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CURRENTS

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READINGS IN RACE RELATIONS

November 1989

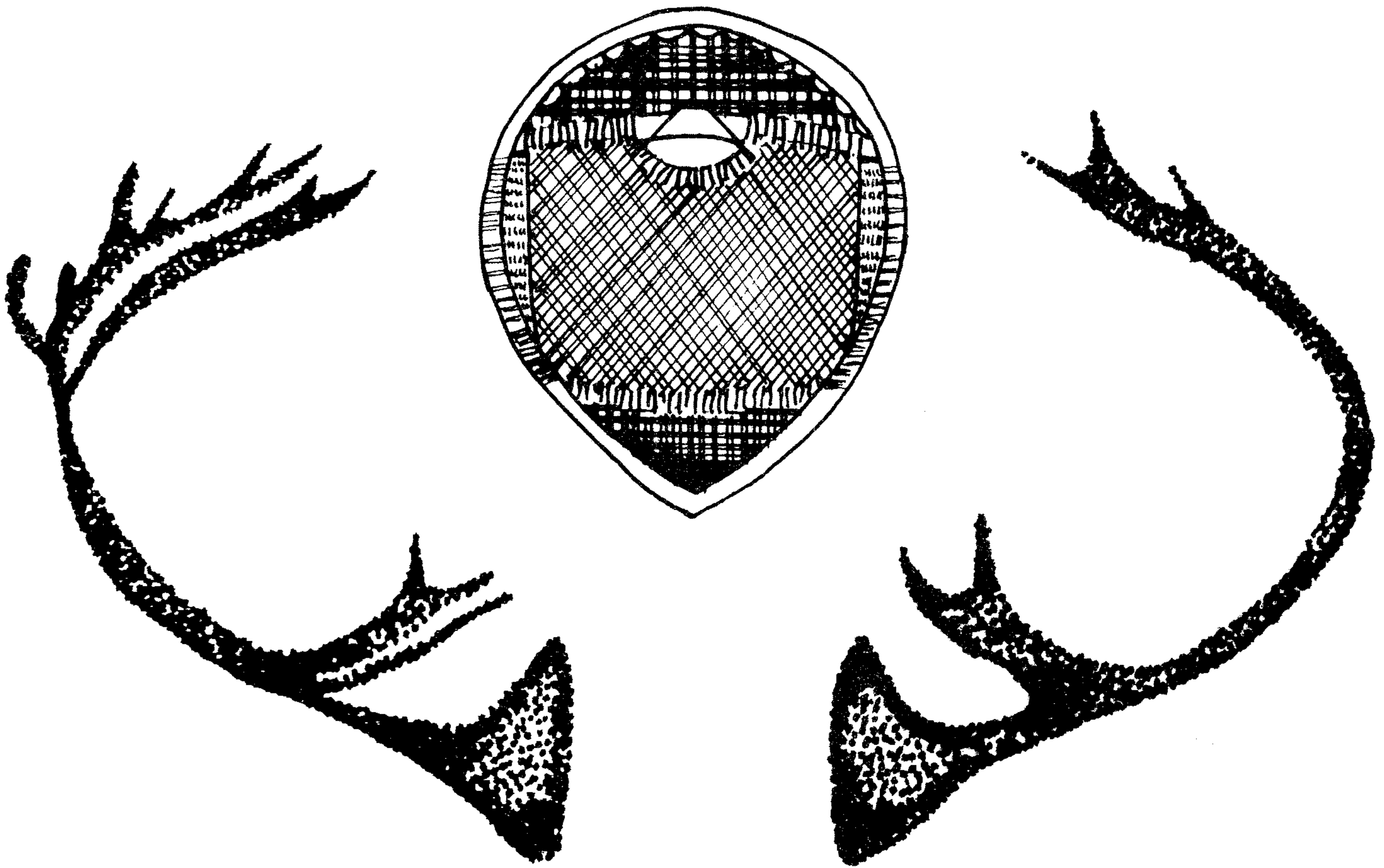
POWER AND PARTICIPATION

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Published by THE URBAN ALLIANCE ON RACE RELATIONS

WHAT IS THE URBAN ALLIANCE ON RACE RELATIONS?

The Urban Alliance on Race Relations was formed in 1975 by a group of concerned Toronto citizens. Its primary goal is to "promote a stable and healthy multiracial environment in the community."

The Alliance is a non-profit charitable organization consisting of volunteers from all sectors of the multicultural and multiracial Canadian society, supported by a small permanent staff.

IN THE FIELD OF RACE RELATIONS WE ARE COMMITTED TO:

- Organizing seminars, workshops and conferences
- Increasing public awareness
- Providing forums for dialogue
- Encouraging equality of opportunity
- Researching and publishing reports
- Consulting, facilitating and mediating in the public and private sector

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE URBAN ALLIANCE ON RACE RELATIONS

Since 1975, the Urban Alliance on Race Relations has sponsored and engaged in:

- Seminars and conferences on Race Relations
- Building community consensus
- Consultations with individuals and organizations
- Working with Boards of Education to develop and implement policies and programs
- Working with police to improve relations with minority racial communities
- Conducting and publishing research studies
- Presenting briefs to the government supporting the development of programs that will ensure equality of opportunity
- Publication of CURRENTS, the only Canadian journal committed to research and dialogue on race relations issues
- Publication of a quarterly newsletter which provides information on activities to members and the general community

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- Who Gets the Work?
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- Race Relations Bibliography
- Case Studies: Multi-Racial Labour Force Project
- Immigrants: Perceptions of Ethnic and Racial Discrimination
- Employment Equity for Visible Minority Women: A Guide for Employers
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Thematic issues include:

- Focus on Visible Minority Women
- Racism and Education
- Discrimination in Employment
- Policing in a Multiracial Society
- Race Equity in Education
- Native People and Racism

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The Urban Alliance on Race Relations, formed in July 1975 to promote a stable and healthy multi-racial environment in the community, is a non-profit organization made up of volunteers from all sectors of the community.

