

DENE NATION: AN ANALYSIS

**a report to the
royal commission on aboriginal peoples**

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DENE NATION: AN ANALYSIS

A b s t r a c t

This report, presented in four parts, is a descriptive and analytical history of a major aboriginal organization north of the Canadian provinces. The first, introductory section, outlines the approach to the study and the presentation of its findings. This part emphasizes the requirement that researchers who report on the activities of people marginalized from mainstream politics and society account for our perspective. Because this report is about and by an organization set up to represent and protect the rights of marginalized people, such an accounting is crucial.

The second part of this report was written by an aboriginal researcher, one of the thousands of people whom the organization studied represents. This part describes the following four key events that mark the organization's history:

- the circumstances in the late 1960s that prompted leaders from different cultures to form a single organization to protect aboriginal rights
- the strategies that, by the mid-1970s, led to a change by federal officials to settle unfulfilled Treaty issues for the people through a land "claim" procedure
- the growth in the organization's diversity and initiatives, until drastic funding cuts in the mid-1980s
- the final years of the single land "claim" being negotiated, and the impact on the organization as it resisted federal limitations within the "claims" policy

The third part of this report is an analysis of the scope and effectiveness of this organization, in order to assess the role of the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation in capacity building for self-determination. For decades, Dene leaders have joined other Elders and Chiefs in declaring self-determination (ie, the ability of Indigenous Peoples to live their lives as they and not outsiders determine) as the goal of self-government. Dene, as Indigenous Peoples have always had the capacity to be self-determining: the challenge for them during the past 25 years has been to persuade non-Dene governments that they can be self-governing and self-determining within the state of Canada and by modern standards. The history of the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation has happened in a time when public perceptions about aboriginal citizen participation have evolved to the

point where the discussion now is over the degree of autonomy a First Nations can have under self-government.

Like other community membership-based groups, the Dene central organization has faced the challenges of balancing responses to membership needs against responses to demands by the external funding sources on which the Dene Nation relies. Despite external obstacles, this organization has increased in political acuity and has contributed to the overall capacity of Dene leaders to support local aspirations for determining the future of their communities. This increased confidence has shifted attention more to local issues and development, and away from the central organization that nurtured this growth in capacity. A vital challenge through its brief history is one that remains is for the aboriginal leadership to find effective ways to inform their people about the complex issues presented by external agencies, while sustaining authentic approaches and maintaining high levels of local participation for consensus building to deal with these issues. The next 25 years are sure to be just as interesting as the past 25 have been.

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Executive Summary

In the past 25 years, many Canadian aboriginal associations C the Dene Nation among them C have been advocating changes in the nature of participation by aboriginal citizens in the public administration of their development. Essentially, they have reasoned that, since non-aboriginal administrations are poorly equipped to handle aboriginal socio-cultural and economic circumstances, aboriginal organizations should be given the authority to do so.

For more than 2 decades, aboriginal political organizations have lobbied governments and the Canadian public to accept their reasoning, to recognize the return to aboriginal governance for aboriginal self-determination. Lobbying has focused on legal arguments about rights, land settlements and Treaty fulfilment, and constitutional development: the details of which remain largely unfamiliar to most Canadians, aboriginal and non-aboriginal. The details, which are complicated and have increased in complexity throughout the past 25 years, have been the daily preoccupation of First Nations Chiefs and their representative political organizations. These organizations, which exist outside the authorities described in the *Indian Act*, have been funded by the federal government C through the Secretary of State's Native Representative Organization Program C precisely because the mainstream polity has not sufficiently represented aboriginal thinking, values, and issues.

In the western Northwest Territories, Dene Chiefs united to set up a formal structure to represent their interests when Indian Affairs officials informed them about federal plans for their people through the 1969 White Paper. From 1969 to 1983, the formative years of the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation reflected strong citizen activism. The most prominent activities included promoting Dene cultural nationalism, lobbying to have Dene land entitlements under Treaties 8 and 11 fulfilled equitably, opposing the proposed construction of a gas pipeline up the Mackenzie Valley, and lobbying to get funds for Chiefs and Band management (until 1974, these were not available for NWT First Nations). From 1983 to 1986 C with land settlement talks taken over by the Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat C Dene Nation staff focused on organizing the Pope's visit and operating programs related to environmental and socio-economic impacts from the building of the Norman Wells oil pipeline. Since major funding cuts in 1986, the National Office struggled unsuccessfully to complete a single land settlement agreement for the entire Dene homeland consistent with the peoples' wishes, and has become project-oriented in continually dwindling program areas.

Life in the Dene homeland since mid-century has been marked by very rapid change. For the past 2 decades, the Dene have organized themselves politically to challenge federal and Territorial government plans to assimilate them into a modern northern state. Not only have the Dene resisted these plans, they have proven accomplished at making and carrying out strategies for their own alternates to government modernization C the integrated development of their

communities on their own terms. The key approach for the Dene has been learning about and analysing government policies and intentions, then communicating the analysed awareness as widely as possible in order to devise strategies based on informed responses from the Dene membership. This approach worked fairly well until the volume and complexity of issues increased, thereby reducing the feasibility of handling of them from a central office, and until government narrowed, first, the activities the organization could undertake and, second, the amount of funding available.

The individuals who formed the Indian Brotherhood spent many hours discussing the ways they could communicate issues and promote their analysis. Every aspect of their organization was considered, including regular Nation-wide Assemblies, so that two-way communication would become the vital means whereby the National Office could represent the Dene membership. But abstract EuroCanadian ideas and technical details of government regulations say little to local Dene preoccupied by the socio-cultural and economic circumstances of their lives. In 1993, the communication between aboriginal organizations and the citizens they represent of complex ideas and issues drawn mostly from mainstream Canadian life remains a great challenge to the effectiveness of Dene political movements in the western NWT and in Canada.

Maintaining excellent communications between the Yellowknife office and the widely scattered Dene First Nations has been inconsistent. Newsletters and radio broadcasts were among the earliest efforts of the Indian Brotherhood staff, which soon became independent and expanded as the Native Communications Society. Recognizing its need to continue such communications on its own, Dene Nation revived production of its own newspaper and tapes in the Dene languages for broadcast on community radio. Fieldworker programs associated with research and community development projects were also a focal point for distributing information and strategic approaches. These efforts, however, were inconsistent throughout the 25 year history because the external sources of funding for the Dene political association have been inconsistent.

Government officials have continually thwarted efforts by the political organization to fund programs that would meet needs expressed by the Dene membership. Losing its charitable status meant that staff had to devote more of their decreasing human and financial resources to raising funds and, once approved, to complying with the funding criteria, which often limited the scope of programs and the way they could be run. Loss of funding in the mid-1980s for communications unfortunately coincided with one of the most crucial times for the organization, when detailed information about the negotiated land settlement agreement needed to be conveyed to potential beneficiaries. Core administrative funding, from which communications spending has since had to be taken, has been steadily reduced.

In 1991, Dene Nation's core administrative funding was transferred from the Secretary of State's Native (now: "Aboriginal") Representative Organization Program to DIAND although the funding for comparable provincial organizations has not been transferred. A finding of this study is that the purposes of the federal government's program to fund aboriginal organizations in order to enhance aboriginal citizen participation have been altered by DIAND, thereby diminishing the scope and effectiveness of the Dene Nation, as defined by its own membership. Throughout the existence of the Dene political organization, the style of decision making and the authority of the

decision-making body C the National Assembly C have gone unrecognized by non-Dene governments, which evidently expect the organization to reflect EuroCanadian hierarchical characteristics. Concerns and discussions about representivity, decision-making styles and authority, and the nature of leadership have been as abundant among the Dene as they have been throughout Canada among aboriginal peoples C and recently among non-aboriginal citizens.

Whereas in the early 1970s Indian Affairs was trying to transfer as many federal responsibilities as possible to the Territorial administration, in the early 1990s, the influence of DIAND is everywhere in the NWT. DIAND is directly responsible for the public government and administration of the NWT (ie, GNWT) but also for First Nations Councils. DIAND is responsible for northern economic (but not social) development but also for sustainable environmental development. DIAND is responsible for protecting indigenous peoples' interests through Canada's fiduciary obligation, but also for negotiating land settlements, self-government, and aboriginal land and resource use, as well as for funding aboriginal consultation and C since 1991 C the funding for northern political organizations. Too many contradictory mandates are held by DIAND in Canada's north. Too often, DIAND policies or actions contradict legal responsibilities and court interpretations of its fiduciary duty, such as those offered by the decisions in *Sioui*, *Flett*, and *Sparrow*.

Fairness has not been a characteristic of the relationship between DIAND and the Dene political organizations. Efforts by Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation to determine and represent alternate views from Dene members have been muffled by external influences that have sought control not only of the political organizations but also of aboriginal contributions to northern media. For their part, northern media in the earlier years appear to have recognized the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation as a "newsmaker" but no longer do so. Inequities in political power and influence persist and affect alleged partnerships and consultations, and negotiations and agreements between aboriginal organizations and mainstream government administrations. If Dene self-government and self-determination are to have a validity, the contradictory perceptions about how the Canadian north ought to be developed must be resolved. If development continues based on mainstream Canadian visions and values, it will deny the evident interest among Dene in all cultural regions in learning from their Elders, in revitalizing Dene ways of thinking and doing things for more authentic approaches to their future.

Until the funding cuts of the mid-1980s, the Dene National Office remained committed to training staff and local fieldworkers in the principles of the most highly participatory forms of community development combined with the growing interest throughout aboriginal Canada in holistic healing; together, these ways of thinking and working in communities are evolving as the Dene means to their self-determination. The National Office continues to pursue the recognition of the inherent right to aboriginal self-government, while efforts to sustain holistic healing and participatory community development are now pursued more actively by local First Nations. Most recently, the Dene regional cultures and the First Nations within them are developing their discrete visions of Dene self-government for self-determination. A major challenge for Dene communities is balancing care for traditional Dene principles and ways of getting things done with government requirements for EuroCanadian organizational principles.

The scope of the goals established by the individuals who set up the united Dene political organization was very broad. It has been narrowed more by external influences, especially government funding sources, than by internal change. The effectiveness of the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation was extraordinary during the formative years. While the efficacy of the National Office has waned in recent years, the long-term effectiveness of people involved in Dene Nation initiatives since they have returned to their cultural regions and communities is likely to prove the enduring legacy of the unified political organization.

A history can be only an interpretation of past events. The recording of a history is only a moment in time. At this time, rapid change continues to mark life in Denendeh and the struggles of the Dene are far from over. For the Dene, the major differences between 1969 and 1993 are two. One difference is that many more Dene C not just a handful of Chiefs and National Office staff C are aware of the ways in which the mainstream government works and the impacts that EuroCanadian public administration can have on their lives. The other major difference is that many Dene have regained the confidence to question mainstream government control over their lives and are supporting their leaders' aspirations for the return to Dene self-government and self-determination.

Policy Recommendations

- that the federal and provincial governments, and their delegated administrations, recognize aboriginal governments, and recognize the leaders and decision-making bodies chosen by aboriginal memberships, their styles of reaching decisions, and the authority of decisions reached by them
- that the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples explore the nature and meaning of aboriginal "citizenship" within the state of Canada

Policy Recommendations, continue

- that arm's-length funding be provided to representative aboriginal organizations
- that the scope, authority, and representation of aboriginal governments must be determined by members of the Nations to whom the governments are responsible
- that the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples address the recognition and implementation of aboriginal title C that is, ownership of traditional lands in perpetuity C so that the basis for land settlements, Treaty entitlement, jurisdiction over land and resource use, and conflict resolution regarding aboriginal rights can be established equitably for all First Nations throughout Canada

- that the federal government establish a permanent mechanism for administering issues related to Treaties with Canada's aboriginal Nations
- that the federal government complete negotiations for aboriginal governance with First Nations in the NWT before Territorial constitutional development is negotiated, and before further devolution of province-like powers to the Territorial administration
- that the customary cultural-economic activities of northern aboriginal peoples be recognized, supported, and directly related to Treaty and aboriginal rights, rather than simply as "business ventures" that succeed or fail according to market conditions C this includes training programs and more flexible schooling to encourage transmission from Elders to younger people of the skills, environmental knowledge, principles, and values needed to sustain our customary cultural-economic livelihoods
- that the NWT Indian Affairs Branch be separated from the Northern Development Branch before the proposed dismantling of DIAND begins and that mandates from other federal ministries (such as Environment Canada) be handled north of the provinces as they are in the provinces, and that
 - no devolution or transfers take place without the consent of NWT First Nations,
 - there be no transfer to Territorial public administration of any federal fiduciary obligations to NWT aboriginal peoples

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part one

About This Report

**Research Perspective
Research & Report Approach
Terms Used in This Report**

by Susan Quirk

About This Report

This report presents both a selected chronological and an analytical history of an aboriginal organization: the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories, later renamed as the Dene Nation. This Canadian aboriginal organization, like many others, was formed because some of their people who were able to assess what was happening felt that their people were being deliberately and systematically marginalised & not only from Canadian mainstream society but from aboriginal peoples in the provinces. No study of this organization can neglect this factor. Before the 1960s, northern aboriginal peoples were virtually ignored except for a handful of anthropologists, and minimal attention from the Indian Affairs Branch. Many observers assume that Dene and Métis had made little effort to acquaint themselves with public matters, although minutes of a meeting of Mackenzie and Athabaskan Chiefs with Indian Affairs officials in 1957 certainly demonstrates spirited concern for their people and a perceptive grasp of administrative conduct: many Chiefs arrived with prepared briefs, and all the Chiefs gathered the day before to prepare motions of their own to present at the official meeting (Indian Affairs 1957). Language differences and literacy restrictions limited the record keeping of earlier gatherings by Dene, although Elders remember many of the strong speeches about issues of value to them.

The activities, scope, and effectiveness of this Dene organization are important reflections on the efforts northern aboriginal peoples have made to resist adverse public administrative aspects, to communicate their views as widely as possible, and to advocate their own remedies to begin addressing matters of significance to them rather than those defined by outsiders. An analysis of this organization, through interpretations drawing on Dene views, can provide much insight for similar aboriginal associations, as for non-aboriginal Canadians wondering about the ascendancy of organizations that have captured and held public attention for the past two dozen years in ways they did not before.

Research Perspective

Researchers trained within the Western or EuroCanadian worldview rarely account for their methodological perspective. For most research, it is not required. But study in a cross-cultural context presents a scholar, or one who is raised and trained in one worldview, with the necessity of saying so and of declaring the ways in which the recognition of another cultural worldview likely affected the research methods and report. Cross-cultural studies in which alternate worldviews are perceived and accepted & in which one or more researchers are representatives of an alternate worldview & call for examination, and perhaps expansion, of conventional notions of research objectivity and validity.

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This study was commissioned by the 1993 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples under a contract held by the organization itself. The contract was not granted without considerable resistance by the Commission's research division. Academic conventions of objectivity prefer an arm's length relationship between researcher and research subject. Aboriginal peoples C and this organization has been particularly vocal in the past on this matter C prefer not to have outsiders study and interpret them. Commission research officials may have had concerns regarding bias or mediocrity in the study methods or a lack of political neutrality in the report content. Dene Nation, however, had no intention of damaging the credibility of this report; neither did the organization want to risk having an outsider misinterpret its past activities nor give open access to its administrative records. An independent researcher with suitable credentials was hired to co-ordinate this study. With some misgivings, the Commission's research division permitted Dene Nation to hold the study contract. Perhaps the quality of this report may dispel some of the initial misgivings. This preliminary accounting for the research perspective and approach may clarify remaining concerns.

Handling Administrative Archives

Maintaining confidentiality while examining the administrative archives of any organization is a dual challenge for a scholar: both to sustain the trust that the organization has placed in the researcher and to persuade study report readers that high academic standards have been preserved in the literature review. Examining the administrative records of Dene Nation is problematic in that the organization C like many other aboriginal organizations in Canada C has had inconsistent support for staffing and managing its archives. In the mid-1980s, with the change of federal governing parties, support in general for aboriginal libraries and archives was dropped. Since then, if an organization had no charitable status, raising funds for managing the increasing amounts of information pouring into and generated by the aboriginal organization has been severely limited.

The administrative records of the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories / Dene Nation (Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation), along with part of its library and some records of this Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat (Negotiations Secretariat) are mostly stored at the Denendeh National Office in Yellowknife. Other Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation records and library documents are stored in other locations, and the records of the Negotiations Secretariat have been stored in two separate places. The organization has prepared innumerable proposals for gathering all of its records in a single location and the arranging and cataloguing them, but sufficient funds have never been raised. In the summer of 1992, a graduate student requested permission to study community development documents held by the Denendeh National Office; in subsequent discussions, an agreement was reached whereby the student would assist in the arrangement and evaluation of the library/archives in exchange for full access to the materials. This student became the research co-ordinator for this study.

To maintain confidentiality of the organization's records, this report does not quote from but may refer to a specific unpublished document to substantiate a point. All documents reviewed

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specifically for this study, as well as other materials that contributed contextual information, are listed at the end of this report. While considering a single document or particular information within it, scrupulous care was taken to place the document in the context of events occurring and activities being undertaken by the organization at the time it was produced, as well as to ascertain the relative perspective of the person who had prepared the document (ie, aboriginal staff? personal opinion? non-aboriginal resource person on staff? outside consultant? internal critic? unsolicited information received? professional opinion contracted?). The context of a document was determined through complementary documents or through verification with long-time Dene staff. This kind of painstaking archival work had been going on for some months before the Royal Commission requested that a report be done of the history of the Dene Nation as an organization. Without this prior work, the Commission study could not have been conducted in only three months.

An Aboriginal Perspective

The issue of perspective, in the sense of methodological worldview, arises in cross-cultural research because most reports about aboriginal peoples in Canada (and elsewhere) are analyses and interpretations by non-aboriginal observers. As learned as such trained observations may be, they are nevertheless interpretations filtered through a cultural worldview that differs from that of the people. Ethnographers and other social scientists are familiar with the debates about the merits and limitations of views that profess to be "outside" or "inside" a society being observed; specialists use such words as "emic/etic" and Tönnies's "gesellschaft/gemeinschaft" to describe these perspectives. Such distinctions, however, may be too definite in cross-cultural settings. Where, for instance, can researchers place themselves if they were educated in the ways of the mainstream society but were raised within a culture that is marginalised from the mainstream? For example, is an aboriginal researcher who has attended a Canadian university more of an "insider" if she or he chooses to conduct studies of his or her own culture? Is an aboriginal researcher an "outsider" if he or she conducts research within mainstream society? A fuller consideration of research perspective seems to be called for.

Whether social science research is mostly quantitative or qualitative, the perspectives of researchers become significant with regard to the validity of information sought and selected, as well as the analysis of that information. In cross-cultural studies, general issues about perspective might be raised in the choosing of culturally appropriate research methods, the ethics of taking community information out of its local context and using it in a different context, the ethics of building a personal reputation and academic career from studies that required considerable contributions from non-academic research participants, the interpretation of personal observations without sufficient cultural context, the most appropriate people to decide who "key informants" are, the interpretation of statements by people speaking or translated into a language (such as English) that cannot convey cultural meaning, and the analysis of documents expressing the thinking of a persistently oral culture written in a language belonging to the mainstream (and mostly literate) culture as if they are

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comparable to mainstream publications. A thoughtful and caring researcher working with aboriginal peoples will want to be sensitive to these and related issues, whether the researcher is aboriginal or not.

Aboriginal perspectives generally have not been recorded in Canadian public records until very recently. Even now, much of the published literature about aboriginal issues is being produced by non-aboriginal scholars and commentators, and questions about the interpretative approach of these scholars are legitimate. Because EuroCanadian or Western conventions of academic publication prefer third-person writing styles, readers often have to sift the content, the tone, the choice of references, and the argument presented to determine each writer's perspective. In other words, the convention of researcher objectivity has in part encouraged scholars to suppress their personal perspective. While critical thinking, analysis, and interpretation are assumed to be part of the training of scholars, relatively few of the works devoted to research method describe these vital processes. Yet, they determine how an individual researcher views the information and observations studied in order to present the findings or conclusions. For these reasons, readers rightly have more than simple curiosity about the perspective of a researcher undertaking cross-cultural study. With a multitude of ethical issues being raised about the ways in which aboriginal peoples in Canada have been interpreted, well-intentioned scholars could demonstrate both courtesy and integrity by accounting for their approach at the outset of their reports.

Awareness of aboriginal perspectives can be learned and expressed by non-aboriginal researchers, just as educators expect aboriginal students to become aware of non-aboriginal thinking within mainstream Canadian society. Gaining such awareness does not necessitate a full understanding of another culture, in the sense that only rare individuals can successfully traverse more than one cultural worldview. Although that seems to be what non-aboriginal policy makers have expected aboriginal peoples in Canada to do. Assimilation, it seems, is a different matter, as it involves disrupting the mechanisms of cultural transmission so that individuals must take extraordinary measures to sustain their cultural thinking. Reporting research information with an aboriginal perspective does not mean diminishing the significance of a mainstream approach: instead, it means balancing the public record to include aboriginal views. It also means selecting information with a sense of fairness: listening to the other side. A non-aboriginal researcher, then, needs to be knowledgeable and respectful of inter-related aboriginal issues in a multidisciplinary milieu, and be willing to assess information from a much more expansive notion of validity than is customary in research conventional to mainstream study.

By 1993, when the opportunity to produce a history of this organization was offered, Dene Nation had gained sufficient confidence in me that I had been asked to prepare policy analyses and respond to requests for information in addition to the archival work I had been contracted to do. Along with my familiarity with the Dene Nation archives and my academic credentials, in the summer of 1993, I co-ordinated a collaborative study with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation on the situation of aboriginal peoples on the urban lands of the NWT capital. My competence to conduct a study through accepted academic and scholarly standards, combined with my ability to express aboriginal

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perspectives, had been demonstrated enough to ensure the Denendeh National Office staff that I could be trusted to handle the Dene Nation history.

My initial task was to plan the research approach, described next, for myself and a Dene colleague. The Integrated Research Plan of the Royal Commission emphasised the potential for increased aboriginal research opportunities by supporting collaboration between trained and untrained researchers in the production of findings for the Commissioners to consider. To comply with this plan, the Dene Nation requested that this study contract include provision for a Dene researcher to work with me. Antoine Mountain, a Sahtú Dene who worked in the Fort Good Hope archives and has some formal archival and library training, was hired as researcher for this study. Now an accomplished self-employed artist, Antoine Mountain has experience as a radio broadcaster and newspaper columnist, who began his communications career with the Native Communications Society when it was formed by the Indian Brotherhood: he was the first employee of Indian Brotherhood. At the time the study began, Antoine Mountain had no formal involvement with the Dene organization. He possessed the skills to review a great deal of written material, conduct interviews, and write a concise report.

My analysis may disappoint some Dene readers because it reflects the thinking of a non-aboriginal outsider. However, I do not pretend to disinterest, as I work with Dene in full support of community aspirations for self-determination. Therefore, the sense of objectivity to which I adhere is the presentation of documentary and interview evidence in fairness, as my training in scholarship has taught me. The context for my analysis is my personal awareness of and efforts to understand Dene perspectives. I do not regard my approach as any more biased than that of researchers who embrace and report support for more conventional or mainstream perspectives. My Dene colleague's presentation is more coloured by his personal recollection of events and contextual circumstances for the formative years. However, for the later years of the history, he relies more heavily on documented or interview records. Readers may notice that his distinctive voice is softer for his chronology of events in later decades.

Validity: Objectivity of Research Information

Validating information in any research study is a vital part of gathering data: careful researchers assess the nature and source of any information. They confirm which data are acceptable, relevant, or useful by reference to other reliable sources, and present in a report only information that has been suitably substantiated. Validation of qualitative information, such as statements made during interviews, may require testing in further interviews or confirming through written documents. For this study, several persons whom the two researchers decided were "key informants" were interviewed. While recognising that the memory of people raised in an oral-aural society is formidable, the two researchers nevertheless treated statements made in interviews to the same validation process as we did archival materials. For example, statements in interviews about the organization's funding were checked against financial documents stored in the archives. All information about people holds socially generated significances: one reason why accounting for

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research perspective and approach is crucial.

Qualitative studies can investigate rich sources of information, drawing on people's direct experience for impressions beyond the interpretations written by trained observers. Social studies researchers who work with marginalized from mainstream society C such as commune residents, street people, prisoners, radical feminists, or aboriginal cultures C come to recognize that conventional ideas about the validity of information need to be expanded, and reasons for doing so may need to be explained to research colleagues unaccustomed to moving beyond main-stream thinking (Kirby and McKenna 1989). To avoid misinterpreting information "from the margins", researchers must be alert to the ways in which information is perceived by the people giving it. To do so, the people in the study cease being research subjects and become research collaborators, resulting in much more active involvement than in conventional research. Rather than diminishing the objectivity of research information, this shift in participation can give a research greater validity of views from people not consistently reported in public records. It can also provide deeper insights into the restrictions imposed by mainstream society and the peoples' ability to cope with them. Rather than describe an observed situation, such a report can project the circumstances that the people involved want to change.

Objectivity: Interpretation by Researchers

When mainstream or conventional academic notions of objectivity prevail, cross-cultural studies are likely to be misperceived unless researchers conducting them account for their own approach and that of the participants. Accounting for participants is essential in community-based collaborative research. It is just as necessary for this study since the organization that is the subject of the research has itself advocated that researchers consider the issues raised in this introduction. The two researchers agreed that the individuals who formed, staffed, and guided the Dene Nation as an organization exhibited abundant critical awareness about the ways in which the Dene and their culture, knowledge, customary governance, socio-economic circumstances, and development are perceived and influences by non-aboriginal people and by policy makers whose decisions directly affect the lives of their people. The views of these individuals C while admittedly opinionated and promoting the interests of their people C are vital for appreciating the initiatives and strategies of this organization at any time during its evolution. They are essential for gauging the specific validity of particular events, and for assessing the effectiveness of the organization in arranging or responding to these activities.

For the researchers, a study is a learning process in which they gain increasing awareness of the study subject C but in a haphazard and arbitrary way. During analysis of validated views and information gathered, the researchers seek patterns of meaning that make sense; for a cross-cultural study, the meanings must include those that make sense to the people participating C the people whose reality is so rarely recorded. A report of cross-cultural research must reflect conclusions that are as meaningful to the culture at the centre of the study as to the researcher-as-outsider.

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Researcher objectivity blurs when the information expressed by people from one culture is interpreted by people from another. During analysis, researchers assess their findings to present them in the study report. A cross-cultural study report can be successful when researchers strive to report their analysis so that their accumulated awareness unfolds for readers in a more coherent way than the researchers gained it. Readers can learn about the study participants in a more orderly way than the researchers have, and can perceive the reality of the participants more clearly than the researchers could at the outset of their work.

Cross-cultural studies present researchers with a special opportunity for self-actualization, that is to learn about themselves as well as the people with whom they share this learning experience. Dene Elders characterize learning as a life-long self-actualization process, in which individuals continually test their skills and demonstrate their gratitude by sharing them with others. This report is offered in this spirit.

Research & Report Approach

The research plan devised for this study proposed an extensive literature review based on selected documents in the Dene Nation Library/Archives as well as scholarly publications about the organization or issues relevant to its activities (ie, federal assessments reviews of proposed development projects, aboriginal rights, land settlements, constitutional development). The materials consulted are listed at the end of this report.

Interviews were proposed with such key informants as former and current heads of the organization, the executive director of the Dene Cultural Institute (DCI), early and long-time staff, and Dene Elders involved with the organization. One former president, the DCI executive director, and several Elders identified for interviews were not available during the research period. Wherever possible, for cultural appropriateness, the comments for response from interviewees were not phrased as questions. Interview comments for response were prepared jointly by the two researchers and, for structured parts of interviews, were sent to the participants before the scheduled time. Interviews of organization heads consisted of two parts: the first, a series of identical questions asked of each individual in the same order, and the second, unstructured further comments to clarify and add to responses in the first part. Interviews with staff were wholly unstructured, in order to pursue specific matters while individuals were on staff and to augment discussions with matters pertinent to each person's term of office. Dene Elders are often familiar with the long interview research method and, therefore, respond well to unstructured interviews. Literate individuals were provided with a transcript of their interview for verification, and validation followed the returned verification. Finally, we are aware that different individual's views of the same events often differ, and we allow such differences.

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The research plan recognized that a comprehensive history of the Dene nation as an organization could not be conducted at this time. Owing partly to difficulties in gaining access to many of the administrative archival records and owing to the insufficient time and funds to interview the many people who have been involved with the organization C this study is necessarily selective. The challenge was to propose a study within these limitations that would follow accepted academic methods and would constitute a fair presentation of this northern aboriginal organization. In consultation with the executive and staff at the Denendeh National Office, it was decided to try two different approaches. One could focus on describing four clusters of key events in chronological order. The second could assess the scope of initiatives and the effectiveness of the organization across all the issues and events of the past 25 years. During data gathering, we decided that these approaches would work, and we proceeded to draft the report incorporating both of them.

Part Two of this report presents the four clusters of key events, which are:

- the circumstances in the late 1960s that prompted leaders from different cultures to form a single organization to protect aboriginal rights
- the strategies that, by the mid-1970s, led to a change by federal officials to settle unfulfilled Treaty issues for the people through a land "claim" procedure
- the growth in the organization's diversity and initiatives, until drastic funding cuts in the mid-1980s
- the final years of the single land "claim" being negotiated, and the impact on the organization as it resisted federal limitations within the "claims" policy

In Part Two, we have relied partly on histories and lists of events C which we refer to as chronologies C recorded by former staff members and filed in the Dene Nation archives. Readers can find a comprehensive chronology for Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation to 1993 in Appendix C of this report.

