of the establishment.<sup>59</sup>

Chief Michael Roy of the Union of Ontario Indians reiterated this point about the lack of native programming on the CBC's southern networks when he stated that:

We do not have confidence in the publicly-funded broadcasting body and its ability to fulfill the needs of our people. We notice the desire to extend services is high, yet the desire to program appropriately is not. Out of a budget exceeding 400 million dollars we are hard pressed to find more than a token amount of programming designed for native people, whether on radio or television.<sup>60</sup>

Even those native communication leaders who were actually involved in producing native programming for the CBC have been critical of the way the Corporation has responded to native radio and television needs. Bernelda Wheeler, a producer and co-host of the CBC network radio

series Our Native Land has attacked the publicly owned network.

If the CBC was doing what is supposed to be doing by presenting the information and news events, then Indian people would not have to organize their own media to give the Indian people the information they are looking for and need. If every region has seven and one half hours daily for regional programming, why can't the native people have one half hour? A native request for additional air time should be given much more consideration because Indians are not 'ethnics' they are 'indigenous.'<sup>61</sup>

Not all native leaders have been against the CBC's programming services. On occasion the network has been praised for its native participation. One such leader was Chief Saul Fiddler of Sandy Lake in Northwestern Ontario.

We now have CBC radio and television. It was very hard to get them here. They kept saying they were coming, and then they would put it off to another date. But now, we have them, and we are happy with that service. On top of that, we broadcast locally five hours daily in Cree. This too, is proving to be a very good thing.<sup>62</sup>

#### CBC: Northern Programming

Although the native people in the South express a need to have their fair share of programming on the public broadcasting network, they have not had the same degree of problems in conditioning themselves to the images of life as portrayed by this media as have their counterparts in the North. The Indians, Metis and Inuit in the mid-Canada corridor and in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories were predominantly traditional in culture

until the coming of transportation and communication facilities to their areas. Radio and especially television are new to them, a phenomenon of the 1970's and its introduction was not gradual but often abrupt often forcing the native peoples to drastically alter their lifestyles and views in a manner completely foreign to them. That is why such concern was expressed during this decade about the need for not only native programming but for native language programming on radio and television. And as the CBC Northern Service is the only broadcast media system in these northern areas it is not surprising to find that native concerns are directed towards this institution.

The CBC visited several communities in the Northwest Territories in the summer of 1970, and public discussions were held with a view to obtaining first hand information about the northern programming service. Because of this series of discussions, the Northern Shortwave Service increased its Eskimo News from five to ten minutes daily and Inuit language programming accounted for two of the nine hours of daily broadcasts. Also, a series of dramas was produced by the Inuit at Povungnirtuk in Inuktitut and another series was developed in the Slavey language at Fort Simpson and Yellowknife.<sup>63</sup>

This slight increase in native programming was hardly enough to meet the demands of the native people in the North who felt that since they were in the majority they

should at least receive a proportionate amount of their radio and television programming in their own native languages. Antoine Barnaby, a native radio producer for CFYK in Yellowknife had this to say about his own station's record in native language programming: "Did you know that most of the people who listen to the radio up here are native? And yet out of the 130 hours a week that CFYK is on the air, the native people around Yellowknife have only ten hours a week of programming that they can listen to?"<sup>64</sup>

The native people in the Eastern Arctic region were a little better off at this time since in the spring of 1973, the CBC Shortwave Service increased its transmitter power and its number of programming hours from eight and one half per day to nineteen. Unfortunately, this nineteen hours of programming was split between English, French, Inuktitut and Cree. Therefore, in reality, the native peoples were not receiving the full benefit of it in their own native languages.<sup>65</sup>

In November 1974, the CBC announced that it was going to do something about the protests of northerners with respect to radio and television programming. The North had been inundated with southern television since its introduction to the North via satellite in February 1973. One of the changes that the CBC Northern Service announced was that live television production would soon be starting

at Yellowknife. The announcement was slightly premature because a television production centre in Yellowknife only became operational in 1979 and even then live production was impossible. The NS also announced at this time that radio CHAK in Inuvik would be increasing its radius to include Fort Good Hope, Fort Norman and Fort Franklin. Also, CHAK would, and it did, produce native language programming for the Hareskin and Slavey Indians in these areas.<sup>66</sup>