The Urban Alliance on Race Relations is an educational agency and an advocate and intermediary for visible minorities. It works toward encouraging better race relations, increased understanding and awareness among our multicultural, multiracial population through programmes of education directed at both the private and public sectors of the community. It is also focusing its efforts on the institutions of our society including educational systems, employment, government, media, legislation, police, social service agencies, and human services, in order to reduce patterns of discrimination and inequality of opportunity which may exist within these institutions.

The work of the organization is carried out through committees such as: Education; Employment Equity; Media; and Judicial.

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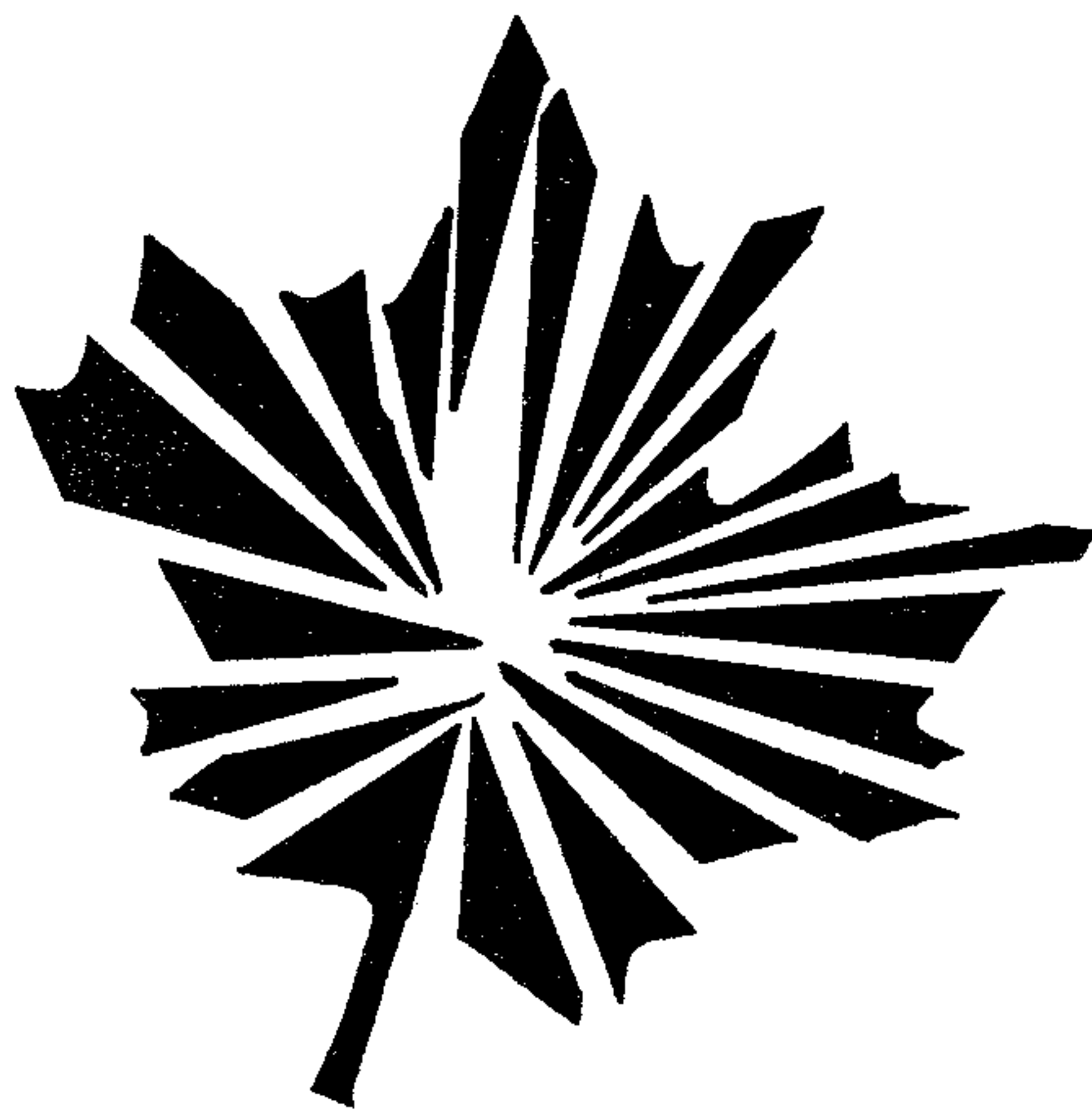
EDITORIAL

POWER AND PARTICIPATION

In capacities other than that of editor of *Currents*, I have had the opportunity in recent weeks to have worked with a number of different communities across Canada; from the Salish off Vancouver Island, the Cree of northern Manitoba, dislocated workers in Cape Breton, to the Innu of northern Labrador. At a time of year when many of us are travelling to experience other parts of this country, it is perhaps an appropriate time to reflect on how we, as Canadian citizens, connect with each other.

My own recent travels have once again impressed upon me the immensity of this country - the geographic, cultural, racial, and linguistic diversity, as well as the enormous disparities in the conditions and quality of life that different Canadians have. How can we feel a part of one another when I can travel back and forth to Europe three times for the same price as travelling from Toronto to Labrador? How can we develop and sustain a sense of participation and civic responsibility towards our fellow Canadians? How can we strengthen the sense that we are all part of the same polity where we can expect and demand equal rights, equal responsibilities, equal access, and equal opportunities for all Canadians no matter who they are or where they live?