Part Two was written by Antoine Mountain. Throughout the study process, we spoke often about specific documents, the interviews we held together, our growing conclusions, and research complications. When the time came for writing, we were not surprised to discover that each of us thinks and writes quite differently. Any attempt to edit our two variant styles would inevitably crush one voice and one way of thinking; therefore, we agreed to present our thinking about this study separately. Our reasoning was that any individual reporting the history of this organization would to some degree be presenting her or his personal interpretation, and we felt our distinctive voices should be heard to underscore the expression of our individual thinking.

Part Three of this report, written by myself, is an analysis of the scope and effectiveness of Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation from 1969 to 1993. In conducting this highly qualitative analysis,

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I pulled certain threads to assess the role of the organization in raising awareness, building capacity, and in making and carrying out strategies in relation to its mandate. I remained especially aware of the different ways in which Dene and DIAND perceive and try to present the organization: Dene see Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation as a political organization struggling to protect Dene rights and to promote self-determination, whereas DIAND continually tries to reduce the role of the organization to a land "claims" mouthpiece. This tension stands at the core of all initiatives the organization has undertaken to address both internally and externally generated issues. Therefore, an assessment was needed of the challenges posed by external efforts to control the organization through funding limitations to complete this analysis.

Part Four is a brief summary of Parts Two and Three. The report closes with supplementary materials, including three appendices (the lengthy and important 1988 Assembly motion regarding improvements delegates wanted made to the Agreement-In-Principle; Dene Elders guidelines for incorporating Dene values in modern Dene institutions and work; and a more detailed chronology of Dene history), a list of persons contributing to this study, and a list of written materials consulted for this study.

When this report was submitted to the Royal Commission research staff, it contained no Executive Summary or Policy Recommendations. These were not requested in the original contract under statement of work, but were asked for later. The authors did not feel it was appropriate for them simply as researchers to make policy recommendations for the Dene Nation. Unfortunately, the request was made after the Dene Nation Assembly for 1993, and there was no opportunity for the National Office to gather policy recommendations from the Chiefs. National Chief Bill Erasmus, drawing on his understanding as the chief executive officer of what the Chiefs might suggest, compiled the policy recommendations. Because they were added afterward and were not written by the authors, it was decided that they should accompany the Executive Summary rather than be placed within the research report.

No study can be as comprehensive as participants or readers would like. Like other studies, this one has limitations. This is not a history of the Dene as Nations of Indigenous Peoples, even though many Dene regard "the Dene Nation" in this broadest of contexts. It is a report on the Denendeh National Office as representative of those Nations. No Chiefs C that is, board directors C were interviewed: observations by most of the elected chief executive officers only are reported. Few of the many staff members who have served this organization were contacted. Given the time constraints, we have had to rely more on written documents in the administrative archives than on the memories of the people most involved. Few observations are reported from what might be termed "professional observers" C that is, non-aboriginal scholars and consultants who have collaborated over the years with their Dene colleagues. Some readers might have preferred detailed evaluation of, for instance, spending patterns, or comparisons of leadership styles, or the experiments with organizational structures. To some extent, we have pursued our personal preferences within the time available. It is our hope that few readers will find these limitations unbearable.

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About Terms Used in this Report

In this report, we call the chief executive officer of the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation by the title as it was at the time we are reporting. At first, this position was called "President", and later, "National Chief". At the request of staff at the Royal Commission, we have reduced the number of acronyms in the text of the original final report. Therefore, the organization is referred to as Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation when we refer to it in general, although we call it either "Indian Brotherhood" (before 1975) or "Dene Nation" (after 1975) for specific events or initiatives. In references, we use IBNWT/DN.

The word "Dene" in this report refers to Peoples Indigenous to their homelands, as well as to those peoples who have requested membership in the Dene Nation but who are not located within the invisible but official boundaries of the NWT. Presidents of this organization told us that they characterized the "Dene Nation" as:

all of the Dene people coming together as a collective to represent themselves to the world as a people to be recognized C as are all other people in the world C by the long historical background; by common languages; by a common worldview, a territory, and with institutions that have survived a colonial past. (1993 OCT: interview)

the collective that brings together our people in the communities. It doesn't mean only the NWT communities. Dene Nation is a collective of people ... in Alaska, in Yukon, in NWT of course, northern parts of the provinces from BC to Manitoba, the Apache, the Navajo, those other people in the States like the Hoopa: they're all Dene and they're part of the Dene Nation. But in the North here, when we say "Dene Nation" we normally mean all of the communities who choose to call themselves different things that make sense in their own language. ... So, Dene Nation is not ... the National Office, but I think in some people's minds that is the Dene Nation. We've tried a number of times to try to make it clear to people, by calling this the Denendeh National Office, for example, so that they realize it's just an office, it's a facility to assist people in the communities who really are the Dene Nation.

(1993 SEP: interview)

As well, one of the presidents told us that, in his view, the Dene Nation means only the National Office. We have no wish to deny the recognition that other Dene are located throughout North America. This report, however, represents the history of the organization established to represent certain of the Dene within the western subArctic of Canada. The words "Dene people" are not used, since the word "Dene" means "the people" and the repetition is redundant. Dene communities with membership in this organization include:

- Gwich'in Dene, from the region of the Deh Cho (Mackenzie River) delta; Treaty 11 Dene

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here, who are related to Gwich'in throughout the Yukon and Alaska (and have been called "Loucheux" and "Kutchin" by anthropologists), coexist with Inuvialuit who live with and north of them

- Sahtú Dene, from regions north and west of Great Bear Lake; Treaty 11 Dene here, also known collectively as "North Slavey" in reference to the classification of their language, actually include several distinct cultures
- Deh Cho Dene, including several cultures living along the Mackenzie, Liard, Nahanni, and Keele rivers as well as on lakes throughout the region; Treaty 11 Dene and Treaty 8 Dene in Xat'xo Deh (Hay River) belong to this region, also known collectively as "South Slavey" in reference to the classification of their language
- Tłı Cho Dene, also known as Dogrib, from the region between Great Bear Lake and Great Slave Lake, east of Deh Cho; Treaty 11 Dene in this region share one language and culture
- Treaty 8 Dene, including Weledeh Yellowknives Dene, Denesūline (Chipewyan), and Cree who were signatories to Treaty 8 south, east, and north of Great Slave Lake, and east of Deh Cho; Dene from Manitoba (Tadoule Lake) and northern Saskatchewan have asked for membership in this region [Note that, through persistent administrative errors, Treaty 8 signatories Weledeh Yellowknives Dene have been classified with Treaty 11 Tłı Cho Dene by federal and Territorial officials; until they moved their membership into the NWT Treaty #8 Tribal Council, they were included in the "North Slave Region".]

The word "Métis" for the purposes of this report refers to NWT people who identify and affiliate themselves under political representation by Métis organizations, rather than the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation. Persons government identifies as Métis were given a choice about taking *scrip* or Treaty status by the Treaty 11 Commissioner, whereas relatives and descendants (identified by government as Métis) of Dene who signed Treaty 8 were not given this choice (Fumoleau 1973: 207B210; YDB 1993). Many people government regards as Métis consider themselves to be part of the Dene Nation. The tension between the way governments identify people and the way they identify themselves has caused considerable discomfort C particularly over the sensitive issue of who is eligible to be a land settlement beneficiary C and some discord among organizations representing northern aboriginal residents.

In the NWT, the federal department responsible for Indian Affairs has since 1966 also held responsibility for the administration of the northern territories under the *Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) Act* (for text, see: Hawley 1993: 144B146). The name of the ministry has changed, but in NWT it is still referred to as DIAND. (The relation of the *DIAND Act* to the federal *Northwest Territories Act* or to the *Indian Act* is unclear, except perhaps to the most senior federal and Territorial administrators.) In deference to the general familiarity of the acronym "DIAND" and as a reminder of the ministry's responsibilities north of the provinces, this report refers throughout to this federal ministry as DIAND.

The Territorial administration has come only recently to the NWT since that land area has come to be defined mostly by the 60th parallel. Before 1967, the NWT Council was for the most

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part an appointed body of federal employees located in Ottawa, as a branch of a federal ministry. Although the council and public administration were established in Yellowknife in 1967, some legislative representatives were still appointed until the late 1970s. Federal influence and financial control over the government of the NWT remains pervasive. Despite increasing numbers of aboriginal Members of the Legislative Assembly, many Dene do not regard this EuroCanadian administration as a government that represents them or their interests. Dene Chiefs in particular maintain that the Territorial Council is competing for jurisdictional authority with First Nations. Throughout this report, then, we refer to the government of the NWT Council and public service as the "Territorial administration".

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part two

**Key Events in
Dene Nation's History**

Beginnings
The Mid-1970s: Settling the Land Issue
The 1980s: Growth & Funding Cuts
Conflict Over the Claim

by Antoine Mountain

Key Events in Dene Nation's History

Beginnings

We Dene have always revered our Elders. We make a special effort to learn as much from them as we can before they pass on. One of the guiding principles of our Dene Nation remains the spiritual foundations our Elders emphasize. People are not long for this world, so we must approach all of our doings with the proper respect and humility. Our Mother the Earth was left to us by our ancestors to, in our turn, take care of her as we would a living person for our future generations. We feel that we are in paradise while we are here in Denendeh, the name we give to our homeland.

A recurring image associated with the Dene National Office is in fact, the logo is designed by Gerry Antoine, formerly a Chief and currently Deh Cho Grand Chief. The image has to do with the Dene holy man, Yamoria. To help us clearly visualize this central theme of Dene Nation's existence, we quote one of our revered Elders, George Blondin:

Many years ago, before the White man came into this country, a special man Yamoria travelled into this land. He put everything into its rightful place. The animals and human beings were separated from each other. Whatever was harmful to people was gotten rid of. By doing this, he had set laws for our people to follow. Until this very day, we are still holding onto them.

This story had come about when there were large beavers living in Great Bear Lake (Sahtú).

The beavers were harmful to the people living in this area. People that lived in this area would travel across the lake by canoe to hunt the caribou. The beavers did not like them to travel across the lake, so they would get as close as possible and splash their tails hoping to tip the canoes over. When Yamoria heard about that, he went to Bear Lake and told the people that he would be chasing the beavers away.

Yamoria started chasing the beavers around the Lake. The big beavers immediately went down to Bear River. The younger ones were harder to chase towards the river. During the time that Yamoria was chasing the younger ones around the lake the bigger beavers had built a dam on the river and that's where the Bear River rapids are to this very day. Yamoria got the younger ones to head down to Bear River and then chased them all down the river to where Fort Norman is now situated.

At the confluence of the two rivers, Bear River and Dehcho, he killed two medium beavers and one small one. The larger ones continued down the Great River.

After killing the three beavers, he stretched and nailed the three hides on the south face of Bear Rock Mountain. You can still see them to this very day.

While he was doing that, the two larger beavers that continued down the Great River (Dehcho) had built two more rapids.

After he had finished with those beavers that he had killed at Fort Norman, he then continued on chasing the other two larger beavers down the Great River (Dehcho).

From the top of Bear Rock Mountain, he shot two arrows at the confluence of the two rivers and he said "as long

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as this earth shall last you shall call them Yamoria's arrows". Still to this day you can see two big poles sticking out of the river. Even after each spring when the ice goes there always are two big poles sticking out of the river.

After shooting the two arrows into the river he brought the beavers that he shot with him up the Great River (Dehcho) about 20 miles from the confluence. There he slept, and where he had cooked the beavers, the grease that had drizzled from the beavers started to burn and to this very day that fire continues to burn.

There are some legends that state that during your travel at night by that site, if you can see the fire coming out you would live a very long life. This they say, that it's not always visible to everyone, just a few.

According to Stanley Isaiah of Fort Simpson, the symbol of the three beaver pelts on Bear Rock Mountain and the forever burning fire up river from that mountain are signs of the land set there as a reminder of the teachings of the legends. Stanley said that, if we remember the teachings of the legends and live them, if we take the sign set on the land for us as our symbol, we will never have any trouble surviving as a nation. (Dene Nation 1992: Annual Report)

These stories of the Dene are just that C stories C unless we are to understand properly that we Dene have, at heart, an oral tradition. The reason these legends have survived for the 30 000 years of our history is because of the medicine power described by our Elders. This form of spiritual energy from our Creator would be passed on to future generations, to guide our Nation on the good red road. This contact with the Creator continues to be a matter of survival for the Dene. We regard ourselves essentially as of this earth. People in the past relied moreso on this medicine power than we do today. The teachings were used as a basis for Dene laws. Elders believe that today our leaders are not as widely recognized, nor as respected, because of the loss of this medicine power (SEP 1993: interview with George Blondin).

Non-Dene Pressures

The Dene in southern Denendeh made Treaty 8 in 1900. The federal government at the time was concerned about protecting the routes to the Klondike where gold had recently been discovered (Fumoleau 1974). For the next 20 years the Dene faced hardships and disease beyond belief. Epidemics, changing social patterns, an influx of white trappers, traders and prospectors had a greater impact on our people than the meagre assistance of the government could mitigate. But it was not until oil gushed from Dene land at Fort Norman in 1920 that Ottawa showed any concern and a second Treaty was hastily prepared and made (Fumoleau 1974; World Council of Churches 1977). Treaty 11 was made in 1921 and 1922 with our people to the north and west of Treaty 8

The Dene have always regarded the Treaties as peace and friendship pacts, not as tools to extinguish their land rights. The Treaties also protect the resource harvesting rights of the Dene, which have since been enshrined in the Canadian constitution. Some provisions of the Treaties to do with traditional Dene lands and aboriginal rights for the protection of the Dene way of life have never been fulfilled, which continues to be an ongoing political issue.

The federal government maintains a different version of the Treaties. They view the Treaties as having extinguished any land rights the Dene may have had. Any residual rights to areas such as resource harvesting were viewed as subject to restrictions of general legislation, according to

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the government. These interpretations have been proven not to have been understood by our people, based on oral evidence of Elders collected by Dene who later worked for the Indian Brotherhood, on testimony given in a court case brought by Dene Chiefs (*Caveat* 1973), and on thorough historical research (Fumoleau 1974). The first head of the NWT Indian Brotherhood mentions that we regarded Treaties 8 and 11 as: "a sacred promise People knew what the Treaties were supposed to be. They still had hopes, faith that the Treaties would be fulfilled. They also saw the Treaties as a kind of security, a guarantee. All they wanted was to get them settled" (1993 SEP: interview with founding interim President).

For the next 40 years, the administration of the north was so indifferent, so filled with broken promises, so contrary to the best interests of the Dene, that the terms of the Treaties were barely fulfilled and lands for the use of the Dene were never set aside. So many promises were made and broken, especially as regards the rights to hunt, fish, and trap that hardships without parallel were heaped on our people. Dene resistance to outside influences is not new nor a recent phenomenon. An example of the Dene response to this colonialism comes from a Yellowkives Dene Elder, Chief Joseph ("Susie") Drygeese, who vividly reminded the officials sent to pay Treaty of the meaning and intent of the peace and friendship Treaty we had made:

"Do you remember what you promised us before? The time they began the Treaty, they kissed the Bible and everything. Why do you lie to us? Why do you do this? Why do you change now? You gave us money and paper; now you want to change the law. We will give you back all the money. We did without it long before. You can't pay us to be the boss of us. Why do you tell us how to run our land? We did not give it to you."

(translated and reported in Fumoleau 1974: 126)

The western culture brought in by churches and RCMP further encroached on our Dene way of life. Our small family units spent much of our time in the bush, where it was difficult for us to learn what was happening. These changes represented an end in a way of life that had sustained the Dene for as long as they had existed. The discovery of oil at Fort Norman, gold at Yellowknife, and uranium at Port Radium dug at the very heart of the Dene Nation. Strangers came to use the land in ways such as mining that were destructive, ways that our people did not use our land. The perception to most non-Dene was that we watched in silent amazement as our land and culture were endlessly violated (described in World Council of Churches 1977: 11); a more accurate description might be that our people were not yet accustomed to the ways in which government and resource industries worked. The colonial process enacted in other places followed the historically familiar pattern here in Denendeh.

There was the pacification of the Dene by the traders and missionaries. Our people were made to depend upon the tools and ideals of these strangers in our midst. The missionaries especially severed our spiritual link with the land. They promised a better tomorrow, in exchange to submission to new ways. All of this foreign influence contributed to the destruction of Dene societies (IBNWT 1977). Many of our people felt a deep-seated resentment borne of helplessness and official neglect.

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Fewer and fewer people remembered that the original purpose of the Treaties was to protect the Dene. By the mid-1960s, many Dene families had been moved from our land by the government to spend most of the year in the non-Dene communities. Consistent with the long-held policy of assimilation, the government embarked on a campaign of universal, compulsory education. The resultant shift to year-round settlement in government-created communities completely altered the rhythm of Dene life. New economic relationships in the settlements were not fully thought out before moving our people there, as there were never enough jobs or wages to support all of our families. The attempt to make us rely on wages undermined the traditional values and principles that were the very foundation of Dene society (Dene Nation 1984d: 21-23; 1993 SEP: interview with Dene Nation President). Many young educated Dene, even though they had grown up without the consistent guidance of our Elders, had an uneasy feeling that things were just not right.

The way the young Dene had been educated was one reason: "The children were taught to forget their history, their values, their heritage and their traditions" (Fumoleau 1980). "Taught" to forget? "Forced" was more like it. We were given a number and were called by that number. Our heads were shaved bald and we were all dressed the same. Our daily schedule included rounds of prayer and French Canadian songs. Our mail was read and censored. We were strapped for speaking our own languages and humiliated for any natural act. To a person who actually went through the residential school experience itself, any study on the subject hardly serves to convey the reality to the reader. It was a process we were put through, like animals to the slaughter, only the process was slower, a daily agony. I am one of the survivors of that colonialist experience, still recovering in a different age. I can still remember the day in September of 1959, being taken from our fish camp along with my little sister, to be led off, hundreds of miles away to school. My grandma standing on the shore, getting smaller.

This was only the beginning of a harrowing journey through the dreaded school years Dene children at the time were subjected to. All the innocent children wondering what was happening. I learned simply to withdraw emotionally, not to expect a better tomorrow. Even to this day, some 25 years after having gone through this "educational" process, I still carry a certain deadness inside, deep resentments, caused by an uncaring system. Mine was the last Dene generation born on the land and then put through a system that was geared for failure. Ironically, it also gave us ways to find out what had been happening to us and to our land.

All Native tribes in North America have grown familiar with the tactics of the intruding White culture, a process of playing two sides against the middle. A fragmented opposition makes for easy prey. In Denendeh, the government was dealing with a trusting people. Until quite recently the Dene simply could not imagine the government being anything but fair and reasonable in its dealings with our people. But the federal government through the *Indian Act* identifies some people as Treaty "Indians", thereby separating them from non-Treaty "Indians", non-status, and Métis. Interpersonal, family, tribal, and national relations were affected in negative ways. At a time when

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the people needed to be reassured and organized, we found ourselves being pulled apart by these schisms caused by the *Indian Act* and by other government policies. In a single Dene family one could find the entire spectrum of northern society, with members being legally defined as Dene, Métis, non-status, and White. Children suffered from the loss of their Treaty rights. To further place the political mood of the times, we can refer to the stance that Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau took in regard to aboriginal rights. The federal government was definitely not going to respect the "grievances of native people who felt that they had been misled by Treaty negotiations" (Braden 1976: 100).

It was not until the late 1960s that the Dene began to reassert our way of life and remind Canada that there were overdue debts to be paid, especially in regard to our land. The Church lost the influence it once enjoyed. Dene learned to believe in ourselves again, to question outside influences, to stand up for ourselves. Some of the damage was irreversible. Colonialism, we discovered, had created a communications and learning gap between Dene youth and Elders. The end of an era, described by young Dene leaders as the "colonialist years", had been painfully reached. We were beginning to listen to our Elders again, rediscovering our traditional knowledge, proclaiming sovereignty over our lives and our land. It was time to organize ...

Speaking at a Chiefs Meeting in Yellowknife in 1993, former President of the Indian Brotherhood James Wah-shee defined the Colonialist Experience of the early 1960s here in the north. He explained that the federal government was running everything, all the programs and services. Federal employees, in the form of area and community administrators, ran the communities and, in 1967, the Territorial administration had just moved to Yellowknife from the federal office in Ottawa (Dene Nation 1993: meeting transcript). At the School of International Law in the Hague, Netherlands, the Territorial administration is studied as the best example of the colonial system (Fumoleau 1980). Few Dene in 1967 could foresee the full impact these arrivals would have on the Dene homeland.

In fact, the year of 1967 marked the Centennial year for the country of Canada. For a people who have been in North America for some 30 000 years, the Dene, this celebration deserved but scant notice. The Dene were brought together to celebrate in the communities and in true Dene fashion used the occasion to exchange concerns about their situation (Dene Nation chronologies, histories). In a fit of typically bureaucratic illumination, the commissioner of the Territorial administration launched a campaign to proclaim everyone in the NWT, regardless of race or Treaty rights, as "northerners". Overnight everyone was supposed to be moulded into "a new race, the northern race" (Fumoleau 1980: 11). The policies and attitudes of the Territorial administration proved to be major pressures that led the Dene Chiefs to unite.

But perhaps the greatest pressure that led to the formation of the Indian Brotherhood of the NWT in 1969 came from the infamous White Paper: "A Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy". The White Paper proposed to repeal the *Indian Act* and to transfer all responsibilities for "Indians" from the federal government to the provinces and territories. This, of

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course, raised some questions as to how much importance or value the federal government placed on the Treaties made with the First Nations and its other legal obligations (Dene Nation 1984c). According to the first interim President, Mona Fox, this White Paper also served to motivate the Dene Chiefs to develop an organization that became the Indian Brotherhood of the NWT; she told us: "it might have been one of the greatest things that happened because it forced people to organize. It was a very definite threat" (1993 SEP: interview). It caused a lot of fear amongst the Dene and "Indian" people throughout the country. The threat was assimilation, that people would be integrated into the mainstream and cut off from our Treaties, our Treaty rights. The Dene feared our Treaties would not be fulfilled.

Needless to say, the White Paper sparked outrage amongst "Indians" throughout Canada, people who were constitutionally entitled to special status under the *BNA Act*. Although the White Paper was officially withdrawn, certain aspects of it were already in process in Denendeh (Dene Nation 1984c). In Denendeh, federal and Territorial policies encouraged Dene to abandon our way of life on the land, to move into permanent settlements, and to prepare ourselves to participate in a wage-labour economy based on the development of the north's rich mineral and petroleum resources (Dene Nation 1984d: 24). The Dene wanted to deal directly with Canada nation to nation, a right accorded us through the Treaties. We wanted to deal with Canada's representative, Indian Affairs, and we wanted nothing to do with the Territorial administration.

Formation of the Indian Brotherhood of the NWT

In 1969 the 16 Dene Chiefs went to Fort Smith for the annual meeting of the Advisory or Regional Council, a body set up by the Indian Affairs Branch to exchange information between Ottawa and the Dene (Braden 1976; Dene Nation histories and chronologies; 1993 SEP: interview with IBNWT founding interim President). The Chiefs were informed that as part of the White Paper policy the Indian Affairs Branch would shut down in the NWT and responsibility for status "Indians" would be given to the newly formed government of the NWT. In fact Indian Affairs did withdraw from the NWT for a few years. During the Fort Smith meeting, the Chiefs held a separate meeting and formed a temporary council of their own. (See Dene Nation Annual Reports, histories, and chronologies.)

It was widely felt by the Dene Chiefs and other concerned people that the time had come to take direct action and assume responsibility for solving some of the accumulating Dene problems. This temporary council of Chiefs attracted volunteers for an ad-hoc executive and a steering committee; this fledgling organization called itself the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories (IBNWT). Mona Jacob (now, Fox), who in 1969 had been working with a Métis organization in Fort Smith, was the founding head of the ad-hoc executive. She was succeeded after a few months by the late Roy Daniels, who served as interim President until a formal selection

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process had been agreed on. Mona Fox told us:

[W]e formed as an organization very quickly: in a way, we built on the existing structures that were there, because we wanted, you know, representatives from each community and the Chiefs that were there did legally represent the people of their community; so, you know, we built on that. We didn't have any staff. ... the people working for Dene Nation, they were volunteers primarily. Some of the people that became, you know, leaders of the organization started out as volunteers. ... We all volunteered our time because there wasn't any money for the organization at the beginning. And I think that they C all those people C became very quickly politicized. I think they were probably leaning in that direction through their work with the Company of Young Canadians [and] saw greater opportunities for Dene Nation in the organization, and they've certainly proved that through their contributions that followed. (1993 OCT: interview)

Mona Fox remembers that a good part of the meaning of the Dene Nation at that time had to do with gaining the power to change things as a group and developing the consciousness to do so. She recalled the importance of getting the Dene politically out of existing government structures, and starting to make our own goals and our own plans (1993 SEP: interview).

The NWT Brothehood was formally incorporated in February 1970. It was set up as a "political but non-militant corporation", consisting of all the Treaty Indian People of the NWT. Its stated intention was to "speak and act formally for a people previously disorganized and disunified; to communicate their voice to the Government of Canada and all concerned" (IBNWT 1970: Objectives; IBNWT 1973a: incorporation documents). The objectives or mandate of the newly formed NWT Brotherhood were stated in its Constitution:

- a) To uphold the rights and interests of the Indian People of the N.W.T., in reference to their Treaties and otherwise
 - b) To develop, discuss and promote policies for the Indian People of N.W.T.
 - c) To conduct, foster, and support programmes and policies for the economic, social, educational, social health, and cultural benefit of the Indian Peoples of the N.W.T.
 - d) To give voice to the opinions of the Peoples of the N.W.T.
 - e) To cooperate with other organisations of similar or friendly purpose
- (IBNWT 1973a: 1-2)

A later version of the Dene Nation Constitution replaces the word "Indian" with "Dene". Also in section (d) the word "peoples" is narrowed down to "Dene peoples". The NWT Brotherhood (later renamed "Dene Nation") is here to take care of the concerns of all the different cultures of our people, the Dene. In 1975, with the Dene Declaration, there was a concerted effort to be recognized as native to Denendeh and not to follow official misnomers such as those in the *Indian Act*. The original mandate of the NWT Brotherhood also included securing funds "to operate, return the Department of Indian Affairs into the North, and unite all the Indian communities within the Mackenzie District" (IBNWT 1974: Annual Report). Thus, the Chiefs provided political guidance as the Brotherhood's Board of Directors, and the office staff carried out the Chiefs' strategies and direction.

All these objectives reflected the thinking of the founders of the NWT Brotherhood in that the Treaties and their proper interpretations would once again form the basis of their dealings with

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the federal government. Left to government devices and the manglings we would receive at the hands of the new Territorial administration, it would be fair to say that we certainly would not have the hard-fought recognition that we have achieved for ourselves as Dene today. Also, there were definite government policies already in place that the early Dene organizers at the time were aiming to correct, including social policies, many of which were regarded as highly discriminatory. The founding interim President of the Brotherhood explained it this way:

there were attempts to assimilate people, as you know, through the education system, through the residential schools, and through streaming people into the trades. ... [I]nstead of encouraging people to stay in the academic stream, they were streamed into being carpenters and bulldozer operators and nurse's aides ... rather than ... the more professional areas, or areas where they had a better chance of making a living. Or reinforcing some of the traditional occupations; that was never done.

And also, there was no kind of employment equity; all the benefits in employment went to people in the south. And people in the north, you know, had to pay for their own housing and utilities ..., whereas people from the south got isolated post allowances. They got housing subsidies, their utilities were paid, their education, ... and so on. You know, some of the Treaty people did get their health and dental care and drugs and so on, when they needed it, but they only got it if they were actually declared indigent C which was like a means test rather than a right. And the Métis and non-status, of course, were ignored, even. (1993 SEP: interview)

Dene Elders also urged the young educated Dene to seek their identity and to strive for unity in their work with the Brotherhood. One of the first staff members recalled that becoming involved in the original organization was a different kind of a venture from what Dene ordinarily aspired to at the time, such as getting a government job or something to do with industry (1993 SEP: interview). This Brotherhood staff member talked of leaving a secure teaching job to take on a position with the new native organization: "I had to examine why I had gone into the field of education in the first place. Education was one of the big factors in the cultural erosion and the situation that many Dene were faced with at the time" (1993 SEP: interview). One of the main functions of the Brotherhood was to protect who the Dene are and what we represent.

I am one of the people affected by the situation this Dene staff member was speaking of. Two years before joining the staff at the Brotherhood I had refused to write the final exams in high school and demanded to be sent home from the boarding school residence at Fort Smith. I was told that I had to find my own way home, some 700 miles to the north. This was all a part of a new awakening to life in the real world. I began working for the Indian Brotherhood in the spring of 1971. We operated out of a tiny office at the back of a Yellowknife clothing store, the Tog Shop, where the mini-mall is now. The office resembled a drop-in centre. I had just completed a two-year radio and tv arts course at a southern technical school. While I began by doing some paperwork for the Brotherhood, eventually I ran the Radio Department, producing a weekly show and training some young people.

Communications was central to the early activities of the NWT Indian Brotherhood. They wanted to inform our people in the communities, to tell them what they had learned about government policies for our people. They also wanted to educate the non-Dene, to try to win their

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support and perhaps attract contributions of money or other assistance. In keeping with its constitutional objectives, the NWT Brotherhood contacted other native organizations to share similar experiences, hopes, and plans for future action (Dene Nation histories & chronologies; Braden 1976; Federation of Natives North of 60E 1972-1975; Russell 1977: 163-173).