Approximately 50% of our CBC northern radio is produced in the North, or for the North, in the North and by the North. I think, and our aim in the next five years ahead is to perhaps not so much to increase that percentage, but to make it even better and more representative.<sup>67</sup>

These words were spoken by Ronald Fraser of the CBC in response to the Northern Service's application for license renewals in both radio and television for the North. While the lack of native language programming on radio was discussed by the various participants at this hearing, the real emphasis was on television and Northern Service programming. That emphasis was placed there by the native representatives. Wally Firth, a former CBC employee, and a Member of Parliament at the time of the hearing, took the Corporation to task for not appropriating enough of its budget for the Northern Services so that the NS could in turn develop native language programming, especially on television.



We in the North come from a very distinct geographical region and we believe that the CBC does have a responsibility to take care of our needs in regional programming. We also have a wealth of material that could be the basis for a great deal of regional programming and I would like to try and demonstrate that the CBC does not allow sufficient funds for the Northern Service to provide suitable regional programming. Nor does the Corporation fulfill its promise to service the needs of our particular geographic regions.

Could we not have more regional and local programs produced by us to service our own needs?<sup>68</sup>

After a number of native, and especially Inuit, leaders were heard on the problem of native programming on the CBC Northern Services radio and television system, Mr. R. Fraser re-emphasized the achievements of the NS and the problems of financing increased native programming.

We share the concerns of the Inuit as to the effects of TV on them and also their needs for programming which will preserve and develop their culture. Our common problem is to find the ways and resources to make these concerns a major component of all our operations.

We have reached a real plateau, a genuine achievement, where 50% of our programming can be called northern. We think that is a very real achievement.

But to meet the desires you have heard expressed today, is simply beyond the powers and resources of the Corporation. The Corporation wants to and will work with the native groups and others to develop television programming in, by and for the North, as we have in radio. We will be limited only by our resources but again may I emphasize, that is a serious limitation right now.<sup>69</sup>

By the end of 1976, the natives of the North were only regularly getting thirty minutes out of some one hundred and twelve hours of television a week. This is less than one half of one percent of the total television

programming schedule. This thirty minutes came from a fifteen minute television program produced in Montreal and called Tarqavut, "Our North" which had been introduced along with Anik I in early 1973. The other fifteen minutes was made up of a regularly produced series of Inuit language programs produced by Nunatsiakmiut in Frobisher Bay. There was no regularly scheduled Indian language television in either the North or mid-Canada, except at La Ronge where local access was provided.

When the CRTC held its first northern hearings in April 1978, condemnation of the CBC's native programming priorities was issued by numerous native representatives. The CBC was well aware of the problem of native programming. For instance, Graham Hall the CBC manager for the Yellowknife and MacKenzie regions recognized the need for greater co-operation between the CBC and the native people with respect to radio broadcasting.

We are seeing that perhaps our concepts of programming are not necessarily those that are appreciated by the native peoples. We have to try and have a system whereby we can sit down and plan for different forms of programming. We have to find out what those needs are and serve them. I think that we can work together and to try to do something about it.<sup>70</sup>

At this series of hearings, the CBC Northern Service announced that it hoped to expand television production in the North by one half hour every month. These programs were to be in native Indian and Inuit languages as well as

in English. The problem with native language programming was that in television, the signal came from the satellite on two channels. These two channels covered the entire Arctic and mid-Canada from east to west and it was impossible to put more than a very limited amount of different native languages on the same signals because the whites and even other natives would not be able to understand it. The only common language to the entire North was really only English, not Hareskin, Slavey or Inuktitut. For the optimum use of these languages radio, not television, was the best medium.

The basic tool of Northern Service radio is language. Clearly, if we are to provide a service to northerners, we must broadcast in the languages that are being used. This usually obliges us to broadcast both in native languages and in English.