The report "What Culture? What Heritage?" published twenty years ago presented a strong indictment of what the schools were teaching our young people about their own country. What progress has been made since that time does not inspire confidence that a generation of truly well-informed young Canadians, sensitive to the interests and concerns of their fellow



Canadians or of Canadian society as a whole, is near at hand.

Canadians, it seems, have a naive, unrealistic and romanticised image of political life that confuses the ideals of democracy with the realities of politics. The ideals are so divorced from practice that Canadians tend to be sceptical of both and are unable to develop the skills necessary for meaningful participation in political life.

Has democracy in Canada come to mean elite governance, with periodic election ceremonials? This elitist theory of democracy is not only identified with power, but also shares many of the characteristics of authoritarian power. It shares them to such an extent that certain kinds of typically democratic values, such as individual dignity and liberal education, become more and more purely mythical, contrived, and tenuous in the world of real action. What has become important is the contrast between *power* - meaning hierarchical dominance, and *participation* - meaning group undertakings which not only involve a common membership but rely on this membership to initiate and direct those undertakings. Many political scientists argue that power has won the day, participation has lost.

As one observer put it graphically: "We are aboard a train which is

gathering speed racing down a track on which there are unknown numbers of switches leading to unknown destinations. No single scientist is in the engine cab and there may be demons at the switch. Most of society is in the caboose looking backward."

In a speech given at McMaster University on May 15, 1948 Lester B. Pearson suggested:

...the absolute and imperative necessity of doing everything we can to make the citizen of today more intelligent and informed about his function as a political animal than he has ever been before in history. That is a "tall order" I know, but a necessary one if democracy is to survive and develop.

This may seem pretty platitudinous stuff. It is. Some platitudes, however, have become such because they are so fundamentally true that it is impossible to refrain from repeating them over and over again. I do not apologise, therefore, for repeating that the kind of education that is most essential now is education for citizenship. All that this means in reality is the cultivation of a capacity to think clearly and honestly on political, social and moral issues. That is all, but that is everything.

These comments are no less valid than when they were made over forty years ago. The fact that little has been done since that time make them that much more urgent today. There has been an apparent neglect of citizen education, and unless we are content with an increasing sense of powerlessness there is a need to revive and revise the concept of citizenship.

Tim Rees

PERSPECTIVES

CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND MINORITIES: MYTH OR REALITY?

George Bancroft

The 1960's shone with a brilliance one visualizes the Renaissance to have reflected. It was the heady days of the civil rights movement, student power, psychedelic drugs, coffee houses, easy sex - and a spate of books and articles on power.

The questions of the sixties are still with us. There is still the issue of who governs, who are the leaders, who makes the decisions - or contributes to the making thereof. Today, in these less chaotic but no less questioning times, we talk not so much of participatory democracy - a term out of the sixties - but of citizen participation.

Characterising it as civic participation, Ottawa through its Department of Multiculturalism has been attempting to study this phenomenon. In 1988 I conducted a very preliminary research project on their behalf. What follows is not a summary of my report, but a few thoughts which come to mind as I reflect on my analysis.

For the purpose of the study, civic participation was defined as the participation, as a result of either election or appointment, on agencies, boards and commissions in the public sector.

What was at issue, then, was the extent to which members of four target groups - Blacks, Chinese, South Asians and Southeast Asians - had been, or stood a chance of being, appointed or elected to legislative councils at the municipal, provincial or federal level, or appointed to agencies such as the International Development Agency, the Royal Ontario Museum, or the Canadian or the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commissions. Also of interest were ap-

pointments to positions of high symbolic significance such as lieutenant governorships or the governor-generalship.

My reflection centres on at least five issues. They are:

- the degree of controversy in the field
- the position or the process
- the discrepancy between the vision and the reality
- the interethnic struggles
- the participation

The Degree of Controversy

The extensive controversy is due in part to the multiplicity of issues subsumed under the title of civic or citizen participation. These issues range from patronage and political pay-offs to who chooses the leaders. It also includes the extent to which leaders chosen by the mainstream are really the accepted leaders. That is, are they accepted by the groups they are "chosen" to represent.

Without having done the necessary and extensive research, I should hypothesize that very rarely in Canada today are the minority leaders chosen and legitimated by the mainstream really accepted by or are acceptable to those minority communities they are presumed to represent.

Two consequences follow from this proposition, if research shows it to be valid: (a) criticism of the chosen by their own is upsetting to the mainstream and (b) both mainstream critics and minority critics fight shy of being incisively critical of the persons involved. One

of the things that militated against Jesse Jackson's campaign for the Presidency was, as expressed in several quarters, a reluctance to come out and criticise him as incisively as Bush, Dukakis, and Gary Hart were criticised.

The same hands-off or kid gloves treatment manifests itself in Canadian society. When a Black or East Indian comes forward as a political candidate is he/she subject to the same rigor of criticism as any mainstream candidate?

Another source of controversy has to do with how the chosen comes to be chosen. And here I express a major difference of opinion with persons I met working in the field. They tended to want to place the emphasis on how many Chinese elected officials, for example, there were at the municipal, provincial and federal levels and make comparisons between provinces. Put another way: are the Chinese of Manitoba manifesting more civic participation than the Chinese of P.E.I.? What is the comparative experience between urban and rural communities?: for example, are the Chinese of Toronto less prone to participate in the wider community than those in a small village in mid Ontario? What are the participation levels based on sex? For example, are Chinese women getting these appointments or being elected more than Chinese men? (Bear in mind here the two-for-one phenomenon: woman and minority). And are differences evident between minority groups? For example, are Chinese women more to the forefront than South Asian or East Indian men?

Fashion or Process?