But, most important of all was the intention to have as many of our people as possible involved in making the decisions about what was to be done. Communicating through radio and newsletters was important, but providing face-to-face explanations in our own languages was vital. So, many of the early days of the NWT Brotherhood were spent raising money, holding meetings to share information and plan strategies, and training fieldworkers to spread information and strategies throughout our communities. Brotherhood staff recognized the central significance of sending its messages to our people about how we could collectively change the colonialist experience in our communities.

Decolonisation

The Dene colonialist experience did not end once the NWT Indian Brotherhood was formed. In 1970, Parks Canada intervened onto traditional Dene lands at  utsel K'e, in the east arm of Tucho (called in English the Great Slave Lake). Over the years there have been repeated attempts for the people of  utsel K'e to acquiesce to government plans to set parts of their traditional lands aside for parks. In 1970, Parks Canada arbitrarily withdrew 7407 square km of this Dene land for a new park, over the adamant rejection of the community of  utsel K'e. The people were deeply suspicious of parks, largely because of perceived violations of our rights in the Thelon Game Sanctuary. The Thelon Game Sanctuary had been established without the consent of the aboriginal peoples whose custom it has been for generations to hunt and trap on these barrenlands; in fact, in the 1920s and 1930s, some Dene hunters had been charged for following their traditional pursuits inside the Thelon Game Sanctuary.

In 1970, a large delegation of bureaucrats from Parks Canada descended upon the tiny community of  utsel K'e for a meeting with the Chief. The Chief at the time, Pierre Catholique, insisted on consulting with other Dene Chiefs on this important matter. Parks Canada agreed and contributed financially to enable the 16 Dene Chiefs to meet with them. Chief Pierre Catholique stated:

Never again will one Chief sit down with many government people. From now on, if twenty-one government people come to a meeting, twenty-one Indian leaders must come and sit across from them. From now on, we the Chiefs must talk with the Government only when we are all together.

(Griffith 1987: 26)

A delegation of Dene Chiefs, Elders, and NWT Brotherhood staff also went to Ottawa to discuss this matter further, a sign that perhaps governments were beginning to take Dene leaders more seriously

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and were recognizing the need to settle our land issues.

The process the Dene were beginning was something that some political scientists call "decolonisation". This was a process of removing the impact of the colonial past, a process being experienced by indigenous and other peoples in the world. This process of decolonisation was described by a Dene spokesperson at a conference in Geneva, Switzerland as "an awesome challenge" (IBNWT 1977). The young Dene just out of the school system had experienced some real freedom and were beginning to question realities back home. We were seeking the right to control our lives, to run our affairs and to have the appropriate political, economic and cultural institutions to maintain that position (Dene Nation 1984c). In order to regain our identities we had to recover our history (IBNWT 1977), and the Elders are the key to our history.

As for the Territorial administration, it had to be continually challenged. The President of the NWT Brotherhood at that time points out that one of the first steps involved in the decolonisation process had to do with members being able to analyze their situations to uncover northern realities, one of which involved the Territorial administration:

At the beginning we ignored them. We found them quite pitiful. And, you know, they were going around trying to convince everyone that they were the legitimate government of the people and it was so ironic that you would have a government full of non-native people from the south flown into the north C they didn't know anything about the north C trying to convince both the Inuit and the Dene and Métis that they were the legitimate representatives, that they were the ones making life-meaning decisions for us, and somehow they had a mandate to do that, simply because, you know, they would call an election every few years. So, at the beginning, there were openly hostile kinds of relationships that existed. And I guess the most bitter fight was over the Mackenzie Valley pipeline; we took opposing positions on that.

(1993 OCT: interview)

The Territorial administration was immediately recognized for not having constitutionally autonomous jurisdiction. Unlike First Nations, it operates without the right to self-government. Its existence is derived from the *Northwest Territories Act*, a statute of the federal government. In fact, when the Territorial administration was left out of the Meech Lake Accord ratification procedure, the NWT Legislature tried to take the federal government to court; but the court threw the case out on grounds that, since the Territorial administration is not a "government", it could not take the federal government to court (related 1993 SEP in an interview with a Dene Nation President). Dene delegates to the 1990 National Assembly in Dettah passed a motion (#51) declaring that the Territorial administration is still not regarded as the legitimate government of the Dene.

As a part of this decolonisation process, in 1971 the Dene Chiefs, as the NWT Brotherhood Board of Directors, asked the federal government to "correct the unconstitutional, illegal practice of transferring Federal responsibilities for Dene people to the Territorial Government of the NWT" (reported in Dene Nation 1984c). For instance, education is clearly spelled out in the Treaties as a federal responsibility to the Dene but it has been transferred to the Territorial administration. Dene inherent aboriginal rights supported by the Treaties should serve as a basis for our negotiations with the Canadian government. The Dene Chiefs and Brotherhood staff felt that developments such as

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the proposed Mackenzie Valley highway and pipeline should only happen with our consent, following a settlement of our land based on our aboriginal rights (IBNWT 1974: Dene Rights Fieldworkers Kit, "The Meaning of Aboriginal Rights" 5). Part of the basis for a Dene position here in Denendeh had to include political rights, as George Barnaby contended: "Laws are made by people from the south that do not make sense to us, but which we have to live by. These laws are to serve the system of the south. They are not laws to protect the Dene way of life" (IBNWT 1976c: IV, Paper 3).

Another of the NWT Brotherhood's early activities was to convince the Department of Indian Affairs that its Indian Affairs Branch office should be re-established in the Territories. In April 1972 the Indian Affairs Branch reopened an office in Yellowknife (IBNWT 1972, 1974 Annual Reports; 1973d & 1973e; Dene Nation histories & chronologies). The reopening of the NWT Indian Affairs Regional Office was further proof of the effectiveness of united action by the various Bands in Denendeh through the Brotherhood to establish and maintain our rights. It meant recognition of Dene Band Councils and Treaty rights. It was intended to assure Treaty people that the federal government was carrying out its responsibility for them. Dene Bands in the NWT had the right to the same programs under the *Indian Act* as Bands in the rest of the country (Braden 1976: 127). As a specific proposal to put this into action, in 1972 the IBNWT proposed a Band Development Program for Band Council funding (IBNWT 1973d), which finally became available by April 1974. Before then, the Chiefs and Band Councils in Denendeh had no operating funds: "In most communities there was no Band offices, and there was no Band Chief staff; at most, there was a box with a little file in it from Indian Affairs that the Chief carried around in a paper bag" (1993JUL: interview with former President).

During the earliest years, two vital facts were becoming clear to the individual members of the Dene Nation:

- the Dene homeland consisted of 450 000 square miles of land, and
- the federal government, industry, and developers knew that a strong, unified NWT Indian Brotherhood could interfere with proposed uses for some of our land

With typical divide and conquer tactics, the governments and developers would continue to approach Dene Bands separately to try to make deals with them. The biggest Dene struggle would be to keep the people together. Perhaps the most succinct statement on the matter of the Dene land settlement comes from a former Brotherhood President:

People are using the word "claim". ... that's something that the government would really like us to believe C that we have a claim. Our problem has been that the government of Canada has a claim on our land. We have no claim. The land belongs to the Dene. ... Our problem is that non-Dene have come on our land, and they say that they have rights here. Our problem is that the Government, the non-Dene are claiming our land. They are making decisions on our land. They are developing our land. We are dealing with the problems of non-Dene claiming our land and our rights.

(Dene Nation 1978: Assembly transcript: 117)

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This reawakening of this process of decolonisation was closely linked with the objectives of the newly formed NWT Brotherhood. All the Presidents of our organization emphasized that the influence of our Elders has been and must continue to be an integral part of our search for a true Dene identity and the rights to our land. One remarked that:

the Elders to me were very, very important and that was one of the reasons why I wanted the kind of meetings we used to have changed, because previously it was just the Chiefs coming together. To me, it was very important that, at each of our meetings, we did political education. If, in fact, we were talking about decolonisation, we would have to learn from the Elders in many ways, even how to conduct meetings themselves. Because it seemed to me that we would have to operate the meetings in a system that was understandable to the average Dene and the more traditional the Dene were, the more they could understand the operation of our meetings.

(1993 OCT: interview with former President)

This former President pointed out that the Dene have to build on what the Elders have done, particularly our making of Treaty with Canada. There seem to be two versions of history, the federal government's version and the Dene understanding. Dene Elders and leaders agreed that the Dene definitely did not surrender any rights to Dene lands (IBNWT 1974: Dene Rights Fieldworkers Kit, "The Meaning of Aboriginal Rights"). To make sure that our understanding of what people had in mind for us, we have to have our Elders involved (1993 JUL-OCT: interviews with former and current heads of IBNWT/DN). The knowledge held by the Elders about the making of Treaty 8 and Treaty 11 is vital to a fair sharing of our land with the newcomers. The Treaties had to be understood according to their original intent, and the government was to be taken to task to uphold its responsibilities.

The Dene have always had a powerful connection to the land. Formally, this link was recognized by the federal government in the Treaties, especially in the guarantees that the Dene would forever enjoy our rights to hunt, to trap and to fish without restriction in Denendeh. Just as the annual spring hunt reaffirms the individual Dene ties and commitments to Denendeh, so this Dene reawakening through the formation of the NWT Indian Brotherhood stirred long dormant feelings among the young Dene of a unique status within the country called Canada.

The Mid-1970s: Settling the Land Issue

In March of 1973 the Indian Brotherhood's Board of Directors, our Chiefs, met in Fort Rae to discuss the Treaty research collected by its fieldworkers conducting interviews with our Elders, as well as the opinions of its legal advisors. The leadership decided on an approach for presenting this evidence to the federal government and to the Territorial administration (IBNWT 1973 meeting minutes; Braden 1976). A month later, the Chiefs applied to register a *caveat*, a prior interest in the land representing the Dene ancestral homelands.

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The Dene Go to Court

The Land Title Registrar refused their application, and the Chiefs took their request to the Supreme Court of the NWT. In the landmark case, called *In re. Paulette et al.*, the Dene Chiefs presented their *caveat* to declare our prior interest in the 400 000 square miles of Denendeh (Caveat 1973). (The land area was raised to 450 000 square miles when the case was appealed in the Alberta Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada.) The amount of land the government was saying the Dene could have on reserves under its version of Treaty 8 and Treaty 11 was 2600 square miles. The *Paulette* case was the first major test of the strength of the newly formed Dene unity. With the rumblings of the proposed Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline already heard, the court case cast the first doubts on the validity of major resource development projects on Dene land proposed without our consent (IBNWT 1974d?). The purpose of filing this *caveat*, in part, was to stop any transfer of land without permission of the Dene, to verify our Elders' understanding of the Treaties, and to demonstrate our aboriginal title to Denendeh.

The judge for the *Paulette* case, Mr Justice Morrow, travelled to the communities to hear Dene testimony, much as Berger would later. This approach to resolving conflicts and sharing information was acceptable to the Dene: it is our custom to go to the people to resolve conflict and to make major decisions. Elders who remember the Treaty making of 1900, 1920, 1921, and 1922 contradicted the government's contention that our rights to our land had been legally extinguished. Julien Yendo of Fort Wrigley described how his name on the Treaty was a forgery, because he had in fact been away when the Treaty party came through (*Caveat* case testimony 1973; also reported in Fumoleau 1974 and IBNWT 1976c). The research to support the *caveat* came from the work since 1968 of the original Dene volunteers with the Company of Young Canadians and continued by the Brotherhood staff. Eventually the judge ruled, giving one of the clearest definitions of aboriginal rights in Canada:

I am satisfied that those same indigenous people ... are prima facie owners of the lands covered by the caveat C that they have what is known as aboriginal rights. That there exists a clear constitutional obligation on the part of the Canadian Government to protect the legal rights of the Indigenous peoples in the area covered by the caveat.

(Caveat 1973; IBNWT 1976c)

This historic decision further ruled that the Treaties had not extinguished the Dene title to our lands (*Caveat* 1973: judgment).

This *caveat* case decision dramatically altered the federal government's position on the land settlement of the northern Dene (Braden 1976). The Indian Brotherhood of the NWT, backed by a legal judgment, forced the government to acknowledge the rights of Treaty Dene to the 450 000 square miles of their homeland. The Brotherhood also gained recognition that the small amount of land mentioned in the government's version of the Treaties was not suitable for our way of life (Dene

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Nation chronologies). However, rather than fulfil our Treaties fairly, the federal government switched to suggesting the Chiefs, through the Brotherhood, pursue a land settlement under the federal Claims program C as if our Treaties had not been made. (Please refer to Table 1, for an outline of the major events of the Indian Brotherhood of the NWT/Dene Nation under the evolving Claims policies.)

The negotiating position of the federal government was that the Dene accepted the Claims policy as if we did not have our Treaties. The first step of a Claim procedure is for the "claimant group" to provide evidence that they have occupied the land they are "claiming". As a result, the Dene had to provide researched evidence of our "claim" that we have occupied our own homeland, even though the government had been trying to decide what to do about our lands since 1900. NWT Brotherhood staff then began negotiations to shape the research in a way that would be appropriate and to get the funds for it. Phoebe Nahanni was hired to organize on behalf of the Brotherhood the study of the maximum extent of our land use (described in Nahanni 1977). This research took the form of the Dene Mapping Project. A second research project was the collection of Elders testimony and published articles by academics, resulting in over 2000 pages of materials printed as the Dene Rights Series (1976c).

Initially, both the Dene and Métis organisations appeared to be preparing a joint land settlement ("claim") based along the lines of the Alaska model. It would have involved land grants and a substantial cash settlement including royalties from future resource development. However, their emphasis shifted shortly after research and preparations began. The new theme for the settlement became "land, not money" (Braden 1976: 130-131). As mentioned earlier, the founding members of the NWT Brotherhood had received inspiration, support, and rationale from other native organizations. Part of this link to and with other groups was the Federation of Natives North of 60, formed in the early 1970s. (The formation of this organization is discussed in Part 3 of this report.) Some of the reasons for setting up the federation included the need for more recognition of aboriginal rights in the north, to study land settlements already in progress, to formulate strategies, and to present a generally united front. The land settlements being negotiated at the time involved peoples in the Yukon, James Bay, and Alaska. One of the

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Table 1 Chronological Overview of Dene/Métis Land Settlement Procedures

1900-1972	Discussions between government officials and Dene Chiefs about land entitlements under Treaty 8 and Treaty 11 in NWT (2600 sq. mi.)
1968-1972	Treaty research with Dene Elders (by CYC and IBNWT staff)
1970-1973	IBNWT prepares for <i>caveat</i> case, <i>In re. Paulette et al.</i> (450 000 sq. mi.)
1974-1976-	<p>DIAND abandons Treaty entitlement, offers Claim procedure, which starts with research to provide land occupancy evidence of "claim"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IBNWT conducts Dene Mapping Project & Dene Rights research, while preparing communities for Berger Inquiry hearings; Chiefs prepare Dene agreement in principle as framework for content of "claim" negotiations
1975-1979-	<p>intermittent negotiating between DIAND and Dene/Métis on eligibility of Métis and non-status Dene, funding, and content (ie, amount of land, self-government, extinguishment) of land settlement negotiations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DIAND settlement offer in 1978 rejected by Dene and Métis - Dene & Métis organizations try to resolve internal conflicts to meet DIAND terms: agreement reached that Dene to negotiate for both but two organizations to remain separate
1980-1983-	<p>DIAND & Dene/Métis agree to negotiate; funding loans are reinstated; very intermittent negotiating meetings on content of negotiations C Dene & Métis stop in 1981 when DIAND announced the proposed construction of the Norman Wells oil pipeline despite the lack of a land settlement, but returned to table when DIAND agreed to a 2-year delay and multi-million dollar mitigative funding package to prepare for this project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - setting up of secretariat to negotiate "claim" at arm's length from Dene & Métis organizations; by 1983, agreement reached on process for enumerating "claim" beneficiaries
1984-1988	Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat completes a series of separate mini-agreements by 1988, when Chiefs initial an Agreement-in-Principal (AIP) presented to Joint Assemblies in Hay River (land area = 70 000 sq. mi.); Joint Assemblies pass motion for sweeping improvements to AIP
1988-1990-	<p>lobbying to support motion for improvements to AIP, but Final Agreement presented for initialling without improvements being addressed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - majority of Dene delegates at Assembly refused to permit initialled Final Agreement to go to communities for approval or rejection, and Gwich'in Dene delegates leave, later requesting separate negotiation of a "claim" for their region alone - federal Cabinet decides to stop negotiating single "claim" and agrees to negotiate with separate regions, based on initialled Final Agreement

Source: Compiled from Dene Nation histories, chronologies, Annual Reports, & Assembly transcripts.

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benefits of keeping in touch with other organizations was sharing information and attitudes toward government policies, such as land "claims". Shushwap George Manuel, leader of the National Indian Brotherhood, noted in his address to the Berger Inquiry that there is a vast difference between Treaties made between sovereign Nations and agreements like the one completed with the Cree of James Bay:

The James Bay Agreement deals with the surrender of title to the land. The government intends to use land settlement to implement the 1969 White Paper that was uniformly rejected by Indians everywhere. Land negotiations are being used to wipe out government obligations to Indian people.

Treaties, on the other hand, recognize aboriginal rights. Indian title and aboriginal rights are not to be sold nor extinguished. Negotiations are only intended to establish agreements between the governments and Indian people on how the principles of Indian title and aboriginal rights will be developed and put into practice. A Treaty should be an instrument calculated to provide a permanent economic and political power ensuring the survival of the signators as a people.

(reported in IBNWT 1976c, X, 9)

The Berger Hearings

One of the most pressing issues for members of the Federation of Natives North of 60E at the time involved the proposed Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline and the hearings the government decided to hold about it (1974: summarized minutes). Here is a description of the project and its impact, by a Church organization that supported the Dene:

The Mackenzie Valley Natural Gas Pipeline planned secretly by a consortium of oil, natural gas and pipeline companies, most of them controlled by United States companies, was the largest of private enterprises ever planned for Canada. Estimated to cost more than \$8 billion, its 2600-mile route would carry Alaskan gas across Canada to markets in the mid-western United States.

For years it had the tacit support of the Canadian government and the wholesale backing of such giants of the energy industry as Exxon, and its Canadian subsidiary Imperial Oil, as well as Shell, Gulf and others. The pipeline would bring thousands of southern construction workers, wreak unknown damage on the fragile Arctic eco-system and leave the Dene even more colonized. In fact they were convinced they would never survive.

(World Council of Churches 1977)

The role of the Brotherhood here was to organize the Dene so that our people could present individual views about the planned pipeline at the hearings arranged for our communities. This was a mammoth task. Our people needed to be informed about the project C which was unlike anything that had been here before C and to think about how it might affect our lives. The Brotherhood staff decided that face-to-face explanations by our community development fieldworkers would be the best approach. The former manager of the Brotherhood's Community Development Fieldworkers' Program explained that it was to help our people develop

analytical skills, so that people in the communities would be able to understand the forces that were happening, what the federal government was doing, what big business was doing, to put in place historically the opening of the North, the impact

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of it. The communities individually for a long time were thinking they were going through their own experiences by themselves. We then started a process where each of us started to learn that what was happening in Yellowknife was also happening in Rae, was also happening in Hay River, and so forth.

(1993 OCT: interview with former manager)

As well as informing and preparing their communities, the Dene and other northern aboriginal organizations decided to educate southern Canadians about the impact of the project in the north, mostly through the media. The aboriginal peoples of the north at the time stood virtually alone. To help educate southern Canadians, the NWT Brotherhood opened a small office in an Ottawa Dene's home. In fact it was only after they made their wishes known publicly that most Canadians even knew of our existence.

In 1975, Judge Thomas Berger started the inquiry to examine the terms and conditions concerning construction of a gas pipeline in the Mackenzie Valley. Finally here was a man who would listen to the aboriginal side of the story. He travelled to Dene/Métis and Inuvialuit communities, and listened to more than 1000 Dene testifying in our languages (Berger transcripts; Berger 1977, 1988). The judge heard the unending refrain "No Pipeline until Land Settlement". Among the most telling of statements to Berger were these:

It is for this unborn child, Mr. Berger, that my nation will stop the pipeline. It is so that this unborn child can know the freedom of this land that I am willing to lay down my life.

(1975: Chief Frank T'Seleie)

We do not wish to push our world onto you. But we are willing to defend it for ourselves, our children, and our grandchildren. If your nation becomes so violent that it would tear up our land, destroy our society and our future, and occupy our homeland, by trying to impose this pipeline against our will, then of course we will have no choice but to react with violence.

I hope we do not have to do that. For it is not the way we would choose. However, if we are forced to blow up the pipeline, I hope you will not only look on the violence of Indian action, but also on the violence of your own nation which would force us to take such a course.

(Phillip Blake, Fort McPherson)

In the face of all of this Dene and national opposition, the gas pipeline was delayed. The experience remains to remind us of our need for constant Dene vigilance in Denendeh. The essential lesson of the gas pipeline experience, then, was that the Dene wanted some solid control over our own lives and over our futures. A bureaucracy like the Territorial administration simply could not be trusted to act in the best interest of the Dene. The time would soon come when some real changes were to be proposed by us.

Unfortunately, the federal government did not share the sense of victory that the Dene felt. The Indian Affairs minister, Warren Allmand, had been conducting positive negotiations with Dene leaders. But, when the results of the Berger hearings were realized, "the federal government virtually went into punishment mode, changed the minister of the day and put forth a minister that was going

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to be involved, really, in a process of punishing the Dene and, really, crushing the political unity and organization that had been created" (1993 OCT: interview with IBNWT President at the time). Facing both negotiations and funding cuts, the Brotherhood had to close its Ottawa branch office, lay off some Yellowknife staff and reduce salaries. But, rather than going on the defensive, the Dene planned an education campaign to encourage Canadian and European support, thereby making the situation of our people "highly political and highly visible" (1993 OCT: interview with IBNWT President at the time).

The Dene Declaration & Negotiations

The first Joint General Assembly of Dene and Métis was held in Fort Good Hope in 1974, to develop a land settlement position. Dene leaders had realized that court action alone would never define our rights. The Indian Brotherhood and Métis Association of the NWT announced that they would seek a single aboriginal rights settlement on behalf of all descendants of the Dene (Dene Nation 1979; histories and Board meeting minutes). In Fort Simpson, Dene delegates affirmed the Fort Good Hope decisions and passed a further motion to declare that:

the Indian people of the N.W.T. have Aboriginal Rights to 450 000 square miles of land and do not wish to sell their Aboriginal Rights in the manner of previous land settlements, and instead of selling their land rights, the Indian people want their land rights recognized by the creation of a title to their traditional lands, these rights include title to all fish, game and to all renewable and non-renewable resources

(Dene Nation National Assembly motion, 1974 JUN 29)

Funding proposals submitted in 1976 by Brotherhood staff to the federal government were based on the premise that communicating information about negotiations and getting the views of our people from the communities to the negotiators was of the greatest importance. For this reason, the Dene and Métis asked for moneys to set up regional offices, for our community field-workers program (to ensure face-to-face sharing of information would continue), and for joint Assemblies where many family representatives could gather to discuss these matters that would affect our lives and that of our children's children (budget submission included in DIAND 1975c). The reason given to DIAND by Brotherhood staff in a Land Claims Budget and Report to support the Dene approach in part said:

The whole process, then, is one that starts from the grass-roots at the community level and builds up, through the regional level, to the [Denendeh-wide] level. It is clear from experience to date and from the demands of the people that a Land Claims Committee cannot function in any other way. At the same time, experience shows that this process, in fact, does work in terms of getting decisions made. (IBNWT 1975c: 3)

In Fort Simpson in July 1975 at another Joint Assembly over 300 delegates voted unanimously to adopt the historic Dene Declaration. This statement of rights states quite simply that the original people of Denendeh are a unique race and culture, and that we have always been a Nation within Canada with the right to self-determination. It also declared that the Dene must be

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recognized as a Nation, with our own languages, values, history, laws, and worldview. It called for the people of Canada and the nations of the world to recognize these simple facts, and that the Dene were willing to negotiate a new relationship with Canada on the condition that the Dene Nation be given sufficient authority to be self-determining (Dene Nation 1975a). In response to the government's divide and conquer tactics, the Dene delegates to the Assembly recommitted themselves to the "Land and Unity" stance, stating that there was only one Nation and one people C the Dene C in Denendeh.

A contemporary analysis compares the Dene and the Nunuvut (ie, NWT Inuit) Declarations by praising the Inuit for devising concrete policies and a plan of action with deadlines, and by deploring the impractical and idealistic Dene approach. In this view, the Dene Declaration lacks objectives, guidelines, a timetable, and a clear list of responsibilities we wanted to be transferred from the federal government (Braden 1976: 207-208). The federal government was quick to answer this Dene call for international recognition. Minister of Indian Affairs Judd Buchanan called the Dene Declaration "gobbledygook" and suggested that it was a separatist notion, like that of Québec.

The formal name change from "Indian Brotherhood of the NWT" to "Dene Nation" took place at a National Assembly in Fort Franklin. There, our constitution was also amended to open membership "to all those who have formally declared themselves under the Dene registry". The way was open for all descendants of the Dene, whatever the government considered them to be, to be members of the Dene Nation. And our people no longer had to think of ourselves as "Indians" or "Métis". We had formalized the earlier process of self-identification.

By 1976, the process of decolonisation had been firmly addressed in many quarters of the Dene Nation. People had a better idea of what our emerging Dene identities could consist of. The real meaning of the Treaties began to take shape. In many Dene leaders' minds, the Treaties represented a lasting bond with the intentions of our ancestors, the Elders who had insisted on these basic aboriginal rights. To give us an idea of Dene thinking at the time we have the words of George Barnaby of Fort Good Hope:

Our life is part of the land. We live on the land and are satisfied with what we get from it. No one person owns the land, it belongs to all of us. We choose where we want to go and our choice is respected by others, whether in the settlement or in the bush. We have no word in our language that means "wilderness", as anywhere we go is our home.

(Berger Inquiry Transcript: 22003-22004)

But despite the adamant opposition of many NWT Whites and the government, despite internal struggles, the Dene never wavered in our struggle. With our position about our land firmly in the minds of the Canadian public, as a result of the *caveat* case and the Berger hearings, the Dene turned to negotiations with the federal government.

The Dene Nation Chiefs spent two weeks in the summer of 1976 at Drum Lake, where they put together the Dene land settlement negotiating position. This preliminary framework became

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known as our proposed agreement in principle (1976a). The Dene Nation President at the time recalled:

it included things like, you know, if we are going to be a Nation, we wanted enough land to be self-reliant, to be self-determining, to be able to have enough land to live in a traditional way. We wanted to be regarded in Canada as a Nation of people. We wanted to be self-governing. We wanted to continue to be self-determining. And, politically, we felt that the NWT would have to be restructured, so that Dene government would become a reality recognized by the Canadian government.

(1993 OCT: interview)

Later that summer, our leaders approached the Métis, with lengthy negotiations up to a week at a time, but no consensus was reached. Staff in the National Office prepared discussion papers to add to the Dene Rights research that had been produced (1976c). By fall 1976, we were ready to present our proposed position to Dene leadership as the grounds for negotiations with the federal government. At this point, the government cut off funding for the Assembly where the proposed agreement in principle would be presented for approval. The Anglican and Roman Catholic churches provided emergency funds for the Assembly and for our leaders to go to Ottawa to present the approved framework to the Indian Affairs minister.

Throughout the winter months, many face-to-face negotiations took place between the Indian Affairs minister and the Dene Nation President, during which the minister seemed to find the substance of our negotiating position acceptable. At this point, possibly supported by protests from the Territorial administration, the federal Cabinet changed Indian Affairs ministers and the new minister promptly reversed the apparent negotiations agreement that had been reached between the former minister and the Dene. The Dene Nation President at the time admitted that the Dene may have been "overconfident and overly aggressive", and possibly miscalculated the impact of the hostility that had developed between the Dene and the Territorial administration during the Berger hearings (1993 OCT: interview). Evidently, the NWT officials had felt that the previous Indian Affairs and Northern Development minister, who was also responsible for the affairs of the NWT as a whole, had been favouring the Dene.

For the next four years, relations between the Dene Nation and the Indian Affairs ministry were very difficult. Funding for land settlement negotiations were cut off or severely controlled (as discussed in more detail in Part 3) and delay after delay occurred, so that months would pass between negotiating sessions (ie, DIAND 1975b, 1978c). The Dene Nation President at the time stated that he felt the government was punishing the Dene for the unity we had displayed during the Berger Inquiry and for the tough stand we had taken (1993 OCT: interview). Some of the reasons for the delays in negotiations included disagreements with the federal government over beneficiary eligibility and the terms and content of negotiations. Also there were disagreements with the Métis Association over who should negotiate for them. In its continuing divide and conquer tactics, the federal government sent its representative for land settlement negotiations to offer to deal with the Chiefs, without the involvement of the Dene Nation staff. This tactic was not well received by our Chiefs.

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In January 1978, the federal government made the Dene an offer of a James Bay-like land settlement: \$250 million cash, reserve-like status over 30 000 to 50 000 square miles of land for traditional economic use, with no rights or control over non-renewable resources or water, and no surface or sub-surface rights (IBNWT & Dene Nation histories). The Dene and Métis did not like the offer, so negotiations were discontinued and relations between the Dene and other parties C including the Métis, the Territorial administration, and the federal government C remained contentious until the early 1980s. Instead, the National Office staff put their efforts into cutting costs and keeping our support from the Berger Inquiry strong.

Dene Leadership

Negotiations between the Dene/Métis and the federal government re-opened in July 1980. A day later, the federal Cabinet gave its approval for the building of the Norman Wells oil pipeline, and the Dene/Métis negotiators cut off the discussions. Aware of the possibility that our funding and negotiations could once again be held for ransom if we opposed this project, the Dene met to assess the oil pipeline and to switch strategies (1993 OCT: interview with Dene Nation President at the time). Dene Nation's internal assessment of the Norman Wells proposed oil pipeline raised the fact that the we have never been opposed to the idea of development. Instead, the issue has always been the matter of asking for our consent and sharing with us the ability to limit the impact of industrial activity on our land and resources, on which our people have always relied spiritually and physically.