On our shortwave service to the Eastern Arctic and Northern Quebec, we broadcast in Cree, and Eastern Arctic Inuktitut, as well as in English and French. From Frobisher we use predominantly Eastern Arctic Inuktitut with a little Keewatin dialect. Native languages used on our Delta service include Western Arctic Inuktitut, Loucheux and the Hareskin dialect of Slavey. In the MacKenzie area, Chipewyan, Cree and a couple of Slavey dialects are used. In the Yukon, where native related programming is done in English, a study is underway to ascertain whether native language broadcasting would be useful.<sup>71</sup>

#### CBC: Northern Broadcasting Plan

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation developed the Frontier Coverage Package to bring television to the North and portions of mid-Canada. The FCP was made redundant

with the advent of satellite communications. The Accelerated Coverage Plan was designed to introduce both radio and television facilities to all communities of five hundred or more. This meant that a majority of the native communities in the North and the northern portions of the provinces received services. ACP, however, did not provide services to the numerous smaller native communities many with a population of two hundred or less. It also did not provide funds for either northern or native programming. With this lack of service and programming in mind, the CBC prepared a Northern Broadcasting Plan to further extend northern coverage and to develop local and regional services. This Northern Broadcasting Plan (NBP) was first announced in 1973 although the plan had been under consideration as early as 1970.<sup>72</sup> In 1973 an inter-departmental committee developed a first stage plan which included funds for northern television programming, improvement of northern radio programming, extension of radio services to all northern communities of two hundred or more, and provision of community radio and television to communities requesting them.<sup>73</sup>

The CRTC in its decision on the CBC network's application for a full network license renewal issued on March 31, 1974, stated that it felt the Northern Broadcasting Plan would not only be an asset to the Northern Service

but would go a considerable way in relieving the problem of services and programming in the North.

The Commission expects that the Northern Broadcasting Plan will effectively respond to the tremendous challenge of extending the national service and meeting the special broadcasting needs of the North. The Commission has been involved in the preparatory work with the CBC, the Department of Communications, and other government departments in the development of the Plan and recognizes the Corporation's contribution of skill and imagination.<sup>74</sup>

The NBP went to the government for approval, since it was the federal government that was expected to fund the program, in early 1974. It did not meet with government approval at that time and went back for revision. The revised plan that the CBC then developed placed a much higher priority on radio but only provided for marginal improvement for native or local input into regional television programming. After these revisions were made, the Plan was sent back to the federal government for approval.

The real test for the Northern Broadcasting Plan was not so much its approval either by the CRTC or the federal government even, but with the native peoples of the North. The CBC had primarily developed the plan to meet the needs of the smaller, more remote communities of the North which were populated almost exclusively by the native peoples. Before the Northern Services' license renewals in Winnipeg in May 1976, the CBC was both praised and condemned for the

plan by many of the native representatives. At the hearing, the CBC defended the program by saying that it was developed to meet the needs of the natives as expressed by their members at various meetings during the planning stage.

The Northern Broadcasting Plan exists on paper. It was put together by a group of people in a variety of meetings, some of which were in the North, and some of which were in the South. But before any implementation is done on that, there would be further consultation with native groups in northern settlements so that it was as carefully honed as possible to meet the needs that would appear to exist in these communities.<sup>75</sup>

The Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, represented by Mr. Tagak Curley, not only condemned the Northern Broadcasting Plan but also proposed an Inuit Broadcasting Plan in its place.

We have been hearing for some years about this Northern Broadcasting Plan. Northerners have not been consulted in this plan and we have heard many different rumors about what is in this plan.

We would like to tell you about our hopes, our dreams, the Inuit Broadcasting Plan if you like. We would ask the CBC not to begin producing programs of relevance to the North.

We ask the CBC instead to facilitate and promote the development of production centres in the North that are controlled and operated by the Northern peoples. We ask the CBC to take the money that it is proposing to use in CBC northern production and invest it in Inuit controlled and operated production centres.<sup>76</sup>

The Inuit Broadcasting Plan also made two other proposals. One dealt with community television claiming that the La Ronge pilot project was a success and that it was about time the project became an operational program throughout the North. The other discussed the need for a

Northern Television Advisory Board.

