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Summary of IPP Submission
Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

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Submission Data

Title:	Metis Culture: Pride of the Metis Nation in the Western Northwest Territories
Submitted by:	Metis Heritage Association, Yellowknife, NWT (MHA)
Date of submission:	93-10-06
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Intervenor characteristics:	The Metis Heritage Association was formed in 1988 to develop programs that foster or enhance Metis culture in the Western NWT. They have hosted cultural and social events, have been instrumental in developing Aboriginal communications in the north, and supported a Metis history project. Its core funding is from the government of the Northwest Territories.
Key Issues:	Culture
Accompanying documentation:	Bibliography Appendices

Abstract

The MHA brief argues that the rich and unique culture of Northern Metis has not received equal treatment in the Western Northwest Territories with other Aboriginal cultures. The association seeks equal recognition of Metis culture and language along with the privileges and funding enjoyed by other Aboriginal groups.

Recommendations

Eight recommendations are made on pages 62 to 64. They include (in abridged form):

1. That all components defined by Metis of the NWT as elements of Metis culture and heritage be included in all current and future legislation of the Government of the Northwest Territories;

2. That the Government of the Northwest territories guarantee that current legislation will be amended to include, affirm and recognize the Metis culture and heritage of the Northwest Territories as a separate and unique northern Aboriginal culture and heritage;

3. That current and future funding criteria within departments of the government of the NWT be amended to include the Metis culture and heritage;

4. That the Official languages act of the NWT be amended to include the northern language of Michif and that amendments be made to funding arrangements to include funding for northern Michif;

5. That the government of NWT refrain at all times from discriminating against or acculturating the Metis of NWT;

6. That the Canadian Federal Government of Canada amend current and future legislation on multicultural projects, programs and incentives to include the Metis of the Northwest Territories and the Metis Heritage Association of the Northwest Territories with commitments for guaranteed representation on national and other multicultural boards, committees, teams, agencies and groups of the federal government and its inter-departments, and inclusive of all financial scopes, terms of reference, mandates and criteria to include financial arrangements accordingly for the Northwest Territories Metis culture and heritage;

7. That all components of Metis culture and heritage as identified by, and guaranteed to, the Metis of the northwest Territories be fully recognized in any

new or proposed founding Charter of Aboriginal Social Rights or Charter of Founding Principles or Charter of Aboriginal Rights or other social charter in any new or proposed Constitution act for a new Western Northwest Territory or Province in the future.

8. That RCAP endorse these recommendations in its Final Report.

Assessment and Policy Considerations

This brief gives a vivid description of northern Metis culture. It charges discrimination by the government of the Northwest Territories and seems to appeal to RCAP for means to gain greater recognition as a legitimate Aboriginal group within the territory. No statistics are given about the number or distribution of northern Metis. It indicates that northern Michif language still has speakers and is significantly different from other Michif, and therefore needs funds for its preservation.

Summary of Brief

This brief is essentially a report on the history and challenges to Metis culture in the Northwest Territories.

The first section gives an overview of Metis cultural activities over the past few decades. This included the production of a newsletter and the publication of a book in the late 1970s and the development of television and radio programming during the 1980s. (p. 3-10)

Cultural programs endorsed by the Metis membership are: a Metis Elders Community Centre, a reprint of the 1976 book, reproduction on radio of Metis oral history, the feasibility of a Metis research and archival centre, a cottage industry weaving northern Metis shawls and sashes, scholarships for Metis students...(p. 13)

Metis locals have also been engaged in cultural activities such as selling handicrafts and music festivals. Much of this has been self financed. Funds received by the association have been used to begin a project to record Metis oral history. The brief reports that the budget of the Metis Heritage association is "approximately 75% below what is allocated to other northern aboriginal cultural organizations or institutes also funded by the government of the Northwest Territories in the Northwest Territories." (p. 15-16)

In the second section on the history of Metis people in the Northwest Territories, the brief notes the lack of research or preservation of myths, legends, folklore or fairy tales. An oral tradition Metis history project has been underway since 1991, but lacks funding. From the work done thus far, the brief illustrates how northern Metis learned from both their Dene and European ancestors and how they were innovative at adapting new techniques for survival. This is the basis of their identity. Their joie de vivre is reflected in their handiwork, music, art and dance. "Because the way of life was a constant struggle for survival, Metis culture became part of a shared way of life in the north...The creativity and innovativeness expressed by the women through their handiwork was matched by the expert craftsmanship of the men." (p. 18-29)

The brief stresses the uniqueness of northern Metis culture, growing from but distinct from both European and other Aboriginal cultures. The Metis also want to be the ones that define themselves. The brief charges that in the fifteen years of land claims negotiations and other political initiatives in the North, the Metis culture was continually undermined by the Dene. In terms of land claims eligibility and enrolment, the Metis were defined only as the descendants of the Dene. (p. 30-32)

The brief also states that despite their continued visibility, no formal recognition of the Metis has been provided by the Government of the Northwest Territories. It also charges that Metis are denied equitable services in relation to other northern cultural groups. (p. 33-34)

The brief cites a 1984 report on the cultural needs of the northern population which blatantly ignored Metis culture, identifying the Dene and the Inuit as the two distinct cultures of the NWT. This has had consequences in terms of the failure to recognize Michif as one of the official "aboriginal languages." It reports:

> The importance of preserving Michif before it becomes extinct is technically recognized by the N.W.T. Languages Commission, established to ensure official northern languages are used and their importance fostered, but not by the Government of the Northwest Territories who through the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories supported the creation of the NWT Languages Commission. (p. 35-41)

The Metis were not invited to a conference on Aboriginal languages held in Yellowknife in 1991. (p. 42-44)

In 1991-92, the MHA was involved in a joint project with the department of education to develop teaching material and information for Cross-Cultural Awareness training. Unfortunately, on account of lack of funding the material has not been distributed to northern schools.(p. 47-48)

The MHA has special advisory councils for elders and youth. (p. 48-52)

The MHA seeks recognition of the Metis language and culture in future NWT legislation and policy, along with support of economic ventures such as the production of northern Metis sashes and shawls. (p. 54-60)

INTERVENOR PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

NOTE TO FILE

ORGANIZATION: **Metis Heritage Association**

RE: Completion of Part II of the Contribution Agreement.

Project: MHA has satisfactorily completed and submitted a brief to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. This brief is in accordance with the conditions set out in the contribution agreement which came into effect on April 15, 1993.

Recommended by: Steven O. Horne Date: October 15, 1993

Approved: RBudgel Date: 15/10/93

Richard Budgel
A/Director IPP

Mr. Richard Budgel
A/Director
Intervenor Participation Program
Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
427 Laurier Avenue West.,
P. O. Box 1258, Station B
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 5R3

September 30, 1993

Dear Mr. Budgel,

Please find enclosed a final submission under the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Intevenor Participation Program by the Metis Heritage Association. A copy of expenditures and activity report will be forthcoming as per the Terms and Conditions of the Contribution Agreement.

I hope the submission will show why the need for political and financial support is vital if territorial and federal governments are to seriously consider not only past inadequacies of northern Metis culture as outlined in the submission, but also that northern Metis culture is deserving of considerate recognition in the Canadian aboriginal and multi-cultural mosaic.

Please contact me if you have inquiries.

Sincerely,

Ms. B. A. Kolson
Executive Director

c.c. file copy

Enclosures: 2 copies

Metis Culture: Pride of the Metis Nation in the Western Northwest Territories

A Submission to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Intervenor Participation Program

Prepared and submitted by the Metis Heritage Association
Yellowknife, N.W.T.

September 1993

My people will sleep for one hundred years, and when they awake it will be the artists that will give them back their Spirit.

- Louis Riel

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This submission on northern Metis culture to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Intervenor Participation Program is the culmination of research conducted by the Metis Heritage Association. Information in the contents of this submission outlines firstly, an overview of Metis culture prior to the formal establishment in 1988 of the Metis Heritage Association.

The reasons northern Metis feel respect, dignity and pride for their northern Metis culture, as well as an overview of the evolution of northern Metis culture over the past fifty years is also outlined under the second section of this brief. Secondly, if northern Metis culture is to be provided - and it should be provided - equitable financial resources to ensure its survival in all areas currently enjoyed by other aboriginal groups in the North and in Canada, acknowledgment and recognition must be afforded northern Metis culture and heritage by territorial and federal governments respectively. Information is provided in the contents of this submission regarding the treatment by government about northern Metis culture. The conclusion evaluates and assesses in further detail the importance of recognition by the territorial and federal governments if conscientious consideration is to be provided the evolving northern Metis culture.

The recommendations are formulated as a result of Metis Heritage Association and Metis Nation - N.W.T. Annual General Assembly resolutions and motions passed unanimously throughout the past twenty-five years and which addressed issues and concerns about the survival of Metis culture by the northern Metis membership.

Consideration is also provided in the recommendations as a result of individual Metis concerns expressed over the years and recommendations as discussed at the 1993 Metis Heritage Association Board of Directors regional workshop on Metis culture.

The methodology for production of this submission consisted of a review of current literature accummulated by the Metis Heritage Association and Metis Nation - N.W.T., as well as from individual Metis and the Government of the Northwest Territories documented material.

Attached to this submission is a Bibliography and Appendix for relevance of supporting documentation.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE METIS HERITAGE ASSOCIATION - I

An Overview of the Metis Heritage Association - I

Background

Prior to 1988 when the Metis Heritage Association was formally organized under the Northwest Territories Societies Act, no structured association existed to develop programs or to foster or enhance Metis culture in the Western Northwest Territories or in the North generally. Northern Metis ensured survival of their Metis culture by melding and embedding cultural traits from both northern and southern aboriginal and European ancestral parental lineages. During festive seasons such as Christmas and Easter, informal gatherings of Metis families in individual Metis homes would inevitably see the completion of a traditional Metis feast, followed by dancing, fiddling and jigging in traditional northern Metis fashion. Gifts were hand-crafted and included the traditional Metis vests, jackets and moccasins. The use of decorative harnesses for dog teams was used by Metis in the 1800's and is a continued use among northern Metis who continue to live a rural land-based Metis subsistence use lifestyle trapping, hunting and fishing. Northern Metis who travelled extensive miles by dog-teams from the bushland of the North to home communities, did not travel extensive miles to a central government department office to apply for a dance hall or lottery licence in order to be allowed to gather and display traditional Metis cultural events and activities to ensure survival of their northern Metis culture.

Traditional northern Metis cultural activities were and are, a part of the whole of the northern Metis way of life. Traditional northern Metis cultural traits were learned by successive generations of northern Metis for the continuation nowadays, of the unique traditional northern Metis culture.

Northern Metis participated during the early 1970's in cultural events sponsored by the Metis Association of the Northwest Territories (now Metis Nation - N.W.T.). When the Metis Association of the Northwest Territories was formed in 1972, also established shortly thereafter, was the Metis Talent Show held annually during general assemblies. The Metis Talent Show as an annual Metis social event actively promotes and inspires the continuation of Metis cultural activities in categories such as jigging, fiddling and hand-held instruments such as the guitar, accordion and Jaw-harp. The Metis Talent Show participants are judged by a Committee of persons nominated by the Annual General Assembly.

In recent years, and in addition to the Metis Talent Show, a family evening of Metis social events is held to display Metis crafts and to present the Order of the Shawl and the Order of the Sash to Metis persons who have made outstanding contributions to the Metis way of life in the North. The focus of the evening is to ensure Metis youth will come to understand and have a pride in, their Metis culture and their Metis heritage.