The Dene leadership compared the Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline and the Norman Wells oil pipeline proposals. This new pipeline was regarded as being an idea that the Dene could live with, given proper environmental and socio-economic impact safeguards. Dene companies and projects could be set up, if the construction of the pipeline was delayed for a year or two. The proposed oil pipeline was smaller and would cover only half of the area of the Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline. Also, the question of the ownership of the oil could be made a negotiating issue. With this assessment, the Dene leadership approached first the Métis Association, which agreed with the Dene strategy. Together, they approached the Territorial administration, which also agreed, and all three parties went to the federal authorities with a united request for a two-year delay so that northerners could prepare for the project (1993 OCT: interview with the Dene Nation President at the time; 1980 Dene Nation Leadership Meeting minutes).

The federal government agreed to provide certain funding C for instance, for socio-economic and environmental monitoring, for preparing our communities for the impact of the pipeline construction, and for training programs so that northerners could benefit from construction jobs. The federal authorities also promised the Dene and Métis progress on the negotiations of the ownership of the Norman Wells resources, with some kind of revenue-sharing agreement. Ultimately, many of these Dene-initiated conditions were only partially fulfilled (Hall 1984; Gorman 1987). (Norman Wells funding is discussed in more detail in Part 3.)

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The Dene took a similar leading role on constitutional development in the NWT, first approaching the Inuit about establishing eastern and western constitutional organizations to handle our differing political needs and then getting the Territorial administration to join this initiative. The President at the time told us that "it was very, very interesting: the relationship changed. We were providing ... the leadership to the Territorial government like never ever before and they became allies with us" (1993 OCT: interview).

The 1980s: Growth & Funding Cuts

By the 1980s, the Dene Nation Executive and National Office staff had developed a considerable network for consultation, among other aboriginal organizations and among Canadian and inter-national non-aboriginal groups wanting to support our efforts to protect our rights. Programs that had been operating in the National Office, in order to meet policy direction from the National Assemblies and Chiefs meetings, included research into our rights, communications (including interpreters), education, health, a variety of programs that would now be called "environmental" (such as fire management, fisheries, lands and resources), and our ongoing commitment to community development. With funding for mitigative programs associated with the Norman Wells pipeline project, the National Office expanded. Until 1986, about 40 people were employed by Dene Nation.

The work that the Dene involved our selves with after the government attempt to limit the Dene Nation as a result of the Berger hearings began to come to light. People all over the world were now aware that the Dene, too, were standing up for our rights. For instance, the International "Russell Tribunal on the Rights of the Indians of the North and Latin America" found Canada guilty of crimes against its Indian peoples under international law. No matter what the federal government attempted to do, it eventually became clear that all was not well in Denendeh. The National Office used every opportunity to inform people everywhere about the situation of our people.

Examples of deliberate federal government interventions onto Dene lands and resources included laws passed without the consent of aboriginal peoples that would have profound effects on Crown (or federal government) lands. These laws, such as Bill C-48 and its regulations for the Canadian Oil and Gas Lands Administration (COGLA), were intended to make things easier for oil exploration and development. The Dene Executive and National Office staff found themselves in the position of fulfilling the mandate given to them by the National Assembly to negotiate for a better future but having to deal with such ongoing conflicts, which eroded our land settlement negotiations. Dene Nation's involvement with the Beaufort Sea environmental hearings into the impact of oil exploration and development brought up much the same issues as with the Berger hearings:

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- that the Dene need to have greater control over the use of Dene lands and waters
- that the matter of ownership of this land & that is, Dene aboriginal title & be recognized and affirmed
- that COGLA be replaced by a single non-government agency with extensive representation by northern native people (Hall 1984)

By 1983, matters between the Dene and Métis had been sufficiently resolved that a joint organization for negotiations & the Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat & was established for the Comprehensive Claims talks with the government. The Secretariat was intended to provide a forum for some of the major problems over negotiations caused largely by DIAND. It was to be responsible for negotiating aboriginal rights for both the Dene and the Métis, and to undertake research and develop positions on issues directly related to the land settlement. In 1983, negotiators independent from the Dene Nation and Métis Association were appointed to present Dene and Métis positions to the federal negotiators. For the most part, these negotiators conducted the land "claim" talks, working with resource people through the Secretariat.

At times, the Dene Nation and Métis Association Presidents joined the independent negotiators and lawyers. By 1986, regional negotiators were also appointed to join the Chief Negotiator at the table. One regional negotiator later became a Dene Nation President; he explained why he thought they had been needed:

The reason they did that was the original format for negotiating was that there was a Chief Negotiator and he went to the table; there were some staff but the approach was very ad hoc. ... depending on the issue, different people went to the table & some people were there on one occasion and they wouldn't be back at the table for 6 months, either because the issue was not dealt with again right away or because [the person was] not available. So, there was a whole movement of people coming back and forth in negotiations and the only consistent people really were the Chief Negotiator, some of the lawyers & who were making really good money & and some of the staff. So community people were complaining that they didn't know what was going on ... they needed to change the structure. So there was a strong move to have regional negotiators instituted. (1993 SEP: interview)

Through the newly established Secretariat, a process was set up in 1983 through which Dene and Métis beneficiaries to the land "claim" could be identified. Delegates attending the Dene National Assembly in Fort Rae in 1984 unanimously endorsed a framework for negotiations, even though negotiations on a wildlife management agreement had already been underway. Interestingly, the Secretariat negotiators advised the Dene Assembly in Rae not to include programs and services in their framework agreement, as the Yukon Comprehensive Claim groups had. Apparently, the negotiators considered that we should negotiate programs and services separately from our land "claim" and the leadership at that time trusted their judgment in this matter.

Constitutional Development

With the Dene and Métis working together, our populations formed a majority in the western NWT and we decided to address some ways for our people to participate more fully in the governing

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structures that were making decisions about us. At this time, Dene Nation and the Métis Association drafted the Denendeh constitutional proposal, called "Public Government for the People of the North" to address the political and constitutional changes (Dene Nation & Métis Association 1981). The Denendeh proposal was a "vision of a new society with a province-like jurisdiction in the Western N.W.T. based on the Dene political style and tradition, with respect for and co-operation with all northern people" (Dene Nation 1984c). Some of the basic mechanisms proposed in the document to protect and promote aboriginal rights include the notion of a Dene Senate, guaranteed seats for aboriginal peoples on all legislative bodies, an extended residency requirement, and guaranteed representation on public committees (Dene Nation & Métis Association 1981).

Along the lines of this proposal to include community governments, the Dene community of Fort Good Hope replaced its Band and Settlement Councils with a unified Dene Community Council. The Council could then exercise both federal and municipal authority, by the addition of seats on Council for non-Dene councillors. Aklavik took similar action, and more communities considered it. The community of Fort Good Hope took measures to secure a degree of local control over resource development. The community signed a precedent-setting agreement with the Minister of Indian Affairs which recognized its rights to negotiate with resource developers to ensure local people and businesses are employed, camp conditions are suitable to northerners, and any environmental hazard is mitigated. The Denendeh National Office accepted the Fort Good Hope agreement as a precedent for developing a national position for land settlement negotiations in relation to resource development (Hall 1984: 26).

In February 1982, the Constitutional Alliance was formed, as mentioned earlier, as a result of the Dene lead to deal with changes to the way peoples in the north could be involved in governing the NWT. Supported by the federal government, the NWT Legislative Assembly created the Nunavut and Western Constitutional Forums within the Constitutional Alliance. Dene Nation, Métis Association, and Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement (COPE, the Inuvialuit land settlement organization) were parties to the Western Constitutional Forum, along with some Territorial MLAs; the Inuit organizations in the eastern NWT and some Territorial MLAs worked on the Nunavut Constitutional Forum (Dene Nation 1984c; WCF 1987 provides an outline of events from 1982). At times, all parties and some academics who collaborated with them joined together for instance, to discuss where a boundary between the east and west (ie, between Nunavut and Denendeh) might be, and how division of the NWT might take place. Efforts were then put forth to include our political rights not only through the land settlement process, but also constitutionally at the local level, as well as within Denendeh (Hall 1984: 7-8; WCF 1987). Of course, the Dene were also working with other aboriginal organizations toward more active recognition of the inherent right to self-government in the Canadian constitution.

Dene Initiatives: Signs of Growth

The Denendeh National Office took a leadership role in negotiating nation to nation with the leader of the Vatican. We invited the Pope to visit with our people, many of whom are Catholic.

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The main motive was to give comfort to some of our old people, especially ones who might not see the "claim" implemented. A further motive was to seek

to force the Church to reconcile some of the things that have been done, by recognizing we're for real as well. The Church is not a force by itself; it has to accept that Dene leaders are legitimate and we're the organizers, we're going to control this issue, the visit itself. It forced us to work with the Church, you know, and the leaders of the Church; it was good experience that way, whereas before we never had that, it was always the Church dictating a sort of a power unchallenged and all of a sudden they were forced to work and negotiate with us.

(1993 JUL: interview with the Dene Nation President at the time)

The Papal visit was successfully realized in 1987, after an attempt three years earlier that was cancelled when poor flying conditions prevented the Pope from coming north during his cross-Canada trip. The Papal visit certainly generated a lot of goodwill, and was a significant spiritual event for many of our Elders and their families.

The National Office had many people working on projects related to the Norman Wells pipeline construction or to communications. We had a cultural survival program, we worked with professional planners to produce our own socio-economic impact study of the pipeline, and we maintained an environmental monitoring program throughout construction, including the training of local Dene to do their own sample collecting. This was in addition to the joint Dene-Métis needs assessment and ongoing community development training programs. At that time, the Yellowknife headquarters had interpreting equipment and staff, who translated many government policies and Dene Nation discussion papers onto tape for circulation to our communities. Peter Hope's history of the Dene Nation in three parts was one sent out by the communications department in this way (Dene Nation 1984c).

In response to the animal rights movement, the Dene took the lead once again. We began to educate people about the rights of our hunters and trappers (or harvesters as they are now often called), who were suffering because of poor fur markets as a result of the animal rights campaigns. The Dene Nation contacted other organizations representing northern aboriginal peoples and suggested we form our own association to counter the impact of the animal rights people (1993 JUL: interview with Dene Nation President at the time). This organization became Indigenous Survival International, which continues to this day to protect trappers rights and to educate people about our continued need to pursue our way of life. Other important Dene initiatives of the 1980s were the formation of the Denendeh Development Corporation and the Dene Cultural Institute. It had become widely apparent that the kinds of work directly related to our Dene culture we had to do for ourselves. The school system has been ignoring our languages, our culture, our history, and our legends. A gathering in  utsel K'e in 1986 discussed the founding principles for the Cultural Institute, which has been at arm's length from the National Office since its first year of operation.

Funding Cuts & their Impact

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Any initiative, no matter how justified, has to answer for the financial resources to carry it out. A Dene Nation policy analyst in 1984 described the frustration felt by staff:

[Our] financial and human resources are very limited and the insecurity of working with pro-grams that may be terminated at the whim of government place severe limitations on our ability to compete with government and industry on the major policy issues which effect [sic] the lives of our people. Because of our lack of an economic base, we often must design our priority projects to fit the criteria of existing government programs, and any new initiatives which we instigate are often years in being realized due to government bureaucracy and red tape. (Hall 1984: 30)

As for funding to work with, we have learned through direct experience, that the axe does fall, often hard and without notice. In 1986, as a result of federal government funding cuts, twenty-one staff members were laid off at the Denendeh National Office, including all community development fieldworkers and the staff of the communications and interpreters departments, and the Lands and Resources department (Dene Nation 1987 Annual Report: President, Executive Director, & Finance reports). Funding for leadership meetings was also cut, reducing the number of Chiefs meetings that Dene Nation could hold. As a result of difficulties over receiving the funds for operating the Norman Wells programs in the National Office, the Dene Nation ended up with a deficit of \$360 000 (Dene Nation 1987 Annual Report; 1993 SEP: interview with Dene Nation President at the time). In the same year, the National Office lost its charitable status, a means of obtaining funding for programs from non-government sources. (More details about funding are given in Part 3.)

Through these cuts, the National Office lost much of its ability to communicate with its membership. One result was that community access to such important information as the Dene position in land settlement negotiations was severely reduced, which in turn limited our people's understanding of what was happening at the negotiating table. The Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat was not very active in informing people about progress. The negotiators relied on the Chiefs to explain these complex matters in their communities, even though few Chiefs had the time or an efficient communications system in their communities to do this. Little effort had been made to convey the legal wording of the negotiated agreements into language that was easy to understand, and none of the materials was translated into the Dene languages. Had the Dene Nation communications department continued to exist, some of these things might have been done. This loss became crucial because the Dene/Métis negotiators were getting ready to present to our people negotiated "mini-packages" and, soon after, the Agreement-in-Principle (Dene Nation 1986/87 Annual Report: 9).

Conflict over the Claim

In 1988, after thirteen years of talks, the federal government and the Dene/Métis negotiators reached

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an Agreement-in-Principle (AIP) on land settlement through Comprehensive Claims. The 1988 AIP was meant to be the blueprint for a land settlement for approximately 15 000 Dene and Métis in the Mackenzie Valley (DIAND 1988; 1990). It was initialled after approval by the Chiefs, but copies of the document were not available for study by community delegates until two weeks before the National Assembly at which it was to be discussed (Dene Nation 1988b: 206-207). Delegates to the Dene National Assembly gathered on the Hay River Reserve, and Métis delegates gathered in the town of Hay River for their own Assembly. The two Assemblies were scheduled to hold a joint Assembly after their separate meetings.

The discussions at the Dene Assembly are a major contribution to what is called the debate on extinguishment in Denendeh. Few delegates supported the AIP as it was presented to them: in fact, on the day that each Chief was asked to speak about it, only three said they supported it unconditionally and all the others wanted improvements made (Dene Nation 1988b: a verbatim transcript of the Assembly). There was a serious attempt to identify the problems that most of the delegates at both Assemblies saw with the initialled Agreement-in Principle.

Many Elders, delegates, and other speakers at the Dene Assembly said the AIP was too detailed, too hard for them to understand what it was saying, and they needed more time to figure out what was in it and discuss it once they understood (for instance, Dene Nation 1988b: 129, 134, 140, 145, 150, 151, 171-173, 203, 204-205, 206-207, 222, 224, 266, 301). One delegate wondered why they were in such a hurry, pointed out that young Dene are getting educated and maybe they could get a better deal later (Dene Nation 1988b: 289). One delegate reminded the Assembly that no Chief at any time had directed the negotiators to get rid of aboriginal and Treaty rights (Dene Nation 1988b: 207). Another noted that Dene Elders have never spoken about ceding rights (Dene Nation 1988b: 165).

Several delegates indicated that agreements should not be expressed in non-Dene ways nor in English, which they said was too open to interpretation (Dene Nation 1988b: 159, 204-207, 222-224, 269, 301). And many of the Elders who spoke were unhappy that this settlement was causing so much tension and conflict among their people; they urged the delegates to think about their spirituality, to come for quiet and respectful discussions to reach a united decision (Dene Nation 1988b: daily opening prayers, 129, 144, 155, 160-161, 204-205, 216-220, 211-212, 222-224, 230).

The Dene/Métis Chief Negotiator was deeply surprised by Assembly delegates' negative reactions to the AIP. He suggested that people did not understand the process of negotiations and that he would never have worked on anything he felt would harm people or was not in our interests (Dene Nation 1988b: 268-279). However, delegates from the joint Dene and Métis Assemblies passed a resolution demanding sweeping improvements to the AIP (reproduced in Appendix A). These extensive improvements included the outstanding issues of political rights, Dene/Métis lands, land and water management, renewable resources, general provisions, settlement corporations, and language (Dene National Assembly, Motion 87/88-#15).

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During the month following the Hay River Reserve Assembly, the Dene leadership, some-times accompanied by the Métis representatives, held several meetings directly with the Indian Affairs minister to encourage government support for the Hay River Joint Assembly motion. The minister at that time C just prior to a federal election C was willing to concede that the Agreement-in-Principle improvements mentioned in the Hay River motion could be discussed and negotiated for inclusion in the Final Agreement (1993 SEP: interview with the Dene Nation President at that time). On August 22, Dene and Métis representatives and the Indian Affairs minister signed this Memorandum of Understanding:

It is understood that the Dene/Métis position going into final negotiations is as reflected in the motions of the Joint Assembly at Hay River July 10, 1988 and Leadership meeting at Yellowknife August 19, 1988 and the position of the Government of Canada is as reflected in the letters of Mr. Osborn July 29, 1988 and Mr. McKnight August 9, 1988.

(MOU with AIP given to Dene Nation, SEP 1988)

At a joint leadership meeting, Chiefs and Métis Presidents agreed to sign the AIP on the basis of the commitment from the federal government expressed in this Memorandum of Understanding: that is, to discuss and negotiate major changes to the land "claim" agreement. The AIP was signed during ceremonies in Rae by Dene and Métis leaders and the prime minister.

After the election, the new minister of Indian Affairs refused to recognize the agreement reached by his predecessor and threatened to break off negotiations if the final land settlement agreement was not completed by the end of October. The Dene and Métis persisted in having the negotiations include the matters addressed in the Hay River Joint Assembly motion (in the Memorandum of Understanding). In 1989, at a Chiefs meeting in Fort Simpson, Dene leaders expressed their great reluctance to let a land "claim" agreement over-ride Treaties 8 and 11, as the AIP section 3.9 does. Throughout this period, the Dene Nation President also informed the media regularly about the details of negotiating meetings with the minister, even though the government preferred to keep them quiet, away from the public (1993 SEP: interview).

Meanwhile, another Indian Affairs minister was appointed C the third during the negotiations between the 1988 Agreement-in-Principle and the 1990 Final Agreement. This minister, too, insisted that he did not have to follow the agreements made by previous ministers. The newest minister set the deadline for reaching a final Dene/Métis land settlement for March 31, 1990. On the evening of March 31, Dene and Métis leaders met to decide what they would do. The Métis and some Dene Chiefs wanted to accept the AIP as the final agreement, but a majority of the Dene Chiefs wanted to press for the improvements the government had said, in 1988 before the election, that it would consider.

On April 9, 1990, Dene/Métis leaders and representatives of Canada initialled the Final Dene/Métis Land Settlement Agreement in Ndilo, a Yellowknives Dene community, with assurances by the Indian Affairs minister that further issues were to be worked out. The promised improvements were never made. In June 1990, the Meech Lake Accord was to be approved and

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the government's attention seems to have been on it. A few weeks after Meech Lake collapsed, the attention of the entire country was on the military standoffs at Kanesetake and Kanewake.

There are few differences between the AIP and the Final Agreement (ie, DIAND 1988; 1990). This Final Agreement is the one the majority of the Dene would not recommend sending to our communities for a ratification vote at the Assembly in Dettah in July 1990. The initialled Final Agreement is also the basis of the regional claims reached with the Gwich'in and Sahtú Dene and Métis. The initialled 1990 Final Agreement included specific terms for land and economic benefits. There are four kinds of land in the 1990 Dene/Métis Final Agreement:

- surface lands selected by the Dene/Métis to be owned by them collectively as "fee simple" but with the possibility only for leasing (not for buying) parts of these lands; improved selected lands were to be assessed for property taxes. Only the federal government can buy parts of these lands and, at that point, they become Crown lands. Ways for non-beneficiaries to get access to selected lands and ways for government to expropriate selected lands were also stated (DIAND 1988; 1990: lands, s. 21; access, s. 22; expropriation, s. 23; taxes, s. 11)
- a smaller percentage of surface and subsurface lands selected by the Dene/Métis with the same kinds of fee simple/lease and tax arrangements as described above (DIAND 1988; 1990: lands, s. 21; taxes, s. 11). The total amount of Dene/Métis selected lands would be about 70 000 square miles, which is about 18 percent of the total land settlement area.
- some properties in existing towns were selected as Dene/Métis lands; if any of these are sold, they are no longer owned by the Dene/Métis (DIAND 1988; 1990: s. 25)
- within the "land settlement area" (that is, the traditional Dene/Métis homeland within the defined boundary, which was not all of the 450 000 square miles), all land that was not selected to become Dene/Métis lands was to be released to the Crown. That is, the Dene/Métis were to extinguish (meaning "put out", like a fire) their rights to about 82 percent of the land and all of the waters within the land settlement area, so that the federal government can own the land (DIAND 1988; 1990: s. 3.10)

The Dene/Métis were also asked to extinguish parts of the written version of Treaty 8 and Treaty 11, including the paragraph that guarantees the pursuit of hunting, trapping, and fishing on Dene traditional lands (as guaranteed under the 1763 Royal Proclamation), lands that the government claims it owns through extinguishment (DIAND 1988; 1990: s. 3.9 and Schedule I, which quotes the parts of the Treaties to be extinguished by the "claim" agreement).

The section on self-government simply noted that it could be negotiated and, where Dene and Métis live in one community, the negotiations have to include the Territorial administration (DIAND 1988; 1990: s. 7). Economic benefits in the 1990 Final Agreement included cash compensation minus the loans paid to the Dene and Métis during negotiations, royalty sharing on

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sub-surface minerals and metals, and certain economic activities that "claims" corporations can undertake (DIAND 1988; 1990: ss. 8-10, 12). A Wildlife Harvesting Agreement set out the conditions where we can hunt and trap within the entire settlement area C that is the Dene/Métis selected lands and the extinguished or Crown lands (DIAND 1988; 1990: s. 13). The 1990 Final Agreement allowed for several management boards to be set up to look after lands, water, resources, wildlife resources, and economic development; each of these boards was to have half Dene/Métis members and half government-appointed members, and the minister with legal authority for each board would have the final say over any decisions a board might make (DIAND 1988; 1990: ss. 12, 13, 28-31).

In 1988, the Indian Affairs minister had agreed to grant aboriginal title to the Dene/Métis C that is, to go beyond giving us fee simple ownership. He had also agreed to guarantee our Treaty hunting and trapping rights on our traditional hunting lands. What we did not get in the Final Agreement was an assurance that all of our existing constitutionally recognized rights would be protected. We tried to convince government that we want to entrench our rights and our place within Canada without giving up the rights we do have. Supreme Court of Canada judgments, such as *Sioui* and *Sparrow* had given strong support to our view. The *Sioui* decision upheld the rights set out by a 230 year-old Treaty, stating clearly that Indigenous Peoples are Nations and that we have a degree of sovereignty within Canada, which the judges felt ought to be clarified. The *Sparrow* decision stated that our aboriginal rights at the signing of the original Treaties are still in effect (summarized in Dene Nation 1989/90: Annual Report).

At the July 1990 Joint National Assembly in Dettah, the Gwich'in Dene delegates agreed to walk out, if other regions did not support the initialled Final Agreement: which is just what happened. An undisputed majority of Assembly delegates voted for a motion calling for "no extinguishment" in the Final Agreement: 124 delegates votes in support, 24 voted against, and 25 abstained (Dene Nation 1990: National Assembly motion #18). Major changes to the Dene/ Métis land "claim" agreement were not considered possible by the federal government, even though Indian Affairs ministers had agreed in 1988 and reassured us on April 9, 1990 that improvements would be made. Following the Dettah Assembly, the Gwich'in Dene leadership approached the Indian Affairs minister to request that they be permitted to negotiate a land settlement for their region alone. The Gwich'in leaders agreed to base their claim on the 1990 initialled Dene/Métis Final Agreement, but ignored the 1988 Memorandum of Understanding and the letters of agreement accompanying it. The Gwich'in and Sahtú Dene/Métis Final Agreements have since become law (ie, in 1992 and 1994). On November 7, 1990 the Indian Affairs minister wrote to the Dene Nation that the Cabinet had decided to stop negotiating a single Dene/Métis claim, and that only regions that would agree to the 1990 Final Agreement would be welcome at the negotiating table. More ominously, the interim protection on lands within the land settlement area, which had been in effect throughout negotiations, was lifted C opening our lands once again to fossil fuel and mineral exploration, even though land settlement agreements (ie, unfulfilled Treaty entitlements) have not been completed with all Dene. Mineral staking in particular has been very extensive since the interim protection was removed.

PART TWO: KEY EVENTS IN DENE NATION'S HISTORY

The debate over extinguishment continues within the Dene Nation. One side of the debate holds that we should never give up those rights that recognize and affirm our unique status as Dene here in the country of Canada. Another side of the debate says that we must exchange some of our rights to negotiate and to secure some lands for the future. One former Dene Nation President put it this way:

I think there were many people who said, you know, that we've got to get rid of extinguishment, we've got to get the government to agree that our political rights should be negotiated as part of the claims, our aboriginal title is intact, that we shouldn't give up any land C before we negotiate. But there were also people who said, "Look, we should get on with this; you know, we have to realize that some of us don't want to give up anything, and some of us are willing to give up something and move to a compromise position".

I think the Métis element in it, for me, always meant that we have to make some sort of an effort to settle. There would always be, I felt, some people who would never settle, whether we did it with the Métis or not. But the feeling was that we had agreed in 1973 to take the Métis in and make a joint settlement, so inherent in that is that we have to accept that they're part of the family and, if they're prepared to settle, then we have to reconcile that with those people in the camp who didn't want ever to settle or do anything substantial with the claim.

So, I think people wrestled with that a long time and in the end said, "Well, the best thing we could do is rally together and make the best effort towards negotiating a package that we can look at in the end and let people decide".

(1993 JUL: interview)

However, a different President voiced these thoughts:

The Conservative Party ... have been especially harsh toward the Dene, going so far as to change a policy in mid-stream, so that they would no longer be dealing with us as a collective C as a very strong political entity C purposely agreeing to go on a regional outlook with our people after they had an agreement in place. They had an agreement to conclude outstanding issues with us. They signed a document to say that, "Yes, we will deal with those outstanding issues". We wanted to delay the ratification date because we knew those outstanding matters would not be settled by then. We recommended [at the Assembly] that we not vote until those matters were dealt with because our people would vote "No". ...

The Assembly didn't reject the claim. They said they were quite prepared to continue negotiating and they wanted to have the outstanding issues completed to satisfaction, then they would vote. ... They put it in the form of a motion, and some people today say, "Well, if we went ahead and voted, maybe our people would still be together". Well, if we went ahead and voted, it's clear that people in that instance would have rejected the claim. And I think it would have been even more difficult for government to say, "Okay, you've had your chance; you've killed it, but we're still prepared to go back to the table and work things out." ... I believe we did the right thing.

(1993 SEP: interview)

Any final agreements on land settled through Comprehensive Claims call for an exchange of rights: we are to exchange some of our Treaty rights, which the government says are vague, for the certainty of rights specified in our land settlement agreements. This exchange is of great concern even for those Dene who have voted for regional claims. Are we giving up our Treaty rights for rights which may not be as strong? Are we giving up our chance to have our own governments when we sign agreements saying that self-government will be within "public" government? Are we giving up something we already have for something that is new and something that gives a role to the Territorial administration that it does not have the constitutional authority to do, for example to make laws of general application that affect our people? (Issues summarized in Dene Nation 1989/90: President's

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report in the Annual Report.)

The present Dene National Chief wonders how the Territorial administration, which has supported the regional claims approach, at the same time is trying to get our people in all our regions to find agreement over constitutional development for the western NWT:

It's really ironic. I say that because they were part of this process & they encouraged the regional approach, which obviously means that, if you develop a land agreement which is regional to your people, you're then going to develop a self-government approach that's consistent with that. Because your agreement says your self-government model has to be subject to that agreement, you're going to design something that makes sense to you. You're not going to worry about the next region or the other people. But now they're telling us, "Why don't you design something that makes sense to all of you?" How can you do it? You're defeating the regional claims' purpose.

It's really difficult to see how things are going to emerge. It will be difficult to see a pan-Dene/Métis approach to things down the Valley. (1993 SEP: interview)

Some of the impacts of the failure to reach a single Dene/Métis land settlement have, of course, involved inconsistencies in government funding for Dene Nation. First of all, our national organization has not been treated as a Dene government. Its mandate has always been wider than just settling a claim. The current Dene Nation President emphasizes that the National Office play the role of facilitating for our communities. Some recent initiatives on behalf of Dene communities include health, environment, taxation, and protesting such legislation as the transfer of land titles registration to the Territorial administration without the consent of northern aboriginal peoples. The Dene Nation President & now called the Dene National Chief & has also been involved in extensive consultation with other aboriginal political associations regarding, in particular, Canadian constitutional amendment, Treaty entitlement, research into aboriginal nutrition, and trapping issues. The lack of recognition toward Dene governments by federal officials has been extended to the Dene regions that are resisting Comprehensive Claims. Dene leaders in those regions were told at one time that, if they were not at the Comprehensive Claims negotiating table, they could not negotiate for self-government (1993 SEP: interview with current Dene Nation President).

This ends the chronological description of key events of the Indian Brotherhood of the NWT and Dene Nation. Part 3, which follows, provides an analysis of the external influences and internal changes of our organization. A more detailed discussion of the recent events affecting the Dene Nation is in a study commissioned by the Royal Commission Intervenor Program, which presents the findings of the 1993 Dene Nation Review Committee.

It is only fitting that I end this section of our report with the words of our representative from the Dene Cultural Institute's Elders Council, George Blondin:

the Dene prophet, Ahya, had seen a great starvation coming. The aboriginal people, though, will not starve. People would come to depend on the Dene. The Indians knew much too late what was going on. I am worried and sad. I don't have the answer. Only God knows what will happen to us.

