

**ETHNOGRAPHY OF INUIT ELDERLY IN A PRESENT DAY**

**ARCTIC SETTLEMENT: CAMBRIDGE BAY, N.W.T.**

**BY**

 **STEVEN GRANT HILL**

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STEVEN GRANT HILL

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of  
the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
of the degree of

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**ABSTRACT**

This thesis provides, as completely as possible, an ethnographic profile of Inuit elderly in a present day Arctic settlement: Cambridge Bay, N.W.T.. The field methodology employed was the anthropological technique of participant observation plus semi-structured interviews with Inuit informants of both sexes and all ages. Research was carried out over a fourteen week period, from September through December 1987.

The thesis documents the historical changes which have occurred in the Cambridge Bay region leading up to the establishment of the modern settlement of Cambridge Bay. It likewise investigates the role of the elderly within the present day settlement as contrasted to early ethnographic descriptions of the role and status of elderly within traditional Inuit society. On the whole, the research illustrates that the changes in Inuit attitude toward the elderly are still based on traditional values as reflected in early ethnographic accounts, enhanced by a transition to present day settlement life. It is hoped that this depiction of the past and present lifeways of Inuit elderly will offer some insights into the future role and status of the elderly within a changing Inuit society.

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I dedicate my love and accomplishment to my Mother and Father. I have been blessed to be their son. My wonderful mother is not here to share this moment of happiness for me. It is with great strength and emotion that I face my future without her. Her loss is a wound that shall bleed forever, her spirit shall be my guide. My brothers, Raymond and Anthony, and my sisters, Heather and Tammy, have always been there for me, to them my deepest love and thanks.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In June of 1981, while employed at the remote DEWLine radar site "Cam-3" located at Shephard Bay, Boothia Peninsula, I was surprised and delighted to happen across an elderly Inuit couple and their three grandchildren who had just arrived from Gjoa Haven, King William Island (approximately 90 kms. distance). The grandchildren ranged in ages from ten to sixteen years old. The old couple had no idea of their own birth dates but believed themselves to be in their late sixties or early seventies. According to the eldest granddaughter, this group had traversed seventy kilometers of ocean ice by means of snowmobile and sled (qamutic) to net for Arctic Char during breakup on nearby rivers. The granddaughter informed me that her grandparents had been coming to this location since they themselves were children. As in previous years, the plan was to set nets and hunt caribou until open water would allow them to return by boat to Gjoa Haven, usually by late July.

Shephard Bay was not to free itself of ice that year until well into August. Knowing that the aged couple had not expected to be in camp this late in the summer season, I wondered how they and the grandchildren were managing. Soon afterward, upon visiting the radar site, I learned from the eldest granddaughter that both her grandfather

and grandmother were actively hunting caribou each day while she and her younger brothers helped hunt, keep the camp in order and helped prepare "piffi" and "mipko" (dried fish and meat). I was greatly impressed by the fact of this elderly couple enduring such a journey at their age. I was to discover much later that it was not such an accomplishment after all but rather a fairly normal activity pattern for healthy Inuit elderly.

This fascinating, albeit brief, experience with the Inuit elderly served as my initial interest in the aged in Inuit society. Unfortunately, though I was to travel to the Arctic as a DEWLine employee on three further occasions between 1982 and 1986 I was unable to take advantage of the logistics to pursue this interest. Having been "hooked" beforehand by an interest on Inuit aged, it was only natural that my topic for a thesis reflect this. I was particularly impressed by the fact that the Inuit elderly of today have experienced firsthand the numerous changes which have befallen Inuit culture over the period of population centralization in the Arctic. This is the only cohort of the Inuit population that has experienced the transition from traditional to modern lifeways in the North.

With all aspects of traditional Inuit life having been, and continuing to be, transformed through the processes of contact with agents of "white" society. A study of Inuit elderly and the changes they have endured presented a unique opportunity for examination of a

culture in transition. For my thesis, therefore, I undertook to review the history which led to the establishment of mixed Inuit-white settlements in the Arctic; and within this framework, to focus on the role of the elderly in the present day settlement milieu as contrasted to the traditional role of the elderly in Inuit society.

Although the Inuit culture in general has been written about in countless books and articles, a preliminary review of the literature demonstrated that there is little data in Canada with respect to how elderly Inuit individuals are currently leading their lives and how they manage to cope day-to-day in a present day Arctic settlement.

The object of this thesis is to present a limited ethnographic profile of Inuit aged in a present day Arctic settlement. This profile is limited due to the short duration of the fieldwork period. This research differs from previous investigations of Inuit cultural patterns within the context of centralized community life since it deals specifically with a social and demographic component rarely examined in reported or published studies - the Inuit "elderly" (see pages 15-16 for an operational definition of Inuit elderly).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on Inuit elderly is sparse and there is no detailed ethnographic account of the milieu in which Inuit elderly live today. The traditional Inuit practices of invalidicide, senilicide and voluntary suicide of elderly persons is amply documented in anthropological literature (Balikci 1961, 1970; Boas 1907; Hoebel 1941, 1954; Jenness 1922, 1959, 1968; Simmons 1945; Weyer 1932). These culturally-adaptive practices acted against the existence of a large population of elderly Inuit. The contemporary scene of population centralization in the Arctic suggests that Inuit survival strategies have altered substantially. Years of extensive involvement by the Canadian federal government in the Arctic has increased the pattern of more permanent settlements with concomitant cultural change. Consequently, the aged have become a larger and more visible component of the Inuit population. The following discussion outlines the reasons behind this demographic transition.

Traditionally, there were culturally-adaptive mechanisms in place which acted against the existence of an elderly Inuit population. Hoebel (1941, 1954), in his extensive reviews of Inuit law ways, ascertained the existence of several forms of homicide approved by the community as a whole in response to a situation of intolerable stress. In addition to the approved execution of an offender whose action constituted a menace to the stability of the community, where lesser

sanctions had proved ineffectual, other forms of acceptable homicide were infanticide (Balikci 1970; Boas 1907; Hoebel 1941), invalidicide (Boas 1907; Hoebel 1941, 1954; Simmons 1945), senilicide (Boas 1907; Hoebel 1941, 1954; Simmons 1945), and suicide by the aged, with or without assistance (Balikci 1970; Boas 1907; Hoebel 1941, 1954; de Poncins 1941; Simmons 1945; Weyer 1932). The most widely accepted explanation for the latter forms of homicide is ecological and states that the harshness of life in the Arctic was such that economically unproductive individuals could not be supported, nor did they wish to be (Simmons 1945:229; Weyer 1932:138). Condon (1983:85) states that the existence of older, unproductive family members was always marginal, especially in times of hardship, when the very young and very old had to be sacrificed for the good of the strong and healthy. It is with this in mind that Matthiasson (1980:272) makes the comment that, "Great-grandparents were a luxury which Inuit could ill afford."

Invalidicide, senilicide, and suicide by the aged tended to be more common in those areas of the Arctic where the subsistence base was quite unstable, with cycles of famine and starvation being an accepted fact of life. In many respects, of course, the hostile environment of these regions made the prospects of living to a ripe old age an unlikely probability. Indirect evidence to support the presumption that traditionally few Inuit survived into old age is found in the study of Inuit linguistics and kinship. Of note in the realm of linguistics is the fact that in Innuinaqtun (the Copper dialect of the

Inuit language) there exists no words for the terms great-grandmother and great-grandfather. The Innuinaqtun vocabulary does contain the words *anaanattiaq* (grandmother) and *ataatattiaq* (grandfather). Only in the recent decades has the suffix - *uaq* (old) been added to create the words *anaanattiaquaq* (old grandmother) and *ataatattiaquaq* (old grandfather) in reference to great-grandparents. This may indicate that in traditional times individuals simply did not survive long enough to become great-grandparents, hence there was no need for a corresponding term. Likewise, in his discussion on kinship reckoning among the Belcher Island Inuit, Guemple (1966:133) states that, "Qiqiktamiut have little knowledge of their ancestors beyond the third ascending generation so that informants generally failed to remember the siblings of their great-grandparents. Indeed, it is usually impossible to find out who a native's great-grandparents were..."

A number of historical factors are responsible for the modern transition to an aging population and the presence of a "new" demographic population segment - the aged. In chronological order, they are: a) the development of the administration of criminal justice in the Northwest Territories, b) the introduction of federally funded social assistance, and c) the enforced settlement pattern of the past 25-35 years.

- a) The development of the administration of criminal justice in the Northwest Territories: Responding to the challenge to its

sovereignty in the Arctic, the Government of Canada, in 1903, launched an expedition to patrol its arctic shores and commence the establishment of police posts, principally for the administration of law and justice (Jenness 1964, 1968). During the period from 1903 - 1921, Inuit were the wards of the police, thereafter, the administration of the Northwest Territories was the jurisdiction of the Minister of the Interior. While Jenness (1968) compared the initial years of the Royal North-West Mounted Police force's development in the North to a military occupation, the establishment of detachments throughout the region did result in the force's introduction of the rule of Canadian law among Inuit. Through informal and formal means of communicating the new norms and sanctions, some actions, while acceptable within the traditional context of Inuit reaction patterns to normative or interpersonal conflict, were redefined by the police as illegal or criminal. Gradually, such practices as invalidicide, senilicide, and assisting to an elder's suicide declined as the police force's intervention increased and proved successful in bringing "murderers" before the courts to stand trial (Finkler 1975:13).

- b) The introduction of federally funded social assistance: In the early 1950's the federal government introduced family allowances, welfare or "ayoghaktoghiotit" (help for people who are unable to help themselves), and the old-age pension for the Canadian Inuit. It is doubtful whether the politicians of the south had any idea at

the time just how much benefit they were bringing into the Arctic region. An extra baby girl suddenly became more of an asset than a debit and was allowed to live. Likewise, an aged parent or relative represented a financial gain instead of an impossible burden on the family.

- c) The enforced settlement pattern of the past 25-35 years: During the 1950's the federal government started playing a more active role in the administration of Arctic regions. Increased government spending led to the building of schools, nursing stations, and government-subsidized housing units. As a result, Inuit outpost camps were rapidly replaced by mixed Inuit-white settlements that developed at the centres of Euro-Canadian activity in the North. Damas (1966:118) explains that:

Centralization of Eskimo populations at such communities usually stemmed from multiple causes. Primarily these were inability of the Eskimo to live off the game of the country, plus the opportunities for wage labour, the presence of schools, government aid programs, and the related motive of seeking the more exciting life offered by the centralized community.

The move to settlement life has had profound implications for the elderly. As Condon (1983:85) claims, "The status of older individuals in the ethnographic present stands in marked contrast to the marginal position held by the elderly in traditional times.". Although the elderly frequently talk about "the good old days" and criticize the negative aspects of settlement life and the passing of traditional

lifeways, the majority realize that their lives are much better off in the security of the settlement. Indeed, the assumption is that modern settlement patterns are conducive to a biologically healthier and longer life, thus creating an aging population and a "new" demographic population component - the aged.

All of the factors described above contribute to a changing age composition for the Inuit which is compatible with the profile of an aging population. The Northwest Territories have recently been described as comparable to "third world" nations in sharing the similar demographic characteristics of low population density coupled with rapid population growth (Freeman 1971:220, Lu and Mathurin 1973:11; Milan 1980:23-24). Population projections developed by Hamelin (1979:30) reveal not only a substantial growth in the overall population of Inuit in the Northwest Territories, but also a marked increase in the number of those over the age of sixty-five (see Figure 1.1 for Inuit population trends in Cambridge Bay, N.W.T.). This is consistent with a trend reflected in world-wide statistics which illustrate that the aged are a rapidly growing segment of global populations (Hauser 1976:71). The Government of the Northwest Territories may have to prepare themselves to cope with this new demographic profile. Although the aged are a small proportion of the overall N.W.T. population at present, it would appear there is a clear need for expanded home-care services and for community development of resources for the care of aged persons.

Figure 1.1  
Population of Cambridge Bay, NWT  
by Age Group

| AGEGROUP             | YEAR              |                   |                   |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| FREQUENCY<br>COL PCT | 1976 <sup>a</sup> | 1981 <sup>b</sup> | 1986 <sup>b</sup> | 1991 <sup>c</sup> |
| 0-4                  | 85<br>13.82       | 85<br>13.82       | 128<br>15.88      | 166<br>17.55      |
| 5-9                  | 70<br>11.38       | 80<br>13.01       | 114<br>14.14      | 126<br>13.32      |
| 10-14                | 90<br>14.63       | 85<br>13.82       | 86<br>10.67       | 112<br>11.84      |
| 15-19                | 65<br>10.57       | 85<br>13.82       | 89<br>11.04       | 84<br>8.88        |
| 20-24                | 70<br>11.38       | 85<br>13.82       | 88<br>10.92       | 87<br>9.20        |
| 25-29                | 60<br>9.76        | 35<br>5.69        | 81<br>10.05       | 86<br>9.09        |
| 30-34                | 40<br>6.50        | 30<br>4.88        | 42<br>5.21        | 80<br>8.46        |
| 35-39                | 35<br>5.69        | 25<br>4.07        | 34<br>4.22        | 42<br>4.44        |
| 40-44                | 25<br>4.07        | 25<br>4.07        | 29<br>3.60        | 33<br>3.49        |
| 45-49                | 25<br>4.07        | 20<br>3.25        | 26<br>3.23        | 28<br>2.96        |
| 50-54                | 20<br>3.25        | 20<br>3.25        | 22<br>2.73        | 25<br>2.64        |
| 55-59                | 10<br>1.63        | 15<br>2.44        | 23<br>2.85        | 21<br>2.22        |
| 60-64                | 15<br>2.44        | 10<br>1.63        | 22<br>2.73        | 22<br>2.33        |
| 65+                  | 5<br>0.81         | 15<br>2.44        | 22<br>2.73        | 34<br>3.59        |
| TOTAL                | 615               | 615               | 806               | 946               |

a. Statistics Canada Census 1976 (not ethnic adjusted).

b. Statistics Canada Census 1981, 1986 (Inuit only).

c. GNWT Bureau of Statistics Age-Sex-Ethnic Projections 1986-2007, Inuit only (see Appendix C).

### SELECTION OF FIELD SITE

A number of factors were involved in the selection of Cambridge Bay, Northwest Territories, Canada, as a field site. Firstly, Cambridge Bay meets the criteria for the third or centralized phase in the development of Inuit communities (as proposed by Damas 1966). Having developed at the centre of Euro-Canadian activity in the Central Arctic, Cambridge Bay is now the administrative centre for the Kitikmeot (Arctic Coast) Region. Cambridge Bay has experienced the same degree of impact in the economic sector as have other large settlements in the North. The present economy of the community is mixed in nature, with major activities consisting of Government, commercial fishing and hunting, trapping, transportation and communications. While there are a large number of permanent and casual wage labour opportunities in the settlement, subsistence hunting and trapping still play a significant role in settlement life. This broad and flexible resource base made it possible to observe aged individuals engaged in various subsistence strategies.

Secondly, Cambridge Bay provides accessible health care facilities and numerous centrally located service agencies - variables that were believed to play a major role in the practices toward, and behaviour of, Inuit elderly.

Thirdly, Statistics Canada (Census 1981) data for the Inuit population of the Northwest Territories reported figures for the age group 65+ at 2.5 percent of the total population, so it was essential that a community be selected which offered a desirable sample size. Cambridge Bay, the largest mixed Inuit-white settlement north of the Arctic Circle (pop. 1,030) fulfills this requirement (see Fig. 1.1).

Finally, the choice of Cambridge Bay as a field site was based in part on the researcher's familiarity with the community, a factor that was advantageous in facilitating the researcher's entry and integration in the field.

#### ENTERING THE FIELD SITE

A primary concern upon entering the field site was to establish a presence in the settlement. I was very fortunate during my first day of fieldwork to be invited to speak at an open session of a Science Institute of the Northwest Territories seminar held at the local Co-op Hotel. The meeting was attended by Institute staff, northern scholars, and interested local residents. I presented my research objectives and explained why I felt the work was important. I received extremely positive and encouraging feedback from all in attendance. I was quite surprised afterward to learn that news of my research had spread quite rapidly throughout the settlement in the days following the meeting. Indeed, local residents approached me at every turn wanting to discuss

the research and offering valuable suggestions on who I might speak to and what I might watch for during my stay.

I had hoped to be taken in by an extended family so as to observe firsthand the interrelationships between the generations. Unfortunately, the housing situation in Cambridge Bay was such that few families had the room to accommodate me for the entire length of my stay. As it turned out, I was lucky to be taken in by a young Inuit male residing in a one bedroom apartment. My accommodations consisted of a 5' x 7' room which would have normally held storage articles. Small though it was, it was all the space that I required.

As I was directing the research toward a component of the population that in general understood little if any of the English language, I thought it imperative that I try and learn the basics of Innuinaqtun (the Copper dialect of the Inuit language). I had hoped to enrol in a formal language training class offered through the Adult Education Centre. Unfortunately, the class was cancelled during my stay in the settlement due to lack of interest. I had, however, obtained a number of texts and notebooks on the language, including a dictionary and book on grammar, which I found quite useful. Likewise, people throughout the settlement were more than pleased at my attempt to learn the language and offered every assistance possible to help me learn. I was surprised at how my very limited use of the language helped to facilitate my acceptance into the community.

Shortly after arriving in the community I registered to play in the Northwest Territories Senior Mens Hockey League. Cambridge Bay had three teams organized which competed amongst themselves as well as in tournaments with visiting teams. Games were held in a new indoor rink complete with bleachers and concession stand. I was quick to realize that hockey was the main recreational attraction in the settlement. If you did not play then you were a spectator. The quality of hockey was of high caliber and the number of spectators, both young and old, in the hundreds. The game of hockey accelerated my assimilation into the settlement more than any other activity I involved myself in.

Other activities in which I engaged and which helped facilitate my acceptance into the field situation included frequent hunting and fishing trips; weekly attendance at the elders' Anglican church gatherings; attending special elders tea parties sponsored through local organizations such as Katimavik, Social Services, etc.; attendance at numerous community hall beer dances and private parties; and, finally, working for a short period of time as a recreational staff supervisor for the Hamlet Council.

#### METHODOLOGY

Research was carried out over a 14-week period, from September through December 1987. Intensive participant-observation over this period of time made it possible to gather ethnographic information on

the aged of the settlement. Participant-observation is a research technique in which a researcher lives with a group of people and observes their daily activities, learning how the group views the world and witnessing firsthand how they behave. Participant-observation was developed by anthropologists and is central to the gathering of ethnographic data. An outline of the methodology is summarized as follows:

- 1) Preparation and analysis of community maps;
- 2) Documentation of the elderly population of Cambridge Bay; and
- 3) Open-ended informal interviews (as described by Pelto and Pelto 1978).

The first step upon entering the field was to gather information pertaining to the physical layout of the community. A series of maps were generated from data supplied by MACA (municipal and community affairs). These maps were useful in determining physical locations, and as indicators of community structure and behaviour.

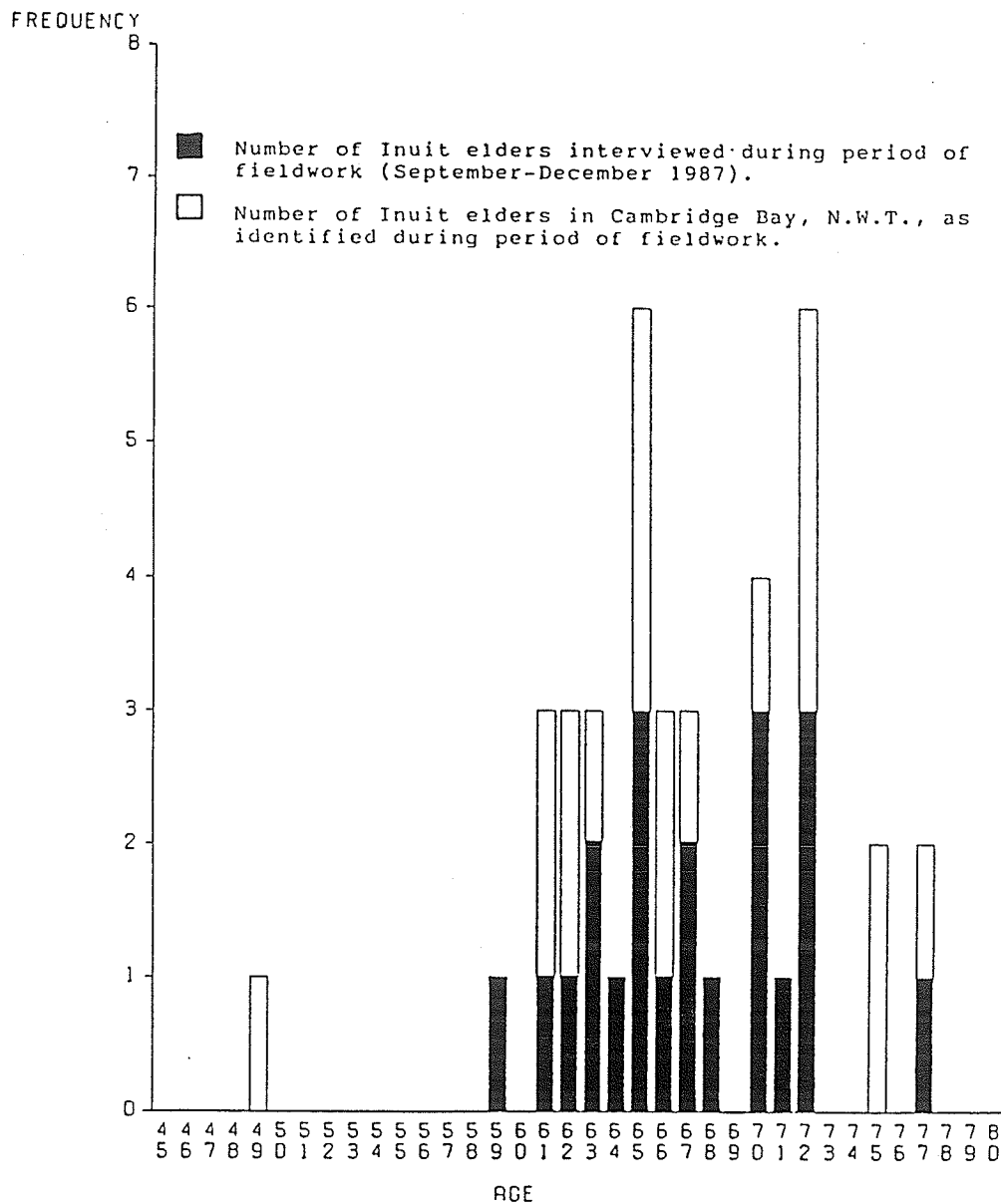
The number and identity of the elderly residing in the settlement as of September 1987 was documented. The status of "aged" in Inuit society is based not as much on chronological age as on a perception of ability. There is no clear boundary between adulthood and old age. In this respect, it was impossible to obtain a clear figure on the number of Inuit aged by studying census data and dates of birth. The method I utilized was a subjective one. My operational definition of Inuit

"elderly" included those who were so identified as being elderly by themselves and by others in the Inuit community. This definition included individuals whose ages ranged from fifty-nine years to seventy-seven years, with one individual identified as elderly at age forty-nine years (see Figure 1.2 for number of identified elders and those elders interviewed during the field period). It should be noted that not all individuals within this age range fit that operational definition of elderly by virtue of their own definition or that of others in the community.

In order to develop a working understanding of who in the community were considered elderly, I constructed a list of names based on informant information. Once a rough list was obtained I asked a number of local Inuit residents to review and comment on its accuracy. Likewise I matched this list to a similar list in use with the Health Liaison Office of the Kitikmeot Inuit Association. I then made a note of those individuals that appeared as borderline cases. I asked the persons identified on my list if they considered themselves to be elderly. Individuals responding in the negative were dropped from the list. I had my revised list examined repeatedly by Inuit throughout the community until I was satisfied that the list in its final form contained the names of exactly those individuals in Cambridge Bay considered elderly as of September 1987. The total number so identified was forty (40) individuals out of a settlement population (Statistics Canada 1986) of eight hundred and six (806) Inuit.

Figure 1.2

Frequency of Total Number of Identified Elders and Number of Interviewed Elders by Age in Cambridge Bay, N.W.T.



Source: 1987 Field Data

Following the completion of the list I began to organize and conduct open-ended informal interviews. To ensure anonymity, Inuit names which appear throughout the text are pseudonyms. The persons interviewed fell into four categories:

- 1) Elderly with little or no understanding of English. These interviews required the assistance of an interpreter;
- 2) Elderly who were fluent in English;
- 3) Local and Territorial government officials; and
- 4) Non-elderly members of the settlement.

In total, 27 interviews were conducted over the period of fieldwork.

All interviews were of the open-ended design based on a series of structured questions (see Appendix A). The interviews were informal in nature and usually conducted over a cup of tea, bannock and some mipko (dried meat). I experimented with the use of a tape recorder during the initial interviews and quickly discovered that no one wished to speak if they thought it was activated. I thus resorted to standard note taking for the remainder of the field period.

During my second week in the field I was approached by a local Inuit woman named Susie who had heard of my project and wondered if I would be in need of an interpreter. Susie was employed as a clerk for the Co-op store but had previously worked as an interpreter for the Department of Social Services. She was 33 years of age, married, had four children under the age of sixteen and was a lifelong resident of

Cambridge Bay. Knowing that I would be quickly in need of the services of an interpreter, I thought it a grand stroke of luck when Susie "applied" for the job, complete with a glowing letter of reference from the Dept. of Social Services. I at once arranged for a meeting with Susie to discuss the possibility of working together. Unfortunately, the official pay rate for interpreters (GNWT) of \$18.00 per hour was completely beyond my budget. Thankfully, Susie understood my situation and agreed to work for the project at the pay rate of \$10.00 per hour. Susie agreed to arrange and schedule interviews with non-English speaking elderly three evenings per week and to accompany me at the interviews in the capacity of translator-assistant. Susie quickly became my biggest asset in the field as she was extremely well respected and knew all of the settlement's elderly.

The interviews where Susie acted as translator were conducted as follows: Upon entering a home I would have Susie explain the purpose of the research and describe where I was from, that I was a student, and that the research was approved and partially supported by the Centre on Aging, University of Manitoba. I would then begin the line of questioning. During the first week of interviews, however, I became aware that if a subject nodded, shrugged or offered only a few words in response to a question, Susie would offer her own lengthy interpretation on what that subject meant to say. I immediately explained to Susie that this situation was unacceptable to me. Susie adapted to the role of passive interpreter quite well during subsequent

interviews. However, I continued to make special notations on my field notes whenever I suspected that a subjects' responses were either incorrectly interpreted or unduly elaborated by Susie and these responses were not included in my final analysis of the field data.

Interviews with Susie lasted about an hour with return visits conducted whenever possible. During many of the interviews Susie's children and/or husband were present. Likewise, friends, children and/or grandchildren of the interviewee/s were almost always present during the interviews; a fact which must be considered as influencing subject responses to interview questions.

After a number of weeks, I became aware that the elderly we were interviewing resided very near to Susie's home, and were all in fair to excellent health, with many still actively hunting and fishing. In order to ensure that I gathered data on a representational sample of Inuit elderly within the settlement, I required Susie to arrange interviews from across the settlement. I likewise had Susie arrange interviews with individuals in poor health. As the field period progressed, I was satisfied that I was accessing a representational cross-section of the elderly Inuit population of Cambridge Bay.

Interviews not requiring Susie to be present were conducted either within the home or in the office of those being interviewed. I was very fortunate to interview three English-speaking elderly Inuit

residents of the settlement who had been sent to Aklavik in the 1930's for christian education (conducted in the English language) in the areas mission schools. I was able to gather a tremendous amount of material from these key male informants (one of whom can be considered a community "elder" as he had been politically active in his younger years) on the history of the settlement as well as on topics such as elderly and the community, alcohol use and elderly abuse.

In addition, data were gathered from informants too numerous to quantify. My inquisitiveness was such that anyone willing to chat over a cup of coffee became another of my informants. Accordingly, I managed to gain a reputation for thrusting my nose into everything.

With the exception of the topic of political activity (see pg. 122) all interviewees used the term elders when referring to the aged of the community.

The body of information collected is discussed under the following sections:

- 1) Introduction;
- 2) Physical Environment;
- 3) Historical Background;
- 4) The Present Community;
- 5) Elderly in the Ethnographic Present; and
- 6) Summary.