In the 1970's when territorial and aboriginal organizations were forming governing structures for territorial organizations, Metis representatives participated on interim boards relating to northern aboriginal culture and communications. For example, in 1975, Charles Overvold as a member of the Metis Association of the Northwest Territories, represented the Metis on an interim board of directors comprised also of the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories (IBNWT, - Pheobe Nahanni), the Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement (COPE, - Sam Raddi), the Tree of Peace Friendship Centre, (Caroline Wah-Shee), a representative of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Northern Services CBC, (Albert Canadien), and the editor of the Native Press (Ted Blondin), which eventually organized the current Native Communications Society of the Western Northwest Territories (NCSNWT). The interim board of directors disbanded upon completion of its interim mandate to establish a communications society in the Western N.W.T.

With the formal organization of aboriginal groups in the North in the 1970's, the Metis, Inuvialuit, Dene and Inuit began to concentrate on housing cultural projects and programs under their respective territorial organizations.

With the advent also in the North of comprehensive land claims and other political initiatives, the Metis Association of the Northwest Territories realized the importance of researching and documenting traditional oral Metis history of the Mackenzie Valley. A Metis newsletter was distributed to the Metis membership and as well, fund-raising resulted in the publication in 1976 of the book entitled, Our Metis Heritage...A Portrayal. The importance of promoting and recognizing a pride and respect for northern Metis culture and heritage, as well as lobbying with government agencies for a greater awareness of benefits for Metis elders and youth for program and project development concerning education, housing and economic development, was on the agendas of the Metis Association of the Northwest territories during the 1970's and 1980's.

Because no formal Metis culture or heritage organization existed in the 1970's and early 1980's and because territorial funding criteria required the formal organization of a cultural association before core funding could be provided, no contribution agreements existed between the Metis and the territorial or federal governments.

No formal contribution agreements existed when in 1978 a public relations and communications portfolio was established by the Metis Association of the Northwest Territories. Monies from the core budget of the organization were used to hire the public relations and communications coordinator. Under the direction of the territorial executive, a Metis newspaper, a half-hour local Cable television program - Our Metis Heritage - , pamphlets and posters on economic development and Metis of the Mackenzie Valley, a half-hour radio program informing northerners about Metis culture and political activities as well as a video on CBC's Northern Television program Focus North of the 1981 Metis Annual General Assembly were some of the initiatives undertaken.

During the early 1980's the Metis were also participants on a Tripartite Steering Committee with representatives of the Dene Nation and the Native Communications Society of the Western N.W.T., for a pilot project to develop a northern all-aboriginal radio and television network. The pilot project, named Decho Gondee, was organized by members of the Tripartite Steering Committee and accessed funds to house a temporary radio station at the NSCNWT facilities at Yellowknife, N.W.T.

Because the Canadian Radio and Television Commission (CRTC) had a mandate within its terms of reference to provide an up-link to satellite for radio and television to isolated and remote northern communities, the Metis were involved in developing and initiating plans on the Tripartite Steering Committee. Also, and because the Metis and Dene of the Western N.W.T. were involved in the development of an N.W.T. - Yukon Native Broadcasting Corporation, representatives for the Council of Yukon Indians also collaborated on formulating a Constitution and By-laws that would serve both Territories in the event an N.W.T. - Yukon northern aboriginal network was successful.

However, in 1981-82 when definitions for membership in the Constitution and By-laws among the Metis and Dene membership could not be resolved, the Yukon territorial representatives and N.W.T. Territorial representatives agreed each territory would negotiate with their respective territorial governments, with the federal governments department of communications and with other parties on the project, for individual radio and television access services.

The Metis were actively involved and instrumental in assisting in the development of aboriginal communications in the North, and the development of what today in the North is Television Northern Canada (TVNC).

Metis cultural organization forms

Initial planning and coordination of the current Metis Heritage Association housed at Yellowknife, N.W.T. with Metis Locals in the communities serving as affiliates, began in 1987. Endorsement by an annual general assembly resolution of the Metis Nation - N.W.T. formally recognized the need to institute and implement programs and projects to enhance Metis culture and heritage in the North. The objectives of the Metis Heritage Association are as follows:

a. to institute and maintain programs promoting a pride of heritage among the Metis people of the Northwest Territories;

b. to institute and maintain programs promoting the culture and traditions of the Metis people of the Northwest Territories;

c. to institute and maintain programs for the advancement of education among the Metis people of the Northwest Territories;

d. to institute and maintain programs to deal with social problems among the Metis people of the Northwest Territories;

e. to establish a cultural centre for the Metis people of the Northwest Territories;

f. to promote the role of Metis youth and elders in the communities and in this respect to establish and maintain Youth and Elder's Councils.

At numerous Annual General Assemblies of the Metis Nation - N.W.T. and at Metis Heritage Association meetings, Metis delegates endorsed resolutions and recommendations for Metis cultural activities and events.

Some programs and projects have been successful and some projects are continuing while other programs and projects are in formative stages. Cultural programs and projects endorsed by the northern Metis membership are: a Metis Elders Community Centre; a reprint of the 1976 pictorial book on Metis lifeways; reproduction on radio of Metis oral history; the feasibility of a Metis research and archival centre; a cottage industry to weave northern Metis shawls and sashes; scholarships for Metis students intent on furthering their education; the President's Award to honour achievements of Metis in the North; the Order of the Shawl and the Order of the Sash; research and documentation of the official northern Metis language Michif; a feasibility study to investigate and research northern Metis commemorative sites in the Mackenzie Valley; the feasibility of archival research to expedite Metis historical artifacts; recording and translating Metis oral history at the community level; pamphlets and posters depicting northern Metis lifestyles; initiatives to involve Metis elders and Metis youth at all program and project levels, and other initiatives.

Although initiatives at the territorial executive level have been on-going, many cultural initiatives have also involved the Metis Locals at the community or regional level as well.

For example, the Hay River Metis Local has raffled canoes to access additional funds for Metis cultural events and have participated in Metis cultural events during the northern Arctic Winter Games. The Yellowknife Metis Local has sold handicrafts and sold caribou stew and bannock during the annual Caribou Carnival at Yellowknife held yearly in March. The Inuvik Metis Local has fund-raised to hold regional youth workshops in the past. Most recently the Fort Resolution Metis Local fund-raised to hold the first of an annual music festival as has the Aklavik and For- McPherson Metis Locals. Although some Metis Locals have been successful in obtaining financial assistance from government departments for Metis cultural events, no core funding has been provided the Metis Locals for operating and maintaining Metis heritage community affiliate Local offices.

During its formative years and prior to formal organization, the Metis Heritage Association with the Metis Locals as its afilliates were neither funded by any government agency through contribution agreements, nor did the Metis Heritage Association receive core funding from other sources. The main impetus for obtaining financial assistance was by holding bingos - the monies fund-raised, sponsored college or post-secondary Metis students intent on furthering their education.

In 1989, a commitment of approximately $8,000.00 from the Government of the Northwest Territories department of culture and communications represented the first allocation for a core budget for the Metis Heritage Association. In 1990 the allocation for a core budget was increased to $41,000.00 to hire an executive director to establish a main office and in 1991 the core budget was increased to its current funding allotment of $66,500.00. Since four years ago, the Metis Heritage Association has requested an increase but has been denied requests for further core funding by the Government of the Northwest Territories. Although requests to adequately and equitably represent program and projects by the Metis Heritage Association, its Metis Elders and Metis Youth Advisory Councils and the Metis Local affiliates at the community level in the amount of $250,000.00 from the Government of the Northwest Territories, no further funding has been provided. Funding for Metis cultural and heritage programs and projects has been accessed either through fund-raising initiatives or from other Territorial government departments and depending upon the nature of the request and availability of monies.

Some requests, for example a two-year project to record Metis oral history has been successful but incomplete as no further monies were forthcoming to complete the project. Some projects have been denied such as continuing research and documentation on the official northern Metis language Michif.

The current core budget is allocated through the Contribution Agreement for salaries, operation and maintenance of the Metis Heritage Association office at Yellowknife, N.W.T. The core budget is approximately 75% below what is allocated to other northern aboriginal cultural organizations or institutes also funded by the Government of the Northwest Territories in the Northwest Territories.

METIS CULTURE IN THE WESTERN NORTHWEST TERRITORIES - II

Metis Culture in the Western Northwest Territories - II

There is no historical period, or timeline that can be acknowledged or implicitly attributed to when Metis culture in the Western Northwest Territories was first documented or written about prior to the 1700's. Explorers, missionaries, government agents, fur-trading companies and settler populations beginning to record the presence of Metis and Metis culture in the Western N.W.T., in the 1800's, did so, with minuscule reference. No complete or fully documented research has been done on the Metis culture of the Western Northwest Territories.

If existing historical data and documentation about Metis culture and heritage in the N.W.T. could be decidedly referenced, at best, an ardent observer of Metis history on Metis culture could say: "Metis culture in the Western Northwest Territories has forever been in an evolutionary existence, consistently in redefinition of itself for its continuing existence." And, so be it - for, world cultures and ethnic identities have evolved over the centuries and consistently in redefinition as the cultural aspects of a way of life evolves. World cultures for example the Hindu of India or the Jewish world communities as others have evolved with the presence of scribes to transfer oral history onto scrolls, papyrus or rice paper.

The unfortunate fact is, no concrete or concise documentation has been done on the Metis culture of the Western Northwest Territories or the North generally. Nor has Metis culture documenting myths, legends, fantasy, folklore or fairy tales either been documented on northern Metis culture. Traditional knowledge of the northern Metis has not been researched or documented either.

What does exist is partial inclusions in books or other written material and literature by early non-Metis in the North. But, as previously mentioned, little reference material or research on the northern Metis way of life exists. What material that does exist in written documentation however, does not preclude the existence of the Metis living a unique way of life in the Northwest Territories prior to the 1800's. For the purposes of this submission to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, this section will include a general discussion on the treatment of Metis by government and other aboriginal northern groups. The purpose of this general discussion is to inform and to provide an understanding of the inadequacies and misappropriation of Metis cultural expression in the Northwest Territories, with particular emphasis on the Government of the Northwest Territories.

The Essence of Metis Culture

Documentation through oral traditions of Metis history is the only factual records of Metis culture in the Western N.W.T. Although an oral traditions Metis history project began over two years ago, in 1991, the results of the project are not complete. Requests for funding to complete the project have not met favourable response from the Government of the Northwest Territories Oral Traditions Program which initially funded the project. However, some documentation has been done, unassociated with the current oral traditions Metis history project, in the form of books written and compiled either by Metis of the North or with the assistance of non- Metis. Material accessed in 1975 as a result of the Metis History Project is now housed at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre at Yellowknife, N.W.T.

Ted Trindell was a respected Metis elder from Fort Simpson whose memoirs were published in 1986. Mr. Trindell recalled in his own words the essence of Metis beliefs as reflected in myth, folklore and legends and reflecting his Scottish and Slavey parental lineages:

> They have lots of stories. I used to sleep with [by] my grandmother and she told me stories to no end. That was fifty years ago. I wish I had them all now.

But now when you tell those stories, the white man says, "they're fairy tales," because they talk about monsters that used to eat people eh! But now they find the bones of prehistoric animals in the North - archaeologists digging the bones out of rocks. So there must have been certain amount of truth.