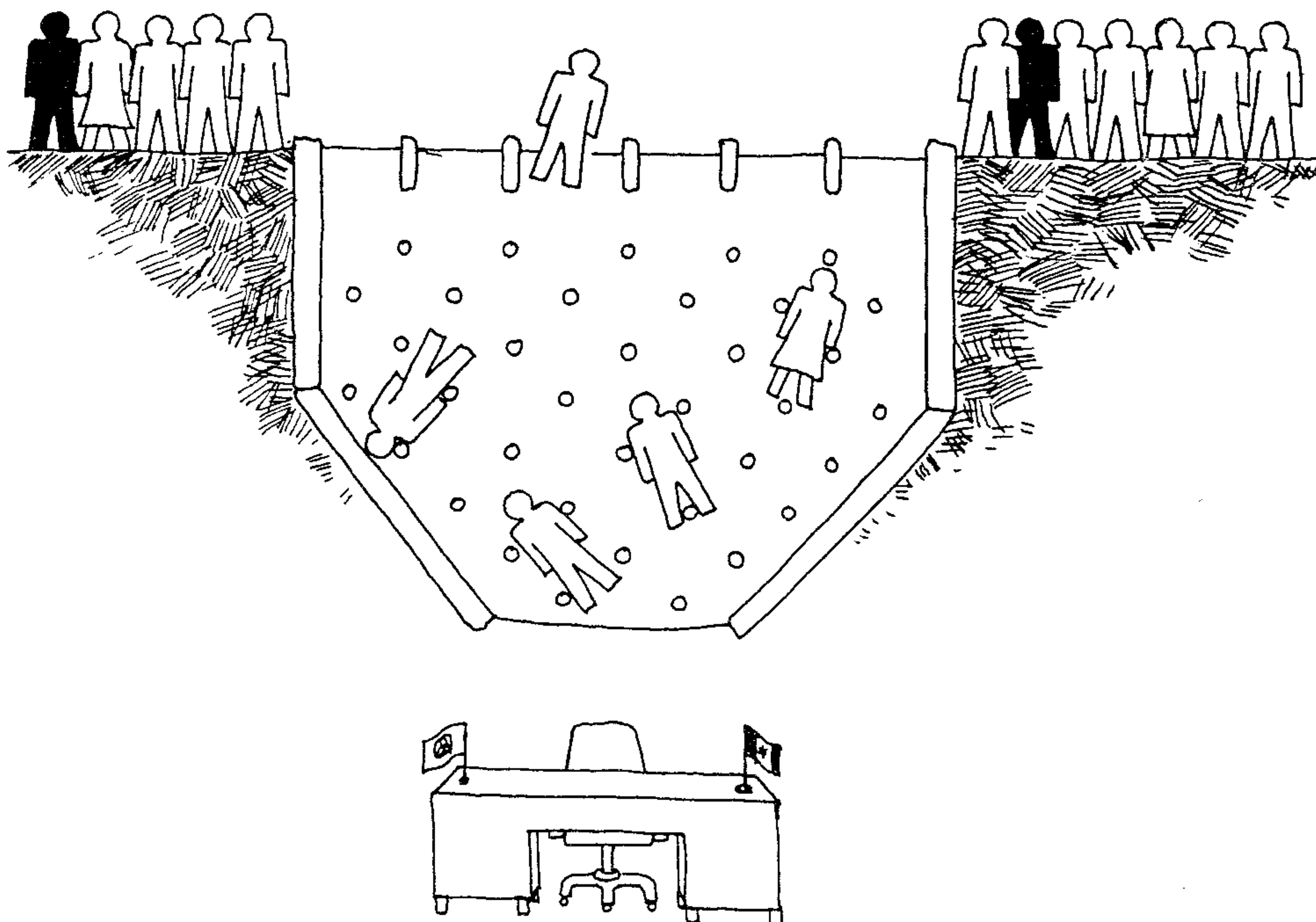
In my view, important though such questions may be, the more significant ones have to do with the process by which one gets on the escalator that leads to subsequent participation.

Recently a friend told me about how X, an "ethnic" in a very high profile symbolic position in one of our provinces came, "way back then", to be introduced to an outstanding Canadian who furthered the former's career. It was a story of the "accidents of life". My friend had made the introduction. They were of the same minority background. He who was introduced got the nod and now occupies a position of high power. He who made the introduction remained in his humble position throughout his career.

Of course "accidents of life", valued though they may be, are not sufficiently objective to permit analysis, but one should still study the process by means of which those who are chosen come to be chosen.

In 1980 I became Executive Director of the Multiculturalism and Citizenship Division of the then Ministry of Culture and Recreation. One of the first things my Minister asked me to give some attention to was facilitating the appointment of an increased number of non-whites to agencies, boards and commissions. I worked on this matter with an experienced member of the senior staff. We had little difficulty coming up with an initial list of people we knew. Where we failed was that we were not able to formulate any sort of process that may be followed with a degree of objectivity to arrive at suitable candidates.

At the moment the major route seems to be the reputational: have you heard of so and so. Until a better way can be designed to recruit candidates for these positions, the



practice of filling them will be inadequate. Thus it is all a question, then, of studying the process. Until we can understand the process, the practice will remain unsatisfactory.

Discrepancy Between the Vision and the Reality

Appointments/election to agencies, boards and commissions is like Motherhood - everybody is for it. When politicians speak before an ethnic audience they make impassioned mention of this policy. When "ethnic" groups appear before commissions of inquiry to present their briefs they make impassioned demands in this regard. But, as a senior political official in Ontario told me, the number of very good candidates for any one position tends to be very many and the number of positions, while presumably extensive (there are more than some

500 relevant agencies, boards and commissions in Ontario alone!) are much fewer than people think.

Consider for example the lieutenant governorship of a province. In recent decades three non-white persons have gained such appointment: Steinhauser of Saskatchewan (Cree Indian), Alexander of Ontario (Black), and Lam of British Columbia (Chinese). The whole eastern half of Canada remains untouched. Also, no non-white woman has made it yet.