## CHAPTER TWO

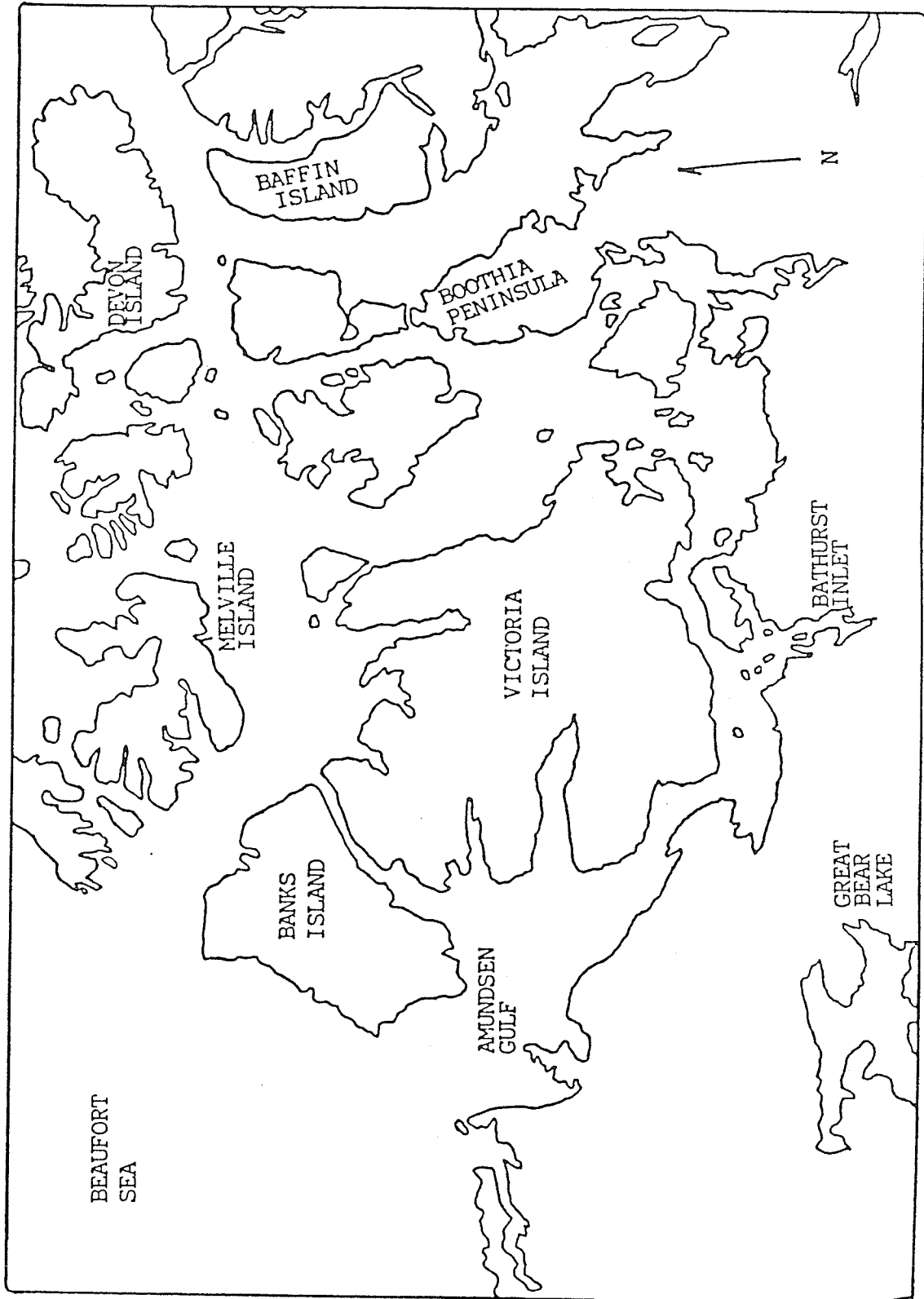
### PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The settlement of Cambridge Bay ( $69^{\circ}07'N, 105^{\circ}03'W$ ) is located on the southeast coast of Victoria Island, north of the mainland Arctic Coast, in the Northwest Territories. Its latitudinal position places it approximately 280 kilometers north of the Arctic Circle and 800 kilometers north of the tree line in an area of continuous permafrost (see Maps 2.1 and 2.2). Victoria Island is the second largest island in the Canadian Arctic Archipelago with a total surface area of 212,198 square kilometers and is characterized by a harsh Arctic climate. The four bodies of water having the greatest impact upon settlement dynamics are, in order of magnitude, Grenier River to the east, Grenier Lake to the northeast, Cambridge Bay, and Dease Strait to the south.

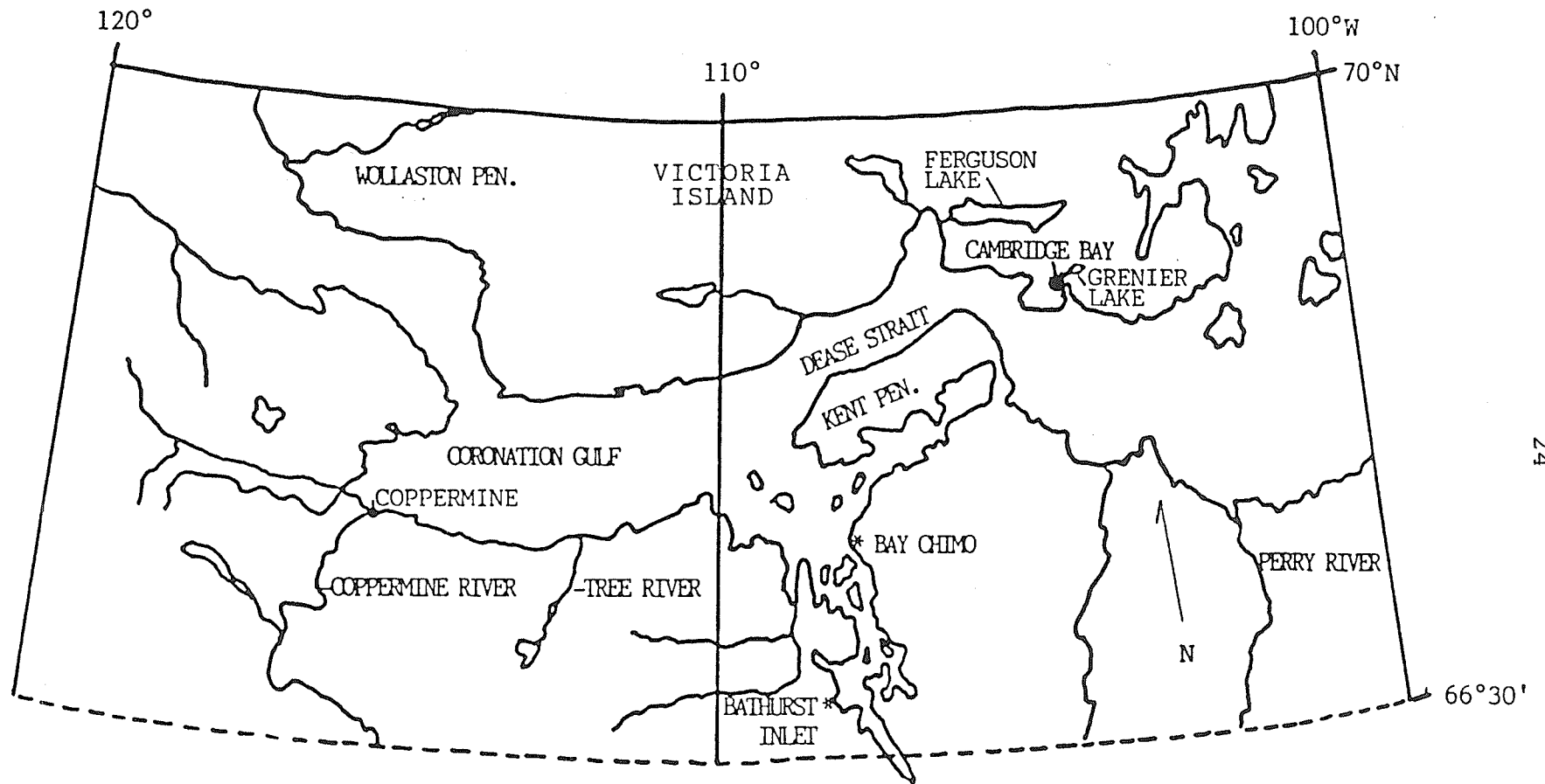
### PHYSIOGRAPHY

Victoria Island is characterized by hills and plateaus to the west and lowland to the east. For the most part, much of Victoria Island to the east is made up of flat-lying Lower Paleozoic rocks. The landscape is low and rolling. Pleistocene glacial deposits are dominant evidenced by deep glacial till and numerous drumlin fields. Bedrock (mainly limestone and dolomite) seldom occurs at the surface, and where it does it is almost buried beneath its own detritus. Rarely do the elevations in this region exceed a hundred metres. The only major variation in

Map 2.1 Central Arctic Region



Map 2.2 Cambridge Bay Region



(Adapted from Abrahamson 1964)

this landscape on Victoria Island is the Holman Island Syncline, a region of scarps developed on what are primarily diabase intrusives, extending in a northeasterly direction from Holman Island to Hadley Bay. In this western region of the island elevations may reach altitudes of 600 metres in mountainous areas (Abrahamson 1964; Condon 1983).

The area surrounding Cambridge Bay is covered by numerous relatively shallow lakes of various sizes, typical of the arctic regions which are underlain by permafrost conditions. The settlement is situated in an area of sags and swells, dry debris-strewn knolls, and moist depressions. The settlement is developed for 1.6 kilometers along the shoreline of Cambridge Bay and approximately 0.80 kilometre northerly. The shore is generally flat for a distance of 15 to 30 metres from the water, then rises at a slope of approximately 15% to an elevation of 15 metres, in the area of greatest residential development. The general relief is in the order of 6 metres within and adjoining the built up area.

The Cambridge Bay area has been glaciated, leaving remnant knobs and ridges of sedimentary bedrock above the kettled till plain. The till has been formed in-situ from the local bedrock and is poorly graded with a predominance of cobble sized material. The only significant landform, representing the highest elevation in this region of Victoria Island, is Mount Pelly. Mount Pelly is a drumlin shaped

hill approximately 16 kilometers to the northeast of the settlement. At an elevation of 213 metres, it rises abruptly above the surrounding lands and is a distinct land-mark and navigational beacon for hunters (NWT DATA BOOK 84/85; CAMBRIDGE BAY, NWT. GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 1977).

The drainage system of Victoria Island is quite complex. Dunbar and Greenaway (1956:207) describe the drainage of Victoria Island as "very confused" and rivers as "following poorly defined courses". Rather than draining through major riverine systems, most lakes drain into one another through a series of interconnecting rivers and streams until reaching the coast (Condon 1983:16). The river of greatest economic importance in the Cambridge Bay region is the Grenier (also known as Freshwater Creek) which drains into Cambridge Bay east of the settlement. The Grenier River continues to be a primary fishing and camping site for local residents during spring, summer, and fall, despite the fact that excessive netting has caused dramatic arctic char and trout depletions over the past few years.

Ponds and lakes are profuse throughout the Cambridge Bay region, as they are for Victoria Island in general. A number of these provide valuable ice-fishing sites for the spring and fall. To the northeast of the settlement (approximately 8 kilometers) is Grenier Lake which is an easily accessible and popular fishing site from spring through fall. Kitiga Lake to the northwest (25 km) and Ferguson Lake to the north and

northwest (35 km) are likewise very productive fishing sites though less accessible after break up. The majority of the lakes in the region are meltwater lakes and are covered with ice eight to nine months out of the year.

### CLIMATE

Victoria Island is characterized by a severe and markedly seasonal arctic climate (see Table 2.1). There are two outstanding characteristics of the climate of this region. One is that the winter is characterized not by its extreme severity, but by its extreme length. Summers are mild and short in duration. Temperatures drop below freezing by the middle of September and remain there through the month of May. If we take winter as that period during which mean daily temperatures are below  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$ ., then this season is almost nine months at Cambridge Bay.

The mean daily temperature at Cambridge bay is  $-15^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The mean daily maximum temperatures are above freezing during June to September only. Although frost might occur during any day of the year, only in July and August are the mean minimum temperatures above  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

The coldest months are January and February during which the mean daily temperatures are  $-33^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $-35^{\circ}\text{C}$  respectively. December and March are also in the  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  range, thus creating a four month period of

Table 2.1 Climatological Table for Cambridge Bay, N.W.T.

| Month | Air Temperature (°C) |                   |                   |                     |                     |                      |                      | Precipitation (cm) |            | Wind      |           |
|-------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
|       | Daily Mean           | Mean of daily max | Mean of daily min | Mean of Monthly max | Mean of Monthly min | Absolute Extremes hi | Absolute Extremes lo | Mean Snow          | Mean Total | Direction | % of time |
| Jan   | -33                  | -29               | -37               | -16                 | -44                 | -6                   | -53                  | 7.1                | 0.70       | W         | 27        |
| Feb   | -35                  | -33               | -38               | -21                 | -46                 | -12                  | -51                  | 4.3                | 0.43       | W         | 28        |
| Mar   | -31                  | -27               | -35               | -14                 | -43                 | -6                   | -47                  | 5.5                | 0.55       | W         | 19        |
| Apr   | -21                  | -17               | -26               | -6                  | -37                 | 6                    | -41                  | 4.5                | 0.45       | N,W       | 16        |
| May   | -9                   | -6                | -13               | 2                   | -24                 | 7                    | -35                  | 6.0                | 0.60       | NW        | 21        |
| Jun   | 2                    | 4                 | -1                | 13                  | -8                  | 22                   | -14                  | 6.6                | 1.70       | N         | 20        |
| Jul   | 8                    | 12                | 4                 | 20                  | 1                   | 24                   | -1                   | 0.2                | 2.05       | N         | 20        |
| Aug   | 7                    | 10                | 4                 | 17                  | 1                   | 24                   | -3                   | 0.0                | 2.36       | E         | 16        |
| Sep   | 0                    | 2                 | -2                | 10                  | -10                 | 16                   | -14                  | 7.3                | 1.54       | E,N,W     | 20        |
| Oct   | -11                  | -8                | -14               | 1                   | -26                 | 4                    | -32                  | 10.6               | 1.14       | NW        | 23        |
| Nov   | -24                  | -21               | -28               | -9                  | -36                 | -3                   | -42                  | 8.3                | 0.83       | W         | 22        |
| Dec   | -30                  | -27               | -34               | -16                 | -42                 | -0                   | -49                  | 6.1                | 0.61       | W         | 25        |
| Year  | -15                  | -12               | -18               | 21                  | -47                 | 24                   | -53                  | 67.0               | 13.98      |           |           |

Source: Dominion Bureau of Statistics  
 1967 The Climate of the Canadian Arctic,  
 Ottawa: Queen's Printer

relatively continuous cold conditions (Abrahamson 1963:8; Condon 1983:16).

The other notable aspect of the climate is the very low precipitation. Precipitation throughout the Arctic is minimal, thus leading to the classification of most of the circumpolar arctic zone as a desert region. Nevertheless, as Condon (1983:18) notes, the continuous permafrost, perennially frozen surface, and relatively slow evaporation process ensure the retention of moisture despite small amounts of rain and snowfall. The total annual precipitation for the Cambridge Bay region is 13.07 cm. The mean annual snowfall is 67 cm, with the greatest amount, about 10.15 cm, falling in October. The bulk of rainfall occurs during the four month period of June to September with an annual average of 6.34 cm (Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Ottawa 1967).

The yearly averages of wind frequencies indicate that the predominant wind directions for the Cambridge Bay region are between west and north. Only in August and September are there significant winds from the easterly direction. The average wind speeds are in the range of 16 to 24 kilometers per hour, although it is not uncommon for there to be 160 kilometre per hour wind speeds recorded during severe storm conditions. The tundra in the Cambridge Bay region is not totally covered by a blanket of snow during the winter months, as would be expected. Incessant wind activity blows the snow, which accumulates

over an eight-month period, into drifts and packs it down to an unprecedented hardness in areas. The author has observed a TD-25 bulldozer proceed over a hard-packed drift leaving only scratches on the surface. As a consequence of wind activity, large expanses of tundra remain clear of snow throughout most of the winter, while drifts of up to three metres may form on the windward side of any obstacle. During particularly dry winters, the local residents encounter great difficulty in over-land travel. Traversing areas blown clear of snow is punishing to both snowmobile and rider and all attempts are made to navigate around such areas.

As Condon (1983:19) remarks, perhaps the most popularized and least understood aspect of the arctic environment is the seasonal fluctuations of sunlight, or photoperiods. Due to the dynamics of the earth's rotation around the sun, nonequatorial regions experience varying degrees of photoperiod change throughout the year, increasing at higher latitudes north and south of the equator. At the latitude of Cambridge Bay, the sun remains above the horizon continuously during June and July. In August, the sun begins to dip below the horizon for increasing periods of time until a balanced photoperiod pattern re-emerges. During November direct sunlight becomes significantly reduced. By the end of the month, there are only one to two hours of direct sunlight, with the sun disappearing altogether in early December. The duration of twilight throughout December gradually diminishes until the winter solstice, at which point there are only a

few hours of very dim twilight at the middle of the day. After the solstice twilight slowly increases in intensity and duration until the sun re-emerges at the end of January.

In February "normal" photoperiod returns and extends to the beginning of April. Toward the end of April there is daylight of 24 hours a day, although the sun is below the horizon between approximately 11:00 pm and 3:00 am. Mid-May through July is the period of direct sunlight 24 hours a day. On June 21st at noon, the maximum altitude of the sun is only about  $44^{\circ}$ , and it is at  $3^{\circ}$  at midnight. As a consequence, the total heat energy provided by the sun at this time is no greater than that provided at temperate latitudes. Much of the sun's heat is largely dissipated into the atmosphere primarily due to the high reflectivity of arctic surfaces.

### ICE CONDITIONS

Temperature, wind frequencies, and current all contribute to the freeze-up, movement, and break-up of sea ice throughout the Canadian Arctic Archipelago. The behaviour of the sea ice varies significantly from season to season. There is, likewise, marked fluctuation from year to year in formation and break-up of sea ice. On average, Grenier River and Cambridge Bay freeze up toward the end of September. By early October ice thickness in the bay area is sufficient to support the frequent pick-up hockey games and travel by snowmobile. However,

open water will persist beyond the landfast bay ice making travel toward Dease Strait extremely hazardous at this time. Freeze-up of Dease Strait varies from one year to the next depending upon meteorological conditions. The combination of prolonged low temperatures and relative calm may cause the strait to freeze over by late November. If conditions are not favorable (high winds and mild temperatures) freeze-over may be delayed until well after Christmas.

The sea ice increases in thickness throughout the winter until a maximum thickness of 1.8 to 2.0 metres is attained in the early spring. The first melting takes place at river mouths, where warmer fresh water gradually melts the ice in a widening radius. At Cambridge Bay the Grenier River opens toward late June with a strong current that much accelerates the melting of the bay ice surrounding the settlement. For the most part, the sea ice between Victoria Island and the mainland remains solid through June when it is still safe for travel to and from the Bathurst region. By the beginning of July the whole shoreward edge of the sea ice has melted, cracks in the ice have appeared, and the surface is covered with pools of water. The sea ice is now affected by winds, which quickly accelerate break-up. The combined action of winds and currents is more important than melting in breaking up and dispersing the ice during July and early August. During this tuvak (land-fast ice floe) phase, the summer camping area on the west arm of Cambridge Bay comes alive with activity. This is a time when people can get back to the land after a long period of relative inactivity in

the settlement. Summer camps are set in preparation, adults hunt seal on the floes near open leads, children jump from floe to floe in play, and everyone, young and old alike, participate in jigging for Arctic Char off the ice floes. All those who venture onto the ice floes at this time of year must pay strict attention to wind direction since it is not uncommon for ice to be blown away from the shore, stranding one until a boat arrives. By the beginning of August, Cambridge Bay and Dease Strait are usually completely clear of ice. Figures provided by Abrahamson (1964:10) give September 15 as the mean date for freeze-up in the Cambridge Bay area and July 20 as the mean date for break-up.

Tides in the Cambridge Bay region are negligible and appear to have little effect upon the behaviour of sea ice. Currents are also of minor significance in the region. Coronation Gulf, Dease Strait and the Queen Maud Gulf are characterized by a weak easterly drift (Abrahamson 1964:9).

#### ECONOMIC USE OF FLORA and FAUNA

The Victoria Island ecotone is classified as Arctic tundra. This classification encompasses the High Arctic subregion of the Arctic Coast and Islands, and the Low Arctic subregion of the mainland Barrenlands. The Arctic tundra is first and foremost a land without trees, a factor which traditionally made wood a coveted possession among the inhabitants of the Victoria Island area (Condon 1983:21).

Tundra soils are thin, acidic, poorly drained, and poorly aerated. They are rich in neither the nitrogen nor the phosphorus essential for plant growth. Tundra soils are agitated by frost action (cryogenics), and subject to extreme low temperatures which hinder the decay of organic matter. Soil fauna are, likewise, scanty; decomposition in the tundra region is exceedingly slow, accomplished by few organisms operating for short periods of time. Continuous permafrost retards plant growth and prevents deep root penetration. All of these factors contribute to the low productivity and low species diversity of arctic environments. As Dunbar (1968:53) has stated, tundra production is only one-fifth that of temperate woodlands.

The tundra in the Cambridge Bay region is that which is commonly referred to as grass tundra. Although a large proportion of the ground is bare of plant life, and appears from both the air and the ground as an immense, arid wasteland, a variety of plant species survive and thrive in the area. Fellfields composed of wind-eroded, frost-churned rock fragments, with crustose lichens, black lichen mats and colonies of Dryas are the dominant plant communities. Clusters of hardy willows and flat bush berries grow in sheltered places, generally along streams and rivers, and may reach heights of 60 to 90 centimetres. Some hardy grasses grow in lower wet areas, where there is a thin layer of soil cover. Briefly in the summer, the area is covered with numerous small colourful flowers of the small arctic plants that abound in the area. Some common species of the brightly-coloured flowering plants include:

moss-pink , Arctic poppy, saxifrages, locoweeds and Alpine milkvetch. Other common species of the region include: small ferns, crowberry, cotton-grass, various grasses and sedges, Arctic lupine, coltsfoot, and various members of the heath family such as bearberry, white heather and alpine cranberry (NWT DATA BOOK 84/85).

It would appear on the surface that tundra vegetation has little impact upon the economic lives of the modern day Inuit. Recent events, however, belie this impression. Many modern arctic communities have developed meat (caribou and musk oxen) processing facilities tied directly to their local Hunter and Trapper Associations, examples being Ulu Foods of Inuvik and Central Arctic Meats of Cambridge Bay. These commercial facilities rely upon the ability of local hunters to successfully harvest yearly government regulated game quotas for their area. Directly after the 1986 nuclear power plant accident at Chernobyl, U.S.S.R., Canadian Federal Government personnel began testing barren-ground and Peary caribou populations for possible radiation contamination. As tundra vegetation showed obvious higher levels of radiation contamination after the Chernobyl accident, the concern was that fall-out radiation would become unacceptably concentrated in herbivorous caribou. This, in turn, would pose a health threat to both local resident consumers and those consumers obtaining the meat through southern commercial outlets. Although two test samples (1986, 1987) in the Cambridge Bay area have been deemed to be within acceptable regulated levels, and harvest quotas have not been

adjusted, the fear remains that the local commercial meat processing facility and all the economic advantages it brings to the community may, in the future, be adversely affected by circumstances beyond anyone's control (Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Association AGM minutes 1987).

Tundra vegetation never figured into the subsistence strategy of pre-settlement Inuit populations in any substantial manner. Jenness (1922:98) has described the traditional use of willow, heather, and Dryas integrifolia as fuel for fires and cotton-grass (Eriophorum) as wicks for seal oil lamps. Willows and mosses are now used as an alternate fuel source for camp fires while out on the land and in emergency situations, however, they are currently of little economic importance.

Inuit lifestyle and ecology have undergone drastic changes since the penetration of permanent southern establishments, as predicted by Jenness (1922:242). Although basic aspects of traditional life have given way, particularly in non-material culture, the Central Arctic Inuit continue to hunt, trap, and net various species of wildlife. These activities remain an essential facet of their communities subsistence sphere. Inuit elderly rely especially upon country-foods, as they openly express their dislike for 'white man's food'. Likewise, the harvest of local resources helps to both offset the extreme high cost of purchasing imported southern foods while creating a source of

cash income through sales to local commercial industries. Preeminent among these renewable resources, in the Cambridge Bay region, are the Peary and barren-land caribou, musk oxen, ringed seal, arctic fox, and arctic char.

The Peary caribou (Rangifer tarandus pearyi) is a small, white coloured species of caribou which inhabits Victoria Island and other islands of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago. The Peary caribou is distinct from the larger barren-ground caribou (Rangifer tarandus groenlandicus) to the south. While the Peary caribou is a year-long resident of Victoria Island, the barren-ground caribou is a migratory species, spending summer on the arctic tundra and winter along the boreal forest fringe.

Historically, the changes in barren-ground caribou migrations have caused severe resource deprivation among the inhabitants of the Cambridge Bay region. Prior to the 1920's, a herd of R.t. groenlandicus would migrate from the mainland to Victoria Island before break-up and return again after freeze-up. Mass movement of barren-land caribou to Victoria Island ceased during the 1920's. According to Hoare (1927) the rifle was primarily responsible for altering the migration routes of the caribou, upon which the Inuit of this area had been so dependent. There was a short resurgence of barren-ground caribou at the beginning of the 1930's, but it did not last (Abrahamson 1964:18). When the caribou failed to migrate to Victoria Island, Inuit

from both western and eastern regions of the Island moved to the mainland. Inuit who remained on Victoria Island, and those who later returned to it, became more and more dependent upon the mainland Inuit for their supply of skins for clothing. They also had to adjust to alternate sources of food (Ibid:18).

By the early 1960's, the situation became desperate. During this period, many forces were at work (more fully discussed later in this report) aimed at creating the centralized community of Cambridge Bay. This was accomplished, in part, through Canadian Federal Government pressure to relocate families from mainland and Island outpost camps into the newly developing settlement. At this time, the barren-ground caribou herd had yet to re-appear in the area. Making matters far worse was the fact that the Island's Peary caribou population was on the decline at this time. In 1959, MacPherson (1960) estimated their number to be around 600 animals, prompting him to recommend that hunting should be discouraged. Abrahamson (1964:142) noted during this period that, "Caribou meat and skins have truly become a luxury for the area."

The Inuit hunters of Cambridge Bay uniformly comment that there are much larger numbers of caribou now than 20 years ago and that they are found much closer to the settlement. The situation has indeed improved to such an extent that it was feasible in November of 1987 to begin operating a commercial meat processing and packing facility (Central

Arctic Meats). Cambridge Bay Inuit hunt the Peary caribou of Victoria Island in the winter, however, most of the caribou are in the northern portions of the Island, beyond the range of Cambridge Bay Inuit. Hunting journeys for the express purpose of taking caribou center on the Kent Peninsula of the mainland. Summer concentrations of barren-ground caribou reach the Kent Peninsula consistently. These caribou hunts usually take place in early August or as soon as sea ice has cleared enough for boat passage. The shortest distance is about 24 kilometres, by way of Cape Colburne (20 kilometers from the settlement). By late August, the barren-land caribou have begun their southward migrations and hunters slowly resort to the smaller but nearer Peary caribou herds.

Musk oxen (Ovibos moschatus) are large, bison-like relics of the last Ice Age that are becoming increasingly common on Victoria Island. Musk oxen also became easy prey with the introduction of modern weaponry and were quickly decimated. In 1929, Hoare (1930:51) estimated their number at 20 and recognized the need for their conservation. Early monographs (Jenness 1922: Stefansson 1913) report the killing of musk oxen to be a rare event among the traditional inhabitants of the region. Musk ox hide was, however, used occasionally for bedding material, as was the horn in making an instrument used to trim the cotton-grass wick of a traditional seal oil lamp. The Victoria Island musk ox population of today has increased to the point where there is no longer a threat of their extinction. To

ensure the continued viability of the musk ox population strict hunting regulations and quotas are maintained by the Department of Renewable Resources. The 1984 musk ox quota for Cambridge Bay was 36 animals (NWT DATA BOOK 84/85).

Up until the early 1960's, seals had not played a significant role in the cash economy of Cambridge Bay. Traditionally, however, seals have always been important as a source of food, clothing, and fuel. The ringed seal (Phoca hispida) is the common seal of the area. The harbour seal (Phoca vitulina) is a rare visitor to the region and the bearded seal (Erignathus barbatus) is found in fairly limited numbers in the area of Richardson Island, off the mainland.

Before a trapping economy was introduced into the region, the Inuit along the south coast of Victoria Island moved out onto the sea ice during the winter and lived in snow house seal hunting villages, as did the rest of the Copper Inuit. At this time of year, breathing-hole sealing became the principle subsistence activity. Present day seal hunting is limited primarily to spring and summer (from March to October). Although hunting continues, seal meat does not appear to be a preferred human food at Cambridge Bay. Seals are harvested rather for the value of their skins. Seal flesh is utilized as a food source for dogs, as well as a supplementary food source for humans. The 1982-83 marine mammal harvest for Cambridge Bay consisted of 86 ringed seals (NWT DATA BOOK 84/85).

Once largely ignored, the white arctic fox (Alopex lagopus) became the most relentlessly pursued fur-bearer in the Arctic with the coming of the fur trade and the advent of the trading post. Until developments of the 1950's, the Cambridge Bay area derived almost all of its income from white fox furs. Arctic foxes are energetic and persistent in their search for food. They are primarily scavengers and will feed off the remains of carcasses wherever they might be found. In the summer their diet consists mainly of lemmings and mice. Fox populations follow a cyclic pattern linked inextricably to fluctuations in lemming and mice populations. Thus, as Condon (1983:22) points out, "...the Inuit trapper not only has to worry about the rise and fall of prices on the southern fur market, but also the cyclic fluctuation of the arctic fox population closer to home."

In the early 1930's, when market prices were high and competition among traders keen (H.B.C. and Canalska Co.), annual yields reached as high as 7,000 fox pelts (Abrahamson 1964:135). By the early 1960's, most of the Cambridge Bay trappers had become only casual trappers. Many of them maintained trap lines emanating from Cambridge Bay itself, taking no more than one day to cover. This meant that the immediate area was over-trapped, dropping yields further. The few successful trappers, on the other hand, maintained lines which took up to five days to cover. These lines extended deep into the interior of Victoria Island and to the mainland south of Kent Peninsula. Abrahamson (1964:136) offers this interpretation on why the shift to casual

trapping:

Sociological and psychological factors of community living at Cambridge Bay inhibit incentive for trapping. The community offers warmth, entertainment, wage employment, and social assistance. In this community, prestige has shifted from the hunter to the permanent wage earner, (albeit the work may be menial) who rents a large comfortable home and can afford the best outboard motors and other material goods.