The make-up of the Board should be negotiated between the CBC, CRTC, the ITC and other northerners. The mandate of the Board should be such as to ensure that Northerners have genuine power over program selection and real participation in policy making.<sup>77</sup>

The Alberta Native Communications Society was one of the few native organizations that endorsed the Northern Broadcasting Plan.

The Northern Broadcasting Plan with which this submission deals is encouraging to us because it recognizes the special needs of native people--especially those in isolated northern areas--and the importance of meeting those needs in terms relevant to their social and cultural individualism.<sup>78</sup>

While it endorsed the concept of the NBP, it also recommended certain changes to the plan. It was against the provision that called for television to be erected in communities with only five hundred or more people and radio in areas with two hundred or more persons.

• Alberta alone has more than a dozen communities of less than 200 population which have no form of broadcasting service except a two-way radio operated by forestry or another agency independent of the community, and some don't even have that. It is, in our opinion, vital that top priority must be to provide a communications link for these people. Then the balance of plan can be put into effect.<sup>79</sup>

The ANCS also submitted that they felt that programming, especially television programming, should not be abruptly dropped into these native communities with their traditional backgrounds but should be gradually introduced so that it could evolve over a period of time allowing the

natives time to acclimatize themselves to the media. Unlike the Inuit Tapirisat who were in favour of the expansion of community radio and television, ANCS believed that, due to their own experiences in the field, community television was just not suitable. A lack of skills and interest would only lead to a misuse of the facilities and that instead, regional facilities should be developed to provide regional programming with input from several native communities in a given area.

After several revisions to the Northern Broadcasting Plan, the CBC once more submitted it for approval. By May 1978, the program was sent back yet again for more revisions by the Corporation. It was still not approved by the time the CBC appeared before the CRTC for its third full licensing renewal application of the decade on October 3, 1978.

We are putting the final touches on a Northern Broadcasting Plan for re-submission to the government, that will try to even the score between technology and the people.

If it is forthcoming, then perhaps the Northerners will feel that they are partners with the South in this great challenge of preserving and buttressing distinctive cultures on the top half of the Continent; and for our part in the Northern Services, we are champing at the bit, and ready to go.<sup>80</sup>

### Conclusions

That the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has not lived up to native expectations is self-evident. But then



again, the Corporation was not established to provide a total broadcasting package to any one single group in Canada. It was established to provide facilities and programming services to the country as a whole. In the South the network has, it must be openly admitted, perhaps not done quite as much as it could have done during the decade by way of creating native access to and usage of its facilities. Programming for natives in the South could also be better. It would probably go a long way in satisfying the natives across the country if the CBC put on a television series relating to the native peoples in the same way as they have done on radio with the program Our Native Land. Northern broadcasting is a complex undertaking. Many of the native peoples expect facilities; they also expect television and radio programming to reflect their needs and lifestyles. Native access to the broadcast media facilities of the North has been in some ways more developed than in the South. Community radio and even television is almost non-existent in the South but is a growing phenomenon in the North. Through its various programs, the Frontier Coverage Package, the Accelerated Coverage Plan and the hoped for Northern Broadcasting Plan, the CBC has sought to involve the native peoples, especially in the North, in their own broadcast media. With better production facilities, better policies, the CBC and its

Northern Services department, may well develop a system that affords more native access, more native use of the media of radio and television. It is an on-going struggle; one which was not totally successful in the 1970's but which may well succeed in the 1980's if the government through funding and the native people through participation allow it to succeed.

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## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study has been to investigate Canada's native peoples' use of and access to the broadcast media of radio and television during the decade of the 1970's. This investigation was undertaken in three steps. The first step was an examination of Canada's native peoples' attempts at gaining control over, and thus access to and use of, the broadcast media through the establishment of their own native communications societies. The second step in this investigation was a survey of the challenges and problems faced by the native communications societies as they sought to work individually and collectively to improve broadcast communications for Canada's original peoples. The third, and final step identified the role of specific governmental departments with respect to native attempts at obtaining access to and useage of the broadcast media of radio and television in Canada during this decade.

#### Native Communications Societies

Historically, the native peoples of Canada have felt excluded from the mainstream of Canadian life.