In the old days they believed animals had been human beings at one time - an animal has its ways. And if you dreamed about an animal, or some animal talked to you - they gave you a certain amount of power to do things for your living eh! Like if you were starving or something, they gave you a reason for being a good hunter.

The Indian life was good because you had no worries so long as you were eating. That was it. But back then the Indian was a professional hunter in the bush. He was a professional, but he didn't go to school. He learned like an animal - a wolf from the time he's born eh! Has to learn how to hunt to survive. That was professional, that was the culture.

I went to Alberta University, you know, where all the students are with the computers working there. And I was there and looked at all those buildings and the people running it.... How do you put it together?

> It's a big gap. How do you make a horse out of a cow eh!
>
> You talk about the culture and the culture is what you do every day. But for natives the culture is lost and you're trying to implement the white culture into that which they cannot absorb.
>
> The white man, he's got his system. And Mister Indian has his system too, but it hasn't welded together yet. The Metis, they came from the south too. I remember the rebellion you know. The Hudson's Bay had yards for dresses and stuff. Once there was bullet holes in some of the cloth. I didn't see it but my grandmother said so. There were bullet holes in the cloth, and flour bags too. My grandmother always remembered that.
>
> And some of the people, the natives were out there and white men were just shooting the Indians down. To move them back. Shooting them down, getting royalties, like the wolves. You don't hear about that in the books.

What Mr. Trindell is saying is that in the early history of the Metis in the North, the way of life was culture and culture was learning how to survive. Culture was survival. Culture and survival were inter-dependent of the other. There is an acceptance, respect and acknowledgment of the direct parental lineages to the northern Dene by northern Metis as well as to the European parental lineages.

But for the Metis of the Northwest Territories, the two parental lineages have, like osmosis, woven the two cultures into a new and unique Metis lifestyle and Metis way of life - into a unique Metis heritage with cultural traits from both ancestries. Despite political efforts during the 1970's and 1980's to assimilate the Metis and northern Metis culture with the Dene, by the Dene Nation, the northern Metis culture has survived, in tact.

Northern Metis learned not only from their Dene and European ancestors how to survive the Northland, but were also innovative at creating new techniques to ensure the acto fo survival as derived from the northern Metis themselves. Metis learned how to survie culturally as a distinct and unique community, based not solely, or one ancestry, but from many and varied multi-cultural ancestral ties.

With the influence of missionary schools and material incentives brought to northern Hudson's Bay stores, Metis were equal recipients of newer methods of practising a subsistence land-based hunting, trapping and fishing lifestyle. During the early history of the North the Metis lived a subsistence and traditional lifestyle. But with the advent of missionary schools in the North and with the growth of communities when fur-trade years dwindled non-renewable economic activity on the land in the 1940's, some Metis families, as Dene families, moved to larger centres to be near their children who were in missionary schools.

Metis also continued to live in the bushland of the North while their children attended missionary schools or hostels. In the 1900's the influence of the missionary schools on the Metis way of life did affect aspects of the Metis culture. Whereas embroidery thread for example was used to adorn Metis clothing in the early history of the North, the Grey Nuns introduced small glass beads for beading traditional Metis handicraft.

However, Metis culture did survive because it was embedded within the very fabric of the Metis way of life in the North. Metis culture is, as Bunny Yanik-Koosel and Gordon Lennie wrote in a recent historical overview of the Metis of the North for the Metis Heritage Association, a continuous expression of celebration as part of the northern Metis lifeways. Ms. Yanik-Koosel and Mr. Lennie wrote:

> The joie de vivre of the Metis culture is reflected in its handiwork, music and dance. Items were borrowed and embellished with a distinctive Metis style of decoration to create a unique assemblage of Metis material culture. Men's clothing, such as jackets, gloves, "parkis", mitts, moccasins, and leggings were often made of caribou or moose hide and colourfully beaded or embroidered with silk thread in floral motifs. Silk ribbons and yarn pompons were added.
>
> Brightly coloured red sashes were worn daily.

Originally, the sashes were finger woven, a Native method of weaving that appears to be unique to North America. Sashes were practical as well as decorative and could be used as a pocket or to replace rope or tumplines when needed. They have remained important to this day as a symbol of the Metis, the different colours representing the distinct nations woven together and becoming one.

At Christmas and Easter, dog teams were colourfully decked out in embroidered or beaded blankets ("tapis") and fancy harnesses with bells that could be heard for miles before they came into a settlement.

It is through recollections and memories of experiences that the essence of Metis culture is imminently present in the Metis way of life in the North. Because Metis culture in the North has not been officially researched and recorded, stories continue to be told and re-told in tact, from one generation to another.

When Madeline Bird was a young Metis girl living in missionary schools, little semblage of Metis culture was re-told in tact by priests or Grey Nuns who acted as educators. Memories from the Fort Smith Metis elders' experiences have been recently documented in a book about the eighty-two year old Metis elders' life.

Mrs. Bird recalled the first time she was reacquainted with her Metis culture and Metis way of life after leaving the mission school system:

> The first time I saw people dancing, I thought I saw grown up people jumping around to music. Me and my friend, we were peeping through the window and we couldn't stop giggling. It looked so funny. I thought it was so crazy. I couldn't dance so I watched them and I was so scared somebody would come and ask me to dance. It wasn't long since I was out of the convent; I didn't know what to say to men because I couldn't go near them, before now.
>
> The people used to dance in each other's houses. They used the biggest houses. Some priests didn't like the people to dance around. They said it could be a peche mortal. The sisters said it was the devil's sport. Maxine Villebrun sure could dance. We danced different from now. There were nice dances then, like square dancing, jigging and reels. People didn't use the guitar music, only the violin. I still like the violin best, even today.

> In the summertime, when the people used to come to town for treaty days, there were lots of people around. They use to dance the T' e Dance or the Drum Dance. Sometimes, all night we could hear the drums and they used to give all kinds of little gifts. Now they don't do that. So many things change all the time.
> I enjoyed the drummers for the dances. They sound just like the heart beat, a moving motion. The drums take over with the heart beat. I like the hand games too. It's unfortunate there is not enough interest to revive this old culture and keep it going for the future generations. It is great fun playing those hand games and eating together, doing things together and caring and sharing. We used to have lots of clean good fun to be all together.
> Before, there was not so much booze, and that meant hardly any trouble for the dances and after. My favourite dances were square dances and a "Drop of Brandy."

The essence of Metis culture during the early history of the North was not intentionally or explicitly repressed by either the early settler populations or the aboriginal inhabitants. As Mrs. Bird notes in her memoirs, everyone from the community shared in the festivities and shared their culture.

No government policies or task force reports on northern aboriginal culture was necessary to ensure participation in, and survival of, northern aboriginal cultures, including the Metis culture. Because the way of life was a constant struggle for survival, Metis culture became part of the shared way of life in the North. Metis culture in the Western N.W.T. was a shared and cherished commodity, not similar in manner to the material goods and services brought yearly by riverboat to trading posts and stores along the Mackenzie Valley to remote and isolated communities. Survival was the key to success, but culture was the key to survival. Metis men working for the mission schools and trading posts, and craftsmen of household furniture did not need a formally structured Guild or Union to express pride in their Metis culture:

> Besides music and dance, painting and carving were also important.
>
> In the Mackenzie Delta, the Rivet family were renowned for their artistic endeavors in music, painting and carving. In Fort Smith, Wilfred McNeil was noted for perceiving images and lifeforms in driftwood and other natural source material such as antler and bone, and bringing them to life in his carvings. Similar traditional and contemporary themes are reflected today in the works of Sonny McDonald of Fort Smith.

> Most of the items needed for daily living were hand crafted. The creativity and innovativeness expressed by the woman through their handiwork was matched by the expert craftsmanship of the men. Many Metis men were carpenters, building boats, furniture, houses and smaller household objects.
>
> Metis woman traditionally did not take as visible a public role as did their male counterparts but contributed in their own important way to the economic and social development of the North. Women served as caretakers in the home and in the wage economy. They were the midwives, nurses, cooks, housekeepers and seamstresses.

Undeniably, there existed in the early development and growth of the North, a Metis presence which fostered and continued to enhance a Metis cultural presence which is evident in the North nowadays through the Metis Talent Shows, community activities and Metis Heritage Association. Although two and three generations of northern Metis children were temporarily denied cultural activities as inclusion in missionary school curriculums, the Metis culture continues as a way of life in Mackenzie Valley communities nowadays in the North.

The Metis Reelers, an all-Metis dance group for example, has performed at territorial, national and international events and festivals. As well, family and community feasts for Metis elders and youth are held annually during the Christmas and Easter seasons in communities. And, in the planning stages for 1993 are Metis Elder and Metis Youth conferences to continue a recognition for northern Metis culture.

The essence of Metis culture in the North may indeed incorporate experiences and aspects of an earlier developing North in which Metis were active participants, but Metis culture is a northern aboriginal culture as well as a culture signifying European cultural traits and it will continue to be a vibrant and visible culture in the North for the Metis of the future as it is for the Metis of today's North.

It is no longer acceptable by Metis of the North to be culturally hand-cuffed and marched into one aboriginal culture or one European culture at the insistence of either northern aboriginals or northern Europeans. The Metis of the North as a collective community and individually have organized Metis governing structures including the Metis Heritage Association which signify an independent Metis culture and a separate and unique northern aboriginal Metis culture and heritage which continues to evolve and continues to survive as a culture.

No other northern aboriginal group can define or dictate what Metis culture is in the North, except the Metis of the North.

Unentrenched non-recognition of Metis culture

It seems, and quite accurately so, that prior to the formal organization of political aboriginal organizations in the Western N.W.T., issues about northern aboriginal culture were not on the agendas of governments or aboriginal groups in the context of ethnic identities. However, with the advent of land claims came assemblies, meetings, workshops and discussions about definitions for the Dene and the Metis of the North. In the fifteen years of land claims and other political initiatives in the North, the Metis and Metis culture was continually undermined by the Dene Nation particularly through its Constitution and By-laws and in the media. The political philosophy of the Dene Nation toward Metis culture during the 1970'-1990's particularly, was that because northern Metis were descendants of the Dene, and because some traits of Dene aboriginal ancestry were adopted as part of the Metis culture, that there was no such thing as a Metis culture and that the Metis should simply accept that any culture they fostered, should be on the basis of wholly recognizing their Dene ancestry only.

Metis of the North however, did not view land claims definitions as political definitions. As well, Metis of the North did not view their culture as only and wholly Dene and a political commodity to be bantered or banished or revanquished at the political will of the Dene Nation political representatives on land claims. Metis of the North continued to reassure the Dene of the North that they did possess a Metis culture which was a unique blend of not only traits of their Dene aboriginal ancestry, but also of their Western European and World ancestral ties and traits as well. This message continues to be reiterated to the Dene of the North in 1993.

As early as 1971 when the Metis Association of the Northwest Territories were organizing to formally establish the northern Metis membership, recognition that Metis culture be recognized as a First Nations culture and Canadian culture was agreed to in a motion passed by Federal Cabinet members meeting in Ottawa on August 1, 1971 with Metis representatives from across Canada.

But with land claims eligibility and enrolment the Metis by definition became only the descendants of the Dene and not Metis of the North as a separate identity and collectivity.

What the Dene Nation attempted to do in the 1980's particularly, and through efforts to amalgamate the two political organizations in the Mackenzie Valley was to acculturate the Metis into becoming Dene - a feat that proved impossible to do.