The willingness may be there, as attested by the breakthrough appointments already made. But there is still a long way to go, and the way becomes longer still when one assesses the chances of a second representative of a given group to be chosen. In other words, with a Chinese having been appointed to the vice regal post in B.C., one wonders when will the second stand a chance.

Inter-Ethnic Struggles

Every group seems to want more of its people in positions of power; but since the number of positions of which individuals are aware is not congruent with the number of possible office holders, the question arises as to how many of a given position a given group can logically lay claim to.

This reasoning surfaced during the 1984 enquiry of the standing committee of the Federal government into the participation of visible minorities in Canadian society. One group felt that because of its size in the total population it was under-represented in the legislature - despite the presence of several members of that ethnic origin. Others could argue that that group was already represented; and surely it was the turn of the non-represented groups to be recruited.

There is serious danger in this line of argument for it would eventually result in representation by quotas - to which every one is opposed.

The foregoing is the intergroup aspect of the controversy. The intragroup extends it: the Sikhs are the largest sub-group of South Asians but a greater number of South Asian appointments go to non-Sikhs - and the Sikhs wonder about the fairness. Another case in point: Black Jamaicans greatly outnumber other Blacks in Canada whether immigrant or native; what proportion then of Black appointments or elections should go to Jamaicans?

There is an arresting converse line of argument; namely, should not the appointment or election be based on individual merit?

Since civic or citizen participation has, in the final analysis, to do with policies and with governing, the claims of individuals and those of groups have to be balanced. And

herein in part lies the dilemma: how does one do the balancing?

A recent example of a politically astute balancing act in this regard was performed by Premier David Peterson of Ontario. In putting together his 1986 cabinet, he named the first non-white, a Black, one of his ministers. In 1988, he named a second non-white, a Chinese, to cabinet. Thus two non-whites currently sit in the province's 20 member cabinet - both of whom were appointed in their "rookie" year in the House. Other premiers might very well have taken one out to put the other in. Peterson put both.

A South Asian friend disputed the merits of Peterson's act! He argued that a third non-white had been elected; he too was a first-timer; he was South Asian. My friend argued that this third non-white too should have been given a cabinet appointment. But what of the other members and their interests or representation? How many are enough? How many too many? Interestingly enough this third person is on the threshold of cabinet, serving as he does as parliamentary assistant to a minister.

Participation

What does participation really mean? Put crudely, it would seem that when many hitherto excluded groups and their representatives gain the much sought after appointments, the appointee can find himself/herself so thoroughly hemmed in by the system that he/she can make very little of a breakthrough along new paths or paths tailored more directly to sectional group interest, needs or concerns. Some hint of the difficulty can be detected in what is said on taking up the appointment: "I shall keep an eye out for the interest of my group, but I shall represent all." The "but" and

the "all" are the significant, operative terms.

Let me illustrate further. As part of the study of civic participation for the Federal government, I invited some twelve persons from the target groups - Black, Chinese, South Asian, Southeast Asian - to a discussion of the issues involved. The discussion was hard-hitting, forthright, informative and tempered with a measure of cynicism. After all, these were highly qualified persons, who were successful in their own professional right.

One of them made a tellingly insightful point, when, impassioned, she said that, in her view, one of the major problems with the appointment (of visible minorities) to agencies, boards and commissions was that the appointing forces expect things to be "business as usual" once the appointment has been made. What is not realized - and it needs to be, she emphasized - is that "business cannot be as usual". In fact, for the appointee to be effective, he/she expects or hopes to see a change in the structural arrangements of power.

Perhaps therein lies the crux of the matter. That is to say, that civic participation as defined or delineated in terms of appointments of citizens to agencies, boards and commissions should not be seen primarily as rewards for services or favours rendered - rather it should be seen as a factor portending new power-structural arrangements.

George Bancroft is Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Toronto and a Commissioner with the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