They have claimed to have lacked the necessary tools, the necessary skills to communicate either among themselves or with the non-native population. In an attempt to remedy this unsatisfactory situation, they have initiated through the 1970's the establishment of regional and local native controlled, native operated communication apparatus in the form of native communications societies. These societies were developed as self-help projects. They were developed to give the native people the type of access to the media of radio and television they could not get either through the public broadcasting system or through the private broadcasting establishment in Canada. They were designed to meet specific native needs. Time has shown that these native communications societies have been successful. The few that have not survived have failed more from a lack of funds than from a lack of involvement or utility.

The effectiveness of the native communications society concept can not be in doubt. The results accomplished by them have been most positive. They have been responsible for developing broadcast facilities where non existed. They have provided access at the most primary level by involving entire communities and indeed entire geographical sections of the country. This is especially evident in the northern parts of the provinces and in the two territories. The

majority of these societies have not been content to remain static. They have progressed from elementary broadcasting operations to the most sophisticated incorporating the highest communication technologies such as the implementation of satellite programming.

They have been developed over the decade because there was a need. They have survived because there has been a need, and they will continue to survive if there is a continued need for them. From the most sophisticated of these societies, such as the Alberta Native Communications Society with its satellite projects like Project Iron Star and its high quality of radio and television programming, to the most elementary such as the I.O.I. in the Northwest Territories, or the RAVEN Society in British Columbia. From the oldest such as the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians' Communications Program to the newest, being the Tagramiut Nipingat organization in northern Quebec. They have all played a significant role in giving the Indian, Metis and Inuit peoples of Canada access to and use of the broadcast media to an extent never before possible. The native communications societies in Canada have only given to the natives what everyone else in Canada has had for a long time. The native communications societies have been more sensitive to the needs of their people than any other broadcasting organizations in Canada.

Native Communications Societies;  
Challenges and Co-operation

The native communications societies in Canada faced many challenges during the decade of the 1970's. Some of these challenges came in the form of problems; problems which were unique to each individual society and had to be overcome independently. Other challenges led to co-operative actions. Not all challenges were problems. Some were stepping stones, progressive moves for the societies. Each society faced challenges and either learned, progressed and were strengthened by them, or were forced to re-evaluate policies, positions and actions. Only a few were overwhelmed by such challenges.

The two greatest challenges came in the form of recognition and funding. The native communications societies in each region of the country first had to gain recognition from their own native peoples. Recognition in that the concept of establishing a native communications society would be worthwhile and of a benefit to the natives in their area of operation. They also had to gain recognition by the governments, provincial, territorial and federal in order to obtain the necessary funding for continued operation. The establishment and operation of native communications societies involved in the broadcast media is a costly business. Without financial help none of the larger and

and possibly few of the smaller societies could have progressed far beyond the planning stage.

Co-operation was the key to financial security among the various societies. Without a co-operative effort, the need would not have been adequately enough expressed to warrant government funding mechanisms. Co-operation among the early established native communications societies at the beginning of the decade led to the various native communication conferences. These conferences, of which the four mentioned in this study were the most important, were primarily established as a collective means for coping with fiscal problems. They led to better co-operation among the societies on other issues as well. The native communication conferences whether called for by the government, such as at Yellowknife in 1970 and at Sardis, B.C. in 1972, or by the native communications societies themselves as at Prince Albert, Saskatchewan in 1973 and Edmonton, Alberta in 1974, articulated areas of common concern and also methods of resolving these concerns. Concerns such as the training of native people to produce radio and television material and to understand the operations and repair of sophisticated broadcast media apparatus.

The co-operation of these native communication organizations led to the establishment of larger, more regional societies. Such was the case with the Native

Communications Society of the Western Northwest Territories. This society was established by the cooperative union of four separate native groups three of which had their own communication organizations operating separately from each other. The Tree of Peace had a VTR production Unit; the Indian Brotherhood had a radio network and COPE had its own radio programming schedule which operated on a weekly and regular basis. Only the Metis Association was without a communications organization and even this group had some experience via its close relationship to the Indian Brotherhood's Communications Unit.