In 1982-83 there were 57 trappers registered in Cambridge Bay, all on a casual basis. Only nine individuals were recorded as having obtained over \$600 worth of pelts. The total fox fur income generated during the 1982-83 amounted to \$21,012.50 (an average of \$368 per trapper). All trappers must be licensed through the Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Association of Cambridge Bay (NWT DATA BOOK 84/85).

The north and east coasts of Victoria Island combines suitable ice conditions, sufficient food, and refuge from human predators to encourage a high density of polar bears (Ursus maritimus). One must go a considerable distance from Cambridge Bay, therefore, in order to hunt polar bears. Traditionally, polar bear was prized for both raw materials and its meat. Currently, however, there is a quota on polar bear, thus limiting the number that can be taken by local hunters. The limited number of hunting licenses issued are usually reserved for sport hunters that pay up to \$24,000.00 to come up from the south to hunt the animal.

Additional mammals in the study area are the red or coloured fox

(Vulpes vulpes), ground squirrel (Spermophilus undulatus), lemming (Lemmus sibiricus), and arctic hare (Lepus arcticus). Wolves (Canus lupus arcticus) are hunted occasionally on the mainland.

The whole of the Cambridge Bay area abounds in migratory birds during the summer. Geese and ducks of a variety of species, as well as terns, loons, swans, and cranes nest in or pass through the region. Unascertained numbers of birds and eggs are harvested by local residents.

The two most important fish in the Cambridge Bay area are the arctic char (Salvelinus alpinus) and the lake trout (Salvelinus namaycush). The abundance of these fish and their traditional utilization is borne out by Inuit place names of the area and by the richness of archaeological material at many long-standing fishing locations. Char and trout, raw, frozen, dried, or cooked, continues to be one of the preferred foods. Since 1961, char and trout have also contributed to the economy of the area. The Ekaluktutiak Co-operative was founded at that time for the export and sale of frozen char and local sale of dried and frozen trout.

The arctic char is a migratory species, spending the summers feeding in the ocean and winters in inland lakes. The major char migration in the Cambridge Bay area originates from the Grenier River and extends past the settlement to the west arm of the bay (a preferred

summer camp area). During migration periods, large numbers of fish are caught by local residents using nets along the river and off the coast of west arm. Before the use of nets is possible, many local Inuit fish off the ice floes of the west arm area with jigging hooks. Once freeze-up occurs, and the char have returned to the lakes, the local Inuit travel overland to a number of lakes and set nets through the ice. These nets are tended until weather and ice thickness make it impossible to continue. Landlocked char, white fish, and lake trout are all caught in fair numbers at these inland lake fish-net sites.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In order to fully understand the origin and nature of the contemporary settlement of Cambridge Bay, an overview of the development of Copper Eskimo culture, prior to and after the consequences of Euro-Canadian culture-contact, will be given. Following the outline set forth by Damas (1966), the present section will discuss: a) the traditional period, beginning with the migration of early populations into the Central Canadian Arctic; b) the contact-traditional period, commencing with Euro-Canadian exploitation of the Copper Eskimo region; and c) the centralization period, culminating in today's modern administrative complexes.

#### TRADITIONAL PERIOD

The country of the Copper Eskimo may be said to consist of Victoria Island, and, with the exception of the Back River watershed, the mainland north of the tree line between approximately longitudes 102° west and 118° west, and latitude 65° north.

A common culture, and especially the intensive use of native copper instead of stone for implements and weapons, distinguished them from other Inuit groups, and led Stefansson (1919:33) to coin the term "Copper Eskimo". Due to its prevalence in the literature, the term

Copper Eskimo will be used throughout this section in reference to the Inuit of the Central Canadian Arctic.

Archeological data obtained from the Copper Eskimo region suggests that a number of different prehistoric culture groups have inhabited the area for varying periods of time. The earliest archaeological sites, distributed more or less continuously across the Canadian Arctic, belong to the Arctic Small Tool tradition (ASTt) culture called Pre-Dorset. Pre-Dorset peoples reached the Central and Eastern Arctic area sometime in the third millenium B.C.. Pre-Dorset peoples seemed to have been concentrated in a core area around Foxe Basin, a region of land and sea mammal abundance. From approximately 1500-100 B.C., a cooling trend throughout the Arctic resulted in migrations of the Pre-Dorset peoples westward onto Victoria and Banks Islands and southward onto the mainland. A Pre-Dorset site on the Ekalluk River (very near the southeast coast of Victoria Island) confirms these dates and illustrates the close relationship between the Pre-Dorset culture and the Denbigh Flint complex of the Bering Strait (Taylor 1967:11). From 1100-950 B.C., Pre-Dorset sites give way to evidence of a new culture called Dorset.

The development of the Dorset complex coincided with a warming trend which resulted in movement back into the high Arctic. Dorset sites are coastal and usually reflect a sea-mammal economy, although most of them contain some evidence of caribou utilization (Taylor 1971:5). Dorset culture reached its maximum distribution during a

period of cooling in the Arctic (200 B.C. to 400 A.D.).

During the Neo-Atlantic climatic optimum of A.D. 900-1200, the Dorset complex was supplanted by the technologically superior Thule culture. Prevailing theory holds that Thule peoples are directly ancestral to modern Inuit. The superior culture of the Thule is thought to have originated in the region of Bering Strait from the Birnirk phase of Northern Alaska. The warming trend resulted in the retreat of the summer limit of permanent pack ice in the Beaufort Sea, along with longer summers and milder winters. This allowed the predominantly maritime Thule culture to spread rapidly eastward across the Canadian Arctic. It is still not known whether the Dorset culture was absorbed by the vigorous, highly skilled Thule culture or displaced into areas further to the east and south; although there is evidence that the two groups existed side by side for about 200 years (Condon 1983:27).

Archeologically, the Thule culture is an example of the coastal subsistence system referred to as Neo-Eskimo or the Arctic Whale Hunting culture. Sea mammals were usually the prominent food source, notably the great baleen whales. Consequently, the Thule complex consisted of an impressive inventory of specialized harpoons, many projected by a throwing board. Settlements during the Thule period also indicated a greater population density than the preceding Dorset period. Although many Thule sites in the Canadian Arctic abound with

the remains of whale, others yield only moderate or scant remains. A case in point is described by Taylor (1967:12-13):

In a Thule winter village I excavated in 1963, at Lady Franklin point in southwestern Victoria Island, the animal bones reflect a near-denial of the whaling heritage of Thule culture. Of some 5900 identified bones, 82 per cent were of caribou, 17 per cent were of seal, and only 1 percent was of all others...Whale bones totalled .15 per cent of the sample. A similar situation existed in small Thule sites at Cambridge Bay and on the Ekalluk River flowing into Wellington Bay in southeastern Victoria Island.

This illustrates that the whale hunting orientation of Thule culture everywhere may have been overemphasized. As Taylor's data points out, Thule culture in the Victoria Island area had to adapt to a distinct set of ecological parameters, motivated in large part by the fact that the Coronation Gulf-Queen Maud Gulf region was too shallow for baleen whales. The exploitation of caribou and seal by the Thule peoples of Victoria Island symbolizes an adaptation similar to that of the historic Copper Eskimo.

A climatic cooling trend around 1200 A.D., necessitated significant adaptational adjustments among the Thule peoples of the area. By 1500 A.D., winters had become long and harsh, and the southward extension of permanent pack ice effectively put a stop to the migration of baleen whales into Arctic straits. According to Condon (1983:26), cultural adjustments to these climate changes included the abandonment of the kayak and umiak (an open, walrus- or bearded seal-skin boat, about nine

metres long) as hunting instruments and an increased reliance upon breathing-hole sealing. McGhee (1972:130) has suggested that it is at this period of time that Thule culture developed the characteristic cultural patterns of historic Copper Eskimo culture. It is difficult to place a date on the beginning of the traditional Copper Eskimo culture. What seems evident is that the complex was well established toward the end of the Little Ice Age (1650 to 1850 A.D.). A warming trend which began at about 1850 brought about an increase in tundra productivity, and allowed for a heavy reliance upon caribou. From May until November, the Copper Eskimo subsisted mainly on caribou and fish. During these months they actively made mipku (dried meat) and piffi (dried fish) for use throughout the long winter months. Hunting took place during the winter months from snow-house villages on the sea ice. Seals were harpooned at breathing holes (aglus) with the help of dogs, who would seek out such holes. The winter sea ice settlements were larger than those of the spring and summer due to the need for cooperation among hunters engaged in breathing-hole sealing.

The Copper Eskimo region never supported a dense population in comparison to those areas where the harvest of whales and walrus permitted large caches of food and large permanent communities. The Copper Eskimos were among the most nomadic people in the Canadian Arctic.

The Copper Eskimos consisted of groups named for the localities

they traditionally frequented in spring. There was a great deal of contact between groups. Inuit who frequented Cambridge Bay to fish at the Grenier River called it Ekaluktutiak, "the fair fishing place", and were themselves called the Ekaluktutiakmiut, "people of the fair fishing place". In traditional times, the people who met seasonally at Cambridge Bay occupied camps found outside the Bay at Starvation Cove, the Finlayson Islands, and Wellington Bay to the west, Stromness Bay, Albert-Edward Bay and Jenny Lind Island to the east, and at Melbourne Island and Ken Peninsula to the south. Some Inuit groups apparently lived on Victoria Island throughout the year. Others wintered on the sea ice of Queen Maud Gulf and visited the island for the summer only.

Prior to 1910, the country inhabited by the Copper Eskimos had been explored by over a dozen parties. Their travels were of short duration and spread over a period of 150 years. Their influence upon the traditional life of the Copper Eskimos was negligible. Scientific knowledge of the area was virtually non-existent until Stefansson and Anderson explored the western portion of the region in 1910-11 and then returned in 1914 as leaders of the Canadian Arctic Expedition. Between 1914 and 1916, the Southern Party of the Canadian Arctic Expedition carried out ethnographic, biological, and geological work in the Coronation Gulf region. As Condon (1983:29) comments, "The ethnographic work of Jenness produced from this expedition remains the definitive work concerning the traditional culture of the Copper Eskimo."

The early explorations are summarized in Table 3.1. Captains Klengenberg, Mogg, and Bernard, all former whalers, entered the area as traders rather than as explorers. Their written accounts, however, proved extremely useful to the scientific parties and traders who followed in their paths.

During a journey of exploration in 1839 to delineate the north coast of the continent, Chief Factor Warren Dease and Thomas Simpson of the Hudson's Bay Company named Cambridge Bay after H.R.H. Adolphus Frederick, Sixth Duke of Cambridge. In 1851 the area was visited by Dr. John Rae, also of the Hudson's Bay Company, during a search for the lost Franklin expedition. Rae's two ships sheltered in a creek (Grenier River) at the head of Cambridge Bay which was reported to swarm with salmon (arctic char). Judging from the numerous caches in the area, Rae considered the site a favourite of the Inuit, although he did not see any local people.

On a later search for Sir John Franklin's British expedition, Captain Richard Collinson in H.M.S. Enterprise spent the winter of 1852-53 in Cambridge Bay. He made contact with about two hundred Inuit and was visited by a number of them during the winter. Collinson reported that the Inuit spent much of their time during the summer fishing in the Cambridge Bay area, and then in the fall followed the caribou to the mainland.

Table 3.1

Summary of the Early Explorations  
Into the Copper Eskimo Region

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>EXPLORING<br/>PARTIES</u> | <u>AREAS<br/>EXPLORED</u>                                       |
|-------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1770-71     | Hearne                       | Overland to mouth of Coppermine River.                          |
| 1821        | Franklin                     | Coppermine River to Turnagain Point on Kent Peninsula.          |
| 1826        | Richardson & Kendall         | Mackenzie River to Coronation Gulf.                             |
| 1833        | Back                         | Descended Back (Great Fish River) River to Arctic Coast.        |
| 1838-39     | Dease & Simpson              | Coppermine River, along Arctic Coast to Back River.             |
| 1848        | Richardson & Rae             | Mackenzie River to Coppermine River, to Great Bear Lake.        |
| 1849-50     | Rae                          | Arctic Coast to Victoria Island.                                |
| 1851        | McClure                      | Prince of Wales Strait, Banks Island, Victoria Island.          |
| 1851-53     | Collinson & Jago             | Walker Bay, Prince Albert Sound, Cambridge Bay.                 |
| 1902        | Hanbury                      | Ogden Bay to Coppermine River to Great Bear Lake.               |
| 1905-06     | Klengenberg                  | Cape Kendall and Victoria Island.                               |
| 1908        | Mogg                         | Minto Inlet, Victoria Island.                                   |
| 1910-11     | Stefansson & Anderson        | Dolphin and Union Strait, Prince Albert Sound, Coronation Gulf. |
| 1910-14     | Bernard                      | Mouth of Coppermine River, Bernard Harbour, Cape Kendall.       |

Source: Jenness (1922:28-31).

Following Collinson's expedition, the region remained unvisited for approximately fifty years. Despite the lack of direct contact between the Copper Eskimo and southern culture agents during this period, the people of this region were already experiencing some indirect changes. As Condon (1983:29) notes:

Although only a few Eskimos had had any direct contact with white men, the presence of this strange race was universally known among the various regional groups, and some individuals had even obtained certain valued objects from the expeditions that had criss-crossed the area in the first half of the 19th century. Trade with neighboring groups brought in a small amount of European-made metal objects such as knives and files. European diseases were also beginning to take their toll on the residents of the area... there was evidence that some population reduction and redistribution had already occurred,...

Further direct contact between the Copper Eskimo and people from gablunaag nunangat (the White's land) did not occur until the beginning of the 20th century. In 1905, Roald Amundsen stopped briefly in Cambridge Bay while on his voyage through the Northwest Passage in the Gjoa. Nine years later, the Southern Party of the Canadian Arctic Expedition carried out extensive scientific investigations within the Copper Eskimo region. Following the Canadian Arctic Expedition of 1914, the country of the Copper Eskimo was quickly opened up. Within a decade, traders, missionaries, and the R.C.M. Police were firmly established.

### CONTACT-TRADITIONAL PERIOD

Changes between approximately 1920 and 1950 produced important alterations within the Inuit way of life, but did not radically alter it; this period is aptly called contact-traditional by anthropologists (e.g. Damas 1966:117). Changes during this period have had some far reaching consequences, which shed light on present day situations.

Except for the handful of explorers who visited the area over a period of nearly two centuries, the Inuit of southeastern Victoria Island had no permanent contact with outsiders until 1921, at which time the Hudson's Bay Company established a trading post in Cambridge Bay. This represents the first phase in the establishment at Cambridge Bay of what has been called the "arctic troika"; namely, a permanent white community consisting of the Hudson's Bay Company, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and the Anglican Church. The Following is a brief historical outline of the development of the three dominant southern institutions in Cambridge Bay, along with a discussion on Inuit culture change during this period.

#### Hudson's Bay Company

The expansion of the Hudson's Bay Company's trade throughout the Western Arctic in the 1920's was motivated by the high prices obtainable by white fox pelts, which were then in very high fashion.

Other trading companies and independent traders, like the Canalska Trading Company and Captain C. Klengenberg, were also active in the Western Arctic, and many posts were established in order to meet the competition. In addition to the established trading posts, there were numerous independent trapper-traders who operated from schooners often termed floating posts. Their activities, however, were sporadic and did not endure (Abrahamson 1964:16).

In 1921 the Hudson's Bay Company began operations at Cambridge Bay as an outpost of their main operation situated on the Kent Peninsula. A more permanent post was established in the fall of 1923 by F. Jacobson, O. Torrington, and C. Clarke. Clarke later worked for one of the H.B.C.'s main competitors, the Canalska Trading Company (Lemer 1985). It can be noted that the Hudson's Bay Company established a temporary trading post at Cambridge Bay during the summer of 1932 with the schooner Fort McPherson, a 30 tons register, making the trip with a cargo of about 50 tons merchandise (Metayer 1969:3).

The wreck of the supply ship the Lady Kindersley, in 1924, meant that the post had to close for lack of fuel. The post remained closed for two years, however, due to a failure in the caribou migration.

The post re-opened in August of 1927 and was then moved about one kilometre from the small bay where it had first been located to the mouth of a small river named Pelly Creek, at 69°08'N. and 105°20'W..

The Canalska Trading Company established a rival trading post in 1929, which operated in Cambridge Bay until 1939. The Canalska post was situated in such a way that their buildings were the first ones encountered by Inuit on their way in to Cambridge Bay to trade. This was a well planned out strategy which captured almost all the business away from the H.B.C. post. In 1934, to correct this problem, all of the H.B.C. buildings were moved beyond the buildings of the Canalska Company. The stated rationale for this move was, "so that the natives come to our doors first" (H.B.C. Western Arctic Annual Report 1927:9-10). This site is still occupied by the Hudson's Bay Company at the present time; though they report to be planning a move to the settlement centre in the near future.

#### Royal Canadian Mounted Police

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, known at the time as the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, first entered the Copper Eskimo region in 1916, while on a patrol to arrest and deport the murderers of two French missionaries, Fathers Rouviere and Leroux (Jenness 1922:96, 242). In 1917, a second patrol of the R.C.M. Police visited Coronation Gulf, their intent being to find a suitable location for the establishment of a detachment. It was determined that Tree River was a suitable location for a Western Arctic detachment, owing in part to the presence of an already established Northern Trading Company post in the vicinity (est. 1917). The R.C.M. Police detachment at Tree River was

opened in 1919.

In 1922, Inspector (later Commissioner) S. Wood recommended that a new detachment be opened east of Tree River in Coronation Gulf. He recommended this move for the summer of 1923. Inspector Wood's reasons were as follows:

- 1) There was too much work for the detachment at Tree River to handle efficiently.
- 2) The district was too large to be patrolled from Tree River.
- 3) The summer of 1922 had witnessed an influx of white trappers and traders from the MacKenzie River area to Baillie Island and eastward, and the Hudson's Bay Company were extending their posts toward King William Land. The Eskimo living in southeast Victoria Island and in the vicinity of Cambridge and Wellington Bays, along the west coast of King William Land, and on the mainland east of Kent Peninsula had not as yet been visited by police patrols (Metayer 1969:1).

Inspector Wood suggested that Cambridge Bay would be a suitable detachment location based on the following reasons:

- 1) A good harbour - Captain Collinson had wintered there in 1852-53.

- 2) A large fresh water lake lay to the north with two streams flowing into Cambridge Bay. There were plenty of salmon in this lake for dog feed.
- 3) The caribou migration crossed to and from Victoria Island in this vicinity.
- 4) The Hudson's Bay Co. were opening a post at Wellington Bay some 45 miles east of Cambridge Bay on Victoria Island and also had one on the west side of Kent Peninsula already established.
- 5) The distance from Tree River to Kent Peninsula was about 220 miles, too far for winter patrols. Therefore, it was practically impossible to arrange patrols from Tree River that would cover Prince Albert Sound and Kent Peninsula.
- 6) Two cases of alleged murder and one of infanticide had not been investigated on account of pressure of other work (Metayer 1969:2).

Inspector Wood went on to suggest that a non-commissioned officer and two constables, with an interpreter, be stationed at the new detachment of Cambridge Bay.

Due to ice problems off Point Barrow, Alaska in 1923, the supply boat with the police freight was unable to reach Cambridge Bay. Some material was off-loaded at the Tree River detachment and the remainder, along with the prefabricated buildings intended for Cambridge Bay, were

stored at Baillie Island where a temporary detachment was opened. In 1924, Inspector Wood recommended that the detachment at Baillie Island be retained as a permanent detachment and that another outfit be sent out to Cambridge Bay.

The Tree River detachment was abolished on August 15, 1926, and Cambridge Bay was finally opened on August 19, 1926. Most of the buildings at Cambridge Bay were constructed from those previously located at Tree River. The Commissioner of the R.C.M. Police summed up the move by writing:

In the Western Arctic the suppression of the Tree River detachment and its replacement by that at Cambridge Bay seem well judged, the situation of the latter on further examinations appearing to be superior to that of the older post (Commissioner's Annual Report 1927:48).

The detachment at Cambridge Bay became the R.C.M. Police's eastern most, and most remote, post in the Western Arctic. The detachment was first manned by Sergeant F. Anderton and Constable S. Dykes, and, on occasion, a Special Constable (a native acting as dog team driver, guide, and interpreter). As in all other remote northern detachments, the staff were required to make extensive yearly patrols. These patrols were only possible after freeze-up and before break-up when conditions permitted travel by dog-team. As can well be assumed, this was also a period of time when weather conditions were usually very disagreeable. One can only imagine at the hardships encountered during

these patrols, which were intended first and foremost as a means to ensure control of the North. Patrols of 90 days covering over 1600 kilometers in temperatures recorded as low as  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$  were not uncommon. One patrol by dog-team was reported as covering 2532 kilometers and lasting 190 days (Commissioner's Annual Report 1937:100). The police stationed at Cambridge Bay were required to make annual patrols for the purpose of "visiting all white trappers and traders and as many native camps as possible in the District" (Commissioner's Annual Report 1939:122).

On several occasions during the 1930's the R.C.M.P. schooner St. Roch was used as a floating detachment, wintering at both Cambridge Bay and Tree River.

#### Anglican Church

As in most other locations in the Canadian Arctic, the Anglican Church was first to arrive in Cambridge Bay. The first missionary to arrive was the Rev. C.M. Hathaway in 1927. An epidemic of influenza the following year struck all sixteen Inuit who were camped at Cambridge Bay; Rev. Hathaway cared for them until all recovered (Commissioner's Annual Report 1928:57). A similar outbreak in 1926, before the arrival of Rev. Hathaway, had resulted in many deaths. It is most likely that the missionaries actions in 1928, and the outcome, compared to 1926, hastened the acceptance of the Anglican faith; while at the same time,

undermining the power and authority of the area Shaman.

In 1934 the Anglican Mission in Cambridge Bay was handed over to the Rev. Dr. Rokeby-Thomas. Along with his wife Anna, a nurse, the Rev. Rokeby-Thomas remained in Cambridge Bay for five years, leaving on August 4, 1939. During those five years the Rev. Dr. Rokeby-Thomas travelled great distances by dog-team, adopted many of the local customs, and was very well received by Inuit of the region.

The Rev. Dr. Rokeby-Thomas was replaced at the mission by the Rev. George Nicholson, a pioneer missionary who was fluent in Inuinnagtun (Copper dialect of the Inuit language). With the declaration of war in September 1939, however, the Rev. Nicholson left Cambridge Bay and was not replaced by another residing Minister for fifteen years. For the Roman Catholic Church, "It was the time or never to have a residing priest there ourselves." (Lemer 1985:5).

The Oblates of Mary Immaculate decided in 1937 to open a mission in Cambridge Bay. The Catholic Church was not very well received, however, and faced many difficulties in trying to get established. The following passage exemplifies the situation encountered,

Father Delalande was rather disappointed of his little success with the Eskimos, in this expedition... he found the local Eskimos usually tense, cold and distant... He could foresee a long struggle ahead before obtaining any conversions... (Lemer 1985:4).

The Inuit remained distant from the Catholic clergy in Cambridge Bay and the despair that this caused is detailed in the many pages of Codex Historicus, written by the Fathers of the Mission Post. When problems were encountered in trying to purchase a building from the Canalska Trading Co., to use as a church, the decision was made to abandon Cambridge Bay and relocate at Ellice River. The Catholic Church was thus inactive at Cambridge Bay between 1941 and 1953.

#### Inuit Culture Change

For twenty years, following the establishment of a permanent white community at Cambridge Bay, the village remained only a nucleus to which the Inuit of surrounding encampments traded or gathered for festive occasions. The permanent population of Cambridge Bay consisted of traders, missionaries, police, and the three or four Inuit families employed by them. From time to time, the population included several old or disabled Inuit no longer able to live self-sufficiently from the land (Abrahamson 1964:119). Inuit trading into Cambridge Bay between 1920 and 1950, continued to live off local resources, although there were fluctuations in caribou migrations which began a reliance on imported foods.

The most significant introduction into the contact-traditional period was the fur industry. The barter of furs provided the sole means by which Inuit could obtain southern goods, such as traps,

firearms, ammunition, food, and even clothing. The major innovation in their seasonal round was dispersion along trap lines between November and April (the best time for arctic fox furs), which took them deep into the interior of Victoria Island and to the mainland by way of Kent Peninsula. After returning south from an expedition lasting four years (1916-20), Captain Bernard stated that,

...the Copper Eskimo country had undergone a profound change during the last few years...The Eskimos were leaving their winter sealing grounds about two months earlier than usual and devoting their attention to the trapping of foxes. In the winter of 1919 all inhabitants of southeast Victoria Island migrated to Kent Peninsula, where a large supply of blubber fuel had been accumulated by the trader in order that the natives might be able to give all their time to trapping...The old copper culture had given place to one of iron...and the old style of dress was being abandoned in favour of western models (Jenness 1922:248-49).

Trapping gradually replaced traditional winter activities. In place of large groups gathering on the sea ice during the winter to cooperate in breathing-hole sealing; individual families spread out to the interiors of Victoria Island and the mainland engaged in trapping activities. Large social gatherings became limited to Christmas and Easter in-gathering periods when families came into the settlement from surrounding encampments to trade their skins for supplies (Condon 1983:30; Porter personal communication).

Trapping required far greater mobility than traditional winter activities. In order to cover long traplines during a period when

there is little sunlight, Inuit increased the size of their dog-teams (Abrahamson 1964:18). The Copper Eskimos originally kept no more than two or three dogs per family (Stefansson 1913). They were used for seeking out a seal's breathing hole, and as pack animals. Journeys in traditional times did not require large sleds or large numbers of dogs to haul them. By the 1940's, however, teams of eight dogs were not uncommon, and a few families maintained as many as fourteen dogs (Abrahamson 1964:18).

In good fur years, returns were high. Inuit in the area were able to obtain through trade most of the southern goods they desired. Constable S. Dykes, of the Cambridge Bay detachment, made the following observation:

In this part of the district there have been since last fall four trading posts established by the Hudson's Bay Company, and Mr. C. Clarke, which fact has been beneficial to the natives in some ways, by obtaining a high price for their furs, but this has also a tendency to make them lazy, as they do not require so many pelts to trade for their requirements, and the traders themselves state that the natives do not trap anymore than is absolutely necessary for their needs, but prefer to lay around the camps doing nothing (Commissioner's Annual Report 1927:79).

In poor fur years, Inuit quickly became indebted to the trading companies by purchasing, on credit, goods which they deemed essential, yet years earlier had done completely without. An interesting note is that in poor fur years Inuit could not afford to purchase imported

southern foods but rather had to rely on country foods which in every respect were better for them. Reliance on country foods also ensured retention of traditional hunting practices. The following extract from a report made by Inspector A. Belcher illustrates the point:

The natives generally speaking are in good health this winter though they are experiencing pretty hard times, owing to the lack of fur, and are living on game with no store goods. I am of the opinion that they are far better off living on the game of the country, then they were last year when they could afford to buy canned goods from the trading companies (Commissioner's Annual Report 1931:101).

The major setback of the period was final cessation of the mainland caribou migrations to Victoria Island by 1931. Abrahamson (1964:119) suggests that the larger number of dogs increased the pressure on the caribou herds and hastened their decline. According to Hoare (1927), however, the rifle was primarily responsible for altering the migration routes of the caribou, upon which the Copper Eskimo had been so dependent. Hoare surmised that lead caribou were shot in the mountain passes on the mainland. The trailing bands of caribou turned aside to seek fawning grounds on the mainland, where depredation by wolves, eagles, and humans was greater than on Victoria Island. No matter what the cause, the resident population of caribou on Victoria Island was not sufficient to supply the needs of the Inuit in the Cambridge Bay area. Nor were there sufficient numbers of caribou on the mainland of the Kent Peninsula. Many Inuit from both western and eastern portions of the Island moved to the mainland, where the few caribou could still

be hunted. Those that remained on the Island came to depend upon a supply of caribou skins for clothing from Inuit of the Bathurst Inlet (Kingaokmiut & Umingmaktokmiut) or Coppermine River (Kukluktokmiut) areas.

To a certain degree, imported food prevented starvation on the Island yet was nowhere near equal in value to the caribou meat it replaced (Abrahamson 1964:18). Arctic char and trout remained a staple of the area. The river systems emanating from the south and east coasts of Victoria Island supplied enough fish during the fall run to enable Inuit to cache fish for winter use. Seals, likewise, continued to be an important source of food, fuel, and clothing. Referring to the people on Victoria Island, Rokeby-Thomas (1976:52) wrote: "We feel great pity for the tribes up there. One day they eat seal and fish...while the next day their diet is fish and seal."

The most important outgrowth of the contact-traditional was the gradual development of permanent settlements, culminating in today's modern administrative complexes. These early settlements grew around the "arctic troika" of trading posts, R.C.M. Police detachments, and missions. These white enclaves offered much to the Inuit. For a few white fox furs, seemingly useless, Inuit could obtain durable metal tools, accurate and deadly weapons, unique foods, and strange clothing. The white man's village never seemed to move; instead of having to move to survive, food came to them, food and goods enough for everyone.

They soon became focal points into which Inuit frequently traded and visited. Yet, before the 1950's, they remained largely deserted for most of the year. This was soon to change.