As previously mentioned, the Metis of the North are proud of their Dene ancestry and do respect their Dene cultural traits which form part of their Metis culture. However, the Metis membership continued in the 1980's and continue in the 1990's to pass resolutions and motions at Annual General Assemblies and at meetings qualifying Metis of the North as a unique and separate aboriginal cultural group in the Northwest Territories. It is not difficult for the northern Metis to accept their European ancestral ties because Metis have forever been accepted, albeit on a marginal abyss, especially in census figures as status quo. It is only in recent years that the federal government has included Metis as an aboriginal group with a separate and unique identity.

Other political factors affected the Metis culture in the past twenty years as well. Beyond mere speculation, presumption, slander or heresay, the intent of the Government of the Northwest Territories has been to intentionally disregard, ignore and perceive that northern Metis culture existed, but that it should be accepted as part of the Dene cultural initiatives as well.

Despite the continued visibility of Metis culture in the Western N.W.T. and participation by Metis at territorial, national and international cultural events, no formal recognition has been provided the Metis in Government of the Northwest Territories legislation or policy as developed by the Metis of the North.

However, since the incorporation of the Metis Association of the Northwest Territories and the Metis Heritage Association in 1972 and 1988 respectively, the Government of the Northwest Territories has continued to deny Metis culture equal recognition in legislation and policy. And, although terminology - the word "Metis" - does appear in Government of the Northwest Territories documents, Metis are denied equitable services in relation to other northern aboriginal groups. Core funding for the Metis Heritage Association as previously discussed, is approximately 75% below what other northern aboriginal cultural groups in the North receive. And, although Annual Assembly Resolutions have continually requested a fair and equitable share of financial resources for core funding for Metis Locals who are affiliates of the Metis Heritage Association, requests have also been continually denied by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

In January 1982 the Executive Committee of the Government of the Northwest territories initiated a study to determine the cultural needs of the northern population and to develop a proposed policy on cultural development in the Northwest Territories.

In 1984 a report written by Rene Lamothe, a Southern Dene, for the Government of the Northwest Territories with the participation of the Inter-department Committee on Culture entitled On Cultural Needs blatantly ignored the existence of Metis culture in the N.W.T.

The report defined culture as:

> The way of life of a people.
>
> The way of life is generated primarily by economic, political, social, mental and spiritual activities.
>
> The uniqueness of any one given culture is determined by the nature of the forms, processes, structures, orders and beliefs of that culture. These are evident in the nature of the expressions of the people's way of life.

The report also defined the cultures existent within the North as:

> There have evolved two distinct cultures within those regions: The Dene and Inuit respectively.
>
> Beliefs are in fact lived. We live what we believe. We occasionally profess to believe in something which we do not live. That kind of profession is only fantasy. Beliefs are the spiritual aspects of our lives which give reason to our way of being.
>
> For the Dene, like for every way of life, a person could spend many life times defining and refining the processes of that way.
>
> The basis of social life and the socializing processes such as education, the political process, and mental and spiritual activities would vary with the group in question.
>
> The public in the North is generally aware of culture as a way of life. Native peoples have indicated clearly that they must determine their own cultural development. This should be recognized as self-evident.
>
> More specific information, complementing the above list of required cultural activities, is outlined as responsibilities of a proposed Council for the Arts and outlined as recommended work for the Councils of Dene and Inuit Elders. (See Appendix I)

Many of the principles for developing aboriginal northern cultures as described in the Report, such as all people having the right to cultural self-identity and defining their own culture, that habitat is critical to the survival of a culture, that culture is diverse, that culture must be maintained and that there are internally motivating factors within a culture, are principles which were adopted by the Government of the Northwest Territories and which also guide northern Metis culture but which the GNWT does not recognize in Metis culture because it does not recognize Metis as a distinct and separate northern First Nation of Metis with a separate northern aboriginal and European culture.

In the 1984 report, following the 1982-83 preliminary discussions on northern cultures, and two years after the Metis of Canada - including the Metis of the North - were formally recognized under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution Act 1982 as founding First Nations in Canada, Metis of the North were not even considered in the Government of the Northwest Territories report on northern aboriginal culture let alone consulted for their views.

How can Metis culture in the Northwest Territories be inherently recognized by northern legislators when northern legislators by whom the Metis culture should be recognized, are in a state of denial, and ecstatically discriminatory toward northern aboriginal Metis culture?

Acculturation, assimilation and discrimination are less than harsh word choices when genocide is encouraged by the Government of the Northwest Territories which purports as an aboriginal majority in its Legislative Assembly to represent northerners in a fair and equal manner. Metis were not consulted during the development of the report on northern aboriginal cultures, nor have Metis been consulted about their cultural needs since the 1984 report by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

One of the considerations for implementation in the 1984 GNWT report on cultural needs, and as outlined as a priority by the Dene and Inuit in the report, was the use of northern aboriginal languages.

On June 28, 1984 the Government of the Northwest Territories signed an Official Languages Agreement with the Government of Canada and under its terms the Canada - NWT Contribution Agreement on Aboriginal Languages became effective on March 10, 1986.
In 1984 also, the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories passed the Official Languages Act NWT, making English and French official languages in the N.W.T. The Act recognized Inuktitut, Dogrib, Chipewyan, North Slavey, South Slavey, Gwich'in and Cree as official aboriginal languages of the N.W.T.

When the Act was amended on April 6, 1990, the aboriginal languages included the addition of Inuvialuktun. The Canada-Northwest Territories Agreement on aboriginal languages signed in 1984 provided for a total of $16,000,000 over five years and was administered at the time by the department of culture and communications. A review of unexpended financial resources is currently underway by the Government of the Northwest Territories and a final report is due in 1994.

Prior to the initiation of the Agreement though, the GNWT sponsored a Task Force on Aboriginal Languages which was composed solely of three Dene and three Inuit. The Dene-Inuit mandate was to undertake a comprehensive Territorial-wide consultation process in 1986. No Metis were invited to participate on the Task Force as equal members, no Metis were consulted during the Task Force process and neither are Metis currently recognized in the Official Languages Act NWT as having an aboriginal language.

As a result of the work on northern aboriginal languages development, a Languages Bureau within the GNWT currently provides translation and other services to GNWT departments as well as non-governmental agencies. While the GNWT remains committed to actively supporting and enhancing the growth and development of Dene and Inuit languages, it is not committed to supporting the inclusion of the official Metis language Michif in the Official Language Act NWT or in legislation and policy related to financial resources.

Requests through written proposals and lobbying to research and document Michif have been made especially for Metis in N.W.T. communities where Michif is predominantly spoken by Metis. Also, initiatives in educational curriculum development for resource material has also been denied the Metis Heritage Association by the Government of the Northwest Territories. In the Official Language Act NWT, aboriginal languages are defined as a language which is not only spoken in the northern communities but also a language which is a composite of one of the official languages described and defined in the Act; either English, French, Inuktitut, Inuvialuktun or one of the Dene dialects.

Michif, officially recognized by the Metis of the North, and used particularly in the Western N.W.T. is a blend of not only English and, or, French, but also one of the Dene dialects depending upon which region it is spoken and dependent upon which mixture of Dene dialects are used in conjunction with either English or French.

Because Michif is a unique and new linguistically aboriginal mixture of the two founding official Canadian languages and as well a mixture of one or two of the official northern aboriginal dialects, the Metis Heritage Association has emphasized the importance of Michif in the context of a new linguistic aboriginal language in the North to the Government of the Northwest Territories and will to the Federal Government in the future.

Also within the current official Languages Act NWT Contribution Agreement, 25% of the budget can be offered for use in areas of aboriginal language development that have not yet been addressed. The Metis Heritage Association has on many occasions informed the Government of the Northwest Territories of the need to research and document Michif before the Michif language is no longer spoken and Metis elders die, but again, the Government of the Northwest Territories has denied funding requests. In a recent Metis Census Project currently underway in the Northwest Territories, out of current persons registered it is estimated that 150 Metis persons only currently speak Michif fluently. Michif is in danger of becoming extinct within the next twenty years if no assistance to preserve it is made by governments, yet the Government of the Northwest Territories continues to deny the Metis Heritage Association financial resources to research and document Michif as a northern Metis aboriginal language.

The importance of preserving Michif before it becomes extinct is technically recognized by the N.W.T. Languages Commission, established to ensure official northern languages are used and their importance fostered, but not by the Government of the Northwest Territories who through the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories supported the creation of the N.W.T. Languages Commission.

The N.W.T. Languages Commissioner has signified an interest in assisting the Metis Heritage Association preserve through research and documentation, the official Metis language Michif.

As late as March 1991 when an Aboriginal Languages Conference was held at Yellowknife, N.W.T. sponsored by the Government of the Northwest Territories and co-sponsored by the Dene Cultural Institute and Inuit Cultural Institute, the Metis of the Northwest Territories were neither invited to attend the meeting, nor was the Metis Heritage Association invited to participate.

Bringing Our Languages Home, the theme of the Conference aesthetically reflected topics for discussion in workshop format, and included discussion on N.W.T. aboriginal languages recognized in the Official Languages Act NWT. The purpose of the Conference was to establish a greater awareness of northern aboriginal language use, the development of new language rights as well as the formalization of aboriginal language policies and programs within the Government of the Northwest Territories.

One keynote speaker, Ethle Blondin, Member of Parliament for the Western Arctic riding said, quote: "Spending on education and the strengths of our culture are investments in the future. The socialization of children through education, shapes all aspects of identity, instilling knowledge of language, history, traditions, behaviour and spiritual beliefs. One of the most important... resources is our development of our linguistic culture and heritage."

Legal Counsel for the Conference organizers Letha MacLachlan referred to the Official Languages Act NWT stating, quote: "The Act states that "the Official Languages of the NWT have equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutes of the Legislative Assembly and Government of the Northwest Territories".... A right is something you can do and the opportunity to do that thing will be protected in the law. The most recent amendments which came into effect this last December (31, 1991) create the Office of Languages Commissioner. That person[s]...role...is to ensure that the rights, status and privileges of each of the Official Languages is recognized and that the spirit and intent of the Act is compiled within "the administration of the affairs of government institutions, including any of their activities relating to the advancement of the Aboriginal languages in the Territories."

What keynote speakers and legal counsel did not mention for the record was either the support and encouragement for the Metis language Michif or the equality which could be afforded the Metis language Michif within the Official Languages Act NWT.

It is not difficult to assess the blatant disregard for the Metis of the North and the official Metis language Michif within the spirit and intent of the Conference organizers and within the contents of the Conference discussions. Nonetheless, the Metis Heritage Association will continue to emphasize these inadequacies and unjust treatment of the Metis to the Government of the Northwest Territories in the future. The Metis Heritage Association will also continue to emphasize the importance of researching, documenting, enhancing and preserving Michif as well as continuing to inform the Government of the Northwest Territories of the significance of the holistically linguistic qualities and interconnectedness of Michif as a viable and working aboriginal language in the North.

The response by government bureaucrats regarding Michif has been an admittance of ignorance. In response to requests to document Michif, bureaucrats have explained that since they are not familiar with the existence of Michif, it therefore does not exist.