FINDINGS

THE INNU OF LABRADOR

Bart Jack

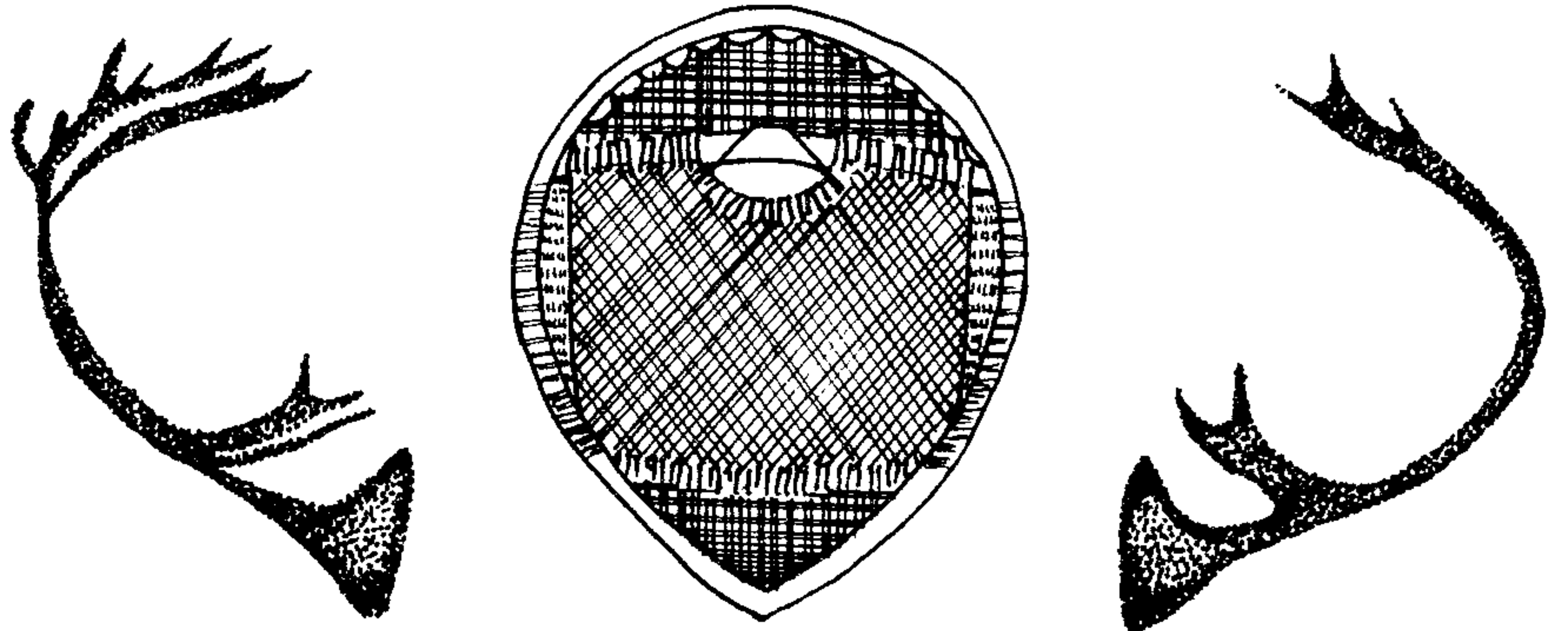
For many years before we heard about the (Akaneshau) whiteman our people lived in what is now called Labrador (Ntesinan). They lived a different way. We lived in small groups and moved from one place to another at different times of the year. Certain families had boundaries which they could not cross to hunt because that area was used by other Innu. Sometimes we gathered together in larger groups in the summer to fish, hunt, and relax after a hard winter.

We had our own Religion which taught us how to live as a part of the land. We learned how to practice what is now called multiple land use, conservation and resource management.

Our family was the centre of "Innu way". The man was the head of the family and was the provider of food, clothing, housing and protection. The mother was the centre of the family and provided much needed support and strength.

Education was handled by our parents and was done by children watching and copying what they saw. It was a method of learning by doing. A child was considered an adult when he proved that he could handle adult responsibilities.

With the coming of the first whiteman, we started changing some of our values. We became commercial trappers and less traditional hunters. We traded for items which became personal property, instead of community property. It was a one-way trade, though. This was because we did not know the value of the traded goods. We traded for knives, beads, cloth, kettles and finally guns and powder. Some of our people were forced to trade whole season's fur (as many as



two hundred pelts) for one steel knife or one kettle. Even though we knew the trading was unfair, we could not do anything about it.

Around 1940, the Base at Goose Bay was built. With it came the promise of jobs, money, better living conditions, and education for our Innu children. Many Innu left their traditional homelands and moved to Sheshatshiu, David Inlet, and along the Grant Lake, Lake Melville, and vicinities.

Many Innu people believed that they had gotten used to the (Akaneshau) whiteman's way, or at least the big money and better times part of it. By then the traplines were neglected and the traditional hunting, trapping and fishing skills ignored. Many Innu did not go back into the country. Indeed, some of us moved into Government houses built for us.

Then came the Governments, and then came welfare. Then these Governments invented the Innu communities where a whole group of Innu could all be put together. This made it easier for administration. The final program of changing the Innu way of life from one of economic independence to a welfare handout was all but complete.

Present Struggles

"Virtually the entire populations of Davis Inlet and Sheshatshiu depend on social assistance payments for most of the year. Alcoholism and the crimes associated with it are serious problems, and the incidence of tuberculosis is increasing at an alarming rate. Infant mortality rates and mortality rates due to accidental deaths far exceed the Canadian average and the national averages for native peoples. Despite the fact that Newfoundland as a whole has the lowest suicide rate in Canada, the rate of suicide in northern Labrador is over three times the rate for native populations nationally and over five times the average rate for the Canadian population as a whole." (Report of the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, St. John's, Newfoundland)

In 1987, the picture of the Innu people is not a pretty one. We are not a happy people. Both the (Akaneshau) whiteman and the Innu are becoming more and more disgusted with each other. The communications gap, the social gap, the economic gap - all these are widening. Both the Innu and (Akaneshau) whiteman are getting nervous be-

cause of the lack of understanding and tolerance among both groups.

We want to describe the position of the Innu as we see it today. Many people say the Innu are lazy. What they do not realize is that the majority of the Innu people have not had an opportunity to provide for their family in the whiteman's (Akaneshau) world. The Government has not helped to provide this opportunity. The Innu does not have the education or skills which will allow him to make a living at something he understands and wants to do. The Welfare Officer has replaced the Innu as head of his own family.

Many people say we do not care for our children. They point to welfare, juvenile delinquency, etc. statistics to prove their point. Nothing could be further from the truth.

We have tried to tell you some of the reasons why we will not be able to solve our problems immediately. We cannot talk about the "Bright New Tomorrow", when so many of our people are cold, hungry and unemployed. We assure you that we want to take part in the development scenario, not stop it. But we can only participate as Innu. We will not sell our heritage for a quick buck or a temporary job.

There are many Government programs today that do not work. In fact, most of them don't work. We know why they don't work but, up to now, nobody asked us or listened to us. They don't work because they are white solutions for Innu problems.

Only an Innu can understand, appreciate and feel what it means to be an Innu. If solutions are to be found which will work, it is we, the Innu people, who must find them. You can only help. Solutions to Innu problems must be found within the framework of our culture. You cannot know, fully, someone else's culture -- you can only

know your own. This is why *control* and *responsibility* over programs for Innu people must be placed in the hands of the Innu people. Government officials will say, "we can't change our programs for Innu people - because they are set up for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. To do something special for the Innu would be discrimination". With national unemployment at amounts of 18% and Innu unemployment at 90-95%, you will still say "the same solution should work for both groups".