#### CENTRALIZATION PERIOD

The break with contact-traditional life came in the 1950's. Events rapidly brought about dramatic and irrevocable alterations in the way of life of the Copper Eskimos. Construction of a Long Range (Loran) navigation beacon in 1947, marked the beginning of a rapid transition at Cambridge Bay. The transition period ended with the construction of the Distant Early Warning Line (DEWLine) in 1955, an event which triggered the swift departure from contact-traditional activities. The opportunity for wage employment in Cambridge Bay during the last half of the 1950's led to the abandonment of outpost camps and profoundly altered the basic fabric of the subsistence economy based entirely upon renewable resources.

In 1947 Cambridge Bay was chosen as the site of a low frequency Loran slave station. This navigation system required a chain of three stations, one master, and two slaves. The master station was at Kittigazuit near Tuktoyaktuk, the slaves at Cambridge Bay and Skull Cliff near Point Barrow, Alaska. About 20 Inuit were employed during construction of the beacon in Cambridge Bay. The "old town" on the east side of the bay developed at this time, as Inuit employees built

houses from scrap lumber left over from the construction of Loran support buildings. Abrahamson (1964:119) noted that:

For the first time, a permanent community of over 100 Eskimos, including families of the employed, lived a major part of the year at Cambridge Bay. The sudden development of wage labour, created by construction and later maintenance of the beacon camp, coincided with a depressed market for fix furs. Relatives of those employed consequently drifted into Cambridge Bay for extended visits.

When construction of the beacon site was completed, the Cambridge Bay Inuit population again declined, but never returned to the old style trading community of a few Inuit families clustered around the trading company, the police post and the church mission. A number of families remained at Cambridge Bay to work in maintenance jobs at the beacon site and to maintain a landing strip on the winter ice of the bay.

After being tested for some time, the Loran navigation and communication system proved unsatisfactory and was abandoned in 1951. The Canadian Department of Transport entered the community and took over some of the buildings on the Loran site for a weather station and radio communications centre. The Royal Canadian Air Force set up an arctic survival school in the remaining buildings of the beacon site. Both the Dept. of Transport and the R.C.A.F. employed Inuit on a year-round basis. "Cold War" politics, meanwhile, was soon to alter the physical as well as the functional character of Cambridge Bay.

By 1952, the United States Government believed it was evident that the airborne nuclear delivery capabilities of potential enemies (i.e. the U.S.S.R.) had put the heartland of the United States in critical jeopardy. As a result, the U.S. military community assembled a hand-picked research team, security-code named "Summer Study Group", to discuss defence options. The group convened at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Lincoln Laboratories in the summer of 1952. The invention, installation, and maintenance of a distant early warning radar and communication system, positioned as close to threatening enemy air bases as possible, was the Summer Study Group recommendation accepted by the U.S. Air Force.

In December of 1952, the U.S. Defence Department took action as a result of the Summer Study Group's accomplishments and gave official approval to the DEW System defence plan. Soon after, a massive construction project, security-coded Project 572, was initiated.

Construction of the DEWLine in the Coronation Gulf-Queen Maud Gulf area began in 1955. Cambridge Bay developed into a major transportation and supply centre for all the DEWLine sites in the region. One of the main DEWLine stations (Cam Main) was erected at the west arm of Cambridge Bay, about eight kilometers from the settlement which was on the east arm of the bay. Cam Main became sector headquarters for 12 sites located at 80 kilometre intervals, between King William Island and Bernard Harbour. At the peak of construction

200 to 250 Inuit were employed in this sector (Abrahamson 1964:120; Clancy 1987:195).

At this time, Cambridge Bay became the focus of immigration from Perry River, Ellice River, Bathurst Inlet, the south coast of Victoria Island, and from as far west as the MacKenzie River Delta (Kavanna, personal communication). By the summer of 1956, the Inuit population of Cambridge Bay had reached 114 persons in 26 families. Twenty-two men out of 32 men between the ages of 16 and 55 were working in wage employment (Abrahamson 1964:120). Although Cambridge Bay had rapidly changed into a settlement primarily engaged in a wage economy, Ferguson (1957:16; in Abrahamson 1964:120) points out that during the transition period of construction days it was still necessary for all employees at Cambridge Bay to leave their jobs periodically to hunt for fresh meat.

Although large wages were earned by a few Inuit in steady or casual employment during the construction boom years of the late 1950's, most of the Inuit population of Cambridge Bay depended on the primary activities of trapping, hunting and fishing. Cash income from the land was derived primarily from white fox. Traps were still set, but traplines were shorter and confined to the land near the settlement. This land was heavily trapped while remote areas were neglected (Abrahamson 1964:34). Abrahamson noted as well that,

...the cost of trapping equipment and the supplies necessary to sustain a man and his family on the land for several weeks or months at a time had steadily risen.

Thus, increased operating costs and declining or unstable fur prices lead trappers to prefer the easier life in the settlements where wage employment, or relief, and the amenities of community living were available (1964:34).

Due to economic uncertainty associated with the fur industry, the Canadian Department of Northern Affairs generated a flurry of new proposals that aimed to encourage new economic activities for Inuit people (Clancy 1987:194). According to Clancy (1987:194), one plan called for the redirection of land-based Inuit from trapping into wage employment in settlements. Wage employment opportunities, however, were not available to meet an influx of people from the land. The result of the redirection policy was critically described by Abrahamson (1964:35):

Nowhere are employment opportunities keeping pace with the expanding population. Most families rely on social security payments such as Family Allowances for children, Old Age Assistance, and Disabled and Blind Persons Allowances. In many cases this is not enough, and heavy relief expenditures have been required to support the population at a standard of living which still falls far below that enjoyed by other Canadians.

The Department of Northern Affairs (Eskimo Affairs Committee) placed one of the first of the Northern Service Officers (NSO) at Cambridge Bay in 1955, primarily to:

co-ordinate the activities of all field organizations with a view to making the greatest possible use of all resources available and to improving the economy and living conditions among the Eskimos...(Clancy 1987:195).

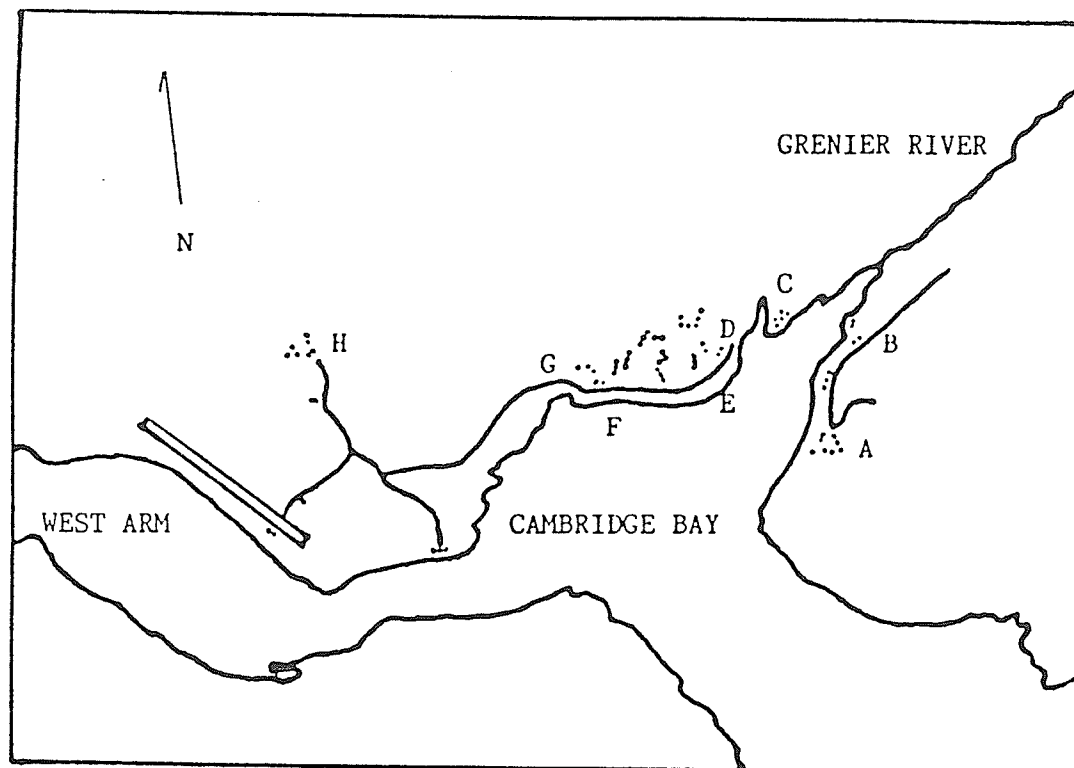
In 1956, the Northern Service Officer became area administrator, responsible for Inuit scattered throughout the Cambridge Bay, Perry

River, and Bathurst Inlet areas, as well as for those employed in the Cambridge Bay sector of the DEWLine. The mandate of the area administrator was to stimulate the economy by encouraging co-operative ventures and handicraft development; and to help Inuit in their period of transition by overseeing financial assistance schemes, such as the Inuit Loan Fund, the Low Cost Housing Program, and the Small Boats Assistance Program (Abrahamson 1964:36; Clancy 1987:194). Other federal government departments started playing a more active role in the administration of the area. Increased government spending led to the building of a school, nursing station (Northern Health Services), and government-subsidized housing in the settlement, thus creating more jobs for local residents. The Department of Transport, in particular, enlarged its staff and facilities when the DEWLine transferred to it a 1520 metre elevated all-weather air field in 1961. With the air field, Cambridge Bay had become an important transportation link between the eastern and western arctic and a north-south link between Winnipeg and Edmonton and such northern points as Resolute on Cornwallis Island.

By the 1960's, the settlement of Cambridge Bay had altered its form considerably. The original settlement developed around the R.C.M. Police detachment and missions on the east side of the bay. The Loran beacon site was also established on this side. Only the Hudson's Bay Company built on the west side of the bay. The transformation began when the DEWLine site and runway were established about 6 kilometers west of the Grenier River. The Department of Northern Affairs,

Department of Transport, the missions and Northern Health Service all established or transferred their facilities to the west side also. Most of the Inuit population abandoned the "old town" on the east side of the bay and re-established their homes around the new complex of buildings on the west side. An interesting note is that the Inuit population distributed in groups according to the areas from which they had emigrated (Abrahamson 1964:121; Kavanna, personal communication). Hence, the settlement developed as shown on Map 3.1.

Map 3.1.



| <u>AREA</u> | <u>DESIGNATION</u> | <u>GROUPS OCCUPYING</u>                                                  |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A           | Old Town           | Seasonal visitors, Cambridge Bay area camps                              |
| B           | " "                | R.C.M. Police Detachment                                                 |
| C           | Jack's Point       | Bathurst Inlet Inuit                                                     |
| D           | " "                | Perry Island Inuit                                                       |
| E           | " "                | Hudson's Bay Company, Post Office, Pentecostal Mission, Anglican Mission |
| F           | New Town           | Cambridge Bay Inuit, Catholic Mission, Government Offices                |
| G           | " "                | Ellice River Inuit                                                       |
| H           | West Arm           | DEWLine site, runway                                                     |

Adapted from Abrahamson 1964:122.

## CHAPTER FOUR

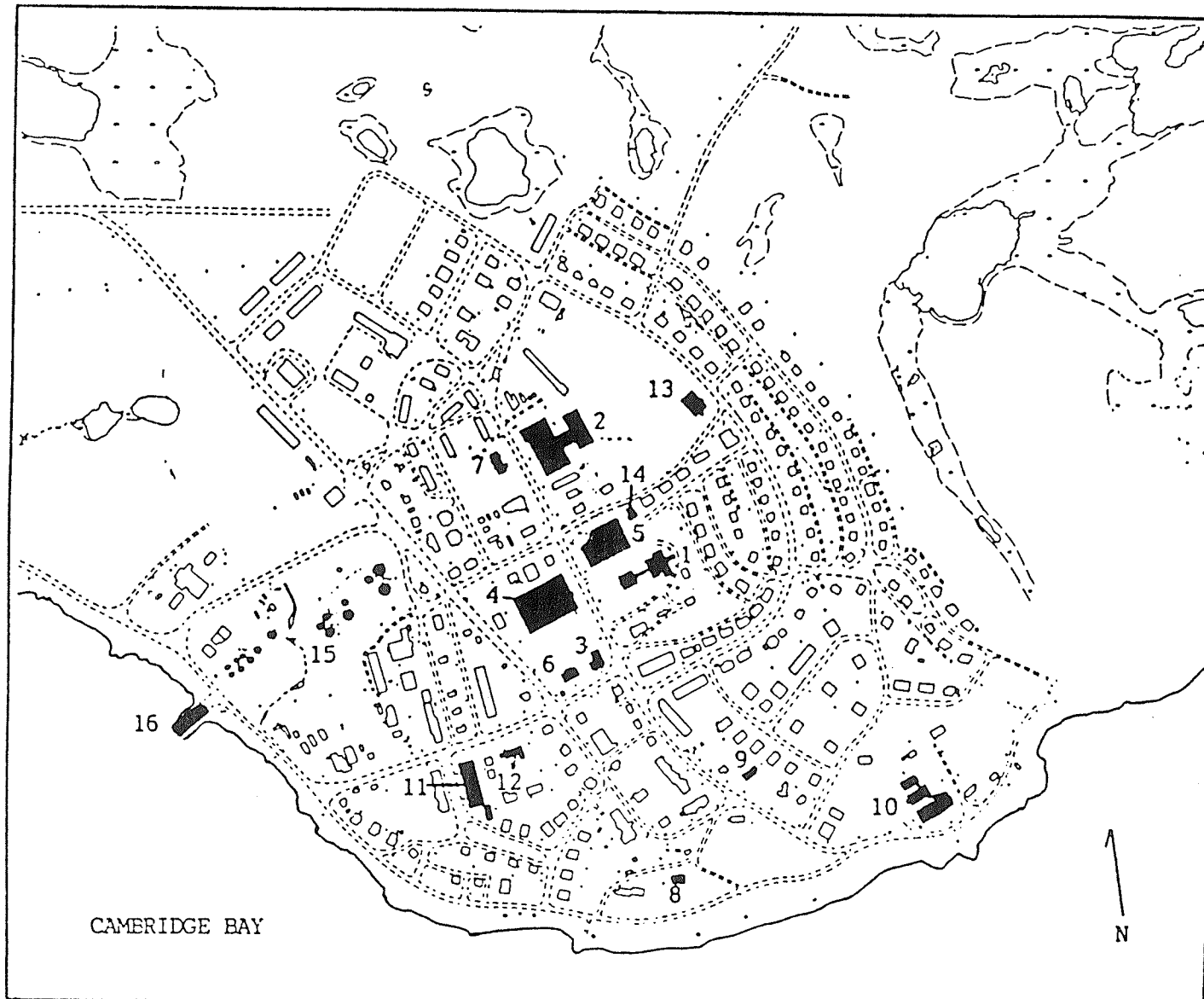
### THE PRESENT COMMUNITY

The present settlement is located on the northwest shore of Cambridge Bay to the immediate southwest of the mouth of Grenier River, a small stream that drains Grenier Lake and area to the north (see Map 4.1). To the west of the settlement is the West Arm of the bay, a highly utilized recreational area. Prior to 1961, the settlement was located on the northeastern shore of Cambridge Bay, but establishment of government, commercial, and religious services west of Grenier River, nearer to the newly constructed DEWLine runway, made it advantageous for people to move to the new settlement location. All that remains at the old townsite are an abandoned stone church and the de-activated Loran navigational beacon.

### COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATION

The current population of Cambridge Bay is made up primarily of Copper Eskimos from Perry River, Ellice River, Bathurst Inlet, the south coast of Victoria Island, and from as far west as the MacKenzie River Delta region. During the formative years of the settlement, these Inuit groups were living in satellite camps located within 140 kilometers of Cambridge Bay. They would periodically visit and trade at Cambridge Bay, especially around Christmas and Easter when large groups would gather for games and other social activities. Abandonment of the

Map 4.1 Cambridge Bay Settlement



1. nursing station
2. primary school
3. community hall
4. hamlet office, arena
5. Enokhok Center  
(GNWT staff offices)
6. library
7. Roman Catholic Church
8. Anglican mission
9. Glad Tidings Church
10. Hudson's Bay store
11. Co-op store
12. R.C.M.P.
13. school hostel
14. Katimavik Center
15. tank farm (oil, gas)
16. barge landing

satellite camps and immigration into Cambridge Bay started with the construction of the Loran beacon and culminated with the construction of the Cam-Main DEWLine station (refer to Chapter 3).

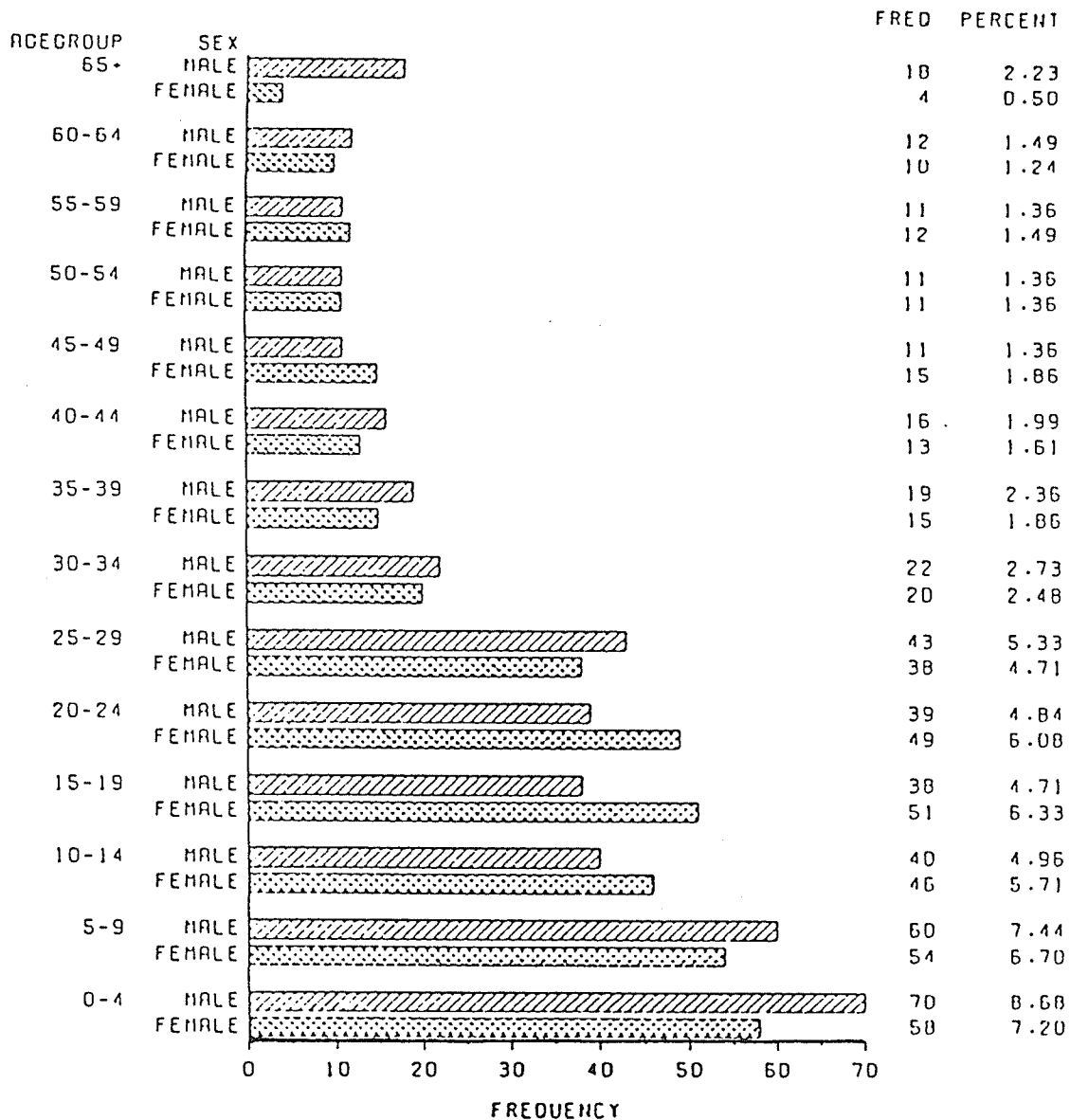
At present, the Inuit population of Cambridge Bay consists of approximately 806 individuals, the majority of which are children and adults under the age of 30 (Figure 4.1). The settlement also contains a white population numbering approximately 180 individuals (not charted), the members of which occupy various government and administrative positions. While some whites have become permanent residents of the settlement, most are transient and leave the community after completion of work projects.

#### HOUSING

The rapid growth of Cambridge Bay produced extreme housing problems. During the initial phase of immigration (1955-60), Inuit housing was described as deplorable and inadequate (Gajda 1962:26). Most of the employed Inuit in Cambridge Bay rented their houses from the Dept. of Northern Affairs. These were the "512" design prefabricated houses, so named because they contained 512 square feet of floor space. Houses of the majority of Inuit, who were not regularly employed, were of the scrap materials variety. These structures were hand-built out of scrap metal, wood, and any other materials which could be obtained locally. Most of these houses lacked effective insulation, although it was not

Figure 4.1

Inuit Population by Age Group (1986)  
and Sex, Cambridge Bay, N.W.T.



Source: 1986 Census Final Population Counts and  
GNWT Bureau of Statistics Age-Sex-Ethnic Estimates

uncommon for people to insulate with tar paper, canvas, cardboard, and blocks of snow in the winter (Abrahamson 1964:127).

During DEWLine construction and the years immediately following, many families heated these shanties with scrap lumber. Such fuel became extremely scarce necessitating a switch to fuel oil. The burning of fuel oil was by means of home made drum stoves or cook stoves (Abrahamson 1964:127).

Generally, these small shacks had only one room, creating a situation of extreme overcrowding. Abrahamson discussed the situation as follows:

The disadvantage of their smallness is that they are over-crowded, especially during the winter when general health is lower and contagious diseases easily spread. Over-crowding is not a summer problem because a number of families move into tents around the townsite...and visiting families from the satellite camps also occupy tents... In the winter, visiting families double up with relatives. Consequently, a number of shacks, containing less than 260 square feet of floor space, provide shelter for as many as 10 and 12 people in some periods of the winter (1964:127).

Problems of health and cleanliness in these shelters were having obvious detrimental effects upon the resident population. Significant increases in various infectious diseases, most notably tuberculosis, were being recorded in the area. 1961 census data revealed that 77 individuals, or 22 per cent of the total Inuit population in the Cambridge Bay area had case histories of tuberculosis (Abrahamson

1964:128). As Condon (1983:36) comments:

By and large, these "permanent" shelters were much less desirable than the traditional winter igloo or summer tent, since the latter had the advantage of being abandoned or moved before sanitary conditions became unbearable. Such general housecleaning no longer availed itself when people moved into the settlement.

Realizing the problem of housing conditions throughout the Canadian Arctic led the Eskimo Affairs Committee (Dept. of Northern Affairs) to initiate a low cost housing program. The program's aim was to provide reasonable standards of housing throughout the north. A number of prefabricated "matchbox" houses were designed to meet a standard above that of the shanties which were occupied by most of the settlement Inuit. It was proposed that Inuit would purchase the new houses with the aid of the Eskimo Loan Fund, also an Eskimo Affairs Committee program. Few Inuit in Cambridge Bay could afford to purchase a house, with or without a loan. In fact, the mere prospect of having to purchase a house shocked the new residents of Cambridge Bay, since they had been promised free housing by the Northern Service Officer as incentive to relocate into the settlement (Kavanna personal communication). As it turned out, people who could not afford to buy a house were provided, when available, with a "plan 370" house, fuel and general services. The costs were charged against the funds of the Welfare Division of the Northern Administration Branch (Abrahamson 1964:36). The "plan 370" unit was a prefabricated matchbox containing 288 square feet of floor space (considerably less than the "512"

design).

Currently, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (NWT HC) develops, maintains and manages residential housing and other housing programs in the Northwest Territories. The goal of the Housing Corporation is to provide adequate housing for all the native residents of the territories. In partnership with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation researches the need for housing and the type of housing required in northern communities. The NWT HC obtains operating funds from the territorial and federal governments. Rents are based on a schedule adjusted to a tenant's income, in Cambridge Bay this ranges from a minimum of \$38 to a maximum of over \$500 a month. The majority of tenants in Cambridge Bay pay the minimum rate which covers the rent, electricity, fuel oil, and municipal services such as water delivery and sewage removal.

After housing units are constructed, local Housing Associations/Authorities assume responsibility as an agent of the Housing Corporation. The Cambridge Bay Housing Association, made up of locally elected members, is responsible for decisions concerning the allocation of housing units, maintenance and repairs, site development, etc. As of December 1987, the Cambridge Bay Housing Association employed one full-time manager, an assistant manager, a public affairs officer and a small staff of full-time maintenance workers (all but the manager position are filled by local Inuit). The housing manager is

responsible for collecting rents, overseeing maintenance work, setting up housing association meetings, and handling all the paperwork.

NWT Housing Corporation units in Cambridge Bay total 155, consisting of single family units (the majority), duplexes, fourplexes, and sixplexes. Government of the Northwest Territories staff housing units (owned and maintained by the territorial government) consist of: 38 houses, 10 duplexes, 23 rowhouses, and 8 apartments. The Federal Government controls 23 units. Overall housing conditions in the settlement are good by northern standards. The majority of homes have self-contained running water and sewage disposal systems. Only three old-style matchbox houses remain, these make do with water tanks and the "honey bucket" method of sewage disposal. For homes equipped with sewage holding tanks, pumpout collection is available six days per week by two sewage tanker trucks, under contract held by settlement council. Bagged sewage and solid waste is collected three or four times per week by a local contractor. In both cases, the sewage is taken to "Garbage Lake", an open-pit dump which is located 1.7 kilometres east of the settlement.

All of the houses in the settlement have electricity and are heated by thermostatically controlled base-board heaters or forced-air furnaces. Electricity is supplied by the Northern Canada Power Commission (NCPC), with a diesel generator capacity of 2,685 kiloWatts. Transmission is by means of overhead lines on wooden poles.

Potable water is delivered to all houses on a six day per week schedule, or when required. The service is provided by the hamlet council. Water is obtained year-round from Water Supply Lake, located 2 kilometers north of the settlement. The hamlet operates a pumphouse facility (includes hypochlorinator with mixing tank) and a 179 cubic metre storage tank to service the needs of the settlement. Home storage tanks range from 455 litres to 2,273 litres. Although water quality is good and all homes have an ample supply, many families complain that the chlorine present in the water turns it an unpleasant yellow colour. They comment that it, "tastes bad, it makes lousy tea and it stains cookware.". Both young and old actively harvest ice from Grenier River and Grenier Lake during the winter, storing it outside until needed. During the summer, river and lake water is stored in jerry-cans, and used mostly for tea and cooking.

There is an acute housing shortage in Cambridge Bay. Although on average 10 units are constructed annually, 3 units are lost to fire, leaving a net gain of 7 units per year, which does not come close to meeting the demand each year. There is a long list of individuals and families vying for each new unit constructed. The continued shortage of housing has caused much frustration and bitterness within the settlement. Although the Cambridge Bay Housing Association allots units on the basis of need, they have often been accused of favouritism toward kin and prominent community members. With some four bedroom homes occupied by four individuals, and others occupied by up to eleven

individuals, it is understandable that tensions will arise.

Many attempts have been made in the past to alleviate the housing shortage. The most recent attempt involves the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP). The Homeownership Assistance Program is a grant in the form of building materials to build a home. The program is administered by the NWT Housing Corporation. Funding is split between the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (75%) and the NWT Housing Corporation (25%), both with offices in Cambridge Bay. The one major draw-back to the program is that it is by nature restricted to high income earners. Few in the settlement can afford the cost of construction; nor have they stable employment or wages high enough to make them eligible for a HAP loan. To be eligible to apply for the HAP program one must be a five year resident of the territories. One must also make a commitment to remain in the territories for a further five years. These conditions are to ensure that the needs of local northerners are met. Those accepted into this program receive housing materials and plans, shipped free of charge, on the September barge. The cost of materials is covered by a forgivable loan to the homeowner. The loan is written off 20% per year for five years; as long as the client uses the home as a principle residence. The only expense (though sizable) incurred by the homeowner is for the building of the structure. At present, there are 12 HAP houses in Cambridge Bay. Nine belong to Inuit families, the remaining three to whites who have settled in the north. Though HAP housing is on the increase in

Cambridge Bay, it is not a program that will benefit a majority of the families, for which the lack of living space is an ongoing problem.

An additional problem with housing in the settlement involves the lack of sufficient insulation. It must be emphasized that the majority of houses in the settlement have not been specially designed to withstand arctic conditions, but have been designed to suit southern building codes. In many of the homes visited by the researcher, ice had formed on the floors near entrances and crawl-spaces. As well there were severe drafts through window frames and doorways. In many of the overcrowded homes, children slept on mattresses placed on the floor, directly in the path of cold drafts. To overcome the cold, furnaces would be run continually. Unfortunately, this also results in making the air in most of these homes extremely dry; a factor implicated in contributing to respiratory and ear disorders (Condon 1983:39).

Wind chill during the winter at Cambridge Bay is among the most severe in the Canadian arctic. During the 1970's, a number of experimental igloo-shaped houses were built and occupied to test the design's wind resistance. All the units were subsequently abandoned due to the fact that 'wind went through them, not around them'. The focus of the NWT Housing Corporation, at present, is on the upgrading of existing units. Double door porches have been built on to a number of homes. As well, there is an ongoing project whereby a select number of older homes are receiving new window units and foam insulation

throughout. There is still a need, however, for the Housing Corporation to develop more practical housing designs, better suited to arctic conditions.