(1993 SEP: interview)

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part three

Capacity Building
for Self-Determination

Raising Dene Political Awareness
Representing Aboriginal Citizens
Encouraging Participation
Funding Challenges
Raising Dene Cultural Awareness

by Susan Quirk

Capacity Building for Self-Determination

As noted in the introduction, Part Three examines the scope and effectiveness of the Dene political organization. The scope of activities undertaken by the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation has been very broad: the people involved organized programs and projects both to meet internal needs determined by the Chiefs on behalf of their First Nation communities, and to respond to external pressures and requests. The effectiveness of the organization is considered for its ability to raise awareness and build the capacity of Dene in relation to its mandate, and for its success in making strategies or plans and carrying them out. As the chronological account in Part Two shows, the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation was very active until the devastating funding cuts in 1986. While it could afford to be a vibrant force in Denendeh, the Dene National Office was a place where young Dene could express their commitment to the people's movement: they could work for their people rather than for non-Dene governments or businesses. It was a place where future leaders and managers learned the issues and developed their own strategic abilities, then left to apply them elsewhere. This movement out from the National Office C perceived from the outset as a vital process for the organization C has been crucial to the development of local capacity for self-government and self-determination in Dene communities.

Dene involved in the many activities of the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation were and are committed to raising their people's awareness: the focus throughout the 1970s was political awareness, while the need to raise cultural awareness was added in the 1980s. Informing people of issues relating to the well being of their land, cultures, and families throughout the vast Dene homeland has always been a formidable task. The number of issues affecting Dene social, economic, cultural, environmental, and political life has increased tremendously throughout the past 25 years C reflecting the very rapid development occurring here. Alerting the people involved to strategic responses to these issues has remained a necessary activity for anyone working in any Dene organization. And encouraging people to become involved in responding to issues and in carrying out their own ideas for meeting the challenges of such rapid development was a fundamental process for Dene starting their own organization C and is still fundamental today. The Dene preference has consistently been for grass-roots participation, from within communities (ie, the First Nations) and cultures (ie, the regions).

During the history of the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation capacity building has been both shaped and obstructed by external influences. Many non-Dene researchers, advisors, and staff C often people attracted to thinking and processes beyond the conventional or mainstream C have collaborated with Dene colleagues in the entire range of activities throughout this history. Innovative approaches to organizational structures, research, programs, and strategic processes resulted.

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However, the newcomers seem mostly to have offered their thinking as their own work; there seems to have been little concerted effort by such non-Dene to transfer their technical, analytical, and professional skills to Dene individuals at the National Office. Dene involved as fieldworkers, especially in community development and research programs, acted much as outreach or extension agents do in rural areas C bringing information, encouraging local people to work for themselves, suggesting approaches to planning or carrying out strategies, and revitalising Dene customs and traditions.

In 25 years, political participation by Dene has gone from no formal institutions to a plethora: now there are First Nation Councils, economic development corporations, Tribal Councils and Assemblies, Treaty Councils, the Assembly of First Nations, co-management and other advisory boards, the Territorial Council and administration, the federal Cabinet and administration, as well as the Dene Nation. In those 25 years, Dene citizen participation has gone from contrived involvement to the possibility of genuine power sharing. These governing and administrative structures follow EuroCanadian organizational principles, and efforts to imbue them with Dene-ness have been minimal. Non-Dene governments seem insistent that Dene governments mirror as much as possible the non-Dene models, and use funding limitations to support their insistence. The challenges for the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation to maintain consistent funding for its programs are similar to challenges facing First Nations and Tribal Councils throughout Denendeh, particularly if they are in regions that are resistant to the federal Comprehensive Claims policy. For these reasons, funding challenges are examined in some detail, to reveal the deliberate undermining by government C through withholding of administrative and limiting program funds C of the organization representing Dene citizens.

Raising Dene Political Awareness

Raising political awareness was recognized by the founders of Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation as one of their most important tasks. It included the development of aboriginal communications links to disseminate information and issues, as well as enhancing the analytical skills of people running the organization. Awareness-building externally was also seen as necessary: improving ways of informing non-Dene about Dene positions on issues, and lobbying aggressively with government to advocate policy change. Few new organizations have had to lobby as hard as for federal officials to meet their obligations: to honour the Treaties, to return DIAND staff to Denendeh, to provide administrative funding to Bands, to listen to the concerns of Indigenous Peoples about conflicting uses of their traditional lands. The major change through the years has been the growing complexity and number of issues for the leadership and staff to handle. Gradually, the flow of information has shifted: in the early years, it flowed mostly from the National Office to the communities; now, the communities are more likely to be the focus for issues and raising awareness about them. Gaining

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access to technology has at once increased the amount of non-Dene positions on issues as well as the scope and means by which Dene can inform their own people and non-Dene. Language differences and the prevalence of oral custom were and remain issues related to the scope and effectiveness of raising awareness.

The individuals who worked alongside the Dene Chiefs to establish the Indian Brotherhood were young Dene and Métis who were sharing information and ways of organizing people with other aboriginal organizations forming throughout North America. (For a history of many of these activities through the eyes of a major figure, George Manuel, see McFarlane 1993.) Aboriginal political associations were forming throughout the provinces and territories at a time when interest in citizen participation in the non-aboriginal population was also increasing. Young Dene and Métis attending universities and visiting in southern Canada or the United States met other aboriginal individuals committed to changing the socio-cultural and economic conditions of their peoples; one of them was Roy Daniels from Manitoba, who became the interim President of the Indian Brotherhood of the NWT when Mona Jacob decided that the position meant too much travel away from her young family (1993 SEP: interview). Most of the initial volunteers and, when funds were available, paid staff were under contract to the Company of Young Canadians (CYC). Roy Daniels, James Wah-shee, and Georges Erasmus C all of whom headed the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation C were CYC volunteers who, among other activities, interviewed Dene Elders about Treaties 8 and 11 and their understanding of them (IBNWT 1969; 1993 SEP & OCT interviews with former Presidents; SEP 1993: interview with early staff member; and CYC 1966: reports and minutes).

At this time, few people worried about where staff came from or what their legal aboriginal status was: an individual's commitment to the aboriginal issues was the vital qualification. More than 6 years after its establishment, Indian Brotherhood formulated an agreement signed by each staff member and Chief (ie, Board member); the wording of the agreement suggests that this kind of commitment remained foremost:

Our prime objective is the actualization of the goals stated in the Dene Declaration. The Indian Brotherhood should be working to establish the ideas in the Declaration such as:

- 1) To represent the political views and ideas of all Dene interest groups
- 2) To continually communicate with all Dene interest groups and keep them informed of what IB is doing
- 3) Encourage and support Dene culture and traditions so that the Dene identity can survive and grow
- 4) Encourage and support Dene control and participation on an equal level in all areas that affect the Dene identity
- 5) To establish in the future a better society for the Dene: a society based on equality of the individual, free from colonial and oppressive institutions
- 6) We must eliminate all manifestations of colonial control over the Dene of the N.W.T. including even those set up by the Dene themselves. We must only begin those institutions which give control to the Dene and only those organizations that do not oppress workers
- 7) To encourage and develop Dene people as individuals and as groups, to become independent and responsible, that institutions governing the Dene are not imposed
- 8) To support the development of a Dene economy C free from colonial ties, and responsible to all Dene

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Breaking any conditions of this agreement without previously re-negotiating the agreement indicates that you are no longer seriously interested in working for the Brotherhood.

(1976 FEB 02: from IBNWT Board minutes)

Ideas and attitudes behind the rhetoric expressed in this agreement reflect the influences from Dene and non-Dene sources from which Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation derived its dynamism.

People supporting the Chiefs as staff in the central Dene organization rapidly gained an awareness of the situation of Indigenous Peoples generally and of aboriginal peoples in the Dene homeland in particular (verified by 1993 SEP: interview with founding interim President). Two very influential Canadian aboriginal leaders, Harold Cardinal and George Manuel, each visited Fort Smith before 1970; also, Cardinal attended the second Dene National Assembly in Fort McPherson in 1972, and Manuel attended Indian Brotherhood Chiefs (Board) meetings in 1974 in Fort Norman and in 1975 in Fort Rae (IBNWT and DN chronologies, histories, meeting minutes). Several Dene Nation Presidents noted in interviews the impact on the Dene from these and other aboriginal people demanding change for their own people:

Our people didn't have the arguments about why it was important to have your own language, to be close to the land, and to be proud of who you were. ... In the early years [of the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation], it was a real boost to many of our people to be involved in the organization that was pushing for change C radical change C in the way things were done and the way people saw the world. A lot of people who were working in the office at that time were quite young ... and it was a real learning experience for our people. I think ideally a lot of us wanted to empower our communities. There was a community development process to bring control into the hands of our people, and there was a strong backlash or fight against that, by government.

(1993 SEP: interview; corroborated by interviews with other former Presidents)

Although Dene and Métis leaders had raised objections to federal policies before the 1960s, their efforts had been in meetings with federal officials that were not reported in public media. Their attempts to attract support for their concerns through a formal association evidently startled many non-aboriginal northerners at the time. Georges Erasmus, at the time employed by the CYC, recalled that the Chiefs' decision in 1973 to go to court to protect their traditional lands was greeted by shock and laughter by non-Dene and, often, by Dene who apparently accepted that their people were powerless to act on their own behalf (1993 OCT: interview; corroborated by 1993 AUG interview with early staff member, Fumoleau personal communication, and news articles in *The Native Press*). Far from deluding themselves, however, the Dene organizing politically were making careful evaluations of government policies that affected their people, their homeland, and their potential development (1993 OCT: interview with a former President). Based on their analyses, they devised their own, specifically Dene policies.

The promotion of Dene cultural identity was perceived to be essential in the face of government assimilationist policies as they had been articulated in the 1969 White Paper and as they were being enacted in NWT. The imposition of the non-aboriginal Territorial administration's policies C especially the creation of local councils that undermined the authority of the Chiefs C was

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characterized by politically astute Dene as "colonialism" within the state of Canada. Further, Dene perceived their Nations as colonies within this NWT colony (Watkins, ed. 1977; see especially Barnaby et al., Bean, Russell, Puxley, and Watkins). The awareness expressed in the constitutional mandate of the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation and the ways in which Dene running the organization sought to pursue its goals came from a variety of sources: political science, international law, development theory, approaches to organizing citizens and advocating on their behalf, and principles of social justice, as well as the sharing of similar analyses globally among Indigenous Peoples.

Clearly, as noted in Part Two, some Dene had been exposed to the concepts, drawn from political science and international law, of the "colonisation" of Indigenous Peoples and their right to "decolonise". Their understanding went well beyond using rhetoric or political science theory. Just as clearly, Dene involved in the early Indian Brotherhood were familiar with related development theory, producing commentary or reports about the dependency evident among their people resulting from modernisation policies by government and industry for the NWT and its aboriginal residents. This dependency was ascribed to the status of their people as wards of the state under the *Indian Act* and as northern residents marginalised from the benefits of modernisation. The Dene Nation Library/Archives contains many publications dating from this early period about consciousness raising and about people-centred or grass-roots development. From the amount of archival material about meeting some people from Tanzania, who reported their circumstances in similar terms, this visit obviously made a deep impression on National Office staff. Ideas about people-centred development initiatives in Tanzania are included in the introduction to a report of a 1974 community development workshop in Fort Simpson, arranged and facilitated by Indian Brotherhood staff (IBNWT 1974c).

Indian Brotherhood staff were intent on spreading their awareness, which was highly critical of contemporary government policies for the NWT, to other Dene through the communications system it developed and through its fieldworker programs (IBNWT and Dene Nation histories and chronologies, meeting minutes, personal communications, and internal administrative documents). Federal and Territorial officials, rejecting the assumptions underlying these Dene evaluations and objecting to having them spread throughout the communities, tried to dismiss them pejoratively as controversial views of a radical minority (ie, DIAND 1978b, GNWT 1977). In many ways the rhetoric of non-Dene officials reacting to Dene strategies was just as strident as the words in English the Dene were learning to use to describe their circumstances C perhaps a sign of the times. Beyond the words, federal and Territorial officials of that era were trying to impose top-down policies formulated by non-Dene professional administrators for development based on modernisation, dismissing Dene community-based initiatives.

The debate over development in the Dene homeland became focused in the 1970s on the proposed construction of the Mackenzie Valley pipeline and the highway to accompany it. These projects were announced by the federal government in 1972, shortly before Indian Affairs Minister Chrétien, announced that reserves would be set aside for Dene under Treaties 8 and 11. Part Two of

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this report chronicles Dene initiatives and strategies in response. In April 1974, members of the Federation of Natives North of 60° met in Inuvik to discuss a letter from Mr Justice Berger inviting them to participate in hearings into these projects. Federation members representing Dene, Métis, Inuit, and Inuvialuit outlined strategic positions that their member organizations could take regarding these hearings. The minutes of their meeting indicate that they considered three possible strategies: (1) opposing the pipeline outright, (2) demanding a postponement until their land entitlements had been settled in or out of court, or (3) negotiating concessions from government and industry for not opposing the developments too vigorously. They also wondered if it would be possible for aboriginal representatives to be present during Berger's discussions with his advisors, so that they could "understand what he is looking for and how he comes to his conclusions". A further strategy under consideration was to borrow resource people from the James Bay Cree to help analyse the vast amount of materials expected to be generated during the hearings (Federation of Natives North of 60° 1974: meeting minutes). The decision to oppose the pipeline and highway meant that Indian Brotherhood, Inuvialuit, and Métis Association staff had to prepare their communities for official visits by Berger, much as the Dene had prepared for community hearings by Judge Morrow during the *caveat* court case.

Preparing communities for such formal hearings was well within the ability of the Indian Brotherhood by 1974. Much of their experience came from organizing the research into the Treaties and into Dene patterns of use and occupancy of their traditional lands, as well as getting ready for the *caveat* court case. Their efforts to alert their people about the pipeline issues and to inform them about the hearings with Mr Justice Berger, however, were cast in a negative light by Territorial officials:

The analysis of the Territorial government was very, very faulty. ... And that was primarily during the Berger Inquiry days. Because, I guess, for the first time, the Dene were being very, very loud and clear in the valley since the European descendents had been living amongst us & we had been quiet for so long, they just weren't used to us speaking out. And then, when we were so clearly opposed to something that was dear to the heart of many & business people and others that felt that opening up the north in a much faster way was going to be the way to go & we were hostile to it, you know, person after person standing before Berger, they thought in each case that we had programmed those people, that we had told the Elders what to say, that we had told the average Dene hunter what to say, and really scripted each of the hearings. You know, Berger heard over a thousand people, and somehow the people who were running the territorial government at that time ... they saw us as having, you know, ultimate power in one structure, in the Yellowknife office, and that we were manipulating people and so forth. It couldn't have been farther from the truth.

(1993 OCT: interview with the President at that time)

The effect of these hearings on northern and southern Canadians & on the environmental assessment review process in Canada & is well documented. The hearings provide a vivid example of public hearings that listened with respect to all presenters, with tremendous participation by citizens who often felt left out of such processes. Southern media coverage of the hearings also carried the Dene perspective about the development of their lands to the Canadian public, where much support was gained.

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The Dene felt euphoric as their concerns were taken seriously. The Indian Brotherhood co-ordinator for the Berger hearings, who became Dene Nation President, described the feelings:

that was, I think, the spirit that carried a lot of us. We had no definite work experience or way to get our hands into something substantial. We were fighting something, you know? It was the most elemental type of situation to be in. ... we were building strength and courage and spirit by fighting something, something that was threatening us.

(1993 JUL: interview)

The proposed Mackenzie Valley pipeline and highway C in combination with the 1969 White Paper, the need for land settlement of Treaty entitlements, the need for funded Band councils, the return of Indian Affairs officials to the Dene homeland, and the protests over the Territorial administration's establishment of local councils to compete with Band councils C gave NWT Dene and Métis purposes for uniting in defence of their lifeways. Perhaps the most notable consequence of the 1973 *caveat* court case and the 1974B76 Berger hearings was the rapid increase in credibility garnered by the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation. This credibility was expressed not only by non-Dene in the NWT and throughout Canada, but by government officials and, most importantly, was felt among their own people. One former President noted that they were victories in the sense that the Dene Chiefs and the National Office had proven to their own people that they were not powerless: "the Dene could plan; they could act and, against great odds, they could win" (1993 JUL: interview).

In the early years, being able to assess their own situation and communicate their evaluations throughout Denendeh was the work of gradually increasing numbers of National Office staff, assisted by the Chiefs and Elders and a handful of non-Dene resource people. The work done by Antoine Mountain, the Dene author of Part Two of this report, was in the original communications section, in radio. The fledgling broadcasting and publishing efforts became technically competent very rapidly and soon left the Indian Brotherhood office as an independent organization, the Native Communications Society, which has been expanding ever since.

Recognizing that the National Office still needed its own means of distributing information with the First Nation communities C in an era before facsimile machines, wide-area networks, and e-mail C the Dene Nation in the 1980s again developed its own communications department. Before the funding cuts of 1986, the Denendeh National Office staff published a regular newsletter and transformed information onto tape in the Dene languages for broadcast on local radio stations. The Dene Nation newsletter informed literate Dene in English about progress on land "claim" talks and other political issues, provided updates of National Office programs, and included articles of interest to Dene, such as traditional stories from Elders. Along with similar information in aural form in the Dene languages, special-interest features were recorded by the language staff: a history of the Dene Nation was taped by Peter Hope and played on community radio during this period (ie, Dene Nation 1984c). The third method of distributing valuable information throughout the Dene homeland was in person, with the many fieldworker programs in participatory research studies or community development projects. The role played by such programs is examined in the section entitled "Encouraging Participation". It is within this third way of raising political awareness that the

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Dene in the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation most significantly contributed to capacity building for self-determination, as the intent was to increase participation of Dene citizens in self-government.

Representing Aboriginal Citizens

While the Indian Brotherhood of the NWT was the first formal association of all Dene north of the provinces, it was not a unique organization in Canada. This section analyzes the formal Dene organization in the context of changing perceptions of aboriginal citizen participation. Efforts to enhance citizen participation through organizations supported and funded by the state have had a fundamental effect on the Canadian polity. The interests of aboriginal peoples are distinct from the interests of other citizens, since the participation aboriginal peoples seek is to regain their political autonomy within the state. Challenges for Dene Nation as a representative aboriginal organization range from legitimacy through organizational management and funding consistency. Never having operated a EuroCanadian-style organization meant that Dene participants felt obliged to learn about the ways required by outsiders, yet gave them a peculiar freedom to experiment. Throughout its history, Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation has operated in an atmosphere of external power inequity.

Countering external restrictions and obstacles was support from similar aboriginal organizations, including others north of the provinces, as well as support from non-aboriginal individuals and organizations.

Citizen Participation in and after the 1960s

The Indian Brotherhood of the NWT came into existence at the end of the 1960s, a decade when much more active involvement by citizens in matters of the state had become widespread throughout Canada, with mixed reception by politicians and administrators (Draper 1977). In the 1970s, however, the federal government accepted expanded notions of citizen participation in policy making.

Federal programs began funding groups to advocate on behalf of interests that were thought not to be adequately represented by elected officials; these programs were remarkable in that Canada is unique in funding organized interests intent on influencing and changing state-generated policy (Cunningham et al. 1988; Ng, ed. 1990; Esbrey & Skogstad in Krause & Wagenberg 1991; also works by Pross and Phillips). The support for state-funded advocacy groups called variously political pressure, lobby, special interest, or organized-interest groups has been consistent with other liberal democratic principles underlying Canadian policy, such as the creation of the *Canadian Bill of Rights* in 1966 and the *Constitution Act, 1982*. This latter addition to the federal written and unwritten constitution includes one Part for the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and a second Part specifically for aboriginal and Treaty rights. Both parts have triggered cases brought by state-funded advocacy groups before the Supreme Court of Canada, which has attempted to interpret the rights and their limitations especially for citizens marginalised within Canadian society including aboriginal peoples. (For one analysis, see Morton in Krause & Wagenberg 1991.) The rights and

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interests of aboriginal citizens have been funded by the state and promoted within these contexts.

Aboriginal citizenship in Canada has been contentious. Enfranchisement, among other former policies, was intended to assimilate aboriginal peoples into mainstream or EuroCanadian society. Since 1869 Indian Affairs officials encouraged aboriginal males to become voting citizens but stripped them of their Treaty status when they did so; for a few years, aboriginal males who became professionals, such as doctors or lawyers, were automatically enfranchised, their Treaty status lost without their consent (DIAND 1975d & 1978a; Daugherty & Madill 1980; Titley 1986). Not until 1960 could aboriginal Canadians of both genders vote alongside other citizens without fear of losing their status. However, the memory of former policies along with changes to enfranchisement policies when they suited federal officials has created an uneasiness among aboriginal Canadians about citizenship generally and about voting. In the Western NWT, until 1979 Dene withheld their votes from Territorial elections, in part to demonstrate their reluctance to become involved with this non-aboriginal form of governance which, they felt, did not represent them. Since 1967, the Territorial Council had received, along with funding transfers from the federal government, moneys that in the provinces would be transferred directly to Treaty peoples. In 1979, the Dene Nation encouraged voting:

Eventually, we decided that we ... needed to change our style not that our long-term goal would change. We still took the approach that, until the Dene renegotiated or negotiated a new union with Canada or a new Treaty or a new settlement or whatever in fact, the Territorial government, it was highly questionable whether it was legitimate for the Dene. But we decided that we would get involved in the elections of the Territorial Council because we thought it would be useful to have people working inside and outside, working for change. All the resources that are being used against us, we could easily start to harness some of those things.

(1993 OCT: interview with Dene Nation President at that time)

Along with enfranchisement that required the loss of Treaty status, federal policies since 1876 had created Band councils with powers derived from the *Indian Act*. Such a council had authority to represent people listed on registered Treaty rolls within the Treaty-determined reserve lands. The definition of "Indian" in the *Indian Act* does not bear any relation to Treaties, but status Indians are people who carry Treaty cards bearing their registration number. Federal officials intended Band councils to develop into municipal-like bodies, despite their direct relation to the federal, rather than a provincial, government. Procedures outlined in the *Indian Act* for Band councils to follow were supposed to teach the elected aboriginal politicians the essence of citizenship (Daugherty & Madill 1980). No forms of aboriginal association were planned beyond Band councils because, as one Treaty Commissioner explained, the system of reserves in Canada was designed deliberately to keep peoples from joining together (Morris 1880; 1991: 288). The underlying concern at the time of the Treaty making was to prevent people organizing battles like those by Indigenous Peoples south of the Canadian border against European settlers encroaching on the peoples' lands even though battles had not been characteristic of aboriginal/settler relations in Canada.

Aboriginal leaders have always spoken to protest conditions and to bargain or advocate for improvements for their people (Morris 1880, 1991; Daugherty & Madill 1980; Titley 1986;

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Dickason 1992). Their individual efforts, however, had been minimal until recent decades. Chiefs' attempts to join forces form associations were thwarted by policy makers' changes to the *Indian Act* restricting peoples' ability to assemble and their use of Band funds for meetings with other peoples; the distances separating different peoples and their pervasive marginalisation within Canadian society contributed to keeping peoples from uniting (Whiteside 1974; Titley 1986). Certainly, distances between Dene peoples in after they were relocated in town made it difficult for more than the one annual meeting between Chiefs and Indian Affairs officials.

As the minutes of the 1957 annual meeting show, Dene Chiefs arrived the day before the government officials in order to meet together on their own. By 1969, the Chiefs had sufficient concerns about the 1967 and 1968 consultations on federal plans to scrap the *Indian Act* and a federal presence in the north that they decided to form the Indian Brotherhood. Because the Chiefs had to return to their communities after such meetings, they needed staff who would stay together and work on the peoples' concerns. Despite obstacles, aboriginal political associations C beyond such long-standing aboriginal governments as the Haudenosaunee Confederacy C have been forming throughout southern Canada since 1850 (Whiteside 1974). An irony observed by many is that official assimilation policies, like teaching aboriginal peoples English, made it easier for people from different cultures to organize to advocate for their common interests. Speaking the same language as most federal officials whom aboriginal representatives must lobby to advance their interests has also been useful.

The two essential motivations prompting aboriginal political association in Canada have been the failure of government policies to improve aboriginal socio-cultural and economic conditions, and the insistence that aboriginal Canadians have the legal right to identify and govern themselves and to determine the quality and pace of their own development (Beaver 1979; Little Bear, Boldt, & Long, edd. 1984; Boldt & Long, edd. 1985; Ponting, ed. 1986; Long & Boldt, edd. 1986; Cassidy & Bish 1989; Erasmus 1989). These motivations set aboriginal political association apart from other organized interests in Canada. The promotion of this thinking drew strength from citizen participation movements since the 1950s.

Citizen participation in public meetings, public hearings, membership on committees and boards, and lobbying have become common and acceptable forms of formal political involvement in Canada C but they have not always been so (Draper 1977; Homenuck et al. 1977). In the 1960s, rallies and parades, sit-ins and blockades, petitions and demonstrations to publicize political issues and causes were common kinds of informal citizen activism, often referred to as "civil disobedience". Some forms of civil disobedience C notably those labelled "radical" C have not become acceptable as expressions of organized interests. Between these formal and informal expressions of citizen participation are many activities involving citizen organization (Kasperson & Breitbart 1974; Connor 1977; Lucas 1977). Among them is community development, which itself represents a broad range of concepts and initiatives. As discussed in the section entitled, "Encouraging Participation", community development struck particular chords in the Dene homeland.

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Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation, formed through indirect response to aboriginal and non-aboriginal citizen activism, did not use civil disobedience among its strategies. Yet, the organization was often called "radical" by federal and Territorial officials (Crowe 1974; GNWT 1977; Thomas 1956, 1978). In December 1974, for instance, the Yellowknife RCMP detachment held a two-week training course on "Native Extremism" for its senior constables (IBNWT internal discussion paper; verified in newspaper articles). In 1978, a DIAND public affairs official used a musical tour of Mackenzie valley settlements as an opportunity to discover how much local support the "militant Indians" in the Dene National Office had (see DIAND 1978b for the report). This impression persists and, according to one President, has harmed the organization:

Government a lot of time is reluctant to fund us because, in the view of a lot of people, we have a radical political view. In the eyes of government and some other Indigenous institutions across the country, the Dene Nation has a radical view on rights and just generally their view of where they ought to go. ... The Dene have been known to be quite politically active. And that has caused some hardship with regard to dollars. You look at the organizations across the country who have a lot of money and most of them are very silent on the major issues, because they're afraid to buck the system.

(1993 SEP: interview)

In retrospect, Indian Brotherhood activities were indeed a contrast to prior aboriginal citizen involvement in the Western NWT. But they were not a departure from efforts to encourage citizen participation and social change elsewhere in Canada. In fact, two of its initial proposals were for Indian Affairs programs that already existed for First Nations in the provinces: funding for Band councils, and a community development program (IBNWT 1973d). Other early strategies were drawn from such federal initiatives as the Company of Young Canadians and, later, Secretary of State programs under the Native Citizens Directorate. Within the Directorate was the Native [later, Aboriginal] Representative Organization Program, which began funding national, provincial/territorial, and regional or tribal organizations for aboriginal peoples, regardless of their DIAND status. In order to get funding, an organization had to register under federal or provincial/territorial societies legislation and comply with its rules of conduct.

A mid-1980s consultants' assessment of the aboriginal representative associations program noted that the objectives of the Secretary of State shifted over time. At first, it was to provide:

a consultative framework in which native organizations act as advocates and negotiators for their constituents .. . In the mid-seventies, citizenship participation objectives were added calling for native involvement in political, social and economic institutions. Finally, there is the operational objective which specifies that program objectives will be achieved through operational support to native representative organizations. (DIAND 1986: 8)

Indian Brotherhood began to receive funds from the Secretary of State in March 1971. That ministry recognized the function of the organization as a representative of the Dene long before land settlement negotiations were considered. This funding was consistently provided, even during years when land settlement talks were intermittent, until 1991. Throughout that time, Secretary of State accepted Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation as a provincial/territorial association representing aboriginal citizens, like others such as the Indian Association of Alberta and the Métis Association of

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the NWT.

One of the main goals of Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation has been regaining for their peoples the right of self-government. In terms of citizen participation, this is the highest form. In 1969, Arnstein published what is widely recognized as an authentic hierarchy of the various forms of citizen participation; Arnstein presented this hierarchy in the form of a ladder, as shown in the diagram on the next page. Arnstein shows the increasing autonomy citizens gained through different kinds of involvement; her interest was to encourage greater participation by citizens in the planning for their communities rather than leaving it to professionals giving their advice to government officials. As noted earlier, Dene citizen involvement prior to 1969 was contrived. Informing and consultation occurred between DIAND officials and the Chiefs at their annual meeting with no further involvement by Dene in policy formulation or implementation: for Arnstein, this is token power-sharing. The participation to which Dene aspire is at the top of Arnstein's hierarchy: citizen control as Dene did before European contact. It is a measure of the effectiveness of aboriginal political associations like Dene Nation during the past 25 years: an astonishingly brief time that this aspiration has attained serious public and political attention. Until full aboriginal autonomy is attained, aboriginal citizens can have only degrees of token power-sharing. Councils and organizations that advocate for aboriginal peoples must continue challenging this unacceptable degree of citizen participation.