Only an Innu can understand, appreciate and feel what it means to be an Innu

There must be a system set up where we will have control and responsibility over the programs that affect us. This control and responsibility must not be just in the administration of the programs - but in the planning. If the idea behind the program is wrong, then we are wasting money and people, trying to make it work. In some cases we may be able to change, or add to, existing programs. This would be good and would save us all both time and money. We must have the right and the resources to change, and stop programs that are harmful to our people. We may need the right to put together new and more meaningful programs.

Hunting and Fishing

There are approximately 13,000 Innu living in the territory, known as *Ntesinan*, what is generally recognized as the boundaries of the

Province of Quebec and the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Innu population is not only dispersed throughout various regions of the two provinces, but for the most part depends entirely on hunting and fishing as the only means of survival.

Today, we, like our ancestors, continue to hunt and fish on a regular basis. These pursuits constitute not only the perpetuation of a very old and traditional way of life, but very often are the only means by which we can adequately provide for our needs.

In fact, today, for the vast majority of us, hunting and fishing are still essential for our survival. The principle source of food, clothing and tools for our survival can be fairly described as the main economic asset currently available to us.

Consequently, when you impose restrictions with respect to hunting and fishing, the result is to increase the possibility of hunger, if not jeopardy, to our lives. Restrictions disregard our rights to a suitable and dignified work, and overlook the suffering which is imposed by being deprived of the exercise of certain rights and the resulting humiliation. The only alternative to hunting and fishing seems to be welfare payments and economic slavery.

Government has prosecuted Innu for alleged violations of "Provincial Laws" dealing with hunting and fishing. Court proceedings are instituted against Innu hunters regardless of the place where the alleged violations occur.

These circumstances regarding our plight should make one even more appreciative of the urgency of the problems we face and investigate alternatives to them.

Community Development

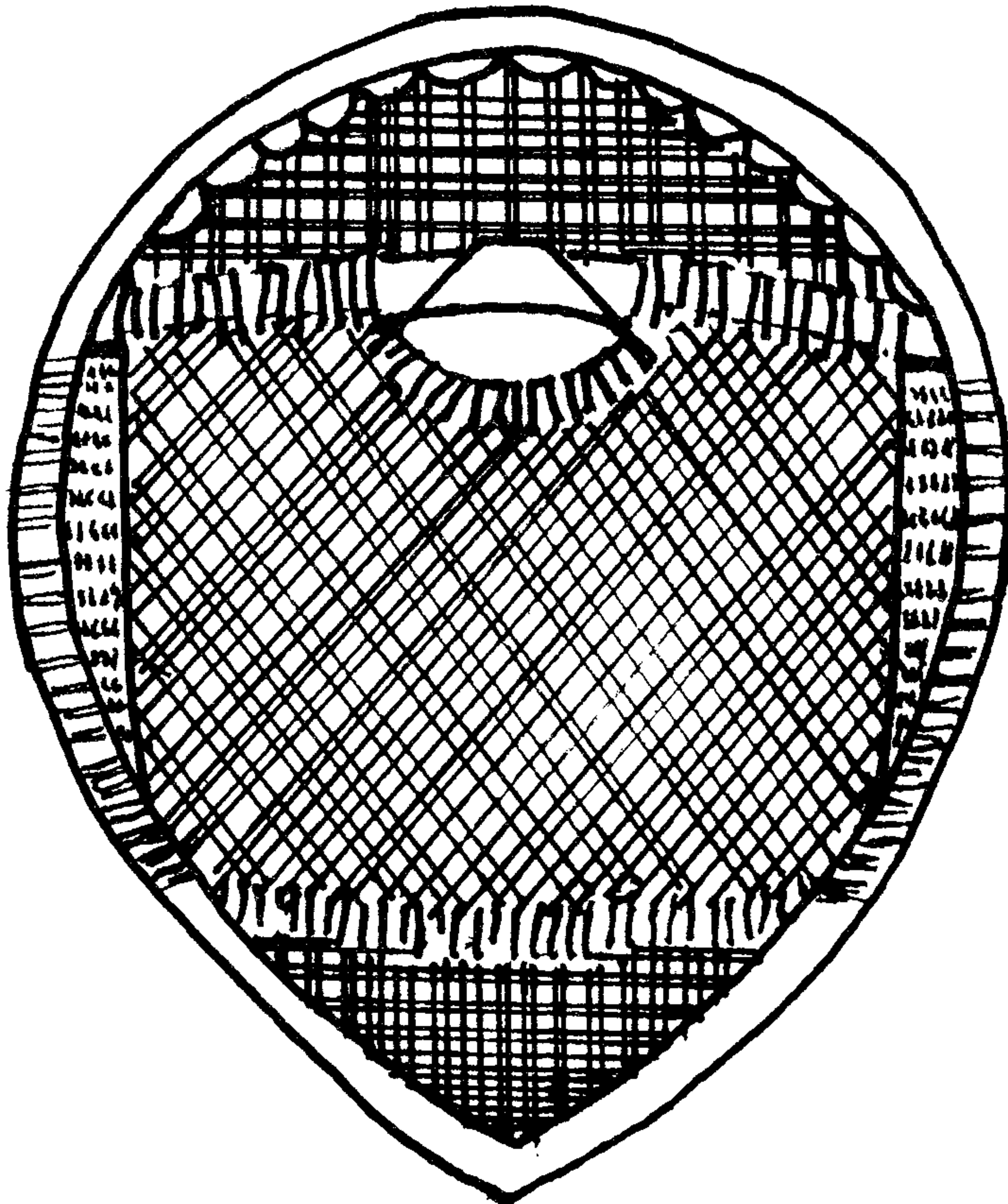
Community Development to the Innu means development of the community. This includes everything from jobs and businesses to running and managing community services.