### LANGUAGE

It can be stated with some certainty that the dominant language of the settlement is English. This is in contrast to the situation 20-25 years ago at which time little English was spoken. The degree of acculturation in Cambridge Bay is nowhere more evident than in the ongoing process of language loss.

The traditional language of the Cambridge Bay Inuit is known as Inuinagtun (a Copper dialect of the Inuit language), meaning "to speak like a person". Fluency in the native language is found mostly among individuals over the age of 25 years; most adults are bilingual with a bias toward using English, while the elderly speak only the native tongue and have little or no command of English. Persons in their teens and early twenties have a passive, or comprehending, knowledge of the native language, but I observed that they rarely speak it (except when conversing with the elderly). Children acquire little or no knowledge of the language. A definite communication gap exists between children and the elderly. In many instances observed by the researcher, children required the help of a parent or adult in translating what was told to them by a grandparent. Condon (1983:40)

found that in households with children, where the average age of the household head was 27.2 years, Inuktitut (Inuit language) was the least emphasized language. Unless this pattern is modified, the native language could disappear altogether when these children become the adult Inuit of tomorrow.

Many causes have contributed to this pattern of language loss. Three may be singled out for brief examination as the most important: educational practices in the contact-tradition period, Canadian Federal government policies since the 1950's, and heightened exposure to the outside world since the 1960's.

Stories abound among Inuit now in middle age of being picked up during the summer by a schooner and taken to a mission school on the mainland. The children were being sent to mission schools in the Mackenzie Delta region (Shingle Point and Aklavik). Both Anglican and Roman Catholic schools were established there in the 1920's. Prompted by missionaries, parents sent off their children to receive a 'white man's' education under the assumption (unfounded) that their children would become better prepared for the future if they obtained an education from the gablunaag. The children would arrive at school speaking only Inuinnaqtun. Once boarding there, however, they were forbidden to speak their native tongue and were punished if caught doing so. As James Kavanna relates:

All our school was strictly in English, and we weren't allowed to speak our own language for the simple reason that the teachers thought we were talking about them behind their backs (in Lowe 1983:ix).

Because ice conditions, and other factors, sometimes prevented the schooner from returning the children each summer to their parents and grandparents, they often spent several years away from home, with the inevitable result that they lost their native language. Upon their return home, they were unable to converse with their relations and were forced to relearn Inuinnaqtun, or settle with an ability to understand it only partially.

During the 1950's, the Federal government took over responsibility for education. Children from Cambridge Bay had to attend schools at Inuvik or Yellowknife. For ten months of the year, these children had to live and study in a physical, intellectual, and cultural environment vastly different from their home environment. The language instruction was, of course, English. Abrahamson (1964:129) noted at the time that:

Although these children may well become useful citizens in a temperate climate world as southern urban civilization knows it, their chances of returning to their own environment and to better their arctic environment diminishes under present educational policies.

Formal education in the Cambridge Bay area did not begin until 1956 (refer to Education section). The Federal government completed construction of a school in November 1957, however, it burned to the ground 10 days after opening. A new school was constructed in 1958,

serving grades one to five only. Students in later grades still had to attend school in either Inuvik or Yellowknife. For young children and their parents, the advantages of having a school in the settlement were tremendous. The major drawback, however, was lack of cultural sensitivity in the curriculum. Southern teachers and English instruction added further to the gradually increasing dominance of English in the settlement. According to Lowe (1983:x):

The advantages of education to the Inuit over the years have been decisive and irrefutable. Education, and their wise use of it, has contributed greatly to their ability to adapt to and, to a degree, control the changes that have occurred so rapidly in their lives. It is unfortunate that these advantages have come at the cost of the threatened loss of their language.

Education was not the only responsibility the government assumed in the 1950's. These years also mark the period when the Canadian government adopted a policy of bringing Inuit across the Arctic off the land and into centralized settlements. An immediate goal of this policy was to draw Inuit into the network of national administration so that government services could be delivered to them and government policies effectively implemented (Clancy 1987:194; Lowe 1983:x). Again, as with education, the language of government in the new settlements was English.

Finally, in more recent years, exposure to the outside world has been intense, leading to an almost complete assimilation of Inuit into the national culture. Satellite television in Cambridge Bay is

considered a required luxury. Few homes are without the local cablevision service. In homes without the satellite hookup only two channels are available, one English language channel and one French language channel. IBC (Inuit Broadcasting Corporation) programming, in Inuinnagtun, is scheduled on the English channel, however, it is available only 4.5 hours per week. Homes with a satellite hookup access eight English channels (Canadian and U.S.); to receive IBC broadcasts the cable must be disconnected, this is rarely done. Moreover, many households have acquired modern videotape machines, those that have none often borrow them. With all three of the stores in the settlement renting out a wide selection of taped movies, this form of entertainment has become extremely popular. These, and other forms of southern influence, provide children as well as adults with high amounts of exposure to English.

Whatever the causes, the pattern of language loss among the Inuit of Cambridge Bay is a fact; English has for the most part become their first language. At best, Inuinnagtun may remain a strong second language for them, but even that is in doubt.

#### ECONOMIC ADAPTATION

The growth of Cambridge Bay since the 1950's has been accompanied by a change in the economic structure of the area. Migration into Cambridge Bay had been the result primarily of the DEWLine, expanding activities

of government agencies, and the subsequent increase in community amenities. The population of the Cambridge Bay area derives its livelihood today from a combination of wage employment, resource harvesting, and social legislation. The significant income source comes from full-time wage employment with the numerous government agencies. Other economic activities are: construction on a seasonal basis; oil and mining companies; commercial hunting, fishing, and trapping; handicrafts; private business; tourism; and social assistance.

Cambridge Bay is a major centre of territorial government activity in the Kitikmeot (central Arctic coast) region. The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) maintains seven regional departments in the settlement. This resulted because of Cambridge Bay's central locale, mainly regarding transportation lines, to the other settlements in the Kitikmeot region. Cambridge Bay became the regional headquarters for the Territorial Government's Kitikmeot Administrative Region on April 1, 1981; a decision which brought a great number of wage employment opportunities to the settlement. Based on economic considerations, the Territorial Government has since decided to transfer a number (not yet established) of regional departments to Coppermine, N.W.T. The policy of decentralization will, over the next few years, represent a loss to the settlement of many full-time wage employment opportunities. Hopefully, many of the job losses will be absorbed by either the Hamlet or Federal government, both of which are

major employers in the settlement.

There is considerable seasonable or part-time employment during the summer construction season. During this period there is usually work, both skilled and unskilled, available from the many local and outside contractors doing projects in the settlement. The DEWLine also remains a major employer for local residents during the summer season. While the majority of Inuit are employed locally, there are between 10 to 20 who work outside of the settlement on a rotational basis. This wage work is with mining and oil companies operating in the Northwest Territories. Cominco Mining Co. personnel often recruit local residents for work in their Polaris mine on Little Cornwallis Island. Jobs in the oil industry, however, have all but disappeared since 1986 when many of the companies operating in the Beaufort Sea and Arctic Islands had to shut down due to negative world market conditions.

There are numerous opportunities for local residents to obtain a portion of their food and income by hunting and fishing. Nearly all Inuit take part in these activities to a varying extent, much of it for recreational purposes. Fishing, mainly for Arctic Char, is the major renewable resource harvesting activity that is carried on in a regular organized manner. A commercial fishing enterprise is operated by the Ekaluktutiak Co-operative (est. 1961), on the major lakes near the settlement. The fish plant processes about 50,000 kilograms of Arctic Char annually. This work offers seasonal employment to many in the

settlement who do not have other full-time employment. As well, a commercial meat processing venture (Central Arctic Meats Ltd.) has been organized in the settlement, managed by the Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Association. The goal of the project is to encourage inter-settlement trade in caribou and musk-oxen products, and at present, to support local settlement needs. This is the first such project in the Kitikmeot region, and when fully operational should guarantee six jobs in the plant, as well as an income to hunters.

Trapping is still carried on by many Inuit in Cambridge Bay, however, mostly on a part-time basis. White fox is very numerous in the area, and wolf can be obtained on the mainland. Red and blue fox are quite rare in the study area. There are on average 50 to 60 trappers registered each year, less than ten of which trap full-time.

Arts and crafts work is a source of income for many of the local Inuit; although the industry is not as well developed as in other Kitikmeot settlements, such as Coppermine, Holman, and Spence Bay. The elderly are the main participants in sewing, carving, or fur related projects, and always on a part-time basis. Most of the goods, such as delta braid parkas, carvings, and tapestries, are distributed through the Co-operative. Items such as kamiks (caribou skin boots) and gulittags (caribou skin parkas) are usually commissioned privately, and bring in good income to those individuals who retain the skill of working with hides.

The potential for tourism (fishing, camping, bird watching, etc.) is great but depends largely on Cambridge Bay being a base point for camps located further out on the land. Accommodation facilities are presently available in the settlement (Ekaluktutiak Hotel) with provision of an excellent level of services for tourist. The major deterrent to an increase in tourism in Cambridge Bay is the prohibitive cost of air travel and accommodations. At present, it is less expensive for southerners to holiday in Europe than it is to visit Cambridge Bay. An active promotional and advertising program, coupled with discounts on air fares and accommodations, would be required to bring in a sufficient number of tourists to make a valuable contribution to income for local Inuit.

The Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Social Services provides emergency help (Social Assistance) to individuals and families in need in Cambridge Bay. This help takes the form of budget counselling, referrals to other agencies and financial assistance with the cost of basic necessities such as food, clothing and shelter. The stated purpose of the assistance is to ensure that people in need maintain their health and dignity, so that they can quickly regain their self-sufficiency.

In Cambridge Bay and the rest of the Kitikmeot Region Social Assistance cheques are made directly payable to the Hudson's Bay Company or the Co-op. Hence at the present time, independent use of

one's money is not permitted when one is receiving Social Assistance. One can thus assume that a particular indignity accompanies the individual to whom Social Assistance is being granted. This situation is contrary to the stated purpose of the assistance program. Adding to the indignity is the fact that gasoline sales are not permitted on Social Assistance at the local Co-op store (the only outlet for domestic gasoline sales). Gasoline is essential for use in the ubiquitous three-wheelers and snowmobiles.

In November 1986, Social Services issued cheques directly to clients as part of a policy toward self-determination for individuals in need. Unfortunately, complaints received by the Superintendent of Social Services in regard to non-payment of accounts brought about a swift return to the former system. It was assumed by Social Services staff that the problem of non-payment of accounts stemmed from the long standing tradition of government assistance monies going to institutions, with Social Assistance clients not realizing that they were now responsible for payment of accounts. It is hoped that individuals in the future will be educated in money management and be granted direct payment of their assistance allowance. The Cambridge Bay Social Services office supports self-determination of individuals and actively works toward such a policy.

Other sources of income for the settlement come in the form of pensions, family allowances, income tax returns, and child tax rebates.

Pensions are paid to the aged and the chronically disabled in the settlement. Old Age Security (paid after age 65) is directly granted to the individual pensioner without the middleman dependence of a particular institution. The family allowance, which is paid to all Canadian families with children, brings in approximately \$300 per year for each child. For families having a large number of children, family allowance payments can and do form a substantial part of their yearly cash income. Tax returns and tax rebates represent cash windfalls and are often spent on entertainment (gambling), children (gifts), and subsistence (rifles, snowmobiles, etc.).

In discussing the economy of the Far North, and of Cambridge Bay in particular, the concept of flexibility as an economic strategy cannot be overemphasized.

Flexibility and opportunism have always been essential elements in the traditional resource strategy of the Inuit people. The Inuit hunter had to be prepared to adjust his seasonal wanderings, his resource utilization skills, and even his social organization to the seemingly capricious availability of food. This flexibility was also evidenced by this willingness to adopt new technologies and even social practices introduced to the north by whites (Condon 1983:49).

An overly simplistic view of the northern economy is one which holds that two distinct economic spheres exist side by side in arctic settlements. One sphere is traditional, based upon the exploitation of renewable resources, and one sphere is modern, consisting of jobs in the service and industrial sectors. In reality, the northern economy

can be viewed as consisting of many overlapping sectors, in effect, a mixing of the two economic spheres. In Cambridge Bay, the extent of overlap is quite striking and can be seen in the flexibility of economic strategies utilized by local residents. As one informant comments, "It is easy for Inuit to find ways to survive, not like a white man maybe knows one thing.". Indeed, it is not uncommon for an Inuit person to engage in a variety of wage-generating activities in Cambridge Bay such as hunting, trapping, fishing, carving, local casual employment, and seasonal construction work.

#### EDUCATION

During the 1930's, a number of Inuit from the Cambridge Bay area received a few years of education at Shingle Point and Aklavik in the Mackenzie Delta region. As previously stated, formal education in the Cambridge Bay area did not begin until 1956, at which time the wife of the Hudson's Bay Company store manager ran a primary school in a temporary building. In 1958, the federal government, through the then Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, became involved, and the first four classroom building was constructed on the present school site. The federal government directed northern education up until 1972, at which time the Government of the Northwest Territories assumed control of northern schools and educational services.

The Cambridge Bay (Ilihakvik) Primary School provides classes from grade 1 to 9 kindergarten. There are presently about 250 students attending classes. Students who have successfully completed grade nine have the option of leaving the settlement to attend Sir John Franklin High School in Yellowknife. Those students who decide to go out for high school are housed in a dormitory that is part of the school and are transported back home for summer and Christmas holidays. On average, however, the number of students who decide to complete their education in Yellowknife is small. As Condon (1983:91) observed, "Most students are not interested in leaving the security of the settlement for advanced schooling.". Another factor may be that many students in the settlement do not perceive education as having any positive or significant impact upon their lives other than to teach them the basic skills of writing, reading, and math.

The core curriculum in the Cambridge Bay school includes math, language arts, social studies, and science. Language arts concentrates upon the reading and writing of English. All school instruction is given in the English language. The main supply of library books is contained in the school. However, a small building located near the centre of the settlement is also used as a community library.

The school staff is made up of fourteen white teachers from the south and four Inuit women for the settlement who act as classroom assistants. The classroom assistants work with the teachers in the

early grades and perform a wide range of tasks. Classroom assistants are especially useful in helping young children adjust to the white dominant environment of the school.

Vocational and continuing education classes are provided through the Adult Education Centre, located in a building on the school property. Current funding from the GNWT Dept. of Advanced Education allows for the employment of a full-time adult educator. The present adult educator in Cambridge Bay is a local resident who obtained training in Edmonton. This individual is extremely over-worked owing to the nature of his position. His responsibilities include student counselling, the teaching of all core curriculum subjects, involvement on the local education committee, and administration of the adult education program. The need for additional staff is evidenced by the frequent closure of the facility whenever the adult educator is ill or away from the settlement.

Community involvement in the school has been made possible by the creation of a local education committee. The Cambridge Bay Local Education Authority consists of nine community elected members, and meets once per month with the school principal, vice-principal, adult educator, and education superintendent (when available) to discuss school business. The committee has not power to enact local educational policy but rather acts as an advisory body to the GNWT Dept. of Education. The education committee does, however, receive a

yearly budget from the territorial government which is used to promote the school's Cultural Inclusion Program (C.I.P.).

The Cultural Inclusion Program consists of various culturally relevant courses taught by local residents (mainly elderly) who are paid to come in periodically and conduct classes. C.I.P. topics include: hunting, trapping, fishing, carving, skinning, sewing, and Inuinnagtun language instruction. The C.I.P. classes have been extremely well received by parents and students. The only problem seems to be a high rate of turnover among C.I.P. instructors. Low pay and family responsibilities help dissuade alot of elderly individuals from continuing in, or becoming involved in, the Cultural Inclusion Program.

#### RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

There are presently three religious organizations represented in Cambridge Bay: the Anglican Mission, Roman Catholic Mission, and Glad Tidings (Pentacostal) Mission.

The St. George's Anglican Mission was the first permanent mission to be established in Cambridge Bay. The majority of local residents are members of the Anglican church. This may be due in part to the early presence of the Anglican church in the area, as well as to a predisposition of the local people toward Anglicanism during the

contact-traditional period.

This predisposition was due partially to previous exposure from early traders, whalers, Hudson's Bay managers, and Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Also, since most of the Catholic missionaries throughout the Central Arctic were Oblates from France, many local Inuit associated Catholicism with French people, and hence considered it foreign, Anglicanism, on the other hand, was associated with Canadians (Condon 1983:88).

The St. George's Anglican Mission consists of three mission buildings: a large chapel used for Sunday services, religious observances, and weddings; a resident that contains office space, visitors' quarters, and storage space; and a small structure used for weekly prayer meetings, and special occasions. The mission is staffed by a minister who has been residing in Cambridge Bay, with his wife and children, for close to a decade. Services are organized and conducted by the Anglican minister with the aid of two local lay leaders. The Anglican minister is fluent in the Inuit language. Consequently, all services attended by Inuit only are conducted entirely in Inuinnaqtun. In addition to regular Sunday church services, the Anglican church also sponsors a women's auxiliary (Arngnait Ekiayuktitaoyuk - women who help) which meets once per week for sewing and prayer, and an Anglican church old folks group which meets every Monday during the winter for prayer. The weekly service for the elderly is conducted by the two local lay leaders, with prayers and hymns being recited in Inuinnaqtun.

The Anglican minister plays a very active role in community affairs. He is involved in a number of the voluntary associations in

the settlement, and has forged a close relationship between the church, the private sector, and the social services department for sponsorship of the many special activities the church organizes, especially for the elderly. His concern for the community, the people, and Inuit culture has no doubt served to strengthen the position of the Anglican church in the settlement.

The Roman Catholic Mission, run by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, numbers only a few local residents in its congregation. During the period of the fieldwork there was no resident Catholic priest in Cambridge Bay, but the mission was maintained by a brother of the Catholic church. An Oblate father from Coppermine does, however, make periodic trips to Cambridge Bay to perform church services.

A third church, the youngest of the three churches at Cambridge Bay, is a pentecostal organization known as the "Glad Tidings Missionary Society". During the early 1960's, their congregation fluctuated between 10 and 15% of the Cambridge Bay population (Abrahamson 1964:129). Currently, however, their congregation is practically non-existent, with the church used frequently as a play-room for local children.

A number of traditional religious beliefs persist among the elderly of the settlement, however, traditional religious ceremonies and observances have disappeared completely. In addition, there is no

longer a shaman ('Angatkut') residing in the settlement, the last person being thus identified died a number of years ago with no person emerging to carry on the tradition.

#### POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Prior to April 1, 1984, Cambridge Bay local government was under the control of the Government of the Northwest Territories, mainly through the activities of the Department of Local Government. The locally elected settlement council provided advice to the Department of Local Government concerning policy matters and the preparation of budget estimates. Although the settlement council maintained roads, municipal services, and other community services with help from the territorial government, they had not real financial responsibility. The government allocated funds to the council and specified exactly how those funds were to be spent.

After years of negotiation with the Development Division, Dept. of Local Government, the settlement of Cambridge Bay was granted permission to incorporate as a hamlet on April 1, 1984. Hamlet status in the N.W.T. is different from settlement status in that hamlets have total financial control over their own budgets. Likewise, hamlets are able to make decisions concerning the local settlement without consulting the N.W.T. government. The present hamlet council is made up of representatives from the settlement who are elected for one and

two-year terms. During the fieldwork period the hamlet council consisted of nine members, including the mayor, assistant mayor, settlement secretary, and councillors.

In many of the more traditionally oriented communities of the Canadian Arctic (eg Spence Bay, Gjoa Haven, Pelly Bay, Broughton Island, etc.) the aged have assumed an active role in political organization and development. Cambridge Bay, on the other hand, is non-traditional in this respect, with very little elderly participation in political decision making.

It is clear that if the needs of the aged are to be adequately served in the settlement then the elderly themselves must assume a more active role in local government affairs. A mechanism must be set in place which will be sensitive to the traditional ideas and concepts of the Inuit elderly, allowing for greater participation in decision making and less alienation from the processes of government. Inuit elderly in Cambridge Bay are extremely vocal as to the path of development that the community should follow; with the proper organization and initiative on the part of the hamlet council, these voices can be encouraged, integrated and acted upon.

#### HEALTH SERVICES

Medical services are provided through the facilities of Health and

Welfare Canada. The Cambridge Bay nursing station provides a variety of services to the community. These services range from outpatient treatment, emergency services, short term inpatient care, medical referral, medical evacuation, and prescription services, to full public health programs. The nursing station is comprised of:

- a) an inpatient area, with eight beds and three cribs;
- b) a dental clinic;
- c) diagnostic and treatment area;
- d) public health room;
- e) reception space; and
- f) a kitchen.

The staff complement is:

- a) one nurse in charge (NIC);
- b) three nurses (in addition to the NIC);
- c) one resident doctor (general practitioner);
- d) one dental therapist;
- e) one janitor (elderly Inuit male);
- f) one secretary (Inuit female);
- g) one cleaning woman (Inuit);
- h) one maintenance person (Inuit male).

The following specialists visit Cambridge Bay:

- a) Obstetrician/Gynecologist - every three months
- b) Ear/Nose/Throat - every six months
- c) Ophthalmologist - every three months

- d) Dentist - every three months
- e) Orthopedics - yearly

Staff accommodation consists of a nurses' residence attached to the station, with five bachelor units, a common lounge, and a laundry room; and a house for the doctor.

The Cambridge Bay hamlet council and the Dept. of Health and Welfare maintain a strong working relationship in the settlement. In the past, the hamlet administration has employed a community health representative (CHR) to act as a liaison between the two levels of government. In addition, the CHR functions as a 'Community Health Developer'. What is meant by this is that the CHR works with all members of the community, to encourage people/groups "at risk", to develop their capacities and to take charge of their own health (McClelland and Miles 1987:205). At present, the position of community health representative remains vacant in Cambridge Bay, however, the position is actively promoted.

It is unfortunate for the settlement elderly that the CHR position has yet to be filled. The previous CHR was very active in promoting and organizing special activities for the elderly, such as parties, teas, dances, etc. These activities are now organized primarily through the Dept. of Social Services and the Anglican church.

For geriatric and/or chronic disease patients in Cambridge Bay, the

nursing station conducts weekly home visits. These are visits to essentially healthy people that are aged, and people with long term illnesses that are under control with medications or special treatments. The purpose of these visits is to help keep these people healthy and functioning as well as possible in their own homes, as well to check on how the immediate family is managing. During the period of fieldwork, the nursing station was undergoing difficulties due to staff shortages. Unfortunately, this resulted in the inability of the nursing staff to meet weekly home visit commitments. A great deal of frustration and tension developed over this situation. The researcher observed a case where an elderly Inuit woman, suffering from a broken knee and complications requiring special medical care, eagerly awaited a nurse's visit which never materialized. After a two-week wait, bitter family members complained to the nurse in charge and were told by her to bring the elderly patient in to the nursing station, since no nurse could be freed for a home visit. Due to lack of transportation and the patient's immobility this course of action was impossible. The conduct of the nurse in charge was viewed by the family as cold, inconsiderate, and irrational. The relatively high turnover rate among northern nurses ensures that staff shortages, and the problems created, will remain an obstacle to efficient and equitable health delivery in northern settlements.

In an attempt to counter such problems in health delivery, the Kitikmiut Inuit Association developed the position of Health Liaison

Officer (HLO) in the early 1980's. The HLO in Cambridge Bay works in cooperation with the nursing station on a home visit program serving the aged, pregnant women, and women with newborn babies. The Cambridge Bay HLO also visits smaller settlements in the Kitikmiut, meeting with health committees, councils, and nurses.

The HLO conducts home visits three afternoons per week. There are no time limits to the visits, and official business always ends with tea and snacks. During the period of fieldwork, the HLO made visits to fourteen single elderly and eight elderly couples. The nurse in charge would often give additional names of aged individuals to be visited and would supply the HLO with a list of special needs to be acted upon. On many occasions the HLO would accompany the nursing staff on regularly scheduled home visits with the elderly, acting as interpreter. The HLO in Cambridge Bay is extremely close to the elderly of the settlement and visits are rarely missed. These visits usually include the following procedures:

- a) observing whether home of the elderly is being kept clean;
- b) investigating complaints of home maintenance problems;
- c) checking cupboards to see if enough food is present;
- d) checking on medication compliance by counting pills against day of issue;
- e) check on well being of the elderly and supporting family; and
- f) investigate any family problems.

According to the Health Liaison Officer, the elders of Cambridge Bay

are, on the whole, a very happy, healthy group.

A nurse who had served in the settlement for a number of years explained that the illnesses most commonly diagnosed among the elderly population of Cambridge Bay resulted from diseases of the circulatory system, diseases of the respiratory system and neoplasms. It was stated that the vast majority of the elderly were extremely heavy smokers. She reported, however, that during the period of field work the elderly of the settlement were experiencing very good health; only a small number were suffering from chronic illness, and these cases were being controlled by medication. She noted that during the same period (September - December) of the previous year (1986) a number of the aged had died after long-term illnesses. It was the nurse's understanding that the general health of the elderly during the field work period was the exception rather than the rule.

Over half of the elderly interviewed exhibited symptoms, signs and ill-defined conditions of illness (aches, coughs, fatigue, etc.). Not one individual, however, was so affected as to require professional care.

It should also be noted that informants identified an unknown (though small) number of elderly individuals as suffering from alcoholism. The research would indicate that alcohol use among some elderly is a problem in Cambridge Bay, and one worth investigating.

## TERRITORIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

The provision of support services to the aged in the Northwest Territories is shared between the Departments of Health and Social Services, GNWT. The mechanism to determine departmental responsibilities is based on levels of care which are determined through an assessment process. There are six levels defined as follows:

### Level 1: Supervisory Care

The level of care required by an individual who is essentially independent and shows only a slight impairment. The care is mainly guidance or supervision with daily living, ie: laundry, shopping and medication reminders. Care may be provided in the individual's own home.

### Level 2: Personal Care

The level of care required by an individual who shows impairment of physical and/or mental faculties and needs help with daily activities, ie: hygiene and grooming, meals, laundry, and housekeeping services.

The individual is able to get around safely with or without aides, is able to feed him/herself and is usually continent.

Personal Care is 24 hour custodial care and may be provided in an extended family or foster home with support services, adult residential care facility, or personal care home.

### Level 3: Nursing Home

A level of care required by individuals who have advanced physical and/or mental illness that is reasonably stabilized and which is not expected to deteriorate in the near future (barring an accident or additional disease).

This care is normally carried out in a Nursing Home or similar facility with adequate staff and equipment. The individual's health care practitioner is responsible for prescribing appropriate medical care. Daily care is supervised by a registered nurse but is rendered primarily by nursing aides. There are no nursing homes in the N.W.T. This care is provided in community hospitals in Inuvik, Fort Smith, Hay River and Yellowknife.

#### Level 4: Extended/Chronic Care

The level of care required by individuals of all ages who require regular and continuous medical attention, highly skilled technical nursing supervision on a 24 hour basis, and special techniques for improvement and maintenance of function. Appropriate diagnostic treatment facilities must be readily available.

Such care is provided in an extended/chronic care unit in a hospital setting.

#### Level 5: Intensive Rehabilitation Care

Rehabilitation care is intended for persons with physical disabilities who require intensive therapy by a rehabilitation team. Maximum benefit of restoring or improving function should be obtained within three months. At such time as this occurs, the individual is transferred home or to another facility for a more appropriate level of care.

#### Level 6: Acute Care

This level of care is short term for persons of all ages requiring 24 hour medical/nursing supervision for diagnosis and treatment in specialized hospitals. Such care is received as an inpatient in a N.W.T. hospital or as an inpatient in an acute care hospital in Southern Canada.

The Department of Social Services, GNWT, is responsible for services provided under levels 1 and 2 and the Department of Health for services under Levels 3 to 6 (McClelland and Miles 1987: appendix 7.6,

NWT Council for Disabled Persons Resource Manual 1987:5).

McClelland and Miles (1987:227) recommend that the Departments of Health and Social Services review and redefine the existing levels of care and expand these to include consideration of community based care for Levels 2 and 3. Their discussion is as follows:

The current levelling system for Aged, Disabled, and Chronically ill clients needing care is institutionally oriented e.g. Level 2 - Personal Care, Level 3 - Nursing Home. This system infers that a person assessed as Level 2 or 3 has to be placed in institutional care. The main focus of assessment should be on the client's needs and what can be done to support their care in their home community. The same care requirements can be met in a variety of ways depending upon the existing resources. For this reason, project officers recommend that a social/development model be considered. This mode would not require a "levelling" structure but would use need as the criteria for entry, not level. Maintaining care levels as indicators for program services does not allow for assessment of the individual's unique situation.

The need for and availability of support services in the communities of the N.W.T. vary based on population, locale, community resources and cultural traditions. The Department of Social Services is involved in the provision of support services to the aged, disabled and chronically ill and is committed to the concept that these services be provided in the client's home or community wherever feasible. According to Felhaver (1987:n.p.), the provision of support services strives to ensure the individual's culture and traditions, independence

and self-esteem are maintained or enhanced.

Support services presently available through the Department of Social Services include:

### 1. Home Nursing

Home Nursing may be defined as the provision of nursing care in the home by a registered nurse or certified nursing assistant. This service is usually organized by the local health agency. The person providing the service may give:

- General personal care, e.g. bathing, mouth care;
- Basic medical treatment such as dressing changes, injections, enemas, catheterizations, supervision of medication and diet;
- Rehabilitation treatments as delegated by physiotherapist, doctor, occupational therapist, or speech therapist; and,
- Preventive health care.

Under this program, nursing services could be provided by a Public Health Nurse, Registered Nurse, or Certified Nursing Assistant. Persons eligible for Home Nursing include:

- Elderly, disabled, chronically ill;
- Persons convalescing after discharge from an acute care facility.