Arnstein's Hierarchy/Ladder of Citizen Participation

Representing Aboriginal Citizens in the Dene Homeland

The immediate tasks of the Dene who formed the Indian Brotherhood were to express the Chiefs' concerns with the White Paper on Indian Affairs and to investigate Dene understanding of the making of Treaties 8 and 11 (IBNWT 1969). In the western NWT, Treaty documents were hurriedly carried from Ottawa in 1900 and in 1921-22 by Commissioner and the Indian Agent who designated Chiefs to be signatories (Fumoleau 1974; YDFN 1993). By the late 1960s, no major decisions about land had been settled between Dene Chiefs and federal officials, despite a special commission to settle obligations unfulfilled from the northern Treaties (Nelson Report 1959), and many meetings on the subject (eg, Indian Affairs 1957; see Fumoleau 1974; YDFN 1993). Since 1959-60, federal officials coerced Dene families to stop living on the lands their people had shared in common for hundreds of generations. Dene and Métis were relocated from their seasonal hunting and fishing camps to the few distantly separated towns and villages, most established for non-aboriginal companies pursuing fur and other resource exploitation. Few economic or training opportunities for the wage economy were available in these settlements: they were places to live but not places to work in. For people accustomed to hard work every day, living in town meant a lack of ongoing purposeful activity.

Few towns and villages in the western NWT are wholly aboriginal. Generally, settlement

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land has been surveyed and, since 1951, has been sold for freehold title in accordance with the EuroCanadian land tenure system. Towns are run like their counterparts in southern Canada, at the insistence in the 1950s and 1960s of non-aboriginal residents who demanded "responsible" local government in the NWT (Thomas 1956, 1978; Crowe 1974; Braden 1976; YDFN 1993). There was a form of district council in Yellowknife in the 1950s. The Territorial legislature and public service, established in Yellowknife in 1967, set about organizing local councils with responsibilities resembling those of municipalities in southern Canada. These local councils were accountable to the Territorial ministry that enacted their existence.

Unlike southern Canada, signatories of Treaties 8 and 11 were not funded in any way, nor were Band councils set up in the 70 years following Treaty making. Dene First Nations had no formal links to maintain the Nation-to-Nation, or direct federal, Treaty relationship. Programs available to aboriginal peoples on reserves in the provinces were not offered to the Dene. Indeed, some programs available to all Canadian citizens such as old-age pensions and mother's allowance were not routinely made to northern aboriginal peoples. Some individuals whom government identified as Métis were eligible for Treaty status under Treaty 11, while other relative of Dene signatories to Treaty 8 were not; still others were not identified by government as either Treaty or Métis. These differences in official designation resulted in confusion, as some members of one family might receive Treaty benefits while others did not (Fumoleau 1974; personal communications). When the Territorial Council and administration moved north at the time when the federal government was developing its infamous White Paper on Indian Affairs it was given recognition as the only legitimate "responsible" government. Consequently, all funding and program responsibility for Treaty people in the NWT was handed informally that is, without legislative sanction to the Territorial administration. Ever since, the Territorial administration has competed with First Nations for their authority and jurisdiction. With the funding for Treaty people hidden in comprehensive transfer agreements between the federal and Territorial administrations, it has been no contest.

Motivation for northern aboriginal peoples to form their own political associations were mostly related to protesting the lack of settlement of ownership of aboriginal lands, as well as this informal devolution to the Territorial administration of federal authority that properly belonged to aboriginal peoples (Crowe 1974; Braden 1976; Bopp 1987; Asch 1988; Watkins, ed. 1977). For many years, only one aboriginal person, an Inuk, was appointed, and later elected, to the Territorial Council; in those years, all other representatives were non-aboriginal people whose residency in the NWT was relatively brief. (See annual reports printed by the Territorial administration for the membership and policies of the council. In 1977, the Dene Nation printed a newsprint photograph of the first council, pointing out that only 3 of the original members still lived in the Territories.) The consent of the peoples Indigenous to the lands over which this administration now made policy was not sought, even though the federal government has a fiduciary obligation to protect their interests, particularly their interests in their lands. Dene, Métis, Inuit, and Inuvialuit began organizing themselves into formal associations as credible alternatives to what was perceived as a colonial government being imposed on their people.

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The celebration of the Canadian centennial had been an excuse to bring aboriginal residents from all over the Territories together: Dene report that much political awareness-raising and organizing happened at these gatherings. Perhaps the first of these organizations was the Thebacha Association, centred in Fort Smith, which represented mostly Métis interests south of Great Slave Lake from March 1967 to September 1971. The Thebacha Association had a representative at the federal consultations held on the White Paper. One of the individuals staffing the Thebacha Association was Mona Jacob (now, Fox), who became the first president of the Indian Brotherhood. She told us that the association shared her time during 1969 so that she could contribute to the early activities of the Dene organization (1993; SEP interview).

Among the influences and supporters of the newly formed northern political organizations were the Indian Association of Alberta's spokesman, Harold Cardinal (who visited Fort Smith), the Company of Young Canadians, and the Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada. The latter, which opened an office in the NWT in March 1967, broadcast programs of interest to aboriginal peoples and C like the Company of Young Canadians later that summer C began holding workshops for Dene and Métis. The Indian-Eskimo Association also held a regional conference on aboriginal issues in Yellowknife in January 1968, and assisted the Indian Brotherhood financially (Dene Nation histories and chronologies). While Indian Affairs officials were holding consultations with Chiefs throughout Canada to prepare them for the White Paper policy changes, the Chiefs formed the Ottawa-based National Indian Brotherhood C later, the Assembly of First Nations. In October 1968, Yukon Chiefs founded the Yukon Native Brotherhood. By December, Dene volunteer members of the Company of Young Canadians, guided by trained anthropologists working in the NWT, began interviewing Elders for their understanding of the making of Treaties 8 and 11. In January 1969, Dene leadership meetings were held in most southwestern NWT communities. Just before the White Paper's release in June, the Inuvialuit in northwestern NWT formed an ad-hoc association that became COPE, the Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement, which was incorporated in January 1970. The formation of the Dene organization later that year was not a surprising or isolated event: it must be seen in the context of other activity by aboriginal peoples to organize themselves politically.

Some of these aboriginal associations were formed solely to negotiate a land settlement. The Inuvialuit association, COPE, for example was disbanded once the people's Final Agreement was passed in 1984. Inuit in the eastern Arctic formed the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut to handle their land settlement: TFN has since evolved into an implementation body. The Yukon, NWT Dene, and NWT Métis associations all perceived themselves as having much broader mandates and functions beyond land settlement negotiations. Indian Affairs officials have tried to depict them as limited to this sole function, presumably in an effort to diminish their representivity and perhaps the effectiveness of these organizations in advocating for their peoples (DIAND 1993b). For 2 years, from September 1975, the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation had an office in Ottawa to assist with government and public relations during the Berger Inquiry and early negotiations on land talks. It is likely the organization could not have succeeded with this office had staff not formed strong links with

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other aboriginal associations in the early 1970s.

Northern aboriginal associations in the early 1970s concentrated on improving their exchange of information, both among themselves and among their memberships. In the Yukon Territory, "non-status Indians" had formed an association in addition to the Yukon Native Brotherhood and, in the eastern NWT, Inuit formed ITC, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, which is now the national body that represents Inuit throughout Canada. In Edmonton, in October 1971, Dene representatives from the Indian Brotherhood met with Inuvait from COPE and Inuit from ITC; they agreed to unify to express their common concerns and commitment for the benefit of all their peoples. Meanwhile, NWT Métis and "non-status Indians" had been encouraged by their Manitoba colleagues to organize themselves: in March 1972, they formed the Métis and Non-Status Association of the NWT, with a central office in Hay River. In July 1972, the National Indian Brotherhood invited northern aboriginal political associations to send representatives to a meeting in Ottawa C where they held their own, separate conference. While most of the representatives were non-aboriginal consultants working for the associations, the delegates at this conference decided to unite formally as the Federation of Natives North of 60°.

Until 1975, periodic meetings of the Federation were held, despite the difficulty of finding funds to cover costs for the travel. At its first meeting in the north, in September 1972, representatives also came from the two Yukon associations, the James Bay Cree, Alaska, and the Native Council of Canada. Also in attendance were representatives from the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee and journalists from Anchorage and Toronto. Exploitation of resources from the lands of Indigenous Peoples, and comparisons of land settlement talks were the topics on the agenda of this significant meeting. The Federation could not afford to meet often but, when it did, the scope of issues discussed was very broad. Delegates exchanged information, for instance, on strategies for public enquiries and on the sterilization of aboriginal women without their consent (summarized meeting minutes 1972B1975). Although the reason is not recorded, it is likely the Federation stopped meeting because of financial constraints and the demands on central figures from their individual associations.

For some years, Dene and Métis in the western subArctic discussed the benefits and drawbacks of forming a single political organization. In many ways the closest, most challenging relationship Dene Nation has had with another northern aboriginal political association is with its Métis counterpart, now known as Métis Nation. The Secretary of State program that funded both organizations did permit support for representation of aboriginal citizens that DIAND did not recognize (ie, Métis and "non-status Indians"). Initially, however, the program funded only associations whose membership followed federal identifications C refusing funds or threatening to cut off existing funds for associations with non-status aboriginal peoples on staff. With typical contradiction, no threats were forthcoming if such an organization had fully non-aboriginal people on staff. For instance, a Dene hired in 1974 as a fieldworker for the Indian Brotherhood had to be let go, when it was discovered that he was "non-status"; instead, he went to work for the Métis association but returned later to Dene Nation and became its president. Steve Kakfwi has never

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forgotten how offensive he found this treatment (1993 JUL: interview). In the Dene homeland, where members of the same family may have different official identifications, this insistence on artificial barriers to representation was confusing and painful.

DIAND was dogged about this artificial division of people, extending it to eligibility for land settlement benefits. At first, DIAND refused to include Métis relatives and "non-status" Dene as Dene eligible for benefits (ie, see the Dene Nation annual report for 1979). When DIAND contributed funds to the 1974 Joint Dene/Métis Assembly in Fort Good Hope, officials sent the money with this note in a cover letter:

This contribution is accountable, and we will require a statement of expenditures supported by receipts to cover the Registered Indian people who attend the meeting. This is particularly important as we have no authority to cover any costs incurred by Non-Status participants. (DIAND 1974)

It was at this Assembly that Dene and Métis recognized their need to unite their efforts for an equitable land settlement. The Assembly passed a motion to admit as members into the Indian Brotherhood of the NWT any descendant of the Dene. During 1974, the two associations agreed to co-ordinate more of their activities to make more efficient use of funds, and to improve external perceptions of their relationship (IBNWT/MANWT Joint Executive 1974 APR 08: meeting minutes). The two central offices, both in Yellowknife, began to share resource people, to co-ordinate their policy recommendations to the Territorial administration, to work together preparing their communities for the public hearings in the Berger Inquiry, to attend each other's meetings, and to co-operate on the land settlement process since the Métis at that time were not eligible for DIAND "claims" research funding. For many years, the two associations held joint executive and leadership meetings, and occasionally joint Assemblies.

Evidently under pressure to obtain a land settlement, DIAND officials changed their policy about excluding Métis relatives and non-status Dene as beneficiaries. But for some years DIAND insisted that only Dene could negotiate on behalf of both Dene and Métis. This put considerable stress on relations between the two key associations. The Dene version of events, with an admittedly subjective perspective, is told in a report by the Committee for One Organization (Dene Nation 1979: annual report). At that time, the committee assumed that the Métis would disband their political association and become part of the Dene Nation C but Métis resisted this move. The two major points of contention were: recognition of Métis as a distinct people, and the decision by the Métis association near the end of the Berger Inquiry to support the Mackenzie pipeline, which the Dene had vigorously opposed.

By 1981, this rift was healed sufficiently that the Dene Nation annual report includes reports from both the Dene and Métis executives, and copies of both the Dene Declaration and the Métis Declaration. However, from 1978 to 1980, DIAND officials exploited tensions between the two organizations such that land settlement negotiating terms and funding were distinctly to DIAND's advantage. By 1980, it was finally decided that a separate body should be set up to negotiate the

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Dene/Métis land settlement. Although it was almost 3 years before the separate organization was functioning, the Dene and Métis central organizations were able to continue pursuing their political mandates on behalf of their people. As the discussion in Part Two shows, the activities of Dene Nation far outstripped land settlement issues.

In 1979, the Dene Nation's Committee for One Organization outlined its concerns about the representivity and accountability of a third body, should one be formed to negotiate a land settlement. Many people who spoke formally and informally to us felt that the Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat, formed in 1983, justified those concerns. Whereas each of the central offices of the two aboriginal political associations was responsible and responsive to its member communities and to each of its Assemblies, the Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat was set up without any clear accountability, except to each of the associations as a whole. It is ironic that the undertaking on which so many Dene and Métis pinned their hopes for the future was not structured with the care taken to shape the two separate Dene and Métis political associations.

By the 1980s, both leaderships and both central offices had had ample experience with their organizations to be aware of potential difficulties. It appears that the Negotiations Secretariat took off with a life of its own. And the consequences were felt at the Assemblies in 1988 in Hay River and in 1990 in Dettah, when the delegates to the people represented but not involved at the table discovered to their horror what was being offered to them as a settlement. After 20 years and millions of dollars spent in loan funding, Dene and Métis from the communities were shocked and discouraged by the results. Certainly, information about ongoing discussion at the negotiating table was not properly communicated to the communities. This research could not undertake a detailed study of the body that led substantive negotiation of the Dene/Métis Agreement-in-Principle and Final Agreement, mostly because its archival documents are not readily accessible. But, Dene Nation administrative archives, media accounts, and interviews we conducted suggest that the only person who is wholly supportive of the Negotiations Secretariat was the president of Dene Nation at the time.

Many aboriginal political associations sprang up in northern Canada in the 1960s and 1970s, and tried to keep in close contact with one another. They were avowedly *political* associations, with the purpose of promoting participation by aboriginal citizens in the highest forms of governance, with a land base of their own to the lands to which their peoples are Indigenous. Because government controlled the funding of these associations, government could attempt to manipulate them through limitations on membership requirements. Efforts by DIAND to restrict beneficiaries of a Dene land settlement resulted in the formation of an organization separate from the two Dene and Métis representative bodies. Given the controversy over the Final Agreement, the Negotiations Secretariat clearly was not accountable enough to Dene and Métis citizens to produce an effective outcome for the organization's sole purpose. Since the collapse of the Final Agreement, DIAND has attempted to portray the Dene Nation as only a land negotiations organization and has suggested that, as such, it should be disbanded. DIAND now claims that Dene Nation cannot represent Dene in regional land settlement areas (internal correspondence to current Dene National Chief from DIAND NWT Region). Despite the obstacles and efforts by government officials to undermine them, it is a

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measure of the success of northern political associations that all northern aboriginal peoples today enjoy full recognition as distinct peoples, and anticipate a measure of full citizen participation.

Encouraging Participation

The initial interest by Dene in community development in the establishment of the Indian Brotherhood remained. Community development provided processes that Dene found appropriate for spreading ideas, planning and carrying out strategies both in the National Office and in the communities. Programs for community development persisted and spread until governments in the 1980s discouraged the Denendeh National Office from organizing them. By then, most local Dene political organizations were prepared to continue such programs. That they have is not surprising; ideas and processes associated with community development seem to resonate with Dene thinking about self-determination. The goal for Dene, and other First Nations in Canada, to enhance their political participation has consistently been self-determination.

Interest in community development throughout North America has been lively since the 1950s, particularly in rural communities. Academic observers note that this interest seems to have begun with widespread migration of rural residents to cities. Later movements have been also prompted by encroachment of cities into rural areas, mechanisation of primary or renewable resource industries, and the loss of conventional economic pursuits in rural areas (Saunders 1958; Bruyn 196?; Warren 196?; Kasparson & Breitbart 1974). Residents who remained in their rural communities became concerned about the future of their towns and villages, the rural landscapes, and their way of life. Processes by which people gather, often through an organized body such as a church, and try to find their own approaches to addressing such concerns are described as "community development" because they bring feelings of capability and empowerment to people feeling vulnerable or dependent on external influences.

Community development processes C which have gradually become more sophisticated and are used routinely in, for example, rural extension services C have become popular for bringing citizens together to plan organized strategies to respond to local concerns. People living in urban neighbourhoods have also benefited from community development processes. Very formal techniques have evolved specifically for community economic development, which remains a preoccupation of rural communities. Small-scale projects organized through community- or people-centred processes have been part of international development programs since the 1950s (Compton in Draper, ed 1971; Rondinelli 1983; Korten & Klaus, edd. 1984). Common threads remain the emphasis on gathering local people together to identify specifically local concerns, and to find solutions to them that they can carry out themselves. These processes are opposite to the kind of incremental development envisioned by most governments, whereby professional experts determine a general plan appropriate for a great many communities, which is usually implemented by

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public servants through established procedures. These competing development ideas and practices are at the heart of the Dene struggle for self-determination.

Interest in community development for First Nations began with a government program in the 1950s through which comprehensive planning for development of reserve communities was attempted in Manitoba (Legassé in Draper, ed 1971). During the 1960s and early 1970s, Indian Affairs experimented with comprehensive planning for community development on reserves throughout Canada; observers criticized the program for being organized centrally and from the top down, as well as for its cultural insensitivity (Lloyd 1967; McEwen 1970s/nd). George Manuel, who was involved in this program, believed that Indian Affairs revoked it when, despite its limitations, it started to work: aboriginal peoples started to feel empowered, started to build their capacity to act for themselves (MacFarlane 1993, Part 2). In 1966, the federal government started a program called the Company of Young Canadians, that was to draw heavily on community development (Canada 1966; CYC 1966). One observer has described the Company's program as a process of community animation to foster social change (Draper in Draper, ed 1971). When the Company of Young Canadians came to the Great Slave Lake area in 1967, it immediately attracted Dene who, not having reserves, had not been eligible for the Indian Affairs community development program. Some of the first Indian Brotherhood staff were Dene volunteers trained in community development processes by the Company of Young Canadians (CYC board meeting minutes 1967B1969; IBNWT 1969; IBNWT 1971; Bopp 1981). Among its many and diverse activities, Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation has proposed some kind of community development program on behalf of its member First Nations throughout its history.

A characteristic common to all the programs developed by Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation is their reliance on processes for encouraging local people to identify and address local problems, rather than on formulating solutions to problems for people. The National Office staff had a clear awareness that local concerns in one First Nation would not be identical to those in another, and different communities might address the same concerns in different ways. The processes Dene identified as most suitable included hiring and training Dene as fieldworkers who would travel to the communities and speak informally to local people about their issues, until the people felt comfortable with holding a workshop to discuss things collectively. In the early years, Indian Brotherhood staff held lengthy workshops and discussions about the processes themselves, how they might work, what obstacles might present themselves and how to deal with them, whether the processes were suited to Dene cultural thinking, how fieldworkers must avoid doing things for local people (*see*, for example, IBNWT 1974f, 1975). Community development was soon established as workable and suitable: the proposal Indian Brotherhood staff sent to Indian Affairs for Dene Bands to start being funded included a community development component (IBNWT 1973d). Sending trained Dene into communities to encourage local participation and empowerment became a consistent method for National Office development programs (IBNWT 1974; Dene Nation 1979a, 1981a, b, c, 1983a, 1984a, b, 1985a, b; Dene/Métis 1990), as well as other Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation initiatives.

Dene trained in community development applied the methods they used in research projects.

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Research was conducted by Dene volunteers in the Company of Young Canadians, along with anthropologists, into Elders' understanding of the making of Treaties 8 and 11: much of this research was given in testimony before Judge Morrow in the *caveat* court case, especially in the community hearings. Community development methods were used to encourage local Dene to come to these hearings and tell the judge what they knew C the same kind of preparation undertaken for the Berger Inquiry. Far from controversial, these methods rely on face-to-face communication as often as possible in the peoples' languages, social learning based on traditional ways of passing on Dene knowledge, highly participatory collaboration and consensus building in which everyone's voice is heard, regardless of their social standing or expertise.

Between these two major hearings held by judges, Indian Brotherhood staff had been alerted by Indian Affairs officials that the Dene could apply for a land "claim". The initial step in such a procedure is for the Indigenous Peoples to identify the lands they have traditionally occupied and used. Grants for conducting such research are available from the same government agency that handles land settlement negotiations. Dene wanted to use their own people and community-based methods to conduct this research (*see Nahanni 1977*), and went to great lengths to allay DIAND's concerns (ie, IBNWT 1973c, IBNWT 1974d, and 1974b, [a 115-page description of the research methods]). The result was, in part, the Dene Mapping Project, which consisted of data from about 30 percent of Dene hunters and trappers at the time drawn by the harvesters themselves. A vast quantity of data were produced on hundreds of maps, on surveys, and in biographies written of the hunters and trappers. Through contracts with the Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat, Dene Indigenous Knowledge from Dene Mapping Project was entered into computerised an early geographic information system at the University of Alberta. The other result is that Dene gained confidence in these highly participatory, culturally sensitive methods, so that they became used for many research projects, notably documentation of Dene Indigenous Knowledge (*see, for example, Johnson 1992; Ryan & Robinson 1992*). Because so many people were involved in these research projects and in preparing for public hearings, the use of community-based methods gained a firm hold in the Dene homeland.

The Indian Brotherhood started with Dene staff inspired by the Indian movement in North America and equipped with methods for citizen empowerment. In order to accept government and other funding, the association had to become a registered society with a formal constitution and by-laws dictating a particular structure and financial accountability; however, Dene running the organization tried many innovations. In their efforts to avoid what they perceived as oppressive operational styles in non-Dene organizations, the executive and staff in the National Office experimented with management styles that one President described as "exciting". The role and organizational structure of the National Office were critically evaluated internally and discussed at several Assemblies (IBNWT 1973a; Dene Nation 1979a, c, 1980b, 1986a, b, 1991); a major re-assessment was documented for this Royal Commission under the intervenor program. Most of these evaluations, including the most recent one, encompassed not only the National Office but First Nation communities, Dene families and cultures.

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One side-effect of acquiring competence in running a EuroCanadian-style institution is the acquisition of non-Dene thinking and behaviour, especially when non-Dene resource people are on staff. The influence of non-Dene resource people on Dene staff is discussed in a later section. Outside resource people are often sought by informal citizen-based organizations C which is one way of describing the Dene Nation C to compensate for gaps in internal expertise. Observers have noted that, while resource people can provide essential shortcuts to expertise, a reliance on outside professionals may also undermine the organization's goals or may prompt the organization to take directions that are expensive to adjust later (ie, Christiansen-Ruffman & Stuart 1977; Shragge 1990). Possibly, the Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat with its many highly-paid consultants and lawyers experienced this difficulty; Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation, however, seems to have avoided it. Rather, the Dene political association's main troubles have been rooted in its dependence on external funding. The organization has never had difficulty maintaining its commitment to Dene ideals, Dene aspirations, Dene culture.

In 1984, Dene Nation arranged for Elders to meet in Rae to discuss customary ways in which Dene governed themselves (Dene Nation 1984d). The report of this meeting, produced under the NWT constitutional development process at that time, was professionally printed. It is a document the National Office staff recommend to all enquirers requesting information about Dene traditional or customary governance. Following descriptions of the ways individual Dene governed their personal behaviour within the people's way of life, the report outlines the values and principles at the core of Dene traditional law. For Dene, this is always the starting place for discussing self-government. Because governing and living are intricately inter-related in the Dene cultures, self-government and self-determination are similarly linked.

Dene staff of the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation maintained their interest in community development because they saw in it appropriate ways for the National Office to work with First Nation communities C to encourage participation by local people to address their particular concerns. The history of this organization is, in some ways, the search by Dene for a structure and approaches to operations that can accommodate the traditional ways their people are comfortable with within EuroCanadian institutional constraints. As well as learning community development processes, Dene staff had exposure to and an opportunity to learn some Euro-Canadian operating and management styles, how northern government administrations work, methods of and requirements for fund raising, the kinds of information available from policy makers and public sources, some arguments used by rights advocates and critics of government policy, and the importance of aboriginal and Treaty rights from a Dene perspective. Dene staff who left the National Office carried to other Dene institutions what they learned to contribute to building local capacity for self-government and self-determination.

A significant preoccupation of Dene involved in Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation has been increasing political participation by their people. Despite considerable government opposition, Dene in the organization representing their people have pressed for a return to governing according to traditional values and ways. No federal or Territorial initiative has been responsive to this

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movement. In 1984, the federal Penner Commission delivered its recommendations that aboriginal people regain their right to government themselves. In 1995, DIAND released a draft policy for implementing the inherent right to self-government 21 years after Penner, 21 years in which government officials made no effort to invite aboriginal participation in the development of this draft policy. The federal vision has no bearing on aboriginal rights. It does not confer on local people the ability to design their own governing processes or to make their own policies, and it does not restore or even recognize Indigenous Peoples' customary or traditional laws. Aboriginal peoples in the territories are to have a different form of "self-government" from the form their relatives in the provinces can have. In the Dene homeland, under the 1995 draft policy, aboriginal "self-government" is to be limited to a form of public government.

In 1966, Dean Carrothers produced a report recommending that aboriginal peoples in the NWT be taught the rudiments of EuroCanadian administration and governing so that they could participate in democratic institutions. By their own efforts, Dene have climbed every rung of Arnstein's citizen participation ladder. Institution building in the Dene homeland has been a major activity since the formation of the Indian Brotherhood, and every institution has been or is wholly dependent on government funding. Funding is tied to strict limitations about the kind of institution that is to handle the funding and how the moneys are to be accounted for. There is no motivation for local people to infuse their institutions with traditional Dene thinking, values, or ways of working. It seems that the federal government has spent the 20 years between Penner and the release of its draft policy on self-government grooming aboriginal organizations for a style of EuroCanadian administration and governance. What choice have the people had?

Funding Challenges

In its earliest days, Indian Brotherhood was entirely voluntary. The association relied on media publicity and such organizations as the Indian-Eskimo Association for office space and travel funds to enable the first organizers to visit Dene communities (1993 SEP: interview with founding interim President). By 1970, staff were struggling to obtain funds to rent an office, have some form of communications, and pay small salaries to the people who gave their time to run things instead of working elsewhere to earn a living. A Dene on staff in those early years recalled that "finding money was a daily exercise. ... A great deal of non-native people would come in to give us moral support and, in some cases, financial support C just give us an outright donation" (1993 SEP: interview). After a few months of investigating potential sources of funding, the ad-hoc organizers were ready to recommend to the Chiefs who established the Indian Brotherhood that their best option was to incorporate as a non-profit society. Churches, charitable foundations, and United Nations development agencies had expressed a willingness to donate funds but most wanted to be able to claim their donations as tax exemptions; to do so, the Indian Brotherhood as the organization receiving such donations had to be registered as a federal or territorial non-profit society and be

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registered with Revenue Canada for charitable status. At first, the Indian Brotherhood tried to operate entirely without government funding, as a matter of principle (Braden 1976: 110B114). Funding information from government sources was very difficult to obtain, former staff told us, but programs for which Indian Brotherhood might be eligible all required that the Dene register their association as a society.

Incorporation under the NWT Societies Ordinance (*now* Act) meant that Indian Brotherhood had to comply with the registrar's rules for how the organization was structured, how it could select officers and operate, and how it must account for its finances. A constitution and by-laws were developed, and Indian Brotherhood of the NWT was officially registered as a society in February 1970. With registration, Indian Brotherhood staff applied to Revenue Canada and received status as a charitable society, which made it eligible for foundation grants. Oxfam, several churches in Canada, the World Council of Churches in Geneva, and several foundations donated funds in the early years C some of which were untied and some were for specific projects. For example, the Richard Ivey Foundation in 1974 gave \$10 000 for the purchase of portable radio-phones that were distributed to the Dene communities with no tele-communication links. Some of this funding was one-time, and none of it was sustained. Welcome as such funding was, getting it required a lot of time by Dene staff with little prior experience at contacting donors, preparing and distributing proposals, developing and monitoring budgets, interpreting complexly worded contribution agreements or contracts, and reporting to donors C all activities separate from running the programs made possible by the funds. Once government provided core administrative funding and some program funds, staff had to keep track of contribution agreements, budgets, and reports according to the demands of each government department's criteria in addition to those of non-government donors.

Most registered societies draw their funding from membership fees as well as external sources. Unlike most other non-profit societies at the time, Indian Brotherhood's membership was comprised mostly of aboriginal people who could not afford to pay a fee. Not everyone in Yellowknife agreed that Dene could belong without paying a fee. When it became known that Secretary of State had granted funds to the Indian Brotherhood in 1971, an informal local association called Northerners United for Equality wrote letters to local newspapers stating that, instead of government funds, the Dene organization should be supported by Dene trappers who should each donate the proceeds of a pelt. The decision by Secretary of State to fund the Indian Brotherhood was also condemned by the Commissioner of the NWT at the time, in a 13-page letter to the Indian Affairs Minister (reported in Dene Nation 1980?a: 9). The Commissioner had tried to insist that funding proposals and applications for the Indian Brotherhood should be submitted for review by the Territorial administration before going to funding sources. Under the first Indian Brotherhood constitution, associate membership was available at \$20, in recognition that some non-Dene did want to support the association. Dene staff and Chiefs regarded the acquisition of core funding from the Native Representative Organization Program as lending Indian Brotherhood the external legitimacy it needed to raise additional funds to support Dene advocacy, research, and community development efforts.

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Funding for aboriginal political associations regardless of their status under Indian Affairs began in the 1970s through the citizenship branch of the Secretary of State (SOS). The Native Representative Organization Program was to provide "a very basic level of support such that an office can be established and operated. The specific activities which S.O.S. wants to see occur as a result of this support are in the area of advocacy and negotiations of a broad range of issues which are important to the organization's constituents" (DIAND 1986: 11). Programs run by Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation were funded from other sources. Reporting to Secretary of State was restricted to a financial audit, so that an arm's-length relationship was maintained; the ministry did not want to "monitor the specific advocacy/negotiation activities of the organization or ... explore the long-term effects of these activities on native communities" (DIAND 1986: 10). This policy is in stark contrast to that of DIAND, which has treated Dene organizations much as it had other aboriginal political associations since 1940: "instead of using direct and autocratic tactics [as it had before 1940,] the department use[d] more subtle indirect techniques to manipulate the situation to the Department's advantage" (Whiteside 1974: 87).