The native communications societies also worked together during this decade to establish a truly national native peoples communications network which would link all of the major native communications societies together throughout the country in order to produce broadcast media material unique to the native peoples. The Native Broadcasting Alliance was one attempt in this direction, unfortunately an unsuccessful attempt. Such was also the case with the national network attempt by the Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia in 1977. All attempts during this decade at establishing a national native communications network failed.

While the native communications groups worked on a

higher, national scale, they also worked with other native groups on a more localized, community level. Several of the native community radio and television stations established during this period were the results of the cooperation between local native authorities and the native communications societies. Native Communications Incorporated of Manitoba, and the Alberta Native Communications Society are but two examples of native societies being involved in the establishment of community access facilities.

The native communications societies faced their problems, met their challenges, and succeeded. The fact that the overwhelming majority of them survived through the years amidst financial cutbacks, native unrest and governmental policies is testimony to that. Much of the credit for this success can be attributed to their ability to meet problems head on and to their working together for the common good. They co-operated because they wanted to, and they survived because they wanted to. They were determined to offer their people the type of communications, the type of broadcast media which they felt they so desperately needed in order to survive in the modern world. They succeeded in giving the native peoples of this country access to and use of the broadcast media, and they did it almost entirely within a ten year period, within the 1970's.

The Role of Government in  
Native Communications

The role of the governments, especially the federal government, has been most noticeable in helping the native peoples of Canada to gain access to the broadcast media. The native communications societies are in large part responsible for the awakening of the native peoples to see their need for modern broadcast media systems and in initiating many of these systems. The various governmental departments have been instrumental in supporting these native communication organizations. They have also been instrumental in the establishment of some of these systems and of the societies themselves. The five major governmental departments and institutions that were involved in native communications at this time include: the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the Department of the Secretary of State, the Department of Communications, the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development has the responsibility under the Indian Act to ensure the preservation and betterment of native lifestyles and in helping the native peoples to cope with modern life. It does not have a responsibility, even under the Indian Act, to address the problems of native



access to the broadcast media. Yet the DIAND took it upon itself to at least play a secondary role in this concern. It was the DIAND, along with the Department of Communications, that sponsored the Northern Communications Conference held in Yellowknife in September 1970. It was a most appropriate way to open a new decade. While the role of the Department was not greatly visible, the conference itself was the point of awakening for many natives in the North to see their need for modern communications, especially broadcast communications, that allowed a native input. The topics discussed at this conference would become the main focal point for native communication endeavours throughout the North during the decade. Through its various studies and its participation in projects, such as the Taqramiut Nipingat project in northern Quebec, and the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada project in the Northwest Territories, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development at least showed its willingness to help native communications. After all, communications was not the DIAND's forte.

The Department of the Secretary of State had a most important role to play in the development of native communications and native broadcasting. The DSS has been the main financial instrument for almost all of the major native communications societies. The first major native

communications conference with respect to funding was sponsored by this governmental department. It took place in Sardis, British Columbia in January 1972. It was this conference that prompted the native communications societies to co-operate with each other, even if only to demand governmental assistance in their projects. It was at the native communications conference in Edmonton in March 1974, that the Secretary of State announced, for the first time, that the government would actively support and participate in native communications by helping to finance the various native communications societies under its new Native Communications Program. It was also here that a new native communications policy was announced whereby native groups could apply for government aid. It was this policy more than anything that created both a working relationship with the government and distrust as well. The relationship between the native communication organizations and the Department of the Secretary of State was turbulent during the rest of the decade. It led to native condemnation of the government for its lack of real support while it also led to praise for its help in forming and financing projects, broadcasting projects, that would most probably never have gotten started, let alone succeeded, without the Native Communications Program. The Department of the

Secretary of State financed the beginnings of most of the native communications societies and continues to keep them operating at the present time. It is considered to be a most successful relationship.