### 2. Homemaker Service

This service is provided to allow individuals to remain at home by providing assistance with activities of daily living, such as bathing, dressing, cooking, cleaning, shopping and errand running. Homemakers may be hired on an individual basis, through contracts with Social Service offices, band or hamlet councils, or through coordinated homecare programs.

This service is often the first step in the progression of care and is therefore a very vital one. Homemaker services are provided to assist mothers with handicapped children or adults; the elderly; or to provide respite for families who are caring for a chronically or terminally ill family member.

### 3. Equipment Loan

Equipment loan is a service which makes equipment available to persons in their homes to enable them to function independently in their daily lives. Examples of equipment which might be available:

walkers, wheelchairs, crutches, sheepskins and bedpans. Such equipment may be available through a local hospital, a local health station or a community service group. Usually there is no charge for equipment loan.

#### 4. Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels is a service that provides people in need with nutritious meals in their homes. This service may be organized by the local health or social services agency.

The meals may be prepared in a home, by the dietary staff in a local hospital or other facility. Meals are delivered by the sponsoring group or by volunteers. There is usually a fee for Meals on Wheels service.

Meals on Wheels programs are being funded through the Dept. of Social Services in Yellowknife, Hay River, Fort Simpson and through individual contracts in smaller communities to provide a hot meal once a day to the elderly.

#### 5. Professional Services

Professional services are those assessment, counselling or treatment services carried out by a dietitian, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, speech therapist, physician, social worker, mental health nurse, psychiatrist, psychologist or a nurse.

These services may be available as a basic component of the service program or on a consultation basis.

Some services may only be provided by these professionals when they are travelling to the communities.

#### 6. Neighborhood Services

Neighborhood Services are services such as errand running, friendly visiting, transportation and handyman services provided by the community. These services may be organized by the local Social Services Agency or by volunteers.

- a) Handyman Service - Handyman Service provides assistance with basic maintenance chores around the home. This service is provided by a person with the skill to carry out a variety of maintenance and other duties such as minor carpentry or plumbing repairs, etc.

The handyman may be a member of the community who volunteers to do such chores, or the person may be paid by a community

group or social agency. The goal is to have these services provided on a volunteer basis.

- b) Friendly Visiting - Friendly visiting is a service often provided by volunteer groups in the community to ensure regular visitors for a specific group of people.

This program would be directed toward elderly or disabled people in a community, who are living alone, are without nearby friends or relatives or are lonely despite presence of relatives in the same community.

- c) Errand Running - Errand running is a service which provides help with activities such as shopping, keeping appointments, writing and mailing letters, etc. This service is directed towards persons who, due to age, disability or poor health, are in need of help with such activities. Usually, errand running is provided by willing and concerned persons or groups in the community.
- d) Transportation - Transportation service may be available in a community through efforts of volunteer groups. Transportation may be provided to events such as community meetings or gatherings, church, and appointments. This service is directed to the aged and disabled in the community who have no means or access to transportation.
- e) Respite Care - Respite care may be provided in personal care facilities or long term care facilities and provides a holiday relief, for short periods, to relatives who have elderly or chronically ill persons living in their home requiring an excessive amount of care. This care is subject to the established policies of the facility offering the service.

## 7. Coordinated Home Care

Coordinated Home Care is a comprehensive program which arranges and coordinates the use of both health and social services to meet the assessed needs of selected persons in their own home. Coordinate Home Care is not a distinct type of health or social service, but rather a method of organizing a number of services.

A Coordinated Home Care program would include at least a home nursing component as well as one or more home support services, such as Homemaker or Meals on Wheels services. The program may also include any number of additional home support services. The objectives of Coordinated Home Care are to provide the opportunity for individuals, especially elderly and disabled persons, to remain in their own home by providing essential health

and support services by helping to maintain and support the family unit and family relationship (Department of Health, GNWT 1984:1-6; Felhaver 1987:n.p.; McClelland and Miles 1987:184).

## CHAPTER FIVE

ELDERLY IN THE ETHNOGRAPHIC PRESENTELDERLY AND THE COMMUNITY

To the elderly of Cambridge Bay, the settlement is a product of the white man's (qablunaaq) world. For the majority of these people, life in the settlement is a relatively new experience, having lived over half of their lives on the land. The sentiment shared by many in the elderly community is that they have lost their independence since moving into the settlement. They believe that their independence was lost the moment they were "forced" to move from traditional hunting grounds into the newly created settlement of Cambridge Bay, circa 1960. Many elderly interviewed stated that they remain bitter toward the Canadian government for using "trickery" in enticing them to settle in the community. As one elderly informant related:

The area service officer travelled to the outpost and told the people that they would be cared for by the government if they moved into Cambridge Bay. He promised us all free housing. He said children had to go to school, that there was going to be an airplane picking up the children from all around. He said it would be wise if we went to Cambridge Bay with our children. Also that there were medical people in Cambridge Bay. But when we got here we had to live in scrap lumber shacks that we had to make ourselves. It took two or three years to get everyone houses and they were terribly overcrowded. What struck us really hard is that most of us didn't have any idea of the ways of the qablunaaq, certain ways were forced upon us. Everything should have been introduced thoroughly. One good instance is we were promised free housing but they forced us to pay rent otherwise we would lose our homes. That's one example of forcing qablunaaq

ways on us.

A paradox exists in the attitude many elderly hold toward contemporary community living. They are satisfied, on the one hand, with the feeling of comfort and security that settlement living offers. Yet, on the other hand, they do not feel that they belong in the settlement, to a great extent the settlement is a strange and foreign place for them. Their often stated desire is to return to the land, however, family obligations and a reliance on southern material goods, coupled with the loss of traditional cultural practices, prevents their doing so. A prominent community elder illustrated the dilemma as follows:

A lot of elders don't feel free. Some I know for sure feel they are tied down to do certain things. This is because they have been shoved into a place where they don't belong, such as Cambridge Bay. In their prime, these people were free to do anything they wished. For me, I would prefer to be out of Cambridge Bay and be free in the country. I tried it once but I missed all the luxuries. I thought I would get away from it all but I found out I couldn't live without all the luxuries I have in the house here. Even though the luxuries are nice, I am still stuck in the settlement, in a way I am imprisoned. A lot of elders feel the same way.

Not all settlement elderly share this view. A few in particular spend the majority of their time hunting and trapping on the land. They have houses in the settlement, and families, yet only return for supplies and to visit. It is said that these elderly have never felt comfortable in the settlement, they were never able to relate to the settlement lifestyle. Many others in the elderly community divide

their time between commitments in the settlement and independence on the land. They are extremely active, productive, and contented individuals, well adjusted to both environments. The remaining elderly are confined to the settlement for a variety of reasons. Their only opportunity to be on the land is during the summer camping season when they travel to the outpost camps with family and friends.

Whether on the land or in the settlement, elderly of the Cambridge Bay area remain isolated, to a degree, from the changes occurring around them. As one elderly individual remarked:

I still think way back in our heads we are still living in the olden days. A lot of elders don't understand how things have changed from traditional to the modern way. A lot of them are still living in their olden time ideas, having not been to school and they have not a lot of contact with qablunaag and their ways. A lot of us elders don't understand why the changes are taking place.

#### ELDERLY ACTIVITY PATTERNS

Soon after arriving in Cambridge Bay and while walking about the community I stopped to lend assistance to a hunter whose sled (qamatik) had become pinned in the rocks on the side of the road. The sled was stacked with caribou carcasses, tied down and covered with fresh hides. It had obviously been a long and successful hunt. The Inuk hunter, dressed entirely in caribou clothing, was sitting on his snowmobile, facing backwards, and pulling hard on the line connecting the sled to the snowmobile. His strength was such that on each tug of the line he

and the snowmobile were jerked backwards a few paces; enough to create some slack in the line. When he had backed up the desired distance, he would take a running start at trying to jar the sled loose. The only help I could offer was to push from behind the sled, which proved quite useless. The hunter struggled three times to slacken the line and get a running start. On each attempt the line would snap taut with such force that the hunter was near to being thrown over the windscreen of his snowmobile. I could only imagine at the frustration he must have felt, so close to home only to get stuck. Soon a young male Inuk came on the scene and took over the snowmobile to try for himself. The hunter, in turn, came to my aid at the back of the sled. As he neared to where I could view his face I was astonished to discover that he appeared to be an old man. His faced showed the wear of a long life of hard work; his long hair and wispy beard were snow white. As he approached it was obvious that he was not frustrated at all, he was, on the contrary, laughing and smiling. Knowing not a word of Innuinaqtun I just smiled back and shrugged a "what now?" shrug. He only laughed and said "ayurnarman, ayurnarman!" (it can't be helped!).

My astonishment at discovering that this person was an "inutquaq" (old man) came from the mistaken notion that only a young man would dare hunt in such miserable weather; that only a young man could be so successful a hunter; and that only a young man could possess the strength that this person displayed. I was to learn as the field season progressed that this individual was more the rule than the

exception. Indeed, the research was to indicate that the elderly of Cambridge Bay were in general a very active group of individuals. Only a small number of elderly were confined to their homes due to illness and extreme old age, and thus were inactive.

A number of elderly activity patterns were identified during the period of field work (see Appendix B, for a list of the elderly and their major activities). These are divided into five categories:

- 1) Subsistence - hunting, fishing, trapping, summer camping, winter camping, and shopping.
- 2) Economic - hunting, fishing, trapping, wage employment, sewing hides, sewing material, crafts, and carving.
- 3) Domestic - cooking, cleaning, sewing, babysitting, snowmobile maintenance, sled (qamutik) construction, and household repairs.
- 4) Recreational - hunting, fishing, summer camping, observing sports events (hockey, baseball, curling, Umingmak games), attending community sponsored tea parties, visiting friends and relatives, drinking, playing cards, dances, and bingo.
- 5) Spiritual - Anglican and Catholic church services, Anglican church sponsored tea and prayer get-togethers for the elderly, Anglican Women's Auxiliary meetings, and Anglican church tea parties.

Of the activities listed, sewing hides and materials seem restricted to elderly women, while trapping, sled and snowmobile maintenance, and winter camping appear activities of elderly men only. Hunting, cooking, babysitting, etc., - activities usually thought of as gender specific - were found to be common to males and females. Thirteen individuals (out of a pool of forty identified elderly) were gainfully employed as of December 1987. Nine positions were full-time, while four were considered part-time. By their own admission, the most enjoyable activities of the elderly were: visiting friends and relatives, hunting, fishing, summer camping, attending tea parties, babysitting, playing cards (gambling), bingo, and drinking with friends on Friday evenings.

An activity obvious in its absence is that of political involvement. Unlike other arctic communities, Cambridge Bay had no active representation from community elderly on the hamlet council and associated committees during the period of field work. When I asked the mayor why there were no elected "elders" on the hamlet council he responded that it was a hard question to answer. It should be noted that the mayor interpreted the word "elders" to mean the aged who had been political leaders in the past and had earned respect in that context, rather than my definition of elders as the aged. He did not believe that elders were disinterested in political matters and concerns but rather that they had complete faith in the job that younger politically motivated Inuit were doing, and preferred to leave

the subject in their hands. The mayor explained that:

Our elders are the ones that made us who we are and how we are, they believe in the day-to-day job we are doing in the administration of the community. The elders feel that they can input ideas and suggestions at any time they wish, they are comfortable in expressing their opinions and know we will listen.

The majority of activities of the elderly are carried out in and around the home. Healthy elderly are rarely, if ever, inactive. Inuit elderly rarely live by themselves, but will frequently live in the same household with married, or unmarried, sons and daughters and their offspring. In many instances, elderly couples adopt children and resume child rearing practices. In all, keeping a household in order is a day long task for the elderly. There is always some chore or other to be dealt with. A high level of activity is maintained until disability, ill health or extreme old age intervenes. At this point, what remains for the elderly is exemplified by the following passage:

Now that I am an old man I am just a babysitter, because my wife works at the Co-op and a couple of our children work for the HBC. But me, I don't go hunting anymore and don't have a job anymore. I just spend time in bed and wait for a smoke. That's all there is now I'm old (Inuit Cultural Institute 1985).

#### THE TRADITION OF CARE AND RESPECT FOR THE ELDERLY

Up until a few decades ago, most Inuit people lived a nomadic and traditional landbased lifestyle. They had succeeded in a transition from a hunting society to one based on the fur trade. Each member of

Inuit society had a purpose and contributed to the community; whether male, female, young or old.

The young were trained to obey and help their parents and the elderly. They were taught the roles of protector, provider, parenthood and nurturer. When the young were considered worthy to take a spouse, they were expected to take on these roles.

Old people were considered an integral part of these stages of growth and development. Inuit people valued their elderly because they felt that experience brings knowledge, so the older one is the more knowledgeable. The elderly were respected and played a special role in the community as advisors, storytellers, keepers of traditions and customs, and teachers. They advised the young adult men and women and taught the youth about spirituality, culture and values. Young people were taught the skills of survival - how to use everything on the land and in the water necessary to live and prosper.

Not only were Inuit elderly accorded respect and admiration but they were assured of constant care by two interacting social institutions, the extended family and the community - both of which were based on communal sharing. There was no need for nursing homes or senior citizen homes. Offspring and the community became their life insurance policy.

Today it is a different story. So many factors have contributed to the erosion of this once cohesive and self-sufficient society. Inuit elderly of today have witnessed the onset of centralization and modernization. They were "forced" off the land and into newly created communities established around the already present southern institutions of the church, trading posts, and R.C.M. Police. Government bureaucrats, teachers, nurses, and white entrepreneurs all assumed positions of authority in the new communities. They brought along with them their southern values, their laws and their diseases.

Inuit children were gathered and shipped off to larger centres for their formal education. This deprived the parents of their parenting role and the elderly of their teaching and counselling role. The natural transmission of language, culture and values was interrupted during this period. Moreover, the children educated in the boarding school system generally displayed less respect for the elderly. When they returned home, these young people were often unsure of their own language, felt alienated from traditional modes of life, and doubted the values and beliefs of their own people.

One of the cultural processes that can be seen, as a result of these changes, is that some elderly Inuit apparently perceive that they are losing their culture-based respect and authority. According to a prominent Cambridge Bay elder:

That was the original attitude of the young toward the elders - respect. Now the young people respect us alright, but not like in the old days. Everything is changing. I think it has a lot to do with school, the young people go to school and think they know more than the elders.

Elders in the old days told the younger people how to know where there was game, and how to get it. Any chores that had to be done around camp whether it pertained to their property or others, they would just do it if it needed to be done. In this way, they would help the elders who could not hunt or help anymore.

Even though I'm an elder I don't try to run what the younger generation should be doing. I figure that they were brought up in this situation and they know how to act and conduct themselves.

Likewise, the Katimavik co-ordinator in Cambridge Bay states that:

Respect for elders is breaking up a lot because kids don't listen anymore. Some young people like hunting and they take their elders to hunting and fishing sites so as to learn skills. The young people who enjoy traditional activities show lots of respect toward elders and enjoy their company. The other young people just don't care about hunting or listening to their elders. There are always some bad apples.

The following passage is indicative of the feelings of bewilderment and disillusionment experienced by Inuit elderly as a result of acculturation:

Now it's so different, not long ago they formed a hamlet here and since then it seems nobody listens to anybody, even older people. We, the older people, are not happy, we are concerned. But we can't say anything, they won't listen to us anyway. So we just ignore them. When you have a family, you worry about your children, and try to provide for them the best way you can, and you also give them advice so that they will be respectable people and good providers too. That's the way it used to be in my

time. We might have had a hard life, but we were contented because we were all united. But now it's so different, the kids do what they want, they don't listen...anymore (quoted in Enge 1987: unpublished manuscript).

Although evidence seems to indicate that the tradition of respect for the elderly is in transition, the mayor of Cambridge Bay stated as very strong the tradition of caring for the elderly within the extended family unit. He sees no breakdown in this tradition. As explained by the Katimavik co-ordinator:

All Inuit want to take care of their elders, this is passed on from generation to generation. Elders brought you up and now you have to take care of the, this will always continue. There is always someone to take care of an elder; if my brother isn't taking care of Dad and I find out, then I will take him in and care for him. Uncle or Aunt is the same thing and I would just as well take them in. Even if there is hardship involved, like no money, it doesn't matter, you either hunt wildlife or you hunt for a job, it just doesn't matter.

Elders within the extended family are considered the head of household. They still have an active and prominent role in decision making, whether or not they bring in an income.

One Cambridge Bay elderly made the comment that:

The tradition of caring for the elderly is being upheld by the younger generations. I'm really surprised because with all the other changes I thought this would change too.

The stated philosophy of the Departments of Health and Social Services, GNWT, is to promote the independence of elderly Inuit persons

by encouraging, where necessary, the development of support services which would enable them to live in their own home and/or community as long as possible (Department of Health, GNWT 1984). The Supervisor, Department of Social Services, GNWT, elaborated on this philosophy as follows:

Seniors often want to maintain a life-style consistent with long standing values and customs. Autonomy, or control over one's life, is an important value as indicated by recent surveys conducted in several communities in the N.W.T. Institutionalization is regarded as the last resort for most of our elders. I cannot reiterate enough the need to support the senior citizens to remain in their home as long as they can. They should not be isolated in special housing.

A task force on aging showed that seniors, like people of any age, want to participate in community life to the full extent of their abilities. Too often, family members, as well as we professionals, tend to place senior citizens in some form of institution, when really emphasis should be directed in providing support services to the elderly and their families (Enge 1987: unpublished manuscript).

Although the Department of Social Services views the institutionalization of the elderly as the "last resort", they have, nonetheless, actively proposed a number of projects aimed at the establishment of community based care homes for the aged. The Regional Superintendent of Health, GNWT, stated that the Dept. of Social Services has presented several proposals calling for the establishment of a community care home for the elderly in Cambridge Bay. The Superintendent indicated that these proposals have been presented at community meetings in the past with consensus being that community

residents were not willing to utilize the proposed facilities.

According to the mayor of Cambridge Bay:

The idea of an "old folks home" is so new to the people that they don't even want to talk about their elders having to be cared for by someone else. The people of Cambridge Bay do not support the idea, nor do our elders.

Opposition to the concept of elderly care homes is clearly illustrated by an incident related to me by the HLO (Health Liaison Officer) of Cambridge Bay. One evening an elderly couple were visiting her parents and they had settled in after dinner to watch some English language television programs. There was a show on dealing with elderly white people and the elderly couple asked Joan (the HLO) to translate for them. It turned out that the program was a documentary about elderly abuse within institutional care homes. Joan related that the reaction of her elderly parents and their friends was one of total shock. Her parents stated that they could never have imagined how poorly the southern aged were treated by their own people. They told Joan how lucky they felt they were to have such wonderful children and grandchildren taking care of them. Joan made the comment that:

The elders are the ones that brought us up, they taught us and were with us always. They cared for us when we were sick or depressed. How could people be so cruel as to turn their backs on them when the elders need them the most. It is only right that the elders get the same love and care as they have always given.

The extent of caregiving within the extended family unit is illustrated by the following statement from the Anglican minister of Cambridge Bay:

Towards the end, elders are cared for continuously within the home by relatives, no matter what. Even if the elder is suffering from a neoplasm, or is incontinent, the family provides the care. And through it all, not one complaint is heard.

However, in a growing number of cases the desire of the family is to ensure that all possible attempts are made to bring an ill elderly relative back to health. As a nurse in Cambridge Bay explained, this interferes with cultural tradition:

The traditional pattern of filial care for the ill elder breaks down at times when the family members ask the medical staff to do everything possible to extend the life of the elder. What results in certain instances is the elder being removed from the family setting to be cared for in Yellowknife or Edmonton. It has happened that the elder has died while under institutional care, and at great distance from loved ones.

The elder patient's wish and desire is that they die at home surrounded by family, this is also the wish of the caregivers. However, the act of doing everything possible to preserve life conflicts with tradition.

There are becoming as many ways to die up here as there are down south, there are so many variables involved.

#### COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES TO THE AGED AND DISABLED

Few of the support services described in Chapter Four exist in the community of Cambridge Bay. The following is a description of the

support services available in the community during the period of field work:

- 1) Friendly Visiting - The Kitikmeot Inuit Association (KIA) in cooperation with the nursing station maintains an ongoing program of friendly visiting. The program is the responsibility of the Health Liaison Officer of the Kitikmeot Region. The HLO organizes weekly visits to a number of elders homes with the primary objective of monitoring their well-being. If problems are discovered within the home, the HLO will notify the appropriate agency, be it the nursing station, Social Services, Housing Association, etc.
- 2) Transportation - The Department of Social Services make available a van for transportation of the aged and disabled to and from community and church gatherings. The van is driven on a volunteer basis by community social worker.
- 3) Equipment Loan - The nursing station provides equipment such as crutches, canes, walkers, etc. at no charge to individuals in need.

A Homemaker Service has been available in Cambridge Bay in the past. A major problem however was the high turn-over rate among homemakers. According to a community social worker, it was both difficult to find individuals who were willing to take the position at the minimum wage offered by the Dept. of Social Services, and once organized, it was difficult to ensure that the services were properly maintained. The Health Liaison Officer related to me an episode involving an attempt at establishing short-term homecare for an elderly community resident. The HLO tried, unsuccessfully, over a period of four months to gain Social Services funding to make a homemaker available for the elderly man in need of the service. Ultimately, the need for the service passed and the initiative was dropped. The HLO voiced her utter frustration at Social Services for not having made

available the funds needed, when they were needed, to ensure the independence of this aged person within his own home.

### RETIREMENT

Isaac worked hard all his life to provide for his family, first off the land and then as a government maintenance worker in Cambridge Bay. At the age of 65, Isaac was forced to retire. It was an extremely hard adjustment for Isaac to make. As related by Isaac's daughter:

The first few days of staying home with a man forced to retire was pure hell. The first few months were miserable. My father hated just sitting around and "doing nothing", as he would say.

Upon retiring, Isaac began receiving monthly Old Age Security benefits from the Canadian Government. Isaac had always worked hard to provide for his family and it hurt and confused him when he began receiving money (O.A.S.) that he believed he had not worked for. Isaac's understanding was that the money coming in to him was a form of welfare or "ayoghaktoghiotit" (help for people who are unable to help themselves). According to Isaac's daughter:

My father thought that he had to work to earn the money needed to provide for the family. The whole family had to convince him that his Old Age Security pension was money he had earned by working all his life. It had hurt his pride so much to receive cheques that he felt he had not deserved.

After a lengthy period of depression, Isaac finally adjusted to retirement by visiting family and friends around the community and by getting out to summer camp sites. Shortly after Isaac began adjusting

to retirement, however, his health began to fail and he became increasingly less active. At present, Isaac suffers from a chronic breathing problems which requires daily medication. Isaac rarely leaves his home now, especially during the winter months, due to the fact that he is weak and has difficulty breathing.

A seventy year old elderly man of Cambridge Bay stated that:

Five years ago I retired for one month. Retirement was too boring and I was too restless, so I went back to work.

Unlike Isaac, the Inuit elder who made this comment represents the rare example of an individual who is free to decide when to retire. Due to his special skills and education, this person was actually compelled to return to the workplace. The majority of the elderly in the Cambridge Bay work force are employed in menial positions, such as janitor and labourer, and are forced to retire at age sixty-five, as Isaac was. However, difficulty in adjusting to retirement is perhaps the exception rather than the rule. As Condon (1983:84) explains:

Inuit adults seldom have to fear an idle and lonely retirement. While old age certainly limits the degree of strenuous activity in which an individual can engage, the elderly do not have to resign themselves to an unproductive existence. The older women in the settlement are among the best and most productive sewers in the settlement and are able to generate substantial incomes by sewing for the co-op. Older men will often continue hunting and trapping with sons and grandsons until infirmity limits them to the settlement, at which time they can begin carving, drawing, and making replica artifacts to be sold through the co-op. Undoubtedly, old age has more of an impact upon the men than the women, since male activities require strength and mobility largely dependent upon an individual's youth and vigor.

Old age, thus, requires more substantial adjustments on the part of males than females.

The elderly interviewed in Cambridge Bay who had retired from full-time employment appeared active and well adjusted. Many stated that they were happy to retire and were now able to devote time to activities which they had little time for while employed, such as hunting trips, doing repairs on the home, snowmobiles, and sleds, visiting friends, spending time with the grandchildren, etc. In many instances, it would seem that the retired elderly must be far busier in retirement than they could ever have been while working full-time.

A number of the elderly interviewed were past the age of retirement but were nonetheless working in a part-time capacity for various employers throughout the community. Although eager to retire completely, these persons displayed a devotion to their jobs which was absent among the younger members of the work force. Examples of this are as follows: George is a sixty-eight year old Inuit resident of Cambridge Bay. George has worked off and on over the past five years as a temporary employee of the DEWLine. In his position as laborer he has had to travel to off-sites located hundreds of kilometers from Cambridge Bay. George states that he is getting too old and tired to perform the long hours of work required on the DEWLine. He would prefer not to work again, however, he states that should he be called back by the DEWLine he will work again. Three weeks after being interviewed George was contacted for employment by the DEWLine and

accepted a temporary position as laborer once again.

Matthew, an elderly of Cambridge Bay, lives alone in a one bedroom apartment. Matthew started working for the Hudson's Bay Company in 1963. He presently works at the Bay store on a part-time basis, three afternoons per week. In 1985, at age 65, Matthew was supposed to retire but was asked to stay on part-time by the company. Matthew states that he is happy to work less hours because he feels he is getting too old and weak. If the company tells him to retire than he will, however, he believes that they wish him to stay on. When asked what his plans were to be upon retirement, Matthew replied that he was going to sleep all the time.

To the retired elderly of Cambridge Bay life centres mainly around family and friends. To a large extent the elderly, upon retirement, become dissociated from community affairs. Few, if any, community sponsored programs and activities are available for the elderly to get involved in. A great deal of local and territorial government funding is put towards special programs for young people, however, as a government official from Yellowknife stated, "the elderly are just falling through the cracks".

This situation was discussed with the mayor of Cambridge Bay, who, upon returning from a visit with his wife's relatives in Ontario, was surprised to discover how involved and active a lot of southern elderly

are in the community upon retirement. He was sorry to say that the same did not hold true for the Inuit elderly of Cambridge Bay. The mayor stated that he was fully in favour of enhancing the retirement years of the elderly in the settlement. He would like to have the elderly more involved in the community, perhaps at the school where they could speak with youngsters and instill within them the joy and pride of being Inuit. The mayor believes there should be many more activities and avenues for involvement available to the settlement elderly, so as to help bring forth their potential.

#### OLD AGE SECURITY

The Inuit elderly of Cambridge Bay do not know when they were born, they only know where and in what season. It was never important for people living on the land to know the date on which they were born. In a modern centralized community such as Cambridge Bay, however, the situation is entirely different. Government bureaucracy dictates that vital statistics be compiled on all citizens. The framework needed to accomplish this accurately has only recently been introduced into the Arctic. Prior to the 1960's, records of births, marriages, and deaths were obtained and compiled by the R.C.M. Police, missionaries, and to a degree, the trading post managers. The accuracy of their data, moreover, is highly questionable.

During the initial home interview phase of the fieldwork, I was made aware of a long standing problem in the settlement concerning a number of aged persons and their inability to obtain Old Age Security benefits. These individuals argue that they are over the age of 65 yet are denied O.A.S. benefits based on their recorded dates of birth, which they view as incorrect information. Indeed, no record exists of their actual dates of birth. Though this may be the case, the government has ascribed to the elderly a date of birth based on records taken years after the fact. As a settlement social worker, who has spent a number of years trying to resolve O.A.S. problems, explained:

In the past, individual census takers working for the government would travel around to the outpost camps collecting information which was often second hand and, therefore, full of inaccuracies. In many instances even close relatives were not consulted when the individual being recorded was not present. In some cases, parents were not consulted about their own children. Whoever was available was utilized for information. I have often questioned whether data gathering was standardized or even if competent interpreters were used. Many of the cases I have dealt with prove neither to be true.

Further evidence in support of the claim that their birth records are in error can be found in a report submitted to the commissioner of the R.C.M. Police:

On this patrol natives were interviewed at Melbourne Island, Flagstaff Island, Perry River, Sherman Inlet, Peterson Bay and Anderson Bay... Records of births and deaths were obtained from the various tribes. This information was obtained as nearly accurate as possible, owing to having no interpreter (R.C.M.P. Commissioners Report 1929:95).

Birth certificates issued to Inuit elderly based on information "obtained as nearly accurate as possible" place a date of birth on these individuals that in some cases has denied them eligibility for Old Age Security. Two examples are used to illustrate this situation: Mabel is an elderly woman residing in Cambridge Bay, N.W.T. She is widely perceived as one of the oldest individuals residing in Cambridge Bay. Mabel had two marriage relationships. Only once was she married in the church. Therefore, only one marriage is recorded in the government records. Mabel's oldest daughter, Suzie, is recorded as having been born in 1937. Mabel's birth certificate states that she was born in 1923. Mabel would have been 14 years old when Susie was born. This is possible, though unlikely. As Jenness (1922:158) observed, Copper Eskimo girls often married before reaching puberty, yet they would bear no children until three or four years later, perhaps not until age eighteen. Prior to Susie's birth, Mabel was living in a marriage relationship with a man named Anarak. Anarak was the older brother of Akana, another aged resident of Cambridge Bay. Traditionally, one's husband was chosen in the order of the eldest child available for marriage. Had Mabel been the same age as Akana, she would have married him rather than his older brother, Anarak. Mabel's second husband was a man named Adam. Both ex-husbands are deceased.