A motivation for Dene Chiefs to form the Indian Brotherhood was the announcement in July 1969 by the ministry's Advisory Committee that Indian Affairs Branch officials would no longer be in the NWT. Their responsibilities were to be turned over to the Territorial administration (IBNWT 1969; IBNWT Annual Reports 1972 to 1975; Braden 1976: 95B99; Dene Nation histories and chronologies: 1980?a, 1984c). The Territorial Council, while still a branch of a federal ministry in Ottawa, had been demanding control over aboriginal peoples in NWT; indeed, federal funding for Treaty peoples has been sent to the Territorial administration through transfer agreements. Dene Chiefs interpret this financial control as one of the ways in which the 1969 White Paper, while it was apparently shelved, has in fact been implemented in the Dene homeland. Although Indian Affairs left the NWT in 1969, the Indian Brotherhood successfully lobbied for their return. In April 1972, there was again an NWT Regional Director for DIAND located in Yellowknife (IBNWT 1972). DIAND's NWT Region staff has grown steadily, and today numbers about 300 C far greater than most local businesses.

In 1972, Indian Brotherhood staff submitted to the newly arrived DIAND Regional Director their proposal for NWT Bands to receive first funding for their Councils and administration (IBNWT 1972 annual report: 3B4). Correspondence about Band and community development programs, once they were funded and underway, came to the Indian Brotherhood office from both the NWT Regional office and Ottawa, notably the Community Affairs Branch (eg, DIAND 1975a). All letters are written in a patronising tone with ill-disguised suspicion about Dene motives. And it is clear that, although the federal government had agreed to replace Indian Affairs staff in Yellowknife, senior DIAND officials in Ottawa continued to exercise vigilance and as much control as possible over the Dene political association.

Until the Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat was set up to handle negotiations, Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation received money toward research and preparing for a land settlement.

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Once the Dene received a favourable judgment in the *caveat* case from Judge Morrow, DIAND officials did not wait for appeals C they agreed to switch from land entitlement according to a strict interpretation of the written Treaties to a comprehensive claim procedure. But it was some years before substantive negotiations would begin. Even though Indian Affairs officials had been pressing for several decades for settlement of the Dene Treaties (as described in YDFN 1993), and even though Dene presentations during the *caveat* court case had been detailed, DIAND insisted on full compliance with procedures for applying for a "claim". This meant a 3-year delay while the Dene and Indian Affairs representatives discussed how to fund and go about documenting Dene occupancy and land use (see, for example IBNWT 1973c), and for Dene to conduct the research. Concurrent research projects in the communities were completed in 1976. During 1974 and 1975 Dene, with their Métis colleagues, held more discussions C with a gap of 18 months in the middle C with a DIAND deputy minister, officials from the Claims Commission, representatives from the Territorial and Social Development Branch, and the NWT Assistant Commissioner (IBNWT 1974d; DIAND 1975b, c). These meetings were to clarify negotiating terms, and discussed at length the funding of negotiations through grants rather than loans. Negotiating terms were discussed among the Dene, culminating in a workshop that produced what Dene called a draft agreement-in-principle (IBNWT 1976a); this document was presented to federal officials. Consensus was difficult to build and attain while government representatives kept changing, although Dene were represented mostly by the same individuals.

The federal tactic of cutting funds to the Dene political association when the outcome of the Berger Inquiry was known is described in Part Two of this report. Fund-cutting occurred often while Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation discussed funding for the land settlement. Until 1980, disagreements between Dene and 5 different Indian Affairs ministers provoked negotiations simply to agree on the funding arrangements for Dene to pursue land settlement talks. Loans from Indian Affairs for the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation to prepare for the ongoing discussions about how to negotiate the land settlement were capriciously provided and cut from 1976 to 1978 (Dene Nation 1978). In February, staff were informed by DIAND that a full year's funding would not be available for the 1978B79 fiscal year, and that each quarter's funds would be sent only after "simultaneous political and financial meetings [were held] to determine political progress and decide whether funding will be continued. [DIAND wanted] the right to audit [Dene Nation's] books at any time, and to terminate funding arbitrarily if they [did not] agree with how funds ha[d] been allocated" (Dene Nation 1979c: 2). Staff noted that their ability to hire personnel and make realistic plans was hampered by such funding uncertainty. These strictures by DIAND seem inappropriate, since the funds were loans to be repaid by Dene. The procedures for "claims" have no appeal process.

The DIAND minister for 1980 reinstated annual loans for Dene to prepare for the land settlement, but senior DIAND officials delayed selecting a federal negotiator until the next fiscal year, in April 1981. The first official negotiating meeting was not held until July and talks were closed the day they began. Dene and Métis representatives at the table decided to stop the talks when they learned that DIAND had approved construction of a pipeline in their homeland. This was the Norman WellsBtoBZama oil pipeline. In 1982, there were some discussions on the land settlement

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negotiations before July, then nothing between July and November. Negotiations finally got underway at this time, and continued through the Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat from 1983 until the federal Cabinet stopped the talks in November 1990. Dene actually spent more years just getting to the table than they did in substantive negotiations.

Once the Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat took over negotiations, the Dene National Office could focus on meeting its constitutional mandate and objectives. Core funding from Secretary of State continued to support the National Office but, for programs consistently requested by the Dene membership, sustained funding remained elusive. For instance, staff tried to continue community development programs. In 1979, after a lapse of 3 years, Dene Nation managed to secure funding from Employment and Immigration Canada for a program centred in Fort Good Hope. Both the DIAND minister and the Territorial administration tried to stop approval of this funding, but they succeeded only in delaying it for almost a year (Dene Nation 1979c; confirmed by 1993 OCT: interview with Dene Nation President at that time). When community development was proposed as the process to determine socio-economic impacts of the proposed Norman Wells pipeline, funding for Dene Nation became erratic, delayed, or held back (Dene Nation annual reports 1981-1986, especially 1985-1986: 17-60; Gorman 1987).

As noted in Part Two, Dene collaborated with Métis and Territorial representatives in their strategic approach to the federal government about the Norman Wells pipeline. Dene Nation had expected to receive approximately \$21 million toward mitigative programs: this did not happen. A report commissioned by DIAND on special funding projects for Norman Wells states that the federal government had intended this amount to be designated for programs in the NWT, with no more than \$2.55 million for each of the Dene and Métis associations or their development corporations (DIAND 1985: 41-42). The commissioned report concluded that, not only did both organizations receive far more money than was originally intended, government characterised the funding as *appeasement* and *compensation*.

The federal government should try to avoid funding *to compensate groups which opposed a project*. However, if this is determined to be necessary, the purpose of the funds should be explicitly recognized and treated differently from funds that are intended to address tangible impacts from the project. There should not be any requirement that the funding be linked to project impacts or activities, since *the intent is appeasement, not project-related impact management*. Also, given its obvious political nature, such funding probably should be provided as a grant, which has fewer accountability requirements than a contribution program. (DIAND 1985: 41, Recommendation 5.3, *emphasis added*)

This characterisation reflects Dene opposition in the 1970s to the gas pipeline from the Arctic coast, rather than their more co-operative stance taken toward the much smaller oil pipeline in the 1980s, as noted in Part Two of this study. Disagreements between Dene and government agencies during the Norman Wells pipeline centred on the research methodologies for government-based impact assessments and their lack of Dene participation, combined with the lack of support for the community-based assessments and mitigative programs developed by Dene Nation. While the analysis quoted above seems to say otherwise, Dene Nation was certain at the time that the programs

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it operated with Norman Wells funds were directly related to impact management C but for impacts and management as they were perceived by Dene. Further, there was nothing disreputable or new about the approaches the communities were using: Dene Nation's proposals reflected the kind of programs the organization had been running for more than a decade. Once the Norman Wells funding stopped, no comparable government funds have been available to Dene Nation for community development programs.

This discussion of challenges presented by DIAND for funding to the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation is not comprehensive but serves to illustrate some ways in which Indian Affairs has sought to undermine the scope and effectiveness of the Dene representative organization. After Cabinet stopped land settlement talks on the "claim" being negotiated by the Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat, funding was cut off immediately to the Secretariat and staff had to pack up in a chaotic process that has rendered most of the documents produced inaccessible to the people who are still pursuing a land settlement. Perhaps because Dene were perceived as the stumbling block for getting the Final Agreement ratified, DIAND also arranged to have Dene Nation's core funding transferred from Secretary of State to the DIAND NWT Regional office C and promptly cut the funds retroactively to a date before the expensive annual Assembly. As a result, Dene Nation was plunged into a huge deficit from which it has yet to recover. Core funding was reinstated for the following year, but with conditions. Correspondence from the Regional office reveals that, once Gwich'in Dene applied to pursue a regional land settlement, DIAND no longer recognizes the Dene Nation to be representative of all Dene. No rationale is offered to explain why DIAND should determine who Dene Nation's members ought to be. In the years since, DIAND has sent letters to regional Dene organizations requesting direction on what the region wants done with the funds to Dene Nation.

At the 1990 Dene National Assembly, the 350 delegates participated in a two-day work-shop to decide what the future role of the National Office should be (reported in Dene Nation 1991). Further, a motion passed unanimously at that Assembly defined the role as:

to serve as the political arm of the Dene Nation and to firmly establish our relationship with Canada, to continue implementation of Dene Treaty rights, to provide assistance and support relating to the definition and implementation of Dene Treaty rights, to co-ordinate financial and technical support for regional and local Dene organizations, to maintain and improve communications within the Dene Nation and with other governments, to initiate workshops with regional and local organizations, and to resolve roles and functions that overlap. (Motion 91/92B006)

Despite the support by Assembly delegates for this motion, the NWT Regional Director for DIAND informed the National Office that core funding for Dene Nation formerly available from the Secretary of State would be opened to other northern organizations (1992 correspondence; 1993 AUG: interview with Executive Director). Core funding for Métis Nation remained with the Secretary of State, so the transfer of Dene Nation's funding is questionable.

Government has affected Dene Nation funding in other ways. In 1986, Dene Nation staff neglected to renew its charitable status and Revenue Canada decided that the organization should

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re-apply as if it had never had status before (1993 AUG: interview with Executive Director). With a change in government had come a change in attitude toward organized citizen groups that advocate on behalf of their members. Criteria for charitable status has changed, and Dene Nation was no longer eligible. Revenue Canada rejected the new application on grounds that Dene Nation was too political. Canada was no longer interested in encouraging citizen political participation. Without charitable status, Dene Nation had to rely almost exclusively on the same government programs that other Dene organizations must apply for, putting the National Office in direct competition with their own members. Most Dene First Nations continue to have very limited administrative funding, and both of the last two Presidents said they felt reluctant to compete with the communities for funding (1993 JUL & SEP; interviews). Extensive wholesale cuts to funding in 1986, consistent cuts to core funding since 1990, and a sizeable deficit have limited options for funding the National Office. The scope and effectiveness of Dene Nation are now severely restricted.

Like other membership- or citizen-based organizations, Dene Nation has had the energy and attention of its staff diverted from the objectives their members demand. Instead, staff are consumed with the task of finding money to keep the organization going. A typical evolution for such organizations is for the very close relationship between membership and operational centre in the early years to gradually diminish as the demands of external funding sources for greater formal management and accounting procedures compete for staff attention and energy (Shragge 1990: 137B140). This pattern seems to have overtaken the Dene Nation. As the scope of Dene Nation's program activities increased to meet membership demands, more staff time and core funding had to be spent trying to generate and account for funds to run them:

Just going after a proposal ... on average, out of every 5 proposals we send out, we may get 1 that's positive and we usually get a small portion of what we're asking for. ... A lot of times, we don't get administration dollars to offset the cost of these projects, so administration is eaten up from the shortfall that we have from core.

(1993 SEP: interview with a Dene Nation President)

When recovery programs were required C that is, when a program has cost over-runs C staff have had to dip into core funding. Cost over-runs have occurred for a number of reasons. In 1978, staff noted that government programs were holding back funds approved for a program until final audit and reports were received and approved by government personnel; such holdbacks can cause problems for organizations with narrow cashflow margins. In this example, the National Office received in February 1978 the holdback for the community development program that was completed in the 1976B77 fiscal year C a wait of more than a year. In order to have effective programs, financially strained organizations have to marshal their cashflow and hope that holdbacks will be sent promptly.

Another reason for a Dene Nation cost over-run occurred when a program's funding was cut off but, because the program was successful in a community, the staff decided to continue it until local people were prepared, perhaps for taking over the program. Program benefits did not always coincide with the flow of funds. When program funding is provided one year at a time, its

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continuation usually depended on the submission of a new proposal along with audited statements and activity reports. The time delay before approval of new funding has often meant that, in addition to cashflow strain, the staff must find new people, as the ones involved last year have had to move on to something else.

Deficits and cost recoveries have been common throughout Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation's history. Dene Nation has had to rely often on the patience of local businesses that have supplied goods and services but have had to wait to be paid for them. Through recovery programs, staff pay past expenses from current administrative dollars and have to trim current spending as a result (1993 AUG: interview with Executive Director). Such recoveries have had an impact on operations, in that current-year funds cannot be used effectively. Long-distance calls, photocopying, and travel had all had to be limited, and staff positions have had to be cut.

Dene in the communities and regions seldom express appreciation for Dene Nation efforts although a recent CBC phone-in on the threatened dissolution of the organization brought almost unanimous support for what the Dene Nation stands for. Nonetheless, Dene are critical, particularly about money. Criticism ranges from concerns that moneys reaching the National Office do not benefit communities, staff are overpaid, National Office is not doing enough, and National Office activities duplicate what communities are doing. The most persistent criticism since the earliest years to the present, however, is that the National Office spends too much time on external issues rather than on local concerns. Ironically, this criticism is consistent with the internal concern by National Office staff that they spend too much of their time and energy on external funding issues instead of on program activities for the membership. One President noted how easy it is for people not working in the office to be critical, and emphasized that meeting often and talking out disagreements to address differences can improve relations between the National Office and the membership (1993 SEP: interview). Tensions rooted in funding issues affect not only the effectiveness of the Dene Nation but how it is perceived by its members. When money is tight, members forget the accomplishments of Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation.

Raising Dene Cultural Awareness

Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation was established to strengthen Dene culture. The mission statement says it all: "The purpose of the Dene Nation is to retain sovereignty by strengthening the Dene Spiritual Beliefs and Cultural Values in Denendeh." As explained by numerous statements, discussions papers, and Dene who have worked for the political association, "Dene culture" means the peoples' way of life, the view of their world held for generations, their common sense of their reality, values, and principles as expressed in their languages. Many observers have commented on the cultural revitalisation by First Nations throughout Canada, and the resulting pursuit by First Nations

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of regaining their inherent right to govern themselves and determine their future development. Dene Nation has been among the leaders of this movement.

Revitalising culture & raising cultural awareness among Dene and non-Dene & has been the focus of many Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation programs and activities. The organization has produced pamphlets, films, books, and calendars to describe or feature Dene culture and the Dene Nation's political initiatives designed to protect and strengthen it (ie, IBNWT 1973a, 1976B77; Dene Nation 1980?a, 1984d, e; also GNWT 1986, 1987). They have given away hundreds of copies of annual reports, which always contain cultural information or discussion. During the Norman Wells pipeline construction project, Dene Nation ran several programs for cultural survival and produced reports of research conducted on impact assessments that included impacts on traditional pursuits and culture (see Dene Nation annual reports 1982B83, 1986B87). Dene Nation's education staff in the 1980s began gathering materials chiefly from interviews with Elders for a Dene classroom curriculum & a project that had to be handed over to the Territorial education ministry when the funding cuts of 1986 resulted in Dene Nation's program being shut down. The Dene kede curriculum was completed for some years and released in the 1990s, and additional grade levels are being developed. Dene National Assemblies have passed many motions directing staff to support traditional economic pursuits, to encourage cultural learning, and to protect lands and renewable resources from undue damage or exploitation.

Assemblies and leadership of Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation have created other separate organizations, mostly related to Dene culture. The Native Communications Society began as the Indian Brotherhood's communications arm, one way in which the central office could raise awareness among their peoples in their own languages. The Dene Cultural Institute, formed as the result of an Assembly discussion in  utsel K'e, became a separate entity at arm's-length from the National Office but still accountable to the Chiefs. Dene Cultural Institute has advocated for Dene Indigenous Knowledge to be part of northern government policy making, recently developed a healing program, and conducted an ambitious research agenda (ie, Johnson 1992; Ryan & Robinson 1993). Denendeh Elders Council, which advises the Cultural Institute, has developed cultural guidelines for community, regional, and Territorial governments (see Appendix B of this report). As well as these and political and negotiations organizations, Dene Nation founded Indigenous Survival International.

Indigenous Survival International was established in response to aggressive publicity by animal rights' activists against the fur industry. The organization was to advocate for northern Indigenous Peoples who pursued all forms of traditional harvesting (ie, trapping, hunting, and fishing). Incomes from harvesting activities had dipped so sharply that many people could no longer make a living at them. Indigenous Survival International was similar to Federation of Natives North of 601, in that membership came from different northern cultures: Dene, M tis, Inuit, Inuvialuit from Canada, along with peoples from Alaska and Greenland (Dene Nation histories & chronologies; internal documents; interviews with former and current Presidents). Dene Nation took the lead role in setting up the organization and implementing its activities & which for the most part consisted of public relations to support Indigenous harvesting and related cultural activities. In recent years, the

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organization has mediated in government efforts to change the trapping methods of northern Indigenous trappers to meet European Community trade laws and threatened sanctions of Canadian fur products from allegedly inhumane traps.

We have already reported the efforts of Dene to identify themselves as "Dene" rather than generalised or stereotyped "Indians", and to declare themselves a sovereign Indigenous Nation within the state of Canada. There has been consistent encouragement for different cultures within the Dene Nation to use the names for their people in their own language, as well as in more recent years the use of Dene place names and Dene names for First Nations to replace DIAND's designations. An emphasis in the early years on unity within the peoples' movement prompted the creation of a single logo and other symbols of cultural solidarity. Dene were among the first in Canada to oppose Indian Affairs' efforts to separate people, including Métis relatives within their membership. Publications about Dene culture did not focus on only one of the regional cultures but ensured that illustrations and passages in Dene languages represented all of them. However, the distinct regional cultures were always recognized within Dene unity.

Although the members of Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation have always been the Bands or First Nation communities, many aspects of the organization are carried through regional representation. As early as 1971, efforts were made to have the regions represented in the Indian Brotherhood. A regional Vice-President was elected to the executive by the Chiefs and Band councillors within each region (IBNWT 1973a: organization chart). In 1974, the constitution was amended so that regional Vice-Presidents were elected instead by regional delegates to National Assemblies (IBNWT 1972 to 1974 constitution and by-laws; 1993 SEP: interview with early staff member). At the earliest General, National, and Joint Assemblies C for instance, those in the 1970s at Fort Rae and Fort Good Hope C delegates broke into their regional groups for separate discussion of major agenda topics, which they subsequently reported to the entire Assembly. So strong is the cultural regional identification that, for a workshop at the 1991 Bell Rock Assembly, delegates insisted that they break into their regional groups rather than the cross-cultural groups suggested by the facilitator (Dene Nation 1991). In 1986, when the Chiefs decided that more consistent representation was needed at land settlement talks, a negotiator was appointed to represent each of the Dene regions. Although Tribal Councils were not set up until the last year of the Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat's work, regionalism is not a recent development. Cultural identity has always had a firm presence within Dene Nation.

Although the Dene political association had to comply with EuroCanadian characteristics in order to incorporate as a non-profit society, Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation managed to maintain many cultural characteristics. On the earliest organization charts, the elected Chiefs, Band councillors, and executive were directly answerable to the Dene who elected them. The Indian Brotherhood office was not included on this chart: it was understood to be simply the administrative servant and political voice of the Dene leadership, on behalf of the membership (IBNWT 1973a: 5 corroborated by IBNWT 1974, 1976 and by reports by the Presidents in annual reports). This kind of accountability and authority reflect ideas about Dene governance, as Elders perceived them (Dene

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Nation 1984d, e). This constituency- or community-based authority has been consistently recognized by Dene (ie, Dene Nation 1988b: 124). The National Office takes direction for its activities from, first, the National Assembly consisting of community leaders and delegates and, next, the Chiefs elected by First Nation members. The President/National Chief who heads the executive and manages the National Office has always been elected by the National Assembly. Throughout its history, Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation's board of directors has been the Chiefs. Most external agencies C notably Indian Affairs, the Territorial administration, and northern media C have failed to recognize the lines of authority accurately, assuming instead that the Dene political association is and behaves like a top-down, hierarchical organization. Publicly, the Dene Assemblies have been perceived simply as large meetings.

Very early, Indian Brotherhood staff understood that they would need to arrange for large gatherings to enable their peoples to participate in policy and strategy making, and to share assessments of their situation from time to time. Assemblies hold cultural significance for Dene. For generations, the Dene have pursued their lifeways on their lands in small family groups throughout the cool and cold months. During warmer months, when melted surfaces and insects can make travel on the land uncomfortable, families gathered together at lake- and riverside fish camps. These annual gatherings assumed enormous importance for families as a time for celebrating marriages and births, for watching the maturing of youth, for grieving the passing of loved ones, and for resolving conflicts or seeking guidance from Elders. At such gatherings, experienced hunters exchanged crucial information about trails and changing patterns on the lands visited last season, to add to their knowledge and plan the next seasons' travel. In effect, summer Assemblies were times when the peoples exercised their customary laws and practices collectively, and considered the ways to approach the coming time (see, for instance, Dene Nation 1984d, e). Dene customary laws evolved as ways for Dene to govern their behaviour wherever they are C their law is not restricted to a land area as non-Dene jurisdiction is.

Dene General, National, and Joint Assemblies are reflections of the customary seasonal gatherings, where their people governed collectively. Thus, the Indian Brotherhood constitution was amended to require the holding of at least one National Assembly annually "so that [the Chiefs] had to have much more people involved from the communities .. and there were always Elders involved" (1993 OCT: interview with President at the time). Enthusiasm for such political gatherings ran high. In 1978, 300 delegates came to a leadership [Chiefs' only] meeting at their own expense. For several Assemblies in the late 1970s C at Fort Norman [Tulita], Fort Fitzgerald, and Drum Lake C close to 1000 Dene, or one-tenth of the entire Dene population at the time, attended (Dene Nation Assembly transcripts, histories & chronologies, and interviews with former staff and Presidents). Dene Assemblies were highly participatory and highly representative. One former President described some of the early Assemblies as huge political rallies (1993 JUL: interview), while another pointed out that such large attendance contradicted attempts by the federal and Territorial governments to suggest that a few individuals and their non-Dene advisors were running the Indian Brotherhood as a virtual dictatorship (1993 OCT: interview). Even when travel had become more costly and it was more difficult for Dene citizens to leave jobs to go to Assemblies, large numbers

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continued to attend. The Hay River Assembly in 1988, attracted 300 voting delegates and about 600 non-voting people to discuss the initialled Agreement-in-Principle for the land settlement. That so many people attended gives even greater support to the motion delegates passed for improvements to the AIP (see Appendix A of this report). That the Assembly is the decision-making authority of the Dene Nation is clear: that body only has the authority to amend the association's constitution and by-laws.

Having large gatherings helped to raise both political and cultural awareness among the Dene. Delegates gather in a circle of speakers, and the National Office has always provided translators so that speakers can use their own language to express themselves. The host Chief welcomes delegates and, at the close, each of the Chiefs present expresses gratitude for those who contributed to the success of the Assembly. The Creator is greeted and thanked in prayer at the start and close of every day. Elders are always respected, featured speakers at Assemblies, reminding the peoples about what they have always valued. Anyone a delegate or not a may speak; speaking in turn, without interruption by others, is the respectful custom at Assemblies. One President recalled attending "community meetings in my youth [and being aware of] the principles I saw there, of the elected leadership taking a stance first, each of the family members all speaking and opening it up ... to more and more people" (1993 OCT: interview). Delegates build consensus through their speeches and in informal discussions beyond the circle and after formal sessions.

Assemblies continue for several days, with discussion of all agenda subjects, broken only by procedural motions. Resolutions are drafted by delegates throughout the Assembly, but are presented altogether to the delegates for decisions as the penultimate order of business before announcing the location of the next Assembly. Resolutions are generally supported, often unanimously, because consensus has been reached by the time they are presented:

Had anybody sat through our Assemblies and listened to people work out together our positions, they would see that we wouldn't necessarily start together and that it was through the process of consensus and listening to each other and talking and giving everybody the proper time to explain his or her position, we finally come to collective decisions. And they are very strong because we have gone through a process of rejecting different options and coming up to a strategy that was acceptable to us.

(1993 OCT: interview with former President)

Resolutions for which consensus has not been reached are more likely to be withdrawn than not supported by a vote a practice consistent with Dene non-intervention. The current National Chief indicated that, in recent years, the staff have tried to ensure that communities are aware ahead of time of issues likely to be raised at an Assembly. For instance, agenda will be circulated to First Nations with information-only items so that Assembly delegates can inform themselves before having to reach a decision about them at the Assembly (1993 SEP: interview).

Not all Dene leaders now agree about the role or necessity of Assemblies. Some leaders who supported the Agreement-in-Principle at the 1988 Assembly wondered if that would be the last Assembly the peoples would need to hold (Dene Nation 1988b: 46). And in recent years, several

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leaders have questions the logic of spending so much money to hold Assemblies and even Chiefs' meetings when funding had become so tight (Dene Nation 1992, 1993: transcripts; internal correspondence). One former President, for instance, spoke about the need for Dene during his term of office to get on with land settlement talks after years of stalling. He said that he and his staff were "compelled to come up with a substantive position to begin negotiations. Those were all duly approved by the Chiefs at Assemblies and Leadership meetings: everything we did was duly mandated" (1993 JUL: interview). This process is, in fact, the opposite of the flow of authority and decision making before and after this President's term, when the mandate flowed from Assemblies and leadership meetings to the National Office executive and staff. In 1989B90, a Dene Nation Vice-President suggested that the elected Chiefs ought to be accountable to each other (Annual Report: 6), apparently forgetting that they are accountable to the people who select them. Such shifts in thinking reflect the impact of non-Dene influences on some leaders and changes in their perceptions about the nature of leadership.

By custom, Dene leaders for generations were individuals gifted or skilled in providing what their people needed to survive. Most often, Dene leaders were respected Elders. All the former Presidents we interviewed agreed that the Chiefs representing Dene in the early years of Indian Brotherhood were respected Elders (1993 JUL to OCT: interviews). One noted that younger leaders forget the way Elders resolve conflict:

What happened all the time in meetings was the older people ... always came in with the same message "We've got to work together, we've got to listen to each other, we've got to respect one another." ... I think it was too late for us when we realized that they were the pacifiers and the peace-makers of the Nation and, when they were no longer there saying those things that we thought were so simple and wasn't worth saying, you know, the fight was on. ... You read the transcripts of the Dene Assemblies and that, it's a kind of verbal abuse ... [that] would never have been allowed, you know, in the years when the Elders were there. ... It was the young Chiefs, you know, that led the charge, I think, disregarding the basic message that, in the end, nothing is worth getting split up about. The message was lost. (1993 JUL: interview)

At various times, Dene have recommended having a formal Elders Council to work with the young leaders of the Dene Nation but, so far, the only ones established have been for the Dene Cultural Institute, individual First Nations, and the Deh Cho First Nations.

A long-time National Office staff member noted that some of the young leaders do not even consult their Elders on community matters (1993 SEP: interview). One young Chief at the Hay River Assembly declared that he sees and knows things that his Elders do not; further, he said that he was elected to make decisions, and he did not want to be controlled by his people, although he must respond to their requests (Dene Nation 1988b: 181B1830). By contrast, other Chiefs spoke eloquently and at length about the advice given them by their Elders, to assist with the position being taken on the Agreement-in-Principle. In 1974, Chiefs at the Fort Good Hope Joint Assembly spoke about ensuring ways for Elders to be involved in planning for the land settlement talks (IBNWT 1974: Assembly transcript). However, like the preference for guide-lines on the settlement going from local people to the negotiators (as expressed in IBNWT 1975c), no formal processes or structures were set up and the implementation of these good intentions was left to individual leaders.

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Feelings among Dene that their political association ought to be run by their own people were often fierce. Community people have frequently expressed disappointment that non-aboriginal resource people were on staff; sometimes, the non-Dene have been asked to leave. From time to time, National Office staff felt obliged to explain why a professional person was needed and why no Dene had the expertise. Here is an example of the explanation given for the hiring of an economic professor as advisor on development in the mid-1970s:

He will read what the government economists write about us and tell us what is wrong with it. ... [We need him] to tell us ... the sort of information to help us choose a land claim which will give us more control over development and make sure we get the most benefit from it. (IBNWT 1974: "Report on Economist for Land Claims Research Project" in Board meeting minutes)

This particular advisor was especially useful to National Office staff, who had to ask their Chiefs and people to be supportive after local media protested the economist's views (IBNWT Board meeting minutes, discussion papers, internal correspondence; *news north*). For the most part, non-Dene resource people have been positive influences on their Dene colleagues. People of many professions and academic backgrounds C often with alternative or nonconventional perspectives C contributed their knowledge and their innovative thinking. It is sometimes a drawback for citizen-based advocacy organizations to rely on outside professionals, because they may persuade organizers to change their direction (Christiansen-Ruffman & Stuart 1977). Dene seem to have successfully avoided such influence. In terms of effectiveness, however, Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation could only afford to pay for professional expertise when funding permitted: only rarely have such persons been willing to volunteer. What the association may have lost in technical polish, it gained in avoiding acquiring too much non-Dene influence.