Also, that since the Government of the Northwest Territories cannot fund a project that does not lay within the scope and intent of the Official Languages Act NWT or within funding criteria for northern aboriginal languages, and because a language does not exist within the terms of reference and mandate of the Official Languages Act NWT, then the deduction is that the language does not exist. Which of course, and in all fairness,is ludicrous, and regressive of the spirit and intent of the Official Languages Act NWT. Michif is spoken in the North and has been spoken in the North since the 1800's. Typical of GNWT response, which in some circumstances is valid, is the following excerpt from the covering letter of June 20, 1992 by the GNWT cultural liaison personnel to the Metis Heritage Association:

> On behalf of the Aboriginal Languages Development Contribution Committee, I regret to inform you that your request for funding to research the use of Michif in the Northwest Territories has been declined. The Aboriginal Languages Contribution Program received approximately $1.8 million worth of applications to a total budget of $400,000.00 for this year. Since your proposal was primarily for research and not for direct enhancement of an Aboriginal language, it was not considered a priority for funding.

In other words, the GNWT will only fund aboriginal language development under its funding criteria for aboriginal languages which have already been researched and documented. Pray tell - how is Metis Michif to be enhanced when the initial research and documentation has not yet begun? Furthermore, with approximately $775,000.00 returned or re-routed within the GNWT from the original $16,000,000 million budget to the federal government under the 1984 Canada - NWT Contribution Agreement on Aboriginal and Official northern languages, logic and reason fail to prove feasible when the GNWT - which purports affirmative representation of all peoples of the N.W.T., but which falls short of guarantees and commitments - provides unjustified excuses to the northern Metis and for the official Metis language Michif and for aboriginal language development in general therefore.

Michif, is the "lingua franca" of the Metis of the Northwest Territories and continues to be spoken among northern Metis. However, the Government of the Northwest Territories continues to decidedly reject and seemingly attempts to decree unwritten mandates to abolish what exists as the Metis language of the North.

As language is a major factor in any world Nation, speculation could serve notice that if the Michif language of the Metis is decidedly abolished then there is no language of the Metis Nation in the North and as such serves then to foster attempts at assimilation and acculturation as earlier described in this written submission, as one now recorded, point of order.

Also as earlier noted, despite unsuccessful attempts in the past to have Michif recognized within the definitions and funding criteria of the Official Languages Act NWT and for research and development of Michif, the Metis Heritage Association will continue to inform the Government of the Northwest Territories of Michif and its continuing presence in the North as a northern aboriginal language. Indeed, because of Michif's linguistic components the Metis Heritage Association will also inform the Government of Canada of Michif's importance on a national scale as well.

Other program areas of the Metis Heritage Association

Because one of the objectives of the Metis Heritage Association is to institute and maintain programs promoting the advancement of education among the Metis people of the Northwest Territories, a joint project between the department of education and the Metis Heritage Association was conducted in 1991 - 92.

The Metis Heritage Association assisted in the development of curriculum material that could be used for elementary, secondary and post-secondary courses in northern schools. The intent of providing information on the Metis of the North for the project was to provide teaching material and information for Teacher Training, Language Centres, Northern Studies Programs and for Cross-Cultural Awareness Training particular in the Government of the N.W.T. Although the material was developed and prepared for use in northern schools, the department of education, culture and personnel has also informed the Metis Heritage Association in 1993 that the material cannot be included in new curriculums because of a shortage of financial resources to print and distribute the material to northern schools and teachers. The question is therefore - what is the purpose of developing curriculum material for northern educators and for the benefit of northern students if the material cannot be used? At the recent Annual General Assembly of the Metis Nation-N.W.T. at Fort Smith this past summer, the executive director of the Metis Heritage Association Ms. Bren Kolson asked of visiting GNWT ministers what initiatives could be taken to ensure the curriculum development material on northern Metis would be used by northern educators?

The response by Mr. Richard Nerysoo, minister for education, culture and personnel was that the issue could possibly be resolved in the future but as of this written brief to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples the issue has not been resolved. Education curriculum development of the history and of contemporary Metis lifeways is an on-going priority of the Metis Heritage Association.

Despite what appears to be a continuous lack of financial and moral support by the Government of the Northwest Territories for initiatives by the Metis Heritage Association, a number of programs and projects have been successful. For example, during the past three years an archival researcher was hired to develop and computerize an index and cross-referenced system for the archival material housed at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife. As well, taped interviews with Metis elders is an on-going project in some Mackenzie Valley communities. The Metis Heritage Association will continue to seek funding to complete the Metis Elders Oral History Project begun in 1991.

Also, two advisory Councils, the Metis Elders Advisory Council and the Metis Youth Advisory Council comprised of persons from Metis communities forms part of the governing structure for the Metis Heritage Association. Access for funds to conduct meetings with the regional Metis Local affiliates has resulted in further direction for the Metis Heritage Association.

Metis Elders have expressed concern during past meetings that it is vitally important that Metis Youth be provided with not only an understanding of their Metis culture and heritage, but also that governments must be more accommodating in responding to needs accentuated as priorities for Metis youth. Some concerns issued by Metis Elders for Metis Youth are more information on educational opportunities for Metis youth currently in northern schools systems and for high rates of teenage drop-outs and alternatives educational methods for Metis youth; more information on alcohol and drug abuse and all forms of abuses, and more activities to promote and enhance Metis culture among Metis youth at the community, regional and territorial levels.

The Metis Elders Advisory Councils, depending upon financial resources available have met twice a year to provide direction to the Metis Heritage Association.

The Metis Youth Advisory Council which provides direction on youth-orientated initiatives also meets twice a year and has been more successful at obtaining financial support to undertake projects. For example, in 1993 a proposal to hold a Metis Youth Conference culminated in a $30,000.00 grant. Implementation of Conference plans are currently in the planning stages. Important items discussed during the last Metis Youth executive meeting in July 1993, were reciprocal of the concerns expressed by the Metis Elders.

Metis Youth noted that Metis Elders should be respected and their advice to help Metis Youth heeded. Better living conditions for Metis Elders, involvement of Metis Elders in Youth initiatives as well as principles to guide the Metis Youth movement in the North be accepted and practised. Some of the guiding principles developed by the Metis Youth Council are: to dissuade racial and discriminatory actions against others; to have access to information on alcohol and drug abuse and on diseases such as HIV; to access information on housing, education and employment, and to partake in Metis cultural activities to ensure a pride of Metis heritage in the North.

The Metis Elders Advisory Council and the Metis Youth Advisory Council's mandates, are that Metis Elders and Youth should be provided with pertinent information by governments and private institutions in areas of concern to Metis Elders and Youth to ensure their participation in and contributions to, a holistic and healthy northern society.

A joint meeting of Metis Elders and Youth was held on April 21, 1991 to form the two Councils with the first joint resolution unanimously approving a joint mandate for the future directions of the two Advisory Councils, emphasizing the need to unite Metis Elder and Metis Youth at the community and regional levels of northern society and to ensure a pride in Metis heritage and culture for future generations of northern Metis.

Board of Directors meetings of the Metis Heritage Association are held bi-annually to review program areas and to provide new direction for on-going projects and programs. In 1991-92, a 30 - minute video depicting a visual history of the northern Metis was produced for general public distribution and is entitled, River of Time. A second video earlier produced entitled Metis Memories, is available from the Metis Heritage Association as well. A brief written history of the Metis of the North was published in booklet form entitled The Fiddle and the Sash and as well, information of cultural events of importance to Metis Local affiliates is mailed to the communities on an on-going basis.

Although it seems financial resources and the moral support needed to continue the survival of Metis culture and heritage in the Western Northwest Territories has been a constant struggle, the Board of Directors and Executive of the Metis Heritage Association feel that because Metis culture is visibly present in Mackenzie Valley communities and has survived since prior to the 1700's in the North, that it will continue to survive as the pride of the Metis Nation in the Northwest Territories for future generations of northern Metis.

Conclusion: Analysis

Conclusion

Analysis:

The intent of this submission to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Intervenor Participation Program on Metis culture and heritage in the Western Northwest Territories has not been an exercise to solely show the inadequacies by the Government of the Northwest Territories and northern aboriginal groups toward Metis culture and Metis heritage. The intent of this submission has also been to provide what information exists that can be referenced by the Metis Heritage Association about the survival and existence of Metis culture and heritage in the Western Northwest Territories for a broader knowledge and understanding for the Commissioners of this process. It is noteworthy to conclude that in all likelihood, the Commissioners on the Royal Commission for Aboriginal Peoples do not have a working knowledge or understanding of northern Metis culture and heritage prior to this submission and that this submission has therefore, provided a brief, but factual, overview for Commission consideration when formulating a Final Report to the Government of Canada.

It is important therefore that the following comments in summary, be included in this submission before recommendations within this submission are recorded for Commission consideration.

Political pressure, as earlier noted, to acculturate and assimilate the northern Metis culture with the Dene culture during the past twenty years has occurred subtly and subliminally. While mention of the Dene, and descendants of the Dene, has been included in written material over the years by both the Dene Nation and the Government of the Northwest Territories as well as the federal government, definitions and meanings of definitions were deciphered by the Metis to mean, the northern Metis. However, when Metis culture and heritage is defined by the Metis Heritage Association, it is meant to include all the Metis of the North and not only, the northern Metis who are descendants of the Dene. Perhaps the reasons why the Metis of the North have continually reiterated that they are indeed a separate and unique cultural and aboriginal Metis peoples of the North is because the northern Metis have included all Metis in the North in cultural definitions under Metis culture and heritage. To exclude southern Metis within the context of Metis culture and heritage in the North would have been to separate the uniqueness of northern Metis culture and heritage according to a northern or southern Metis presence, preference or influence.

The reality of the situation in the North is that Metis persons not originally born in the North did relocate, raise families and subsist on northern lands together with the northern born Metis. Cultural traits that were part of the southern Metis were sometimes adopted or interconnected with northern Metis cultural traits and often, if not adopted, shared with northern Metis. Cultural traits accepted by northern born Metis of their Dene heritage were adopted along with cultural traits from European ancestral parentage and as well from southern Metis who have made the North their homeland and who have raised generations of northern born Metis therefore. The aforementioned facts have come to signify a unique blend of Metis culture and heritage in the North, distinct and separate from some southern provincial Metis but with similar themes in the context of Metis culture and heritage. The evolution of Metis culture and heritage in the North has evolved not unlike world cultures which have evolved over the centuries. No culture is stagnant and remiss of change. The borrowing, melding, blending, webbing together of cultural traits over centuries is what provides culture with the essence to flourish and evolve. It is unfortunate that land claims definitions for eligibility and enrolment were used in the context of political definitions when the Dene Nation was attempting to define for the Metis membership, who a Metis of the North was, and therefore which culture the Metis of the North must belong.

It is however, fortunate that the Metis of the North continued to exercise their democratic rights and privileges and continued to define their membership and continued throughout turbulent years to entrench Metis culture and heritage within the fabric of northern aboriginal culture and heritage as a unique and separate unit of northern society. Metis cultural events from both southern and northern Metis have evolved as has other northern cultures such as the Dene culture and heritage. Fragile painted white fish scales sewed on a babiche bag are no longer made by the Dene of the North and few are preserved in northern community or central city museums. But - that does not signify that the babiche bags are not a part of the Dene handicraft culture. Babiche bags are still hand-crafted by the Dene but embroidery or coloured beads have replaced the white fish scales. Culture exists, but it also evolves.

Why are myths, legends, fairy tales as earlier mentioned by Mr. Ted Trindell, told and re-told in any world culture but to ensure the cultural components of a society continue to exist in tact. A reflection of past cultures through the oral and written word is the basis for the future of an organized cultural society , among other components that derive a society of peoples.