Mabel was baptized and legally married in 1940. She had lived in a common-law relationship for an extensive period of time before she was

married in the church.

Vital Statistics, GNWT, states that Mabel was born in 1923. This information is based on a birth certificate issued in the 1950's. The birth certificate is based on census information which dictates that Mabel was "approximately" 20 years old in 1940 and 30 years old in 1950. The two census reports thus correlate. What is not considered, however, is the possibility that Mabel's 1950 census year of birth could have been based on her 1940 census report year of birth, which could have initially been incorrect. The difficulty with determining Mabel's true age is due to the original birth certificate and the 1940 and 1950 census data. Historical events and information gathered from other elderly of Cambridge Bay, however, refute the data obtained in 1940 and 1950.

The historic ship "Maud" sunk in 1932 at Cambridge Bay, N.W.T. According to Mabel, she was newly married to Adam when the ship sunk. Had she been born in 1923 she would have been 9 years old when she first married Adam, and much younger when she was married to Anarak.

Ruth, an aged resident of Cambridge Bay, receives Old Age Security. She is recorded as having been born in 1917. According to Ruth, Mabel is older than Ruth. Apparently, Ruth was not married when Mabel married. It may be presumed, therefore, that Mabel is older than Ruth, hence born prior to 1917.

Simon is the only elderly person in town who played with Mabel as a child. Simon states that he and Mabel are the same age. Simon is receiving Old Age Security and is recorded as having been born in 1916. Peter is also receiving O.A.S. benefits, he is recorded as having been born in 1918. Mabel states that she babysat Peter when his parents were hunting. She thinks that she was about six years old at the time.

The elderly of Cambridge Bay state that Mabel is one of the oldest individuals in the settlement. She is certainly visibly older than other elderly in the settlement. However, Mabel has only recently (May 1987) begun receiving Old Age Security benefits. She has been struggling to obtain benefits for a period of five years. Her original birth certificate and census data prevented Mabel from obtaining Old Age Security at an earlier and more appropriate date.

According to the data presented, it is clear that Mabel is much older than her original birth certificate dictates. It is also clear that Mabel was being unfairly treated with regard to the fact that she was not receiving what was duly owed to her. Instead, Mabel was being penalized for the fact that she is an Inuit born at a time when date of birth was not recorded.

Bob is also an elderly resident of Cambridge Bay, N.W.T. Bob's birth certificate (issued in 1951) states that Bob was born in 1926. Bob maintains, however, that he was born in the late 1800's. Bob is

clearly a person of advanced age, nevertheless, his assertion of a birth date in the late 1800's is extremely unlikely. For this to be true, Bob would be widely regarded as the oldest Inuk in Cambridge Bay; this distinction does not belong to Bob.

Bob states that he is many years older than his step-sister Betty. Betty concurred to this being true. Vital Statistics, however, have Betty as being older than Bob.

When Peter, another aged of Cambridge Bay, was forced to retire at age 65 from a government job, many elderly in the settlement wondered openly why Peter had to retire while Bob was still working. The elderly know Bob to be older than Peter. Peter's birth certificate states that Peter was born in 1918. When Bob's employer was presented with these facts, Bob was also forced to retire. Unfortunately, Bob's birth certificate date of 1926 does not allow him to receive Old Age Security benefits. Needless to say, Bob is not receiving the respect nor the income that he deserves from the Canadian Government. Bob is presently receiving a monthly allowance from Social Assistance. He is definitely a very old person, and has undoubtedly been eligible for Old Age Security despite government documentation that denies him the pension.

The elderly in Cambridge Bay that are denied O.A.S. pensions until that time that the government deems them to be 65 years of age, must

survive at present on Social Assistance. Old Age Security benefits differs from Social Assistance payments in that Social Assistance cheques are made directly payable to the Hudson's Bay Company or the Co-op. Consequently, at the present time, independent use of one's money is not permitted when one is receiving Social Assistance. It can be assumed, therefore, that a particular dignity accompanies the elderly to whom Old Age Security is being granted.

The Cambridge Bay community social worker responsible for handling cases involving O.A.S. disputes is unsure of what it takes to resolve the situation. According to the social worker, the Bureau of Vital Statistics, Government of Canada, previously required him to follow a set of guidelines on how to re-document birthdates. The amended information would then be reviewed by Vital Statistics. Within a two year time frame, Social Services would receive a decision. If revisions as to date of birth were allowed, Old Age Security was paid retroactively from the date of revision. A number of elderly received lump-sum payments due to this policy. All this changed during 1981-82. A new government policy was introduced at this time making revisions to existing census data virtually impossible. Though the community social worker has struggled over the past five years to have revisions to birth dates accepted by the government, he sees little hope that anything can be resolved. He states that the response from Vital Statistics is that they are sympathetic to the plight of the elderly, only their hands are tied to existing policy and regulations.

ALCOHOL USE

The subject of alcohol use among the elderly of Cambridge Bay is a complex one. The short time in the field did not allow for a comprehensive investigation of the situation. Certainly, some of the elderly do have a problem with alcohol, though it is my contention that they are a minority. To listen to a number of whites in Cambridge Bay, one would get the impression that the entire community has a drinking problem. This is simply not true. White opinion of Inuit drinking patterns is, to my understanding, based in ignorance and fear. To make the statement that one should, "lock the doors and bolt the windows on Friday nights" (the evening of beer sales in the community) is to show lack of sensitivity to the peculiarities of Inuit drinking habits.

Though the pace of drinking at parties can be fierce, it rarely culminates in violent behaviour. Condon (1983:186) offers this well defined assessment on Inuit drinking behaviour:

Since alcohol is a relatively rare commodity, it is, more often than not, consumed immediately upon receipt. Interestingly enough, the same pattern that characterized traditional food-sharing systems has been extended to the utilization of alcoholic beverages. Residents of the settlement are quick to find out who has received a shipment of liquor on the plane and will converge on the home of the buyer to share in his good fortune. Thus, the home of the buyer will generally be inundated with visitors who rarely visit under other circumstances. Although a certain degree of reciprocity is assumed in this pattern of sharing, there are those individuals who do more drinking of other people's liquor than reciprocating.

A predominant characteristic of local drinking behaviour is the conspicuous absence of any form of moderation. Regardless of the amount of alcohol purchased by an individual or group of individuals, it is usually consumed the day it is received. The local pattern is not to drink socially until "high" or drunk and then stop, but to drink until the alcohol is completely gone or, alternately, until most people have passed out. The term "passed out" is frequently used to describe the physical state of many people who are drinking on any one night. This lack of moderation may be partially a reflection of the relative scarcity and difficulty of obtaining alcohol. In addition, one would not expect the practice of moderation to be highly developed in any society whose traditions are adapted to an unstable environment, necessitating a feast-or-famine outlook on most valued resources.

Perhaps the most poignant description of Inuit drinking behaviour in Cambridge Bay is that offered by an elderly Inuit man of the community. According to this informant:

Now many people have died from drunkenness, a few of them by freezing to death, some by poisoning and some by being smothered by fire. Yes, Cambridge Bay is a bad place for alcohol, like so much drinking. Most of all, making home brew is worse now. Yes, there's a lot of home brew being made here in Cambridge Bay. I know a lot of these widowers on welfare drink a lot of home brew. It's not so good for them.

Yes, I used to be bad for home brew but I'm very tired of the stuff. I used to make some for the weekend a lot, but thank God now I do not make any yet. You know, it's time to quit making home brew.

By the way, I'm very sick of alcohol now. We need someone to help us out. Well, on weekends it's very bad nowadays - too much alcohol and I get very tired of it. It's getting to be a very bad habit. In our settlement the teenagers wait until Saturdays and Sundays then they start drinking. They wait until the police slack down and they start to drink. The police should look for these guys instead of putting innocent guys like me in jail. These young bright punks act smart, should be in

jail though.

Yes, it's time for people to realize about their young teenagers how they are taking home brew and beer away from their parents when they are drunk. Pretty near every weekend you can see a lot of these young boys and girls drunk. I've seen too much already in the house of the woman I'm staying with. Every weekend, never change, these young boys and girls stay up at her house. They're drunk most of the time. Yes, it's not so good for her and me.

Now I have to say alcohol spoils a family life. Some people drink a lot just for the heck of it or to raise hell, and some like to argue a lot while drinking. Well, sometime you may over drink yourself. It happens to me sometimes. I don't know what I am doing myself. Now I'm finding out and I'm getting sick of drinking.

Yes, I think it would be nice if an alcoholic person could go around to people and talk about their problems of drinking and all that. I think it would do good because a lot of these people have drinking problems. Like myself, I'm finding out slowly about my problems, like the woman I'm staying with, I'm jealous of her because I love her so much. She is weak, she takes pills all the time. She can't work or cook, but I love her so much. Yes, it makes it hard for me because her children can't look after her. They leave her alone most of the time.

Another opinion is offered by Henry, an elderly Inuk of Cambridge Bay:

Drinking isn't that much of a problem for elders. We get together and have some beer on Friday nights. They are really nice get togethers. I like to save a few cans to drink during the week, especially for watching hockey on TV. The young kids drink it all in one sitting then they ask for my beer, sometimes I hide it but I've often had it stolen anyway. I like to go to Yellowknife as many times as I can. You can get booze every night there. I stay with relatives for free and I know a lot of the people in town.

One elderly person, in explaining why he likes to drink home brew, stated the following:

There are so many activities in other places, like Inuvik and Yellowknife, not like here. Maybe they shouldn't make a town any bigger than this, it's too big already. Too much qablunaaq are here now and nothing ever going on. It's not like in olden days, now old people would rather play cards and drink at home. Even the women don't like to sew kamiks anymore.

Community "beer" dances are held in Cambridge Bay on alternate Friday evenings. These dances are sponsored by the various interest groups and sports clubs within the settlement. Tickets for these events usually sell out within a day of becoming available. Many factors are responsible for the popularity of these events, though the major draw is the availability of alcohol. Each ticket holder is allowed six cans of beer at a cost of \$2.50 per can; this is in addition to the case of beer allowed each adult on Friday evenings. The beer dances are held on Saturday evenings and thus allows one to drink store bought alcohol over a two day period. During the dances a list is kept of how many drinks have been purchased by each individual. In order to obtain more than is allowed, there is bargaining and politicking going on all evening.

Many elderly in the settlement also enjoy these social gatherings. As one aged informant commented:

I really enjoy dancing with the young people, it's great fun. It does bother me how these young kids drink though. They don't know how to handle it, it is so new to them and they don't know how to act or control themselves. I learned how to drink when I was down south, there you can drink in a nice bar any evening you want. You don't feel as if beer is so special. You know

there is going to be more beer tomorrow. The kids here don't know about alcohol, white people make it but don't teach the proper way to use it. The young kids think it more important than it is really. I'm just glad I learned how to drink.

According to the Anglican minister of Cambridge Bay, "A lot of elders drink and fall asleep, very few ever find themselves in court. The important issue is how other people's drinking effects the elders.". This is an issue discussed in the following section on elderly abuse. Specific to the present discussion is the fact that some elderly do indeed find themselves in court due to alcohol use. A telling example of this is as follows: A CBC North news report dated November 1987 stated that an elderly man from Coppermine had been sentenced to jail for the attempted murder of two young women at a home brew drinking party. This 73 year old had apparently started a fight with the two women which resulted in his pouring naphtha gas over both of them and lighting them on fire. One woman was required to spend six months under care at the Edmonton General Hospital. The other woman required three months of care at the same facility. The elderly man was convicted and sentenced to one and a half years in detention with a one year probationary term.

An Inuit informant in Cambridge Bay related to me that the same old man had been charged with a similar offence some eight years past. At that time he had set fire to a house after a drinking party which resulted in the death of one man.

This is an extreme and rare example of alcohol related social deviance among the elderly. In Cambridge Bay, the majority of cases in which the elderly become involved with the law stem from public drunkenness on Friday evenings. Late Friday evenings and early Saturday mornings the R.C.M.P. cruise the community and place all drunken individuals found in public into jail overnight. When I asked one elderly Inuit man to give his opinion of the R.C.M.P., he replied: "I can't say much about them, they always just throw me in jail".

The Supervisor, Department of Social Services, GNWT, noted that:

Another grave concern that has emerged in the North is the apparent alcohol abuse by some elders. There is no evidence as to the cause of such alcohol abuse. Some thoughts are that attributing factors are loneliness, lack of extended family support, lack of activities geared to meet needs of senior citizens. Unfortunately, over the years, we have seen tragedies resulting from alcohol abuse. There is definitely a need for an alcohol awareness program directed towards our elders (Enge 1987:unpublished manuscript).

The Katimavik Centre in Cambridge Bay is a community drug and alcohol centre created to reduce the negative impact that alcohol and drug use has on persons living in Cambridge Bay. The Katimavik Centre counsels and teaches individuals and groups about alcohol and drug abuse and their effects. The facility is located in the core of the settlement and consists of one building with offices and open area space. The Katimavik Centre offers many services to the community, such as:

- 1) The Crisis Centre - open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The purpose of the Crisis Centre is to offer a home away from home to victims of alcohol. The centre is staffed by on-call workers and attendants after work hours.

- 2) The Drop-In Centre - open Monday through Friday and Thursday evenings. The program allows people of the community to drop in to the facility and discuss any problems they might have.
- 3) Addiction Counselling - for people who need counselling on drug and alcohol problems. The counsellors teach what the effects of drug and alcohol abuse are, and promote a better understanding of these drugs.
- 4) Home visits - counsellors or community workers do weekly homevisits to a number of people in the settlement. These people feel more comfortable having counselling within their home.
- 5) Resource Centre - open to the public. This program has pamphlets, library books, video cassette tapes and magazines that help develop the communities understanding of drugs and alcohol.

According to a Cambridge Bay social worker, however, a major difficulty exists in attempts to have elderly with alcohol problems seek counselling. She explains that:

Elders still feel that problems, such as alcohol abuse, are to be faced within the family unit and should not be dealt with by outside agencies. The elders view Social Services, Katimavik, the nursing station, etc., as foreign institutions. Traditional means of dealing with family or social problems are deeply ingrained and serve to alienate other non-traditional support networks.

#### ELDER ABUSE

The phenomenon of elderly abuse in the settlement of Cambridge Bay is very much an "underground" problem. To date, elderly abuse has not been as public an issue as spousal assault and child abuse. This is due to the hidden nature of elderly abuse. The humiliation of being

abused along with the difficulty of admitting that a friend or relative is an abuser creates a situation where few victims are willing to come forward to seek help. This makes it virtually impossible to estimate how widespread the problem is. As Havens (quoted in McClelland and Miles 1987:210) relates:

Abuse of the elderly presents special problems for both government and a concerned community: it still has to be identified and defined, at the same time as it is being confronted. The reason is simple. Very little is known about the nature and extent of abuse of the elderly. More than wife and child abuse, it is difficult to identify, because the victims are especially unwilling to reveal that they have been abused.

Havens (Ibid.) identifies three levels of elderly abuse:

- 1) Physical abuse - can range from withholding food to physical assault and homicide;
- 2) Emotional-psychological abuse - being treated as a child, verbal abuse, threats, humiliation, name-calling, and being taken advantage of; and
- 3) Financial abuse - includes misappropriation of funds, disposal of assets without consent, and failure to manage income or assets properly (financial abuse is perhaps the most common form of mistreatment of the elderly).

The community social worker in Cambridge Bay acknowledged that there have been cases of abuse toward the elderly during home drinking parties. With the family violence that often accompanies drinking, it seems likely that elderly are sometimes attacked or threatened during these parties. The social worker commented, however, on the fact that after these drinking parties the abuser(s) promptly forgets all that occurred, whereas; the elderly person remains hurt and confused, nothing has been resolved. The abuser(s) does not understand the

extent to which the elderly individual is hurt by such a show of disrespect. As one elderly informant explains:

Some elders talk to their kids and tell them how they should act. The young people don't like being told and when they drink and start feeling high they start a fight with the elder. When I drink with my sons I keep them happy, I don't want to start anything. I don't like loud music but I turn it up anyway myself and I don't complain about it. I like everyone to be happy and get along good.

McClelland and Miles (1987:210) have suggested providing the elderly with physically separate shelters in order to reduce the occasion for violence. The suggestion fails to take into account the Inuit tradition of maintaining elderly family members within the home. The problem of elderly abuse must be confronted, however, removing the abused, in effect, isolating the abused, is simply not the solution.

The Katimavik co-ordinator commented that:

Elders are quite upset at what they see going on in the community, such as spousal assault, child abuse and elder abuse. They try to teach that it is the wrong way to live, that it is a product of drinking - a white man's sickness. The elders always say that they never had these problems in the old days.

Beer sales in Cambridge Bay are handled through the Hudson's Bay Company. Every individual over the age of 18 (excluding those on the interdiction list) is entitled to one 12 bottle case of beer per week. Sales occur every Friday from 4:30 to 7:00 pm. In order to receive the beer, individuals must personally be present at the Hudson's Bay

Company between the hours stated. No exceptions to this rule are allowed. It was reported to me that on a number of occasions in the past, young people have abused elderly relatives in order to gain an extra case of beer. It was explained to me that some young people literally wheel their elderly relative down to the beer line, no matter what the weather may be like, so as to gain their case of beer. One particular case involved a young man who used to bring his elderly father to the beer line each and every week. His father, however, was severely disabled, and could move only with assistance. The young son had to struggle to get his father to and from the beer line, only to get his father's case of beer. It was made clear to me that a number of the elderly require assistance from family members in order that they may get to the Friday beer line (in many respects a social highlight) and receive their beer. The situations described below, however, relate to actual cases of abuse whereby the elderly were forced to the beer line.

A number of cases were related to me involving financial abuse of the elderly. It appears that this is the most common form of elderly abuse within the settlement. Examples include handing money over to youths who ask for and expect it, though the elderly may not want to give it or may not have enough to give out; pilfering money from an elderly family member's wallet; and, family members taking all pension or Social Assistance money from an elderly relative. It is hard to determine if this last example belongs under the heading of financial

abuse. All of the elderly Inuit interviewed were happy to contribute their income to the household, of which they were glad to be productive members. It may well be implicit to the family members that this income is contributed to the household.

What follows is a description of an incident of physical abuse directed toward an elderly Inuit male in Cambridge Bay during the period of fieldwork:

David is a very active 70 year old member of the Cambridge Bay elderly community. On a Saturday, David had attended his son's wedding at the Anglican church. That evening he was present at the reception held at the community hall. After the reception, the party was continued at David's home. The party continued until late Sunday evening. At some point on the Sunday evening David and his adult son-in-law began to fight. Both David and his son-in-law were drunk at the time. David's daughter soon joined in. The result was that David was severely beaten by both his daughter and his son-in-law.

On the Monday, I went to David's place of work in order to arrange a home interview with him that evening. His boss informed me that David had called in sick and would more than likely be in the next day. It was assumed that David was suffering from a hang-over, nothing more. The following day I again tried to see David at his place of work only to find that he had not arrived and had not called in sick. This was

highly unusual for David and his boss was quite concerned. I decided that in the afternoon I would go to David's house (under the assumption that he was just tired from the weekend) and ask him if that evening we could meet.

Upon arriving at David's home I was informed that he was resting in bed. I stated that it was not important to disturb him, that I would return later. David's young granddaughter bid me to stay; that he would be up soon. A moment later David appeared. I was momentarily stunned. I had never known an elderly person to be abused in such a manner. David stood in obvious pain, the entire left side of his face was deeply bruised, his left eye was completely shut and his mouth was badly damaged. David stated that he was sick and felt terrible, that he had been beaten up and kicked while on the ground. He was having quite a bit of trouble speaking. I wanted to leave so that he may rest but asked if there was anything at all that I could do for him. David said that he would be all right. I stressed that he should have his injuries tended by the nurses. He replied, however, that he would be fine, he just needed rest.

The Katimavik co-ordinator had mentioned that at drinking parties the elderly have been known to be abused, however, this was my first exposure to such an occurrence, and I was deeply moved. Nothing was mentioned openly about the assault in the settlement, but everyone was aware that it happened. It was treated as a private family matter that

did not require outside interference.

Some two weeks after the incident I was able to interview David at his home. By this time he was almost fully recovered. When asked to give his opinion on elderly abuse in the settlement, David replied: "I don't know of any elderly people who have been abused, I don't know of anyone in Cambridge Bay abusing their elders".

## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The major goal of this work has been to provide, as completely as possible, an ethnographic profile of Inuit elderly in a present day arctic settlement. The field methodology employed was the anthropological technique of participant observation (as described by Pelto and Pelto 1984) plus semi-structured interviews with Inuit informants of both sexes and all ages. Unfortunately, the brevity of the field period (14 weeks) did not allow a thorough examination of all aspects of the situation.

All aspects of traditional Inuit life have been, and continue to be, transformed through the process of contact with agents of "white" society. The small isolated communities which dot the great expanse of tundra in the Canadian Arctic present to the researcher a unique opportunity for the examination of a culture in transition. The role of Inuit elderly within this dynamic is an especially important area of examination, owing to both the steady growth rate of the aged Inuit population (since centralization) and the hitherto minimal interest shown toward the elderly in social scientific research on Inuit culture change. This thesis has identified and investigated eight relevant subject areas. These areas are briefly discussed and commented upon in the following section.

ELDERLY AND THE COMMUNITY

Inuit elderly of Cambridge Bay, N.W.T., view the settlement as a product of the white man's world. Having been raised "on the land" it is fair to say that the majority of Inuit elderly interviewed described sedentary living as a negative experience. Many remained bitter about the circumstances which led to their entering and remaining in the settlement. They feel that they were coerced by agents of the Federal government into believing that all of their needs would be cared for in the "new" community. In reality, extreme hardships were encountered by the Inuit inhabitants of Cambridge Bay during the early years of the settlement. The sentiment most often conveyed by the elderly was one of lost freedom and independence since moving off the land.

By and large, Inuit elderly are satisfied with the feeling of comfort and security that settlement living offers. They realize that in contrast to traditional times, their lives today are protected and productive. Modern conveniences (ovens, washers, dryers, television, etc.) have been adopted as essential to the modern settlement lifestyle. The elderly are extremely appreciative to white society for having introduced into their lives such luxuries. Yet, for all the benefits gained from southern material goods, much has been modified in the way of traditional cultural practices. It was stated by all informants that Cambridge Bay was about as "non-traditional" as an Inuit community could be. To the elderly, the settlement is the domain of their children and grandchildren. Not long ago, the role of the

elderly was to teach the young survival on the land, now they teach only those few who care to listen and learn. The traditional role of Inuit elderly as portrayed in early ethnographic accounts is changing within the context of a modern settlement. In the home, traditional roles persist to a certain degree. In the community the elderly have indirect input in community affairs, politics, education, religion, etc.

Elderly Inuit of Cambridge Bay are still clearly adjusting to life in a settlement. Very few understand the processes which created the settlement or those that maintain it. To a great extent, the settlement is a strange and foreign reality for the elderly. As a result, there is a feeling among elderly of estrangement, of not belonging to the settlement. Where the elderly do feel they belong is within the family setting and amongst other elderly. The family is truly the centre of an elderly Inuit's existence. Though isolated, to a degree, from the community around them, their lives are made comfortable and secure through interpersonal relationships with family and life-long friends.

#### ELDERLY ACTIVITY PATTERNS

Research indicated that the Inuit elderly of Cambridge Bay were, in general, a very active group of individuals. It is noted that over the period of fieldwork the health of the elderly community was described as excellent by staff at the nursing station. Only a few elderly

individuals were considered inactive due to health reasons. A wide variety of elderly activity patterns were documented during the period of fieldwork. These activities were categorized under the headings of subsistence, economic, domestic, recreational, and spiritual. Of the activities identified, only a small number (sewing, trapping, winter camping, etc.) appeared to be gender specific. Of interest is the fact that activities such as hunting, cooking, baby-sitting, etc., were engaged in by both sexes.

Perhaps as interesting as those activities engaged in, were those activities not engaged in by Inuit elderly of Cambridge Bay over the period of fieldwork. There was no direct involvement by the elderly in local political matters. The elderly held no active representation on the hamlet council or special committees, either elected or voluntary. This is in contrast to the situation that exists in other settlements (as it was conveyed to me by informants) of the Kitikmeot Region (i.e. Gjoa Haven, Spence Bay) where some elderly still maintain positions of authority within local government and decision-making bodies. As traditional social and cultural "leaders", the aged of Cambridge Bay could be encouraged to re-establish a leadership role in decision-making. Aboriginal organizations could play an active role in allowing the elderly to assume a leadership role within the community.

Likewise, Cambridge Bay elderly were not involved in the formal education system of the community. Although a C.I.P. (Cultural

Inclusion Program) committee has been active within the Cambridge Bay Local Education Authority, the members found it extremely difficult to recruit elderly instructors for the positions available. As a result, the program was suspended until instructors could be found. The program is a valuable one in that it teaches young Inuit a cultural identity. When the elderly were asked if they supported such a program, the response was always positive; when asked why they did not participate as instructors, many answered that they were afraid or embarrassed to stand up in front of such large classes.

The majority of activities engaged in by Inuit elderly were centered in and around the home. Older individuals rarely live by themselves, but will frequently live in the same household with married, or unmarried, sons and daughters and their offspring. Under these circumstances, healthy elderly are rarely, if ever, inactive. Keeping a family and household in order amounts to full time work for many elderly.

#### THE TRADITION OF CARE AND RESPECT FOR THE ELDERLY

In traditional times, not only were Inuit elderly accorded respect and admiration but they were assured of constant care by two interacting social institutions, the extended family and the community - both of which were based on communal sharing. The contemporary situation for Inuit elderly is not so ideal. The research indicated that the traditions of care and respect for the elderly of Cambridge Bay are in

transition.

Elderly informants generally indicated that the Inuit youth of today treated them with less respect. They were disturbed at what they said were "so many Inuit kids turning white". Many held feelings of bewilderment and disillusionment as a result of not fully comprehending why these changes were occurring. It is clear that in the settlement of Cambridge Bay the tradition of respect by youth toward the elderly is changing. Respect is a hard variable to measure subjectively over such a short period of time in the field. The elderly appeared to be treated with a great deal of respect by both the young and adult. Yet, in reality, this is not always the case. A number of informants expressed the fear that in the future Inuit may become as cold and uncaring toward their elderly as the white man is today.

The depth of knowledge held by today's Inuit elderly is profound. Non-Inuit institutions (i.e. school, television, etc.) have expanded the Inuit world view without eroding the value of this knowledge for the younger generation.

The tradition of caring for the elderly within the extended family setting is still a strong one in Cambridge Bay. The elderly still expect to die in their homes surrounded by family and friends. In almost all cases this is the reality. Yet, a growing number of families are becoming unable to care for their aged. Commitments

outside the home or the inability of family members to give the level of care required are some of the reasons behind this trend. The idea of "care homes" for the elderly has been suggested by the Department of Social Services, however, the concept has met with strong opposition from community members. At present, the only service offered families for the care of ill and disabled elderly is home care visits conducted by the nursing station and the Kitikmeot Inuit Association. Due to time and budgetary constraints it is impossible at present to ensure that a proper standard of care is given to the elderly by way of home care visits. Unfortunately, home care visits during the period of fieldwork tended to be brief and extremely infrequent. There is a clear need for a comprehensive home care program in Cambridge Bay. Such a program would provide the opportunity for the ill and disabled elderly to remain in their own home by providing essential health and support services and by helping to maintain and support the family unit and family relationship.

Existing home care programs in the Northwest Territories (Departments of Health and Social Services) utilize the services of health care professionals. In small Arctic settlements health services can not meet the commitment of a sustained home care program. An alternate model could be as follows: Individuals already caring for an ill elderly relative within the home can be brought together as a group and trained in the proper aspects of care giving. Training would take place within the community by health and social services staff.

Sponsorship in the form of funding (i.e. medical supplies) would come from either the Department of Social Services or the hamlet government. The individuals trained to care for their elderly could create a support network offering respite care to families in need in the community. Such a course for training family members to care for their elderly does not depend on money but tradition to succeed. A program of this kind enhances cultural tradition by having the support of service agencies as opposed to being controlled by them.

The elderly must remain within the home and community so that they may continue their role within Inuit society. The tradition of filial care for ill and/or disabled elderly must be reinforced. Support services within the community must be established to ensure this tradition continues.

#### SUPPORT SERVICES TO THE AGED AND DISABLED

The provision of support services to the aged and disabled in the Northwest Territories is shared between the Departments of Health and Social Services, GNWT. Unfortunately, of the numerous support services developed for ill and disabled elderly in the N.W.T. (refer to Chapter Four) few are available in the community of Cambridge Bay. The support services which were available in the community during the period of fieldwork were friendly visiting, transportation, and equipment loans. A homemaker service had been available in the past but was inactive during this period. In the area of support services

to the aged and disabled of Cambridge Bay very little has been accomplished to ensure that present day needs are being met.

Responsibility for health and support services in the Northwest Territories is presently being transferred from the Federal Government Medical Services Branch to the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Health (see Appendix D). When the transfer is completed for the Kitikmeot Region (proposed for 1989) a new health services infrastructure will have been put into place. The new system stresses "participation", "devolution of authority", and "devolution of accountability". The institutional structures to operate the decentralized system will be centered in the Community Health Committee (CHC), the Regional Health Board (RHB), and the Territorial Health Board (THB). The ultimate authority for health operations will rest with the Minister of Health and the Executive Council of GNWT. The main objective of a decentralized health system is to allow concerned community members a greater level of input on health services policy within their communities. Whether these changes will result in an increase in health and support services for the aged in Cambridge Bay is a matter for future investigation.