Our communities, presently, are undeveloped. There is unemployment, sickness, poor housing, poor sanitation, little or no recreational activities. The school dropout rate is extremely high, our people are in jail, and our children sent away to group homes, etc. Our communities aren't only undeveloped, they are sick. It is the general health of our communities which we are concerned about. The spiritual health, the economic health, the social health. A sick community can only be cured when its people want to be cured. We feel we have already taken this step.

The next step is up to you to encourage and support us, the Innu leadership of our communities, to identify problems and propose solutions. This latter step should now take place in our communities. When our communities are planning and most important of all implementing their own recreation programs, education programs, health programs, economic development programs, housing and water and sewer programs, they will be well on their way to becoming cured. Then some of the people we often see in our communities, such as the Police, the Welfare Officer, the Nurse, the Doctor, the Probation Officer, etc. will only be needed in emergencies. We lived without these people before - we believe we can do it again.

Education Development

Most of the changes in the Education System in recent years have not made things better for the Innu student. Even the new changes they are suggesting will be of little use, unless the changes are made by us, the Innu. They will be the same programs with the same results.



The whole (Ntesinan) of Labrador/Quebec peninsula is our School. In the past we learned from our surroundings.

There must be many new programs of instruction for people of all ages, and for people with all levels of previous education. Courses about the land must be taught on the land not just in the classrooms. Traditional skills must be encouraged and taught by our Elders for those of us who are willing to learn and have the necessary skills and interest.

We believe that Innu Education must have two main goals: the stimulation of pride in one's culture and background; and the development of those skills and that knowledge which is necessary to successfully compete in today's world.

The Innu people have no control over educational policy because they are not included. The system, its teachers and what is taught remains strange to the parents. This continues to increase the cultural and communication gap between Innu parent and child. The all important family unit continues to fall apart.

Only a comprehensive and intelligent system of education with sufficient Innu input can properly prepare our children for the skills which will be required in an ever developing society. Most importantly, there must be local control of Innu schools.

Training

In order for many of the programs proposed to have any chance of working there has to be an extensive training program to a number of Innu in our community to ensure that we are prepared to maintain a level of excellence in the day to day operations of our overall programs.

With the implementation of the Community College concept within Labrador we must be and are prepared to ensure that the right kinds of courses will be offered to prepare our people for the kinds of work required within our communities.

This must be done in the very near future if we have any hope of catching up with the world around us.

We have needs that are unique to our local community and feel we should be trained in various technical and administrative areas.

Social and Health Development

Health is a growing concern of our people - we have a total new awareness of our needs for health care. We are aware that without health, we can do nothing worthwhile - with health, we will make tremendous strides in achieving the goals we have set for our people.

We must do all in our power to immediately evaluate, recognize and coordinate our current health care system. We must cultivate initiative within ourselves and decide what is most desirable and advantageous for our people.

We must be totally involved and committed to finding ways and means to improve and ensure the best health care, medical and social. We must participate in setting policies and see to their immediate implementation.

It is time that the Innu, the Provincial Government and Federal Government act cooperatively, decisively and with expediency to meet the immediate and future health needs of the Innu people. It is our hope that some day we will be responsible for all health services in our communities. At present, though, we recognize the need to cooperate with the provincial and federal governments as well as the Grenfell Association in an effort to improve the "appalling" health environment in our communities.

Economic Development

The phrase "Economic Development" describes to the Innu people what we once had, but no longer have. In both our communities the economy is controlled by the Whiteman (Akaneshau), supported by his Governments. They manage the stores, run the fish plants, and own and control most economic activities.

Before the 1940's, the Innu people were economically independent. Now, over half our families are on welfare and the number receiving assistance is as high as 90%. There can be jobs created which would be meaningful to Innu people. This is actually one of the most important plans we have.

The Innu people must play an important part in the development of Ntesinan (Labrador, Quebec). If we are expected to take part in the social, economic and political life of this land, we must have a solid economic base. We must have a chance to help plan the future of this land if we are going to benefit from its development.

Although it is the stated policy of Government to assist us and support our economic development plans, no plan for us to take part has been developed. We suggest that you should allow us to plan a self-supporting way of life that will make sense to Innu people. We suggest also that you should allow and support us to find out what our training needs are, and help us plan programs to meet these needs. We will need a major on-the-job training program. We further suggest that Governments should permit, even encourage us, to the point of allocating secondments to us, in order to help us find the answers and implement our economic development aspirations.

The Naskaupi Montagnais Innu Association believes in a policy of

integrated, properly researched, relevant and meaningful economic development which provides for an authoritative Innu voice in the formulation of that policy. This policy is adopted fully in the articles of the Innu Development Corporation.

Economic Development programs must provide employment which is relevant to the quantity, capacities and preferences of Innu people. Economic Development through the provision of employment should result in the improvement of surroundings, community facilities, and general living conditions of our people. Confusion and frustration now exists in regard to funds which are said to be available for economic development in our area. We need to expedite development, and we need to be heard in our efforts to obtain development funds. However, we must have control over these funds, otherwise there will not be economic progress.

We have been told that one of our biggest problems in getting Governments to accept us is that we "are not credible". This is supposed to mean that we cannot be trusted with responsibility. We have heard this for a long time now, and we are fed up hearing this. We now demand a chance to prove you wrong.

In Summary

This article offers our feelings and recommendations as to how we can work together and reach our common goal to assist our people. We should realize that every day that is lost our people are suffering. Every day that is lost, the economic and social distance between our people and yours increases.

Bart Jack is with the Naskaupi Montagnais Association and the Innu Development Corporation.