A collectivity of Dene, Inuit, Inuvialuit and Metis aboriginal groups in the North is what makes the northern society unique. To deny the existence of any one component is to order the society incomplete. To intentionally deny the Metis culture as a component of northern society is to discriminate on the basis of ethnicity.

Concurrently then, Metis culture and heritage is existent in the North. It has evolved and will continue to evolve. The priority for Metis culture and heritage in the North is that its membership ensure its survival, whether it is spiritually beneficial, morally beneficial, linguistically beneficial, artistically beneficial or musically beneficial for the expression of northern Metis culture and heritage.

It is fair to comment in this submission that the Metis culture and heritage in the North has not been treated fairly or equally by the Government of the Northwest Territories as proposed by the examples within the contents of this submission. In order for a fair and reasonable recognition of Metis culture and heritage in the North by the Government of the Northwest Territories and by national government, legislation, regulation, policies and priorities will have to change and be amended to include Metis and in relation to all criteria and mandates of the Metis Heritage Association through its Constitution and By-law objectives.

It is the hope and aspirations of the Board of Directors, Executive and membership of the Metis Heritage Association that past and present factors contributing to a non-recognition of Metis culture and heritage by the Government of the Northwest Territories and northern aboriginal groups, will be amended in the future that will result positively in an equitable endorsement of Metis culture and heritage for future generations of northern Metis.

Future inclusions of Metis culture and heritage in Government of the Northwest Territories legislation and policy, as well as in any future Charter of Aboriginal Social Rights in a new Constitution for a new Western N.W.T. governing structure will have to address educational, social and cultural aspects of Metis heritage and culture.

Economic ventures to ensure the viability of programs and industries instituted by the Metis Heritage Association, and encompassing Metis culture and heritage, will also have to be included in amendments to current northern legislation. Currently, for example, in the North, the economic opportunity exists to build a cottage industry which would produce northern Metis sashes and shawls either hand-crafted or woven on looms for sale to northern and southern markets.

No Metis persons currently are trained in this potentially viable cottage industry in, and for the North. No funding criteria exists that could enable northern aboriginal Metis the opportunity to either learn this Metis trade, nor does criteria exist for potential financial support under current Government of the Northwest Territories economic development incentives. If the Government of the Northwest Territories is serious about preserving and enhancing northern Metis culture and heritage and serious about including northern Metis in potentially viable economic development ventures that will accentuate Metis culture and heritage, then the Government of the Northwest Territories and indeed the federal government must not be afraid to implement commitment into credible action.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

The Metis Heritage Association therefore recommends the following to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples:

Recommendation #1.

THAT all components defined by the Metis of the Northwest Territories as elements of Metis culture and heritage in the Northwest Territories be included in all current and future legislation of the Government of the Northwest Territories;

Recommendation #2.

THAT the Government of the Northwest Territories guarantee the Metis of the Northwest Territories that current legislation will be amended on northern aboriginal Metis culture and heritage that will include, affirm and recognize the Metis culture and heritage of the Northwest Territories as a separate and unique northern aboriginal culture and heritage;

Recommendation #3.

THAT current and future funding criteria within all departments of the Government of the Northwest Territories be amended to exclusively include the Metis of the Northwest Territories with preference and exclusive funding criteria for Metis culture and heritage inclusively;

Recommendation # 4.

THAT the Official Languages Act NWT be amended to include the northern Metis language Michif and that amendments be made to current and future funding arrangements and criteria to exclusively include funding for the northern Metis language Michif;

Recommendation #5.

THAT the Government of the Northwest territories refrain at all times from discriminating against or acculturating the Metis culture and heritage of the Metis of the Northwest Territories in the future;

Recommendation #6.

THAT the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms Act in the Canadian Constitution Act 1982 recognizes all Canadian cultures as integral to the Canadian multi-cultural mosaic that comprises the Canadian society and,

THAT the founding Nations of Canada comprise the English, French and First Nations inclusive in Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution Act 1982 of the Metis Nations of Canada and,

THAT the Metis of the Northwest Territories comprise an integrated blend of all the founding Nations of Canada that form the multi-cultural mosaic of the Northern Canadian society in Canada, AND THEREFORE,

THAT the Canadian Federal Government of Canada amend current and future legislation on multi-cultural projects, programs and incentives to include the Metis of the Northwest Territories and Metis Heritage Association of the Northwest Territories with commitments for guaranteed representation on national and other multi-cultural boards, committees, teams, agencies and groups of the federal government and its inter-departments, and, inclusive of all financial scopes, terms of reference, mandates and criteria to include financial arrangements accordingly for the Northwest Territories Metis culture and heritage;

Recommendation #7.

THAT all components of Metis culture and heritage as defined by, and guaranteed to, the Metis of the Northwest Territories be fully recognized in any new or proposed founding Charter of Aboriginal Social Rights or Charter of Founding Principles or Charter of Aboriginal Rights or other social Charter in any new or proposed Constitution Act for a new Western Northwest Territory or Province in the future;

Recommendation #8.

THAT the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples has been mandated to review all aspects of aboriginal peoples lifeways in Canada, by Order of the Prime Minister of Canada over a two-year period and to investigate and assist in the development of, and provide results-orientated solutions to negative aspects of aboriginal peoples of Canada's lifeways, and,

THAT the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples is committed in its mandate to ensure that all aboriginal peoples in Canada are consulted and have resources available to participate in the Commission's mandate, and,

THAT the Metis Heritage Association has been provided with resources to participate in the Intervenor Participation Program and has reported the inclusive recommendations in its Submission to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, and,

THAT the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples will report to the Government of Canada their findings as a result of the work of the Commission in a Final Report, AND THEREFORE,

THAT the Metis Heritage Association of the Northwest Territories recommends to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples that the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples endorse the inclusive recommendations of the Metis Heritage Association inclusively in their Final Report to the Government of Canada and its respective representatives when writing and completing its Final Report and provide a full copy of the Final Report of the Commission to the Metis Heritage Association upon completion of its mandate or in any new or renewed mandate.

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APPENDICES

- Language standardization is needed, including Language Institutes.
- Socialization processes are integral to cultural survival.
- Educational process should adopt the learning modes of Inuit and Dene.
- Cross-cultural differences must be recognized and accommodated.
- Cultural exchange should be encouraged and supported.
- Develop organizational modes of government based on the customs of the Dene and the Inuit.
- Facilities and resources are needed to provide for the development and display of the visual and performing arts.
- Re-introduce the arts in the school curriculum.
- Dene and Inuit need to develop technical skills in all fields of heritage preservation and development.

The public in the North is generally aware of culture as a way of life.

The public in the North is generally aware of culture as a way of life. Native peoples have indicated clearly that they must determine their own cultural development. This should be recognized as self-evident.

More specific information, complementing the above list of required cultural activities, is outlined as responsibilities of a proposed Council for the Arts and outlined as recommended work for the Councils of Dene and Inuit Elders. These are provided in the section of this report headed: Recommendations.

Phase I, Task 4:
Assessment of Activities Being Carried Out in the NWT Communities by Private and Voluntary Agencies Independent of GNWT Assistance:

According to the territorial office of the Registrar of Societies, there are thirty-six societies in good standing in the Northwest Territories which have an interest in cultural affairs. (Files reviewed 1983)

Further to the societies registered with the Territorial Government, there are many other activities by groups of people, organizations and communities. These Include: Inuit Tapirisat Canada, Baffin, Kitikmeot and Keewatin Regional Inuit Associations, COPE, fall fair and winter carnival groups, drum dances, talent shows, drama clubs, ethnic groups and the activities of social clubs such as the Lions, Rotarians, Elks, etc.

The Inter-departmental Committee on Culture concurs that an assessment of the activities of the above groups in the communities would require several person-years to complete. Time and resources for this study do not provide for this assessment to take place.

Herman Catholique of Snowdrift in the snowshoe races at the Arctic Winter Games

Phase I, Task 5:
Identification of Available Long-Term Federal and Corporate Direct Funding Sources for Cultural Organizations and Activities:

Federal Funding Sources:

The specific information: Contact names, phone numbers, criteria for funding and addresses are readily available from the Advisor-Cultural Affairs, Dept. Executive, GNWT.

Federal funding can be divided roughly into two categories:
- Grants and Contributions
- Services

The departments, programs and councils of the federal government providing for aspects of cultural development:
Indian and Northern Affairs
National Health and Welfare
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
Regional Economic Expansion
Finance
Manpower and Immigration
Transport
Justice
Secretary of State
Communications
Canada Council
Energy Mines and Resources
Environment Canada
National Library
National Museums of Canada
National Gallery of Canada
National Research Council
National Film Board
Public Archives of Canada

Corporate Funding Sources:
Council for Business and Arts in Canada

The above council is established with the objective to encourage corporate support for the arts; to assist individual corporations by providing them with information on cultural groups, and to assist cultural groups with their presentations to individual corporations. The major corporations in Canada which fund cultural groups are members of The Council for Business and Arts in Canada. The corporations' interests in cultural fields is usually specific and the above organization is designed to match groups with the appropriate corporation based on these interests.

Generally, corporations provide support in those communities in which they are established.

Canadian Centre for Philanthrophy

The above centre maintains an updated Directory to Foundations and Granting Agencies. The GNWT has several copies of this publication.

Phase I, Task 6:
Development of an Options Paper Identifying Organizational Options for Rationalizing Cultural Policy and Program Accountabilities Within the GNWT. - To be Approved by the Committee on Priorities and Planning Before Commencement of Phase II.

An Inter-departmental Committee on Culture was established July 27, 83, to complete this section of the study. The committee consisted of:

Rene Lamothe,	Co-chairman
Robert Janes,	Co-chairman
Dave Sutherland,	Member
Vicky Paraschak,	Member
Frank Cserepy,	Member
Kathy Arden,	Executive Assistant

Four options were developed. Each option includes arms-length agencies to accommodate the cultures of the Dene and the Inuit.

The options for the administration of the arts vary from the status of arms-length agency through to the status of a full department to accommodate several existing functions of the Government of the NWT, and an administrative function to be established for the arts.

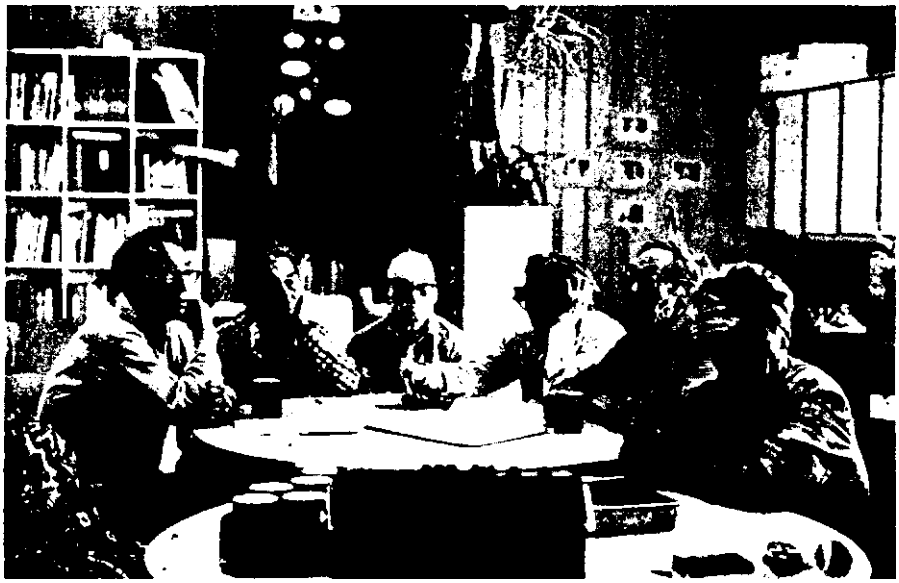
Arms-length agencies, playing such a major role in the development of culture, merit some discussion to outline their nature and functions.