#### RETIREMENT

The elderly in Cambridge Bay who had retired from full-time employment appeared, for the most part, to be active and well adjusted. In many instances it would seem that retired elderly individuals must be far

more active in retirement than they could ever have been while working full-time. For the retired elderly, life centers mainly around family and friends.

The majority of elderly Inuit interviewed had been employed in menial positions and were forced to retire upon reaching the age of sixty-five. For some elderly retirement came unexpectedly and created adjustment difficulties. However, these cases were few. The common response from the retired elderly was that they were eager to retire so that they could devote time to activities which they had little time for while employed. Many of these activities (sewing, hunting, trapping, etc.) generate considerable income for retired elderly. As well, many elderly Inuit interviewed were past the age of retirement but were nonetheless working on a part-time bases for various employers throughout the community.

#### OLD AGE SECURITY

A long standing problem in the community of Cambridge Bay has been the inability of a number of the elderly in obtaining Old Age Security benefits. These elderly argue that they are over the age of sixty-five yet are denied O.A.S. benefits based on their recorded dates of birth, which they view as incorrect. Indeed, the accuracy of GNWT vital statistics data was shown to be highly questionable. Two case studies were described which indicated that elderly individuals were clearly older than their birth records would dictate. These individuals,

therefore, are being denied O.A.S. pensions until that time that the government deems them to be sixty-five years of age. These elderly must survive at present on Social Assistance benefits.

The Cambridge Bay social worker responsible for handling cases involving O.A.S. disputes has been working with the Federal government to resolve the situation. He sees little hope, however, that anything can be resolved. He states that the response from the government is that they are sympathetic to the plight of the elderly, only their hands are tied to existing policy regulations which make revisions to existing census data impossible. It is hoped that the Federal government will move in the future to prevent the elderly from being penalized for the fact that they are Inuit born at a time when vital statistics were not accurately recorded.

#### ALCOHOL USE

It is clear from the research that a number of Inuit elderly in the settlement suffer from a problem with alcohol. Unfortunately, the short time spent in the field did not allow for a comprehensive investigation of the problem. What was evident, however, is that there is a definite need for an alcohol awareness and treatment program in the settlement. Existing programs (i.e. Katimavik Centre) are viewed as insufficient to meet the specific needs of the elderly. A further difficulty in treatment is that the elderly still feel that problems, such as alcohol abuse, are to be faced within the family unit and

should not be dealt with by outside agencies. It is necessary, therefore, that for an alcohol awareness and treatment program to be effective it must involve a strong family orientation as well as a home-care component.

#### ELDERLY ABUSE

The phenomenon of elderly abuse in the settlement of Cambridge Bay is very much an "underground" problem. To date, elderly abuse has not been an openly public issue. This is due to the hidden nature of abuse toward the elderly. It was extremely difficult for the researcher to gather data on elderly abuse during the short period of fieldwork. However, personal experience and informant information would suggest that for a number of elderly in the settlement, abuse has been a serious problem. The forms of elderly abuse identified consist of physical, emotional, and financial. The frequencies of these levels of abuse within the community could not be established during the field period. Also, evidence as to whether elderly abuse is increasing or decreasing in Cambridge Bay could not be ascertained by the information gathered. As a result, it was virtually impossible to estimate how widespread the problem of elderly abuse in Cambridge Bay is.

## CONCLUSION

The cohort of Inuit elderly focused upon in the above study are a very special group of individuals. They belong to a generation which was born and socialized on the land. Through the processes of culture-contact they were displaced from the land and "forced" to reside in the foreign institution of the settlement. They were and are witnesses to the transformation of their culture. As such, their knowledge is invaluable toward gaining an understanding of culture in transition. When these individuals pass away so also will this knowledge.

This thesis documents the historical changes which have occurred in the Cambridge Bay region leading up to the establishment of the modern settlement of Cambridge Bay. It likewise investigates the role of the elderly within the present day settlement as contrasted to early ethnographic descriptions of the role and status of elderly within traditional Inuit society. On the whole, the research illustrates that the changes in Inuit attitude toward the elderly are still based on traditional values as reflected in early ethnographic accounts, enhanced by a transition to present day settlement life. It is hoped that this depiction of the past and present lifeways of Inuit elderly will offer some insights into the future role and status of the elderly within a changing Inuit society.

**APPENDIX A****Sample of Semi-Structured Interview Questions**

1. What is your name?
2. Do you recall in what year you were born?
3. What is the year stated on your birth certificate?
4. Do you recall where you were born?
5. By what place name did your group refer to itself?
6. Where did you live prior to moving to Cambridge Bay?
7. In what year did you move to Cambridge Bay?
8. Why did you move to Cambridge Bay?
9. Could you describe Cambridge Bay at that time?
10. What were your activities upon settling in Cambridge Bay (e.g. wage employment, hunting, trapping, etc.)?
11. Do you now consider yourself an elder?
12. Why do you consider yourself an elder?
13. Do others in the settlement consider you an elder?
14. What was the role of elders when you were young?
15. How has this changed now that you are an elder?
16. What are your feelings on living in a community?
17. Do you get along with the whites in the settlement?
18. Does the white influence on youngsters affect you?
19. Do youngsters show proper respect toward you?
20. Do you communicate well with youngsters?
21. How many rooms are in your house?
22. Please list the people you live with?

23. What relation are they to you?
24. Are you independent or do you need to be cared for?
25. Who cares for you? How?
26. Are other elders in town well taken care of?
27. Are you happy with the way things are today?
28. What would you like to see changed?
29. Are you working?
30. How long have you been retired?
31. Did retirement cause any problems for you?
32. Would you like to see more activities for elders?
33. What activities would you suggest?
34. Are you satisfied with the treatment received from the Nursing Station?
35. Are you satisfied with the R.C.M.P.?
36. As an elder, would you like to have more involvement in community politics?
37. Are you receiving social assistance, or old age pension?
38. Have you had problems with receiving your old age security benefit?
39. Are you experiencing any health problems?
40. Could you describe your activities during a normal day?
41. Could you describe your major summer activities?
42. Could you describe your major winter activities?
43. What are your views on elder drinking?
44. What are your views on youth drinking?
45. What are your views on elder abuse?

APPENDIX BELDERLY ACTIVITY PATTERNS

|     | <u>AGE</u> | <u>GENDER</u> | <u>H</u> | <u>SH</u> | <u>SM</u> | <u>FN</u> | <u>SC</u> | <u>WC</u> | <u>I</u> | <u>W</u> | <u>C</u> | <u>NA</u> |
|-----|------------|---------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
|     | (Years)    |               |          |           |           |           |           |           |          |          |          |           |
| 1.  | 66         | Male          |          |           |           |           | X         |           |          | X        |          |           |
| 2.  | 72         | Male          | X        |           |           | X         | X         |           | X        |          |          |           |
| 3.  | 66         | Female        |          |           | X         |           | X         |           |          | X        |          |           |
| 4.  | 63         | Female        |          | X         | X         |           |           |           |          |          | X        |           |
| 5.  | 49         | Female        |          | X         | X         |           |           |           |          |          |          |           |
| 6.  | 75         | Female        |          |           |           |           | X         |           |          |          |          | X         |
| 7.  | 68         | Male          |          |           |           |           |           |           |          | X        |          |           |
| 8.  | 71         | Female        |          | X         | X         |           |           |           |          | X        |          |           |
| 9.  | 72         | Male          |          |           |           |           |           |           |          |          | X        |           |
| 10. | 72         | Male          |          |           |           |           |           |           |          |          |          | X         |
| 11. | 67         | Female        | X        | X         | X         |           | X         |           |          |          |          |           |
| 12. | 77         | Male          |          |           |           |           | X         |           |          |          |          | X         |
| 13. | 61         | Male          |          |           |           |           |           |           |          | X        |          |           |
| 14. | 70         | Female        |          |           | X         |           | X         |           |          |          |          |           |
| 15. | 66         | Male          | X        |           |           | X         | X         |           | X        | X        |          |           |
| 16. | 62         | Female        |          | X         | X         |           |           |           |          |          | X        |           |
| 17. | 65         | Male          | X        |           |           | X         | X         |           |          | X        |          |           |
| 18. | 70         | Male          | X        |           |           | X         | X         |           | X        |          |          |           |
| 19. | 61         | Female        |          | X         | X         |           | X         |           |          |          | X        |           |
| 20. | 70         | Male          | X        |           |           | X         | X         |           | X        | X        |          |           |
| 21. | 67         | Male          | X        |           |           | X         | X         |           | X        |          |          |           |
| 22. | 67         | Male          | X        |           |           | X         | X         | X         | X        |          |          |           |
| 23. | 72         | Female        |          |           | X         |           |           |           |          |          |          | X         |
| 24. | 62         | Male          | X        |           |           |           | X         |           | X        |          | X        |           |

|     | <u>AGE</u><br>(Years) | <u>GENDER</u> | <u>H</u> | <u>SH</u> | <u>SM</u> | <u>FN</u> | <u>SC</u> | <u>WC</u> | <u>T</u> | <u>W</u> | <u>C</u> | <u>NA</u> |
|-----|-----------------------|---------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 25. | 63                    | Male          | X        |           |           | X         | X         |           | X        | X        |          |           |
| 26. | 63                    | Male          | X        |           |           | X         | X         | X         | X        |          |          |           |
| 27. | 61                    | Male          |          |           |           | X         | X         |           | X        | X        |          |           |
| 28. | 64                    | Male          |          |           |           | X         | X         |           |          |          |          |           |
| 29. | 59                    | Male          | X        |           |           | X         | X         | X         | X        |          |          |           |
| 30. | 65                    | Male          |          |           |           |           |           |           |          |          | X        |           |
| 31. | 65                    | Male          | X        |           |           | X         | X         | X         | X        |          | X        |           |
| 32. | 72                    | Male          | X        |           |           | X         | X         |           | X        | X        |          |           |
| 33. | 62                    | Male          |          |           |           |           |           |           |          |          |          |           |
| 34. | 70                    | Male          |          |           |           |           |           |           |          |          |          | X         |
| 35. | 77                    | Male          |          |           |           |           | X         |           |          |          |          | X         |
| 36. | 72                    | Male          |          |           |           |           |           |           |          |          |          | X         |
| 37. | 65                    | Male          | X        |           |           | X         | X         |           | X        | X        |          |           |
| 38. | 65                    | Male          |          |           |           |           | X         |           |          |          |          |           |
| 39. | 75                    | Male          |          |           |           |           |           |           |          |          |          | X         |
| 40. | 65                    | Female        |          | X         | X         |           |           |           |          |          | X        |           |

LEGEND

H - Hunting  
 SH - Sewing Hides  
 SM - Sewing Material  
 FN - Fish Nets  
 SC - Summer Camping  
 WC - Winter Camping  
 T - Trapping  
 W - Working  
 C - Crafts/Carving  
 NA - Not Active

## APPENDIX C

NWT POPULATION PROJECTION MODEL

- Based on June 1986 Census Final Population Counts -

Community Age, Sex and Ethnic Group Distributions

Base population figures used for current NWT population projections are June 1986 Census final population counts released April 13, 1987 by Statistics Canada. Ethnic group counts (numbers of Inuit, Dene/Metis, and Non-Natives) are figures prepared by the Bureau of Statistics using 1981 Census information and adjusting for community population change since 1981 as estimated from Family Allowance and Vital Statistics information. Age and sex distributions for each ethnic group were determined from June 1986 population projections (base population: June 1985 NWT population estimates).

Non-Native Population

For the purposes of the population projection model, the Non-Native population is subdivided into a "permanent" and a "non-permanent" portion, based on migration information from the 1981 Census. The non-permanent portion of the non-native population is kept constant throughout the projection period; that is, its members do not age, die or give birth. This approach is taken because the dominant population process for the non-permanent portion of the non-native population is short-term Northern residency followed by replacement by "similar" individuals from outside Northwest Territories.

How the Model Works

To function, the projection model requires two sets of information kept as input files to the model. The first file contains the base year population data as described above. This data is distributed by ethnic, sex and age group as follows:

|         |                                 |
|---------|---------------------------------|
| Ethnic: | Dene/Metis                      |
|         | Inuit                           |
|         | Non-Native (Permanent)          |
|         | Non-Native (Non-Permanent)      |
| Sex:    | Male                            |
|         | Female                          |
| Age:    | Single Year of Age (0-64 Years) |
|         | 65 Years and Older              |

The second input file contains fertility and mortality rates, and sex ratios at birth. Fertility rates are presented separately for Inuit, Dene/Metis and Non-Native women for each five-year age group in the range 15-49 years. Mortality rates are broken down by three age groups and the three ethnic origins. Sex ratios at birth are provided by ethnic group.

Logic of the Population Projection Model

For each community and Region

For each year

For Dene/Metis, Inuit and Non-Native (Permanent only)

I. For each sex:

Take the base data (i.e. previous year's data)

1. Calculate number of deaths for persons 65+ years  
(persons 65+ years \* 65+ mortality rate)
2. Subtract number deceased 65+ years from 65+ category  
(persons 65+ years - deceased 65+ years)
3. For each single year of age group, 1 to 64 years
  - a. Calculate number of deaths for each single year of age  
(persons in age group \* 1-64 mortality rate)
  - b. Subtract number deceased from each single year of age group  
(persons in age group - deceased for age group)

II. Calculate the number of births

For each fertility five-year age group:

Sum the number of females in age group and multiply by the fertility rate for that age group.

III. For each sex

1. Age the 1 through 64 year age groups by one year.
2. Calculate the sex distribution for children born.  
(births \* sex ratio)
3. Calculate the number of infant deaths.  
(births \* mortality rate for newborns)
4. Add the new births.  
(births - deceased newborns)

APPENDIX D

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES  
GNMT HEALTH SYSTEM

Formation, Responsibilities and Relationships of  
Community Health Committees, Regional Health Boards  
and the Territorial Health Board

6 July 1987

## INTRODUCTION

With transfer of Health from Medical Services Branch to the GNWT Dept. of Health, a new system of service delivery will be established. The new system stresses participation, devolution of authority and devolution of accountability; all of these in parallel to the most reasonable and practical level. Participation is provided to ensure that the system responds to the health needs of the people. The people in turn come to a better understanding of their health service through management of its resources. Accordingly, we are formalizing health institutional structures at community, regional and territorial levels to ensure that participation is provided at all three perspectives.

The institutional structures to operate the decentralized system in the communities will be centered in the Community Health Committee (CHC) and the Regional Health Board (RHB). This paper will explain the function of the community health committee and the regional health board and will also explain the relationship between these two institutions and all community health facilities such as nursing stations.

The ultimate authority for health operations will rest with the Minister of Health and the Executive Council of GNWT. The Minister's role and that of the Territorial Health Board (THB) is also outlined.

The GNWT is dedicated to community participation in the management of all health facilities and programs. While it is not practical or economical in most cases to have each community manage its own facilities, community participation is assured by membership on the regional health board, which will carry out the management function.

The GNWT sees participation in health matters in a broader manner than simply facility management; it will therefore emphasize local participation by community members in the community health committee, in order to seek a healthy environment, healthy way of life, and healthy attitude in the communities.

This paper is organized under the following headings:

- A. Community Health Committees (CHC)
- B. Regional Health Boards (RHB)
- C. Territorial Health Board (THB)

## A. COMMUNITY HEALTH COMMITTEES (CHC)

### 1. Overview

The community base for the Northwest Territories Health system will be the Community Health Committees. These committees, one in each community, will not be appointed by the Minister of Health but will be an entity of community government. The CHC will be formed by the government council in the settlement, hamlet, town or city. Where there is a band council as well as a municipal council, the two will get together and make a joint recommendation as to the formation of the CHC.

In each area of the N.W.T., regional health boards will manage the health system of that area. The regional health boards will be made up primarily of one member from each community; these members will probably be chosen from the CHC's. It will be in this way that the community people of each region control and manage their own health care. While the regional health boards and not the CHC's will directly manage the nursing stations and other facilities in each community, the CHC's will work in partnership with the nursing station to improve community health. The CHC's, for example, can be a very practical way of delivering preventative health information and education programs to community residents.

Traditionally, the committee is a group of people with interest in a distinct cause or "solving the same problems", which the acute care facilitators at the nursing station are perhaps unable to deal with. The committee generally takes shape as a result of people with the same interest coming together in an informal setting.

### 2. Political Structure

Depending on the region and system of local government, local health committees are usually either committees of hamlet council (or settlement, town, city) or band council. In some communities, at the present time, the health committee may be independent as a society under the Societies Act; after transfer, each CHC will be encouraged to have an attachment to the local community government.

In other communities, at the present time, the Health Committee may operate independently as an interest group with no legitimate authority. In most cases, however, the committee is an entity of the municipal government. As a society, the committee may involve itself in fund raising and spending for special projects separate to any municipal government involvement.

It is recommended in the formation of new CHC's that associations be made with an existing political body - e.g., municipal council, band council. In this way, funding for projects can be controlled and audited through the political body. Even as a society it is advisable to align with the local government.

For the new CHC, the band and/or municipal council will determine its relationship with council and establish its role and responsibilities. Terms of reference for the functioning of the committee will vary from committee to committee reflecting the diversity found between the many local government councils. However, generally, terms of reference will define overall goals, objectives and specifics such as the number of members required for the committee, how the committee will be formed (i.e., elected or appointed), length of term on the committee, committee officers and their responsibilities, meeting times, etc.

It is recommended that someone on the committee be a member of the larger political body - e.g., hamlet council, band council. This member can be an ex-officio member or a regular member. Ex-officio infers that the member advises and reports but does not vote on policy or program matters.

The committee should attempt to include professionals and paraprofessionals as regular members in an advisory capacity. Not to be omitted, however, are members of all cultural groups within the community.

(a) Possible Committee Structure

Any committee should be made of at least six (6) members with one person designated as Chairperson. The internal structure of the committee should provide for a secretary. This provides a mechanism to keep track of minutes for the committee and handle general correspondence. Also, a system of financial accountability should be found in the form of a treasurer.

(b) Committee Meetings

New health committees should establish general regulations regarding meetings. The Committee may wish to draw up a constitution and committee by-laws, however, in the formative stages this is premature. At the initial stages of development it should be noted that the committee is more apt to succeed if it comes under the jurisdiction of the municipal government, and will act within the guidelines established by that government.

The committee may later wish to examine how other community committees are established and prepare a framework based on other models (e.g., Educational Committees).

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

The role that a health committee may assume in a community will largely be determined by guidelines it sets for itself in accordance with directives it receives from its governing body (i.e., band council, municipal council), and also the guidance it may receive from the regional health board. The authority which a band or hamlet council gives to a health committee is determined by government legislation.

The delivery of health services, at present, is the joint responsibility of the GNWT and the Federal Government. In some regions the management and delivery of health services have already been transferred from the Federal to Territorial government. The Territorial government, in turn, has organized Regional Boards of Health who manage and are responsible for the administration and delivery of health services in their respective regions. While the role and responsibility of a local health committee does not include the management of health delivery services in the community, because of the membership relationship being developed between the CHC and the RHB, there will be a continuing and growing dynamic between those two bodies.

#### (a) Possible Terms of Reference for CHC

- (i) Become aware of and respond to health-related issues of the community.
- (ii) Priorize community needs, issues and problems related to health.
- (iii) Advise and consult with politicians and health care professionals on health concerns of the community.
- (iv) Develop, administer and facilitate community-based health education programs.
- (v) Where a Regional Health Board is in place, advise and consult with the board and administration on all community health concerns.
- (vi) Works towards its own development in both an administrative capacity and in its own health knowledge, in order to take on greater responsibilities.

These guidelines give the health committee a solid base from which to define its activities. It is important, particularly with a newly formed health committee, that communities' needs be carefully prioritized and that issues or concerns selected for action do not overwhelm the resources of the committee. As the committee members will be mostly volunteers from the community, it is important that the committee not over-burden itself by taking on too many activities at any one time.

As can be inferred by the guidelines, the health committees may take a major role in assisting and working with the community health nurses in the delivery of health education programs being initiated. As well, the health committee may act as a liaison between the community and nurses by providing a forum where concerns of the community and/or the nursing staff may be brought forth for cooperative solutions.

Health issues recognized by the health committee may be referred to the regional health board and/or the hamlet or band council who, in turn, may appeal to the appropriate government body for action. Some hamlet or band councils may give the authority to their health committees to initiate action on their behalf.

**(b) Possible Activities**

The following is a list of functions that the health committee could undertake based on the Terms of Reference. The order is progressive. An established health committee could begin at any level of activity depending upon the community needs, and the particular activity.

ACTIVITYDETAILSIdentifying Community Health and Social Issues

- determining and collecting information from a variety of sources within the community.

Network Building

- creating a number of links within the community to further identify problems. Links could include alcohol workers, RCMP, social workers, community leaders, etc. These links may be most useful later.

Assessment of Health Needs

- identification of high risk groups; directing the membership towards drawing up a plan of action to address problems, especially for high risk groups.

Program Development

- with the assistance of the "network", develop a program in detail to reduce a problem based on the needs of the community.

Advising the Municipal Government and Regional Health Board

- a time should be set aside to fully advise both these bodies on strategies. this can be accomplished through the liaison member in each case. The advice and support of the municipal government and RHB should also be sought.

Financing

- the committee or a sub-committee should undertake to draw up a budget (if required) to assist with solving the problem.

Implementing Plans

- the program should be implemented in the most effective manner. Also, the committee should determine if the plans are to be long range and continuous or short term measures. Coordination with other community based organizations should be in place.

Program Evaluation

- Document the success and failure of the program and make recommendations.

Reporting

- report to the municipal government, the financial source and the Regional Health Board, the results of the program. This primarily is the evaluation and should be documented in a summative report.

Financial Accounting

- if funded by any organization, it is imperative that the organization be supplied with a copy of the report and an accounting of all financial transactions.

#### 4. Resources

Various government departments and non-governmental agencies may be able to assist health committees in carrying out their activities. These resources may take the form of funds, educational aids and information, and resource people. The Regional Health Board, the GNWT Department of Health, Health and Welfare Canada (Medical Services Branch), Dene Nation and Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC) (through its various regional affiliates) and the Committee for Original Peoples' Entitlement (COPE) all provide health professionals able to work with health committees on special projects or areas of concern. Non-governmental agencies such as St. John Ambulance, NWT Council for the Disabled and the NWT Mental Health Association are additional sources of information and support services.

If the health committee simply discusses health concerns and makes recommendations to the political body, little funding is required. For minor concerns such as telephone and postage charges, the municipality can usually account for such costs internally.

Funding for special projects, however, should be forwarded to the appropriate source with accompanying support from the municipal government. If all financial transactions are made through the municipality, the disbursement and accountability is then with that municipal government.

Some possible sources of funds for special projects include the following:

- Regional Health Board.
- Government of the N.W.T. Department of Health, Health Promotion.
- Secretary of State.
- National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NNADAP).
- Government of the N.W.T. Department of Social Services.
- Health Promotion Directorate, Health and Welfare Canada (through the Department of Health, GNWT).

## B. REGIONAL HEALTH BOARDS (RHB)

### 1. Overview

The Regional Health Board will be the primary management board in the health delivery system. The regional divisions will be on a pragmatic basis and will not necessarily match the geographic regions of the GNWT. In some cases, the RHB will manage nursing stations and public health units in a certain area; where a hospital is included in that area, the hospital will also be part of their responsibility. Sometimes, the major part of the responsibility will be a hospital in their area. At the present time, our decentralized management boards are:

Baffin Regional Health Board  
 Fort Smith Health Centre  
 H.H. Williams Memorial Hospital  
 Inuvik Long Term Care Facility  
 Keewatin Regional Health Board  
 Stanton Yellowknife Hospital

When the transfer is complete, some of these management boards will stay the same, others will evolve to take on further responsibilities; there will probably be three more regional health boards added for a total of nine across the N.W.T.

All regional health board members will be appointed by the Minister of Health. The appointees will be from the communities with a basic membership of one person from each community. The Minister will invite nominations for appointment from the municipal and/or band council from the community, and will suggest that the person nominated also be a member of the community health committee, perhaps the chairperson. Regional councils for a group of communities may also want to have representatives on the Regional Health Board, although it is not mandatory. According to size of population one community may have more than one member representing that community.

### 2. Political Structure

Boards of Management are presently appointed pursuant to Section 11.2 of the Territorial Hospital Insurance Services Act. They are established to operate one or more facilities including related programs and services. Members of Boards, commonly called "trustees" are nominated from communities for appointment by the Minister of Health. These persons are active, respected members of communities and often are either the chairperson or member of the community health committee.

Terms of office after a Board is in operation are usually three (3) years to a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms.

The Board is established as a Body Corporate under a name assigned to it by the Minister and is considered a "Working Board".

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

The function of these Boards is to operate, manage and control the health facility or facilities, programs and services assigned to it. To accomplish this the Board;

- selects and appoints a Chief Executive Officer
- proposes rules for conducting and concluding the business of the Board (By-laws)
- determines objectives and major policies
- ensures that qualified staff are employed and maintained
- safeguards assets
- ensures financial stability
- approves organizational and major delegation of authority patterns
- ensures that plans and programs are designed to conform with and meet approved objectives
- approves policies concerning relationships with external organizations and groups
- analyzes and evaluates the total operation of facilities/programs and services for which it is responsible
- participates in the decision-making process in cooperation with government.

To ensure clear lines of authority between RHB's, Department of Health and other government departments, each Board has a specific agreement clarifying terms of reference, roles and responsibilities.

### 4. Resources

Under our Canadian Parliamentary system, for every fiscal year the Legislative Assembly votes an amount of money designated to the Department of Health from the overall N.W.T. budget. The Minister of Health then has the responsibility to allocate to each regional health board, the amount of money required for it to run its facility and programs. The main part of this money will be allocated through the Territorial Health Board but some of the money, mostly for community-type health programs, will be allocated through the Department of Health.

No level of funding in any one year can be guaranteed to any particular regional health board, since the prerogative for amounts of money for health in the Territories rests with the Legislative Assembly, and secondly the prerogative for the division of that money within the Territories rests with the Minister and the Territorial Health Board, which is appointed by the Executive Council on the advice of the Minister.

## C. TERRITORIAL HEALTH BOARD (THB)

### 1. Overview

When the transfer of the remaining health services from the Federal Government to the GNWT is completed, the senior authority for health in the Territories will be the Minister of Health and the Territorial Health Board. The purpose of the THB is to ensure that public participation in policy and management continues with a Territorial wide focus. Certain health programs, mostly those related to facilities such as hospitals and nursing stations, will fall under the jurisdiction of the Territorial Health Board. Other health programs, mostly related to community health, health promotion, legislation and insurance benefits will come directly under the control of the Minister. The Regional Health Board will look to the THB or directly to the Minister for its authority and funding. The THB will be a regulatory Board in relationship to the RHB's; it will also propose the required legislation, write policy, carry out evaluation, and will divide its overall Territorial funding amongst the Regional Health Boards. The Territorial Health Board is appointed by the Executive Council of the GNWT on the advice of the Minister of Health.

### 2. Political Structure

The membership on the THB will be formed in the following nomination and appointment process:

Four representatives will be chosen, one from each of the four main aboriginal groups: Indian (Dene Nation), Metis (Metis Association), Inuvialuit (COPE), Inuit (TFN). The native associations will nominate.

One "Eminent Person" from each GNWT regional geographic area appointed as follows:

The nominations for each "Eminent Person" will be through the regional health boards. Each regional health board will put forward three nominations to the Minister, who will then choose one representative for the THB from these three for that particular geographic region. Where there is more than one RHB within a geographic region, the Minister will choose one THB member from all the groups of three nominees put forward. No sitting member of an RHB will be eligible for membership on the THB.

There will be one member nominated by the Minister from the Dept. of Health who will act as Chairperson.

The Executive Council of the GNWT will appoint on the advice of the Minister.

The Minister will supply each RHB with the names of the organizations and individuals that he wishes to be invited to nominate (e.g., the MLA in the area). The RHB will then invite nominations from this list, add any people the RHB wishes; then, from that total list, three will be put forward to the Minister. The Minister would have access to all the names on all the lists.

### 3. Role and Responsibility

The future Territorial Health Board will be similar in its power and function to the existing Territorial Hospital Insurance Services Board (THIS). This existing Board has the following powers:

- (a) to develop and administer the hospital insurance plan;
- (b) to determine eligibility for and entitlement to insured services;
- (c) to determine the amounts that may be paid in respect of the cost of insured services provided to insured persons;
- (d) to enter into agreements on behalf of the Territories with hospitals or other health facilities in or outside the Territories or with the Government of Canada or any province or an appropriate agency thereof, for the provision of insured services to insured persons;
- (e) to license, supervise and inspect hospitals and other health facilities in the Territories, and ensure that adequate standards are maintained therein;
- (f) to authorize the establishment of hospitals and health facilities in the Territories or any change in such facilities, and develop and maintain a coordinated system of hospitals, training schools and related health facilities throughout the Territories;
- (g) to conduct surveys and research programs and obtain statistics for such purposes;
- (h) to appoint inspectors to inspect hospitals and health facilities in the Territories to ensure that adequate standards are maintained therein;
- (i) to appoint inspectors and auditors to examine and obtain information from records, reports and accounts;
- (j) to prescribe forms and records necessary to carry out the purposes and provisions of this Act; and
- (k) to perform such other functions and discharge such other duties as may be assigned to it by the regulations.

The THIS Board was established by the THIS Act in 1959. With the transfer of the nursing stations and other facilities and programs of the Baffin Region in Aug. 1986 the THIS Act was amended to allow for the expanded mandate of Regional Health Boards due to that transfer. The THIS Act will be again revised to encompass the new organization under the final Transfer. The rewriting is being done at the present time; legislation will take place after Transfer.

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