The Department of Communications while having no special native communications program has nevertheless played a substantial role in helping the native peoples to gain access to the broadcast media. The DOC was a major sponsor of the Yellowknife Conference and a major participant in several projects aimed at establishing broadcast facilities for remote native settlements. The Ministers of Communication from Robert Stanbury, through Gerard Pelletier and Madam Sauve all showed a great interest in the need for adequate communications policies and services for native peoples. This is evidenced by the Department's initiation of such pro native communication projects as Operation Snowgoose in 1972, the Rankin Inlet 'Cominterphone' project in 1972 and that monumental effort the Northern Pilot Project which was started in 1971. The Northern Pilot Project was responsible for, among other things, the establishment of the Wa-Wa-Ta Native Communications Society in northwestern Ontario, the establishment of a number of community radio stations in the Keewatin and northwestern Ontario, and the erection of a network of over twenty high fre-

quency radio stations with broadcast capabilities throughout these areas. The DOC also brought the Alberta Native Communications Society into the space age in the first ever native satellite project in North America. This project, code named Project Iron Star, involved the Communications Technology Satellite and brought television and radio with community access to several northern Alberta native settlements in 1976. The Department of Communications has been one of the few agencies that has received mostly praise for its help in giving broadcast accessibility to the native peoples in all parts of Canada.

One governmental body that has not been the recipient of quite as much praise as the DOC has been the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission. In all conscience, however, the CRTC has at least been concerned about the need for native access to the broadcast media over the last decade. This is evidenced in many of its public announcements. Announcements such as its Broadcasting Services to More Remote Areas issued in 1971 and the FM Licensing Policy Announcement of 1973. The primary area of involvement by the CRTC in native communications has come from its various public hearings. These public hearings have given the native peoples a forum by which they can air their opinions on native

communications in general and in support or condemnation of specific licensing endeavours either proposed by themselves or non-native media organizations. The native peoples have used the CBC as a means for airing their grievances against the CBC whether it be the regional network, the Northern Services, or the national network as a whole. The Commission held three public hearings this decade alone dealing with the CBC's application for full network licensing renewals. And native representation at all three of these hearings was most evident. The Commission also started, albeit rather late in the decade, 1978 to be exact, to hold hearings in the North for the first time. Native relations to the CRTC have been at times quite strong, especially at the beginning of the decade, but they have deteriorated steadily, especially with respect to the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, through the ten year period. Still, the Commission has played a vital role, whether the natives have felt it an adequate or strong enough role or not is another question, in helping the native peoples to at least express themselves and to protect the natives in their communication endeavours.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has played a greater part in native communications than any other governmental department. Greater even than the DOC or

the Department of the Secretary of State. At the same time, it has been the continual whipping boy of native grievances with a system they feel has not operated in their best interests. Mandated by Parliament to supply broadcasting services to all geographical areas and all peoples in the country, the CBC has tried to live up to native expectations; expectations the Corporation has always felt too demanding given the financial circumstances of the 1970's. Perhaps the least area of CBC involvement in native communications has been in the South where no real special priority has been given the native peoples either in facilities or programming services. The North is another story. The CBC Northern Service initiated a number of plans to put broadcasting services into remote native settlements. The Frontier Coverage Package and the Accelerated Coverage Plan have covered all communities with populations of five hundred or more in the North and mid-Canada with television and radio services. Its Northern Broadcasting Plan, yet to be approved by Parliament, seeks to bring radio services at least to all communities of two hundred or more. The CBC has also been strong in its allowance of community access to both radio and television facilities. If there has been one consistently weak spot in CBC-native rela-

tions it has been in its native programming. This is also a problem more of finances than design. The role of the CBC in providing native access to and use of the broadcast media during the 1970's has been considerable.

There can be no doubt that native communications has evolved during the 1970's. The native peoples have gained a considerable degree of access to and use of the broadcast media during this decade. They have achieved this goal through their own efforts, through a concerted effort among themselves and in co-operation with various government departments and bodies. It has proved difficult for Canada's Indian, Metis and Inuit peoples to adjust to contemporary technological and social changes. However, these recent developments organized in part by the native peoples themselves to secure a better accommodation with the larger society, combined with a better awareness among Canadians as a whole, offers some hope that a viable relationship between native communications aspirations and cultural traditions of Canada's native peoples will be achieved in the decades ahead.

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