The Need for Arms-Length Heritage Councils[1]

Because arms-length heritage councils represent a departure from more traditional methods of government operation, it is important

1. Provided by Dr. Robert Janes, Director, Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre.

to summarize why arms-length relationships between the Councils and the Government of the Northwest Territories are essential for an effective cultural policy. The Inuit, Dene and N.W.T. Heritage Councils will have advisory, regulatory, funding, operating and developmental responsibilities.



Old Folks Club meeting in Baker Lake

Advisory

In their advisory roles, the Heritage Councils must be in a position to decide upon the sort of advice they will provide, and not be bound by direction from any source. This is because..."the cultural sphere, embracing as it does artistic and intellectual activity, has as one of its central functions the critical scrutiny of all other sphere including the political..." and therefore cannot be subordinated to any other activity.[1]

Regulatory

At least one of the Councils, the N.W.T. Heritage Council, will have regulatory responsibilities at the outset arising from the administration of the N.W.T. Archaeological Sites Regulations. It is recommended that this regulatory process be conducted at arms-length from the political and administrative institutional systems. A good illustration of why this is necessary involves the recent destruction of a northern archaeological site by a department of the federal government. Punitive action was considered and rejected by Government of the Northwest Territories' legal staff because the GNWT is considered to be part of the federal government's Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. It is essential that the regulatory process be seen to be fair and unbiased.

Funding

Funding a variety of cultural activities will be a responsibility of the Councils. It is the opinion of this Committee that the granting

1. Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee (Information Services, Department of Communications. Government of Canada, 1982), p.16

of financial support should be as free from partisan influence as is possible. In this way, the spontaneity, diversity and uniqueness of cultural activities can be recognized and nurtured. As was recently observed, "the well-being of society is threatened if the state intrudes into the cultural realm in ways that subordinate the role and purpose of the latter to the role and purposes of government itself - or of any other spheres of activity".[2]

Options for Cultural Models and products.

Operating and Developmental

Operating and developing cultural programs will also be fundamental to all three Councils. Each council must be able to define its own priorities, as well as to plan and implement the means of achieving the desired results. The preservation and development of Inuit and Dene cultures are best accomplished if representatives of those cultures are able to formulate programs and apportion resources as they see fit. An arms-length relationship with the Government of the Northwest Territories will reduce or eliminate the conflicts which invariably arise between cultural and other government considerations. Similar advantages would apply to the N.W.T. Heritage Council, which will represent all cultural groups in the Northwest Territories. The Councils and their program managers will be in the best position to assess the relative importance of competing claims on the resources available and must be able to act on this knowledge.[3]

It is important to note that these proposed Councils will also be able to compete for a variety of corporate and philanthropic grants which are inaccessible to government departments. Administrative controls for the management of both these funds and government appropriations, within arms-length agencies, are well established. Two categories of Crown corporations, the Agency and Proprietary corporations, are able to manage their own funds, to maintain their own accounts and to follow accrual accounting practices - thereby avoiding the lapsing of unspent balances at the end of the fiscal year. They must, however, submit their annual capital budgets for ministerial approval and Agency corporations must secure approval of their annual operating budgets.[4] Arms-length councils can thus be designed with various forms of accountability in mind.

The proposed Heritage Councils represent an investment in the future. As the Government of the Northwest Territories assumes more and more responsibilities, it is not inconceivable that conflict could develop within the government itself. Resources development versus heritage preservation is an example of one such potential conflict. The arms-length agencies proposed here will be in an excellent position to either avoid or mitigate such conflicts, thereby ensuring that cultural preservation and development are not superceded by competing interests.

2. Report of the Federal Cultural Review Committee, pp.15-16.
3. Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, p.30
4. Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, p.24

Option 1 - Three Arms-Length Agencies

Three arms-length agencies responsible for cultural preservation and development should be established. These agencies will report to the Legislative Assembly through a Minister for Cultural Affairs.

This option requires the transfer of Library Services and the Museums/Heritage Division to the NWT Heritage Council, in addition to the creation of a Visual, Literary and Performing Arts section within that Council.

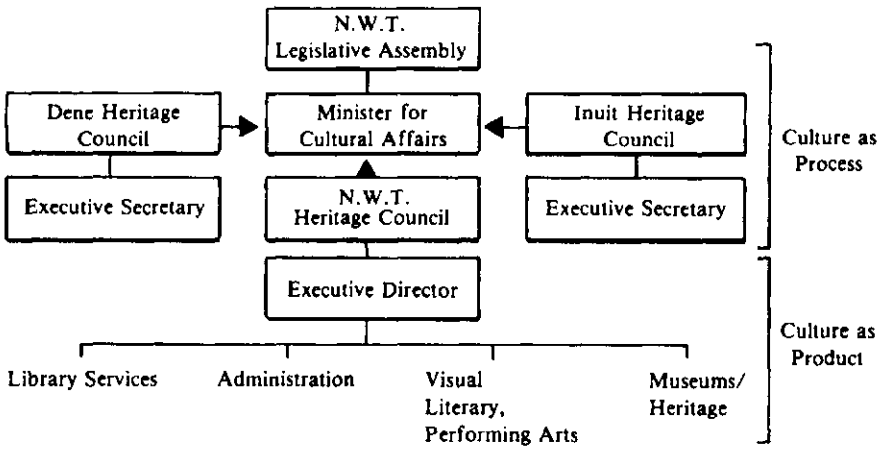
Advantages:

1. All funding goes directly to arms-length agencies.
2. No person-year increase within the GNWT.
3. As they are all arms-length public agencies the Dene, Inuit and NWT Heritage Councils are given high priority and visibility.
4. The aboriginal peoples of the NWT are allowed to decide what is in their best interest, culturally.
5. The visual, literary and performing arts are recognized and supported.
6. New organizational focus and higher visibility for current GNWT cultural programs (libraries and museum/heritage) are provided through the NWT Heritage Council.
7. The NWT Heritage Council already exists by authority of the Historical Resources Ordinance.
8. Arms-length status allows the use of external funding not normally available to government programs.

Disadvantages

1. Some reorganization of the Department of Justice and Public Services is required to allow the removal of Library Services and the Museum/Heritage Division.

Option 1 Organizational Chart



Option 2: Senior Advisor and Two Arms-Length Agencies

Two arms-length agencies for cultural preservation and development should be established. These agencies will report to the Legislative Assembly through the Minister for Cultural Affairs.

A Senior Advisor for Culture will also be appointed to co-ordinate both internal and external cultural activities on behalf of the GNWT. This is necessary because current cultural activities, i.e. Museums/Heritage, Library Services and Sports and Recreation will remain where they are.

An Arts Administrator will be appointed and attached to Sports and Recreation within the Department of Local Government in order to co-ordinate support for visual, literary and performing arts.

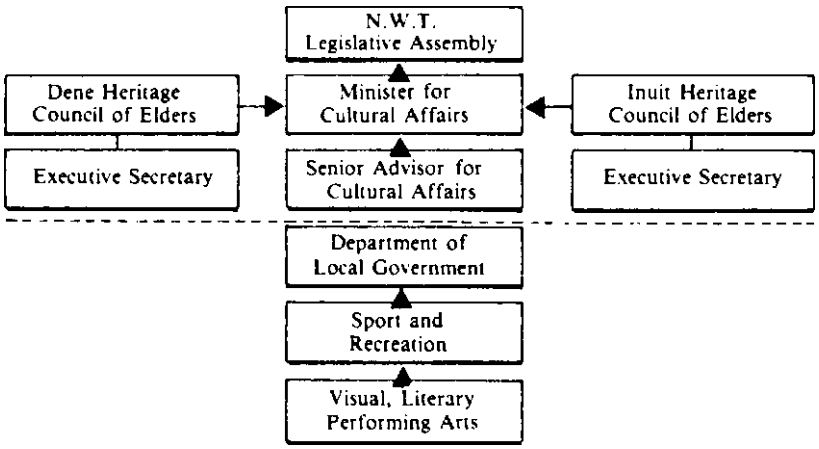
Advantages:

1. Majority of funding goes directly to arms-length agencies.
2. The two arms-length agencies are given high priority and visibility.
3. Dene and Inuit Councils will have access to external funding sources not normally available to government.
4. The aboriginal peoples of the NWT are allowed to decide what is in their best interest, culturally.
5. This option is the least costly.

Disadvantages:

1. No organizational focus for current GNWT cultural activities, i.e. Museums/Heritage and Library Services.
2. The visual, literary and performing arts lack the support of an arms-length agency.
3. Requires two additional person-years within the GNWT.
4. Senior Advisor position will lead to additional person-years and corresponding financial needs.

Option 2 Organizational Chart

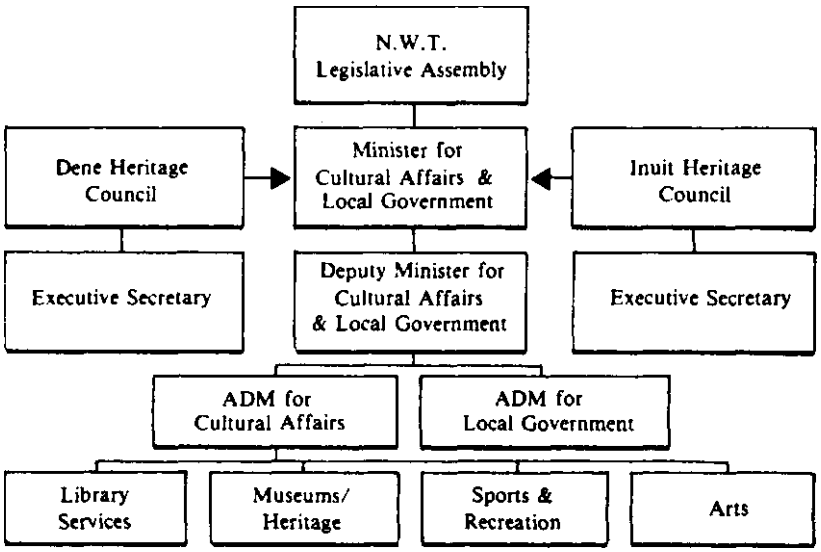


Option 3: Assistant Deputy Minister and two Arms-Length Agencies

Two arms-length agencies for cultural preservation and development should be established. These agencies will report to the Legislative Assembly through the Minister of Culture.

An Assistant Deputy Minister for Culture will be appointed within the present Department of Local Government. This department will be renamed the Department of Culture and Local Government. Library Services and Museums/Heritage will be transferred from Justice and Public Services into this department. A new section for the arts and the present Division of Sports and Recreation would also be a part of the new ADM's responsibilities.

Option 3 Organizational Chart



Advantages:

1. Majority of funding goes to arms-length agencies.
2. The two arms-length agencies are given high priority and visibility.
3. Dene and Inuit Heritage Councils of Elders will have access to external funding sources not normally available to government.
4. The aboriginal peoples of the N.W.T. are allowed to decide what is in their best interest, culturally.

Disadvantages:

1. Requires three person-years within the GNWT.
2. Only limited recognition and support for visual, literary and performing arts.
3. Requires significant reorganization of the Departments of Local Government and Justice and Public Services.

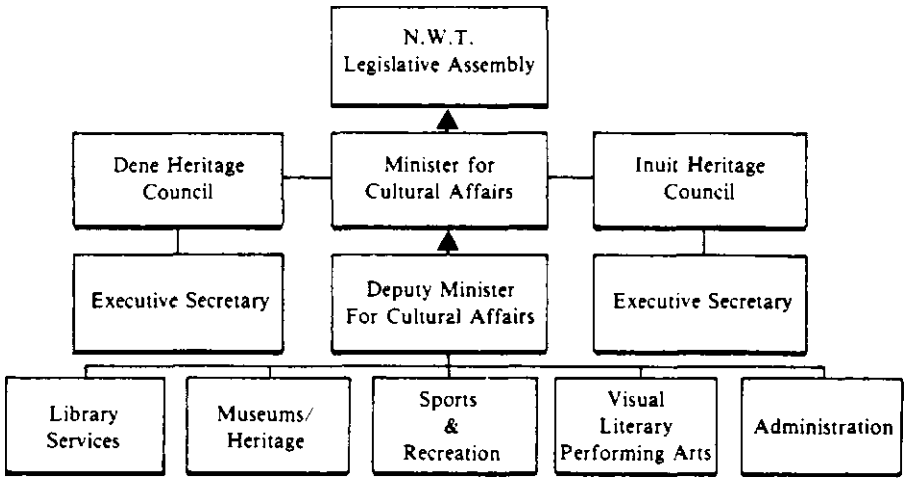
4. Approximately one third of the cost of Option Three will be required for administration within GNWT.
5. The public profile of current GNWT cultural activities is not enhanced by including them within an existing government department.

Option 4: Department for Cultural Affairs and Two Arms-Length Agencies

Two arms-length agencies for cultural preservation and development should be established. These agencies will report to the Legislative Assembly through a Minister for Culture.

A Deputy Minister for Culture will be appointed. This position will be responsible for Library Services, Museum/Heritage, Sports and Recreation, Visual, Literary and Performing Arts and for the administration of the new department.

Option 4 Organizational Chart



Advantages:

1. The two arms-length agencies are given high priority and visibility.
2. The aboriginal peoples of the NWT are allowed to decide what is in their best interest, culturally.
3. Dene and Inuit Heritage Councils of Elders have access to external funding sources not normally available to government.
4. New organizational focus and higher visibility for government programs will be provided.
5. Official recognition and support for the visual, literary and performing arts will result.

Disadvantages:

1. Nearly half of the cost of this option will be required for administration within the GNWT.

2. Of all the options considered, this is the most costly.
3. Requires six additional person-years within the GNWT.
4. The visual, literary and performing arts lack the support of an arms-length agency.
5. Requires significant reorganization of the Departments of Local Government and Justice and Public Services.

Dogteam and snowmobile in Holman Island

Recommendations

Phase II, Task I:

Development of Preferred Organizational Option for Rationalizing Cultural Policy and Program Accountabilities Within the GNWT.

The Executive Committee adopted the basic structure of Option Two as outlined in phase one, task six. The position of arts administrator has not been provided for at this time.

This approach will provide for the establishment of two arms-length agencies: a Dene Heritage Council of Elders and an Inuit Heritage Council of Elders. This will begin the work to meet the prime objective of preserving traditional and contemporary arts and culture unique to the NWT in the only applicable manner.

The Executive Committee further adopted the need of involving the Dene and Inuit Heritage Councils of Elders in the formulation of the Policy on cultural development. Consequently, tasks two and three of phase II will not be completed until such time as the councils of elders are established.

In appointing a Senior Advisor - Cultural Affairs, the Government of the Northwest Territories has initiated the implementation of the work which has to be undertaken to provide for the development of the cultures unique to the Northwest Territories.

Monies have been identified to begin the work of establishing the Heritage Councils of Elders in the new fiscal year, 1984-1985.

Recommendations Phase II, Task 1:
1. It is recommended that an ordinance be enacted to establish, authorize and provide for the funding of the Dene and Inuit Heritage Councils.
2. It is recommended that the office of the Senior Advisor - Cultural Affairs and the Heritage Councils of Elders work together to establish clear guidelines to assist each other in the work to meet cultural needs. This relationship should eventually expand to include all government departments.
3. It is recommended that the work to establish the guidelines consider the following points:
- Organizational structures and processes, through which programs are delivered, must be an expression of the culture the program is designed to develop.
- Beliefs, language, order and form must be known and respected, that is listened to carefully, in order to ensure cultural integrity and growth.
- The priorities established for work to be done must be determined by the value system (beliefs) of the culture to be developed.

Recommendations Phase II, Task 2:
Identification of a Strategy for Promoting Arts and Culture Within the Northwest Territories.

The activities of the industrial community impact the cultures of the Dene and the Inuit in a strongly negative manner in the context of the structures, processes, order, beliefs and forms. It is expected that by following the recommendations here, the government will be able to affect this impact in a way which will assist the native communities of the Northwest Territories to recognize themselves and their ways in the world around them. This work will be required if the cultures of the Dene and the Inuit are to survive, as the work undertaken in implementing these recommendations will modify the existing habitat in ways which will allow the cultures of the Dene and the Inuit to flourish once again.

Symbols must represent Dene and Inuit vision.

Phase II, Task 2: *Recommendations Concerning Public Institutions:*
4. Models of customary Dene and Inuit structures and processes should be the basis for defining the models to meet today's economic, social and political needs in maintaining the habitat of the cultures of the North.
5. Public facilities and the media must reflect the value base of the cultures they serve.
6. The vision and portrayal of reality of the Dene and the Inuit artists should be used to determine the symbols for government and industry in the North.
7. Provisions are required for the establishment and operation of a council for performing, literary and visual artists for the Northwest

Territories.

Some of the areas of responsibilities that this council would carry are to:

- provide logistical support for performing, visual and literary arts. (eg. performances, displays, publications)
- provide for cultural exchange and celebrations of performing arts.
- provide for professional assistance to local artists through workshops, etc.
- provide administrative service to operate fund raising projects (eg. lottery?) for cultural development work.
- provide a medium of art distribution and promotion.
- provide a catalogue of performing artists in the North.
- provide for the development of local initiatives in the arts.
- provide administration of grants and contributions to develop the arts.
- provide input to policy development for the arts.

Ishmael Katsak in the carving section of the Pond Inlet Co-op
Cultural inclusion program in Pond Inlet

8. Person-years, resources and materials for the following existing programs of the GNWT should be administered and supervised by the Councils of Elders to ensure language development according to the spirit as well as the linguistic requirements of today:

- Indigenous Language Development:	Education
- Cultural Enrichment Programs:	Education
- Development of Programs & Materials in Native Language:	Education
- Athapaskan Language Steering Committee:	Education
- Language Bureau:	Information

Phase II, Task 2: *Recommendations Concerning Government Structure, Process and Programs:*

9. Structural and procedural models should be explored with the objective of re-organizing government to better meet the community in its holistic approach to life.

10. For the immediate, the following existing programs of the government should be consolidated within one government agency responsible for cultural affairs:

- Museum/Heritage Division, Dept. of Justice & Public Services
- Library Services, Dept. of Justice & Public Services
- Grants, Cultural Organizations, Dept. Local Government
- Contributions, Northern/Dene Games, Local Government
- Tourism and Parks, Dept. Economic Development
- Arts and Crafts Development Officer, Economic Development
- Sports and Recreation O&M, Local Government
- Grants, Sport & Recreation, Local Government
- Contributions, Sport & Recreation, Local Government

11. Dene and Inuit languages should become official languages in their respective regions of the North.

12. Decisions of an economic, social and political nature (including constitutional development and aboriginal rights) must be taken with the needs of cultural development clearly in mind.

13. The processes of education and other socializing functions of the Dene and Inuit should be implemented in their appropriate contexts in the structures and public institutions in the North.

14. An immersion course on the Dene and Inuit ways of life and languages should be implemented as required orientation for all employees and introduced as an integral part of the curriculum of education.

15. Programs and services, their philosophy, principles, objectives, modes of delivery and personnel must accommodate Dene and Inuit ways of life.

16. Dollars allocated to programs and services should reflect the population distribution of the cultures of the North. Initiation of work to align government spending with the cross-cultural nature of the North is required.

17. A publicity campaign (comparable to that on participaction) should be designed to educate and motivate the public to learn and participate in the multi-cultural nature of the North.

Program structures and process must be reflections of the culture they serve.

Phase II, Task 2: *Recommendations for Consideration by the Heritage Councils of Elders:*

In keeping with the spirit that directs that native people must determine their own cultural development, the following are submitted only as recommendations for the consideration of the Dene and Inuit Heritage Councils of Elders:

18. The presence and economic activities of the Government and

the industrial economy in the North is undermining the basis of Dene and Inuit ways of life by radically altering the habitat. It is therefore recommended that work be undertaken to bring the activities of industry and government into the proper structures, processes, order and spirit according to the Dene and Inuit ways, if their cultures are to survive.

19. Television changes the language of play used by native children within two years after it is introduced to a native community.[1] It is therefore recommended that more programs in Dene and Inuit languages and sound tracks for existing programming are required if television's impact on language usage in the family is to be controlled.

Maggie Etuangat stretching seal skin in Pangnirtung
Inuit Blanket toss at the Northern Summer G i I uvi

20. Local initiatives in cultural matters should be supported.

21. Cultural celebrations and exchanges should be supported and promoted as a means of strengthening self image and development of cultural expressions.

22. The Dene and Inuit should study and determine the impact of the technology they now use to hunt on the balance of natural supply. (Could a hunter kill as many caribou using the old technology of the Dene and Inuit as they now do with rifles? Does the economic activity of industry affect the balance of nature; the number of caribou alive today?)

23. Studies to define in a clear way the structures and processes inherent to Dene and Inuit culture, with the specific objective of formulating decision making processes and rules of order, should be undertaken by the Dene and Inuit.

24. Dene and Inuit should move rapidly into audio-visual technology and do so in their own languages, producing sufficient material to maintain a full time channel on the television.

25. Audio-visual recordings should be made to preserve the

1. Dr. Ed Cook, Linguist, University of Alberta, Calgary, personal communication, 1982

knowledge of the elders. These would also provide raw material for immersion courses and curriculum development for the education system. Some suggested topics:

- Legends, laws and their teachings.
- Relationships with, usage and purpose of flora & fauna.
- Place names (toponyms) and their historical origins.
- Technology, architecture and dress.
- Language.
- Time, its role and influence on relationships.
- Music, its nature, origin, role, etc.
- Space, its role.
- Land, vision of, role, relationships with.

26. "Learner Centres" established and operated by elders are required to implement education according to Dene or Inuit processes of education. These could also be used as centres for orientation of government and industrial employees.

27. Responsibility for language and its development should be carried by the elders. They should consider taking over the person-years and dollars presently within government for the following areas:

- Indigenous Language Development
- Cultural Enrichment Programs
- Development of Programs and Materials in Native Languages
- Athapaskan Language Steering Committee

28. The Heritage Councils of Dene and Inuit Elders should provide for an immersion course in Dene and Inuit ways and languages as orientation for employees of government and industry.

Phase II, Task 3:

Recommendation of Provisions to be Included in the Policy on Cultural Development:

The Executive Committee has recognized the need to involve the Heritage Councils of Elders in the development of the policy on cultural development.

This section then is rightfully deferred until after the Heritage Councils are established and able to participate in the work.