Despite being surrounded and inundated by non-Dene influences, and despite the lack of Elders present much of the time, many National Office staff felt touched by their influence. One Dene Nation President observed that many Elders removed themselves from their customary role; he suggested that, with changes that have occurred to the extended Dene family, Elders and youth are rarely together now and Elders are not always recognized as the leader of a family (1993 SEP: interview). Another former President felt that it was "impossible for us to talk about Dene laws C whether they were given to us from the Supreme Being or whether they were man-made through the history of the Dene C without the Elders (1993 OCT: interview). And in the 1989B90 annual report, the Executive Director noted that "the most important lesson [the Dene have learned] is the discovery time and again, that the answer to many of our problems lies within our own culture and traditions." The difficulty for some Dene seems to be making the conscious effort not to be distracted from their priorities.

While Elders were never replaced by non-Dene professionals in guiding staff, their influence became indirect and diluted by some aspects of the work to be done. The founding President and the current National Chief both mentioned that speedy decision making required for office

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operations C more typical of non-Dene than Dene ways C has not left time or due care for the kind of deliberations that Elders would take (1993 SEP: separate interviews). Their comments are mindful of these concerns of an early staff member:

I've been taught to make decisions on what I know, and the things I know are through reading and talking to people. And when I'm in the office, I don't have too much time to read, and so I feel as though I don't know what I'm deciding on. As we make decisions, I feel as though I'm saying "Yes, I agree" but I don't feel comfortable. ... And I don't feel that I can say "no" without a basis. I could say "Well, no, because I don't know about it" C but then who's going to give me the time to know about it, because things have to keep going. I suppose in a way a lot of Indian people feel that way C they don't know about an issue, but they have to decide right now. (IBNWT: 1974f: side 11)

Externally generated pressures still urge Dene in the National Office to make decisions rapidly, often without sufficient time to deliberate issues and possible positions. For peoples accustomed to face-to-face discussion, there are challenges for acquiring the skills to analyse the vast amounts of written information that demand responses, and manage it for easy retrieval and distribution. Many internal memos are filed in the Library/Archives from different times during the history of the association lamenting the time staff spend dealing with non-Dene demands when they would prefer to be working toward Dene goals.

This issue C National Office staff being able to decide whether to spend time and effort responding to external, usually non-Dene, demands or fulfilling Dene proposals C more than any other goes to the heart of the debate over Dene government and self-determination. How can Dene leaders today combine meeting these competing demands and remain accountable to their own people? Do Dene go forward with development by accepting government modernisation, or by drawing on Dene values and principles? Can young Dene make the effort to focus on becoming aware of and assessing their circumstances, and to perceive them as their Elders can? Can young Dene learn how to apply traditional thinking and values to today's issues?

Dene are deeply spiritual peoples, identifying themselves with the lands to which they are Indigenous. They mark their political gatherings C even National Office staff meetings C with prayer. If they are present, Elders are asked to offer the prayers. They seek the steadying influence of the Creator to guide their speech and their ability to listen and build consensus. Perhaps no other action so distinctly sets apart Dene from non-Dene northern politics.

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Conclusion

Dene Chiefs who asked young people in 1969 to set up an organization to raise their peoples' awareness might find it hard to believe that, 25 years later there are dozens of Dene political councils. Most of them started through the efforts of the association they established. In the early years of the Indian Brotherhood, Dene staff told us they had to scramble to learn how government works, how to get the attention of very senior officials, how industry works, how to get funding, how to rally support, how to determine the best strategies, and how to follow Dene mandates when public servants insist that its policies and procedures be followed instead. From the outset, Chiefs and staff struggled against employing non-Dene institutional practices, preferring to fulfil their desire to be as Dene as possible:

I think ... we were becoming aware that there was a relationship between how we organize ourselves and how we define ourselves as Dene. The question came out: If we organize ourselves under White Man's rules and procedures, how can we still pursue the objectives that we originally had of preserving and enhancing Dene identity and Dene heritage? There was a relationship there that we knew we had to be very careful of: this was a topic of several of the brainstorming sessions that we had. There was an element of expediency there as well. We had to have an organization that got the seed money with which to do some of the things that we wanted to do, or address some of those things.

(1993 SEP: interview with early staff member)

This dilemma has been expressed by Dene in every kind of political organization ever since.

The scope of activities undertaken by people involved with Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation during the past 25 years has been very broad. In general, it can be observed that changes in scope have been influenced most by external pressures, especially from federal fickleness for funding. In the early years, Dene Chiefs and Elders guiding the organization gave thorough direction to the younger people fired by their enthusiasm for a people's movement who were running the organization's activities. It can be seen that those early activities came from within: the organization set its own agenda and sought ways to meet their peoples' expressed needs. Dene also experimented with innovation and creativity in their programs and research.

Federal government support for encouraging greater aboriginal citizen participation through which Dene Nation received its core funding shifted in the 1980s with the change in governing party. No longer supportive of advocacy associations that lobbied for changes to existing policies, the new federal government instead shifted its approval to such self-financing organized interest groups as the Canadian Bankers Association or professional lobbyists (Esberoy & Skogstad in Krause & Wagenberg 1991). This same government seemed more interested in supporting the land settlement procedures than programs the Dene Nation was carrying out for its membership. In 1989-90, for example, the Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat received nearly \$4 million toward its administrative and operating expenses, while Dene Nation received just under \$300 000. It is truly ironic how many Dene initiatives that were strongly opposed by senior Territorial and federal officials

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C including most of the 11 Indian Affairs ministers since 1969 C are now advocated by government administrations or policy makers.

The influence of Indian Affairs over Dene must not be underestimated. In addition to its responsibilities toward Dene as "Indians", DIAND has diverse and competing mandates in the Dene homeland. The ministry has responsibility for the Territorial administration as well as for First Nations and Tribal Councils C governments with competing authorities. For many years, while the Territorial Council struggled to establish its own legitimacy, northern political associations like the Dene Nation were getting a respectful hearing from the general public and, at times, federal ministers (Braden 1976: esp. 155). DIAND handles both devolution to the Territorial administration and implementation of the inherent right to aboriginal government. The Northern Development branch of the NWT Regional Office of Indian Affairs handles both environmental management and resource exploitation. Indian Affairs headquarters handles land settlement negotiations, while the ministry also has responsibility to meet Canada's fiduciary obligation to protect aboriginal land interests. The Indian Affairs ministry in NWT has become increasingly complicated and contradictory, while Dene evolved politically.

The bitterness with which senior officials have treated and continue to treat Dene Nation seems rooted in the steadiness and consistency of Dene positions on self-government and self-determination. Dene understanding of their culture is the very broadest possible: it is their way of life. For Indian Brotherhood staff to enhance and protect Dene culture meant in part trying to address the socio-cultural and economic circumstances in which Dene were living at the time. While federal officials initially agreed that Indian Brotherhood proposals were worthwhile, they sought to limit Dene activities they regarded as competing with government authority. In 1975, for instance, an Indian Affairs manager requested of Indian Brotherhood staff very detailed reports under their agreement to fund Band and community development programs because Dene

workers are devoting a considerable amount of time to community and social work problems of a general nature that are not specified in the Agreement, and to personal problems like alcoholism. I have no doubt that these problems are troubling Indian people in the Territories, but the Agreement is not intended to finance the Brotherhood in carrying out general social reforms. ... The objectives that were set out in the Agreement were carefully chosen to prevent conflict with the responsibilities of other Federal and Territorial Government Departments. (DIAND 1975a)

Clearly, the effectiveness of Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation in carrying out activities from its full scope C meeting the mandate set out by its membership C was impaired by differences perceived about what the scope of its mandate *should* be, on the part of non-Dene government. As shown in this study, Dene staff persisted in their efforts to do what their members wanted. The gap in perception of what authority is acceptable for Dene, while it has diminished over the past 25 years, nevertheless is still there.

With the official shift in attitude toward support for advocacy associations came disastrous funding cuts and continual undermining of Dene Nation by Indian Affairs. Perhaps considering the

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Dene association far too effective, some government officials manipulated the organization's funding, which resulted in an inability for the Dene National Office to meet its peoples' needs. Ironically, this external undermining of the central political association resulted in a strengthening of overall capacity of Dene throughout Denendeh. With little work available at the National Office, Dene staff moved to local and Tribal organizations, carrying with them the ideals and strategic thinking, their knowledge of community development processes learned through their work with the central organization. These individuals have gone on to sustain Dene culture and political aspirations for self-determination in every kind of Dene institution throughout the peoples' homeland. Given the consistent commitment of Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation to highly participatory citizen-based participation, the effectiveness of the organization must be assessed in this light.

As a training ground for capacity building in self-government and self-determination that are grounded in Dene values and principles, Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation has been a very successful political organization. In recent years, the Chiefs & still the organization's board & have withdrawn their attentive direction in order to concentrate on often overwhelming local (First Nation) and tribal (regional) issues. At the same time, the organization has been wilfully undermined and persistently redefined by federal officials, as if it is DIAND's task to recreate Dene Nation's history. Federal divide-and-conquer tactics used to resist Dene efforts to free themselves from colonialism & tactics familiar to the founders of Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation & can still be seen at work 25 years later in Denendeh. The focus for the people's struggle now is the First Nations and Tribal Councils. The struggle for Dene self-determination continues and, generally, the Dene taking leading roles are those whose names and work grace the administrative archives of the Dene Nation.

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p a r t f o u r

S u m m a r y

by Susan Quirk

Summary

The Indian Brotherhood of the NWT began with lofty ideals and a strong sense of self-preservation. For more than two decades, the scope of the Dene national organization has been very broad and the approaches taken for most activities have been innovative. The organization has been far more than simply a land "claim" negotiating body, as it has been narrowly characterized by DIAND (1993b) and by one of its former Presidents (1993 JUL: interview). Often, external perceptions have underestimated the ability of the Dene to organize themselves and act in their own interests. Father René Fumoleau readily recalls the shock on the streets of Yellowknife when, in 1973, the Dene Chiefs took their case to court (personal communication). The organization's early staff gave themselves the widest possible mandate C younger Dene being influenced by "Indian" and popular citizen movements, and the Elder leaders persisting in their customary role. Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation accomplished some extraordinary successes, being especially effective with single-focus issues, like the Mackenzie Valley pipeline, which Dene from all regional cultures could support.

Consensus among the different Dene cultures on unified approaches to issues has been rare. Unity was stressed during the formative years, partly from the sheer exuberance of reviving Dene identity and discovering common causes. Unity was essential for a "peoples' movement", as heard clearly in the rhetoric of what the Dene involved expressed as their struggle. The pressure in the 1970s to unite Dene and Métis was needful, if provocative, since not all Dene nor all Métis were persuaded of the need and government authorities for Indian Affairs at the time were not supportive of non-Treaty people. Unity was a useful tool, but tended to camouflage cultural diversity. As noted before, distinct regions within the Dene Nation are not recent political developments, but have existed culturally for many generations. As issues confronting the Dene became increasingly localized and multi-focused, the cultural regions responded differently C just as First Nations throughout Canada are developing discrete arrangements for, for instance, wildlife management or self-government. Reasons or pressures for maintaining Dene unity within a single political organization C in order to articulate responses or to plan pro-active strategies C are not as persuasive at this time.

The overall effectiveness of the Dene Nation as an organization is reflected through the evident respect C in both aboriginal and non-aboriginal senses C with which it is regarded, in particular by other First Nations and other Indigenous Peoples. The political proficiency of the Dene is readily indicated by the many individuals who have moved from the National Office into every kind of formal institution in the western NWT, as well as in Edmonton and Ottawa. Former Dene Nation leaders and employees are now elected Chiefs and MLAs; trainers and educators; and program co-ordinators or managers for community or tribal councils, for ongoing land negotiations, for non-political organizations, and for the Grand Council Treaty 8 and the Assembly of First

Nations. While inconsistent funding has resulted in less effective distribution of information, Dene with skills learned in the National Office have become catalysts for awareness building, capacity development, and strategic planning elsewhere in Denendeh.

Perceptions of the organization's scope from within the Dene Nation have changed as the needs of the membership and the capabilities of the leadership have altered. The organization's constitutional mandate has been tinkered with but not drastically altered since 1970. However, there has been a recurring preoccupation with changes to the structure and the styles of management to meet internal demands (eg, IBNWT 1972 General Assembly minutes; Dene Nation 1979b, c, 1980b, 1984d, 1986a & b, and 1991). People who study membership-based organizations point out that internal assessment is essential for the organization to adjust to the evolving needs of its members (ie, Shragge 1990). Dene Nation self-assessments, from this perspective, were healthy attempts to improve the ability of the organization to reflect rapid changes in the Dene communities and regions.

These reviews, however, have been construed by outsiders C notably northern media C and often by some Dene as signs of the organization's incompetence or inability to represent its members. On the strength of the establishment of the most recent Review Committee, local media prophesied the demise of the Dene Nation in 1992 and again in 1993, rather than commending the organization for trying to improve itself.

Dene Nation self-assessments or reviews were thorough, but tended to focus on organization charts and job responsibilities, perhaps experimenting with Canadian-style structures and procedures.

However, these assessments generally neglected to consider whether the constitutional mandate and Assembly directives were followed up, whether structures and responsibilities encouraged accountability or authentically Dene ways to operate, or whether the programs offered or the processes through which staff worked were effective. Only the 1993 Review Committee examined some of these issues; its findings were reported to the Royal Commission's Intervenor Program.

National Office staff, in general, have been effective in maintaining critical awareness of relevant issues, developing political acuity, and giving voice to Dene aspirations. The early years are marked by the intensity of staff efforts to analyze circumstances, devise strategies, match funding sources to the organization's plans, and distribute analytical skills and information outward to the leadership and communities. Programs run by the National Office, notably those in the past decade, have tended to be project-driven based on the submission of individual funding proposals. Thus, programs provided were those deemed acceptable to external agencies that agreed to fund them. This ad-hoc and incremental approach to managing programs, by comparison to the planned strategies of the earlier years, seems less intently linked to the goals of the constitutional mandate and to specific Assembly directives. The organization has yet to develop consistent and, preferably, qualitative ways to show its effectiveness. Having been able to evaluate its effectiveness would have been useful for the Dene Nation not only to detect administrative or process weaknesses and fix them, but also to demonstrate to its membership and to external funding sources what progress it had been making. Still, formal Dene organizations have been in existence only a brief time and may yet develop measures of their efficacy.

PART FOUR: SUMMARY

Determining the Dene Future

Dene Nation leaders for the past 25 years have sought the means to self-determination. For them, self-determination is a gathered bundle of long-held ideas and practices encompassing self-reliance (rather than dependency), collective collaboration (rather than individual consumption), spiritual inheritance (rather than propertied estates), and holistic well being for individuals, families, communities, and Nations (rather than assimilation). For the NWT Dene, a Canadian-style town rather than the land of their ancestors has been "home" and "community" for less than four decades. Self-determination is not a dim memory. It is not surprising that, through their political organization, the Dene have been such strong, persistent, and outspoken advocates for a return to their former autonomy.

In some senses, changing circumstances in the western NWT represent what is happening in the rest of Canada. Federal and Territorial authorities have been haggling over the distribution of their jurisdictional powers, while they both assume that First Nations will settle for being handed delegated authority within the European-based system. First Nations continue to press for recognition of their existing authority to govern themselves and to determine the style, pace, and values of their own development. Some First Nations (such as the Sechelt, Inuit, and some NWT Dene) have opted for a form of public or delegated-municipal form of government as their aboriginal self-government. (See Boldt 1993 for a comprehensive discussion of the risks.) In the self-government debate in the NWT, one hears the underlying clash between the pressures to modernise and the aspirations to develop in authentically aboriginal ways.

Many observers C particularly in the northern media C characterise the current situation of the Dene Nation as a fractured organization that is a ghost of its former spirited self. Many of these observers also claim that, since so many of the Dene regions seem to be supporting some form of unsegregated delegated local government, the proponents of public government for the western NWT C among them a former Dene Nation President C have won. This might suggest, ironically, that the Dene whose protest against the 1969 White Paper resulted in the formation of the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation now seem to be in favour of the White Paper's objectives. Even if this stance is rationalized as the unwilling acceptance that no other option is being offered, this abrupt about-face seems improbable.

During the 1980s, when the Western Constitutional Forum was active, the Dene Nation supported public government (ie, DN/MANWT 1981). At that time, the combined Dene and Métis populations outnumbered the non-aboriginal population, and prospects for the uneasy Dene/Métis unity remained optimistic, if unrealistic. Their adherence to public government was linked to land settlements. Since the 1973 *Statement on Claims* C the federal government's self-protective response to the *Calder* judgment C Indian Affairs negotiators, as their opening and final positions, have negotiated public or delegated-municipal forms of government as the self-government component of "claims". This has been uniformly applied to "claims" in the NWT, as DIAND officials reported in their paper to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples on the evolution of northern governments (DIAND 1993b). The self-government component of the

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Agreement-in-Principle was one of those included for renegotiation in the 1988 Hay River Assembly motion (see Appendix A of this report). However, Gwich'in and Sahtú regions, settling their "claims" based on the 1990 Dene/Métis initialled Final Agreement, have agreed to a form of self-government within the framework of public government.

Preliminary evidence demonstrates that self-government proposals emanating from these regions may disappoint observers looking for conventional municipal models. Proposals such as the Inuvialuit-Gwich'in Dene-Métis approach for Inuvik are highly autonomous, reflecting aboriginal authenticity and little perceived role for central (ie, Territorial) administration. Local First Nation councils have not been fooled by federal or Territorial policies, such as the Community Transfer Initiative, or ongoing programs that are suddenly re-labelled "community based". In practice, they mean that highly paid and professionally trained federal or Territorial public servants devise programs, and expect under-resourced local administrations to accept responsibility for them while receiving no additional funding or expertise toward their efforts. Since such delegated authority has been a feature of northern administration for some years, most local Dene staff have become adept at adjusting external government plans to meet some of their immediate needs. But, given the extent of chronic neglect by external governments of local social and environmental circumstances, such juggling is however dextrous is never enough.

As noted earlier, the Dene have only in recent decades been exposed to EuroCanadian towns and governments. They have shown great agility in learning new ways as too often with tragic results as combining them with the teachings of their Elders, when those have been learned and understood. The 1969 White Paper galvanized the Dene leadership to unite under a formal structure, the Indian Brotherhood. Since then, many Elders, Chiefs, and Dene Nation staff have pulled themselves out of the shock resulting from relocation and enforced residential schooling. They have not simply objected to government imposition of EuroCanadian structures and procedures, but have prepared alternatives to the assumption that delegated styles of government would result in socio-economic advancement for their people. The Dene Nation has steadfastly resisted assimilation into a modern northern state. From the earliest days of the Indian Brotherhood, Dene leaders recognized that community development as their way of achieving self-determination as was the vital issue, and that self-government is only one tool to move the Dene along the path toward it.

Calls from all Dene regions for the highest forms of citizen participation for First Nations as self-government as are consistent with those heard elsewhere in Canada. Individuals leading and staffing Dene organizations have made tremendous gains in a very short time. On Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation (see page 59), they have climbed from being limited to the lowest rung to having their aspirations for the highest rung taken seriously. The Dene have not resorted to violence or civil disobedience to accomplish change. Their contribution has been to demand that the Canadian polity grant equitable, genuine participation to its aboriginal citizens within their homelands: not just "consultation" nor "partnership", but recognition and implementation of their inherent right to legal political authority.

PART FOUR: SUMMARY

The principles of the most highly participatory forms of community development took firm root among the Dene involved from the earliest days of the Indian Brotherhood. Logically, the attraction to these principles for the Dene would seem to be the ease with which they fit or could be linked to the customary ways of Dene decision making, conflict resolution, and self-determination. Subsequently, when individuals left the Dene National Office and returned to their local or tribal councils, they took these principles with them. As a result of this distribution of political acuity from the National Office, every region of Denendeh continues to advocate community development in some form. Since the mid-1980s, each cultural region has been preparing its unique approaches to self-government, so that local people can determine their own development according to their own terms. This is likely to be the long-lasting legacy of the broad scope and analytical effectiveness of the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation.

Many observers now confuse the Dene Nation, the original inhabitants of Denendeh, with the Dene Nation, the political organization formed to unite the different Dene cultures against organized government assimilation. At present, the Dene in Denendeh collectively may not feel inclined to give the kind of guidance they once did to the national political organization that has continually drawn the hostile wrath of non-Dene governments. But the Dene as Indigenous Nations have not diminished. The Dene as Indigenous Nations have not lost their commitment to recovering their autonomous self-determination: the processes for doing so are continuing separately, in ways that are suitable for each cultural region. Interest in healing and cultural revitalization is everywhere, and self-confidence among Dene members is spreading. Younger Dene in greater numbers appeal to Assemblies for the opportunity to learn their own language, to learn the ways the Elders can show them, to begin to understand what their Elders know.

The energies and attention of the Dene leadership have shifted away from the single central political organization to focus instead on strengthening and transforming their local and tribal councils into governments. Considering that no Dene Band in the NWT had any funding until the Indian Brotherhood lobbied for and obtained it in 1972, it is remarkable that such a transformation is receiving supportive attention only 20 years later. What the Dene may achieve C separately within their cultural regions, or collectively C in the next 25 years is likely to be just as remarkable, just as worthwhile to watch unfolding.

Dene Nation: An Analysis

appendices

- A The 1988 Joint Dene/Métis Assemblies Hay River Motion
To Improve the Agreement-in-Principle
- B Dene Cultural Institute Elders Council Guiding Principles
- C Comprehensive Chronology of Dene History

people consulted

materials consulted

appendices

A The 1988 Joint Dene/Métis Assemblies Hay River Motion To Improve the Agreement-in-Principle

MOTION NO. 15

**DENE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
HAY RIVER RESERVE, N.W.T. / XAH O DEH, DENENDEH
JULY 04~~B~~11, 1988**

WHEREAS aboriginal rights were never surrendered in Treaties 8 and 11 or the related Scrip Agreements, and they cannot be taken away in the future; and

WHEREAS the Dene are committed to implementing their aboriginal rights; and

WHEREAS the Dene national Assembly has discussed the AIP; and

WHEREAS through the Iqaluit Agreement, agreements on political rights including the following have been reached between Dene/Metis and the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories which bear directly or indirectly on aspects of the AIP, and these negotiations have been held with the full support of the Federal Government:

"... the (two) constitutions (of the Northwest Territories) must recognize, affirm and guarantee the unique rights of the Inuit, Dene, Metis and Inuvialuit, including their land claims rights and their rights of self-government"

"... communities should have control over those matters which affect them exclusively and they should have input and influence over those decisions which affect them as well as others"

"Aboriginal rights relating to language, culture and any other political rights which are not included in claims agreements shall be entrenched in the constitution and means shall be found to help ensure that all aboriginal rights are protected"

"There shall be a guarantee of aboriginal participation in government and significant impact on decision-making in the future, including perhaps exclusive aboriginal jurisdictions in limited areas of concern to aboriginal people; the focus would be on cultural matters and on the special relationship that exists between aboriginal peoples and the land, and the political protections required to ensure its maintenance"

continued ... 1988 Joint Dene/Métis Assemblies Hay River Motion To Improve the AIP

DENE NATION: AN ANALYSIS

"The constitution or those parts which address each of these principles and objectives must not be amendable without the approval of aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples"

"It is intended that, if negotiations toward a western constitution succeed, they will result in a constitution whose relevant sections are designed to constitute, together with provisions in land claims agreements, the definitions of aboriginal self-government in the western jurisdiction. Any such definition must fully reflect any right of self-government held by Dene, Metis, and Inuvialuit"

WHEREAS the attached conditions, together with acceptable sections of the proposed AIP, are consistent with the Federal Government's Comprehensive Claims policy and the negotiating mandates of the Dene/Metis;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT

1. The Dene National Assembly hereby informs the Government of Canada that it has mandated its appropriate signatories to sign the AIP when the Government of Canada agrees, in the AIP, to negotiate or renegotiate the matters set out in Appendix A.
2. The Government of Canada is hereby given notice of the attached instructions to the Dene/Metis negotiators, as set out in Appendix B.
3. The Government of Canada is hereby given notice that the Dene will not ratify a Final Agreement until it is fully satisfied with the results of the negotiations of Aboriginal self-government for the Dene/Metis.

MOVED BY: Gabe Hardisty, Voting Delegate, Wrigley, N.W.T.

SECONDED BY: Francois Paulette, Voting Delegate, Fort Smith, N.W.T.

PASSED: July 10, 1988

continued ... 1988 Joint Dene/Métis Assemblies Hay River Motion To Improve the AIP

APPENDIX A [of Motion No. 15/1988]

[ie, Items Dene/Metis wanted negotiated or renegotiated; numbers refer to AIP articles]

1. Political Rights

- a) Self-government (3.1.24; 25.8.1)
- b) Laws of General Application (3.1.18; 28.1.1(c))
- c) Jurisdiction of Boards (13.3.1; 13.10.1; 13.10.2; 28.1.1(a); 28.2.5; 28.3.1; 28.4.1(a))

2. Dene/Metis Lands

- a) Remaining Aboriginal Title on Dene/Metis Lands (3.1.9(a)(i); 3.9(b); 21.1.1)
- b) Dene/Metis Lands in Alberta (new item)
- c) Status as Indian Lands (21.1.14)
- d) Public and Commercial Access (22.1.6; 22.2.1; 22.2.4; 22.4.1; 22.4.3)
- e) Changes to Municipal Boundaries (25.6)
- f) Selection Criteria (21.1.7; 21.1.8)
- g) Band/Local Ownership (5.1.2)
- h) Water Rights (27.1.7; 21.1.3; new items)
- i) Taxation on Dene/Metis Lands (11.4; 11.5.1; 11.5.2)

3. Land and Water Management

- a) Relationship between Boards and Minister (16.5.3; 28.2.10; 28.4.2(b))
- b) Terms for Implementation (28)
- c) Impact Review (28.3.6; 28.3.7)
- d) Land Use Planning (28.2.11)

4. Renewable Resources

- a) Legislative Restrictions on Harvesting Rights (13.3.2; 13.3.6; 14.1.3)
- b) Other Government Restrictions on Harvesting Rights (13.4.14; 14.1.4(b); 15.1.3(b); 16.8.1; 17.1.5)
- c) Harvesting Compensation (14.1.8(d); 15.1.7(d); 20)
- d) Wildlife Management Board (13.10.5; 13.10.14; 13.10.10; 13.10.28; 13.10.31; new item)
- e) Economic Measures related to Harvesting (new item; 12.1.2; 12.1.4)

5. General Provisions

- a) Interpretation Clauses (3.1.15; 3.1.16)
- b) Indemnity Clause (3.1.12)
- c) Surrender of Rights South of 60 (3.1.9(a)(1))
Protection of Non-Resident Rights (new item)

DENE NATION: AN ANALYSIS

continued ... 1988 Joint Dene/Métis Assemblies Hay River Motion To Improve the AIP

APPENDIX A [of Motion No. 15/1988]

[ie, Items Dene/Metis wanted negotiated or renegotiated; numbers refer to AIP articles]

6. Settlement Corporations: Permitted Activities (11, Annex A)

7. Language and Incidental Amendments

APPENDIX B [of Motion No. 15/1988]

INSTRUCTIONS TO NEGOTIATORS

1. Political Rights

a) Self-Government

The Final Agreement should recognize the continuing opportunity of the Dene/Metis to achieve recognition of their right to self-government through the Constitutional Alliance process or its successor. The Agreement should also recognize the Principles for Constitutional Development agreed upon by the Dene/Metis and Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories through the Iqaluit Agreement.

b) & c) Laws of General Application, & Jurisdiction of Boards

These clauses must be made to the results of the political rights negotiations. The Agreement should allow for Dene/Metis jurisdiction over wildlife and land and water management on Dene/Metis lands.

2. Dene/Metis Lands

a) Retaining Aboriginal Title on Dene/Metis Lands

Aboriginal title on Dene/Metis lands should not be surrendered.

b) Dene/Metis Lands in Alberta

Provisions for Alberta land in the vicinity of Fort Fitzgerald and satisfactory to the South Slave Region should be negotiated.

continued ... 1988 Joint Dene/Métis Assemblies Hay River Motion To Improve the AIP

APPENDIX B [of Motion No. 15/1988]

continued ... **INSTRUCTIONS TO NEGOTIATORS**

c) Status as Indian Lands

Dene/Metis lands should remain federal Indian lands under the Constitution Act, s.91(24) unless otherwise agreed in the political rights negotiations.

d) Public and Commercial Access

The access provisions should not permit commercial fishermen or outfitters to use Dene/Metis lands without charge or other reasonable terms set by the Dene/Metis.

The application of public access rights should be identified in land selections.

Public access across Dene/Metis lands to reach places of recreation should only be by public roads or with consent of Dene/Metis consent.

Pre-existing commercial access rights should only be extended in any way where there is a legal right to renew or extend such rights, or with Dene/Metis consent.

No building of roads or airstrips without Dene/Metis consent should be permitted except by expropriator, unless specifically agreed upon during land selection.

Except as public access, there should be no access across Dene/Metis lands to neighbouring lands for "commercial purposes", without Dene/Metis consent.

e) Changes to Municipal Boundaries

Changes affecting Dene/Metis lands should not be made without Dene/Metis consent, or by the expropriation process.

f) Selection Criteria

The clauses requiring that lands be of average value and topography, and that lands be set aside for public community purposes should be dropped.

g) Band/Local Ownership

The Agreement should recognize that Dene/Metis may hold title to their lands through the Band/Local.

DENE NATION: AN ANALYSIS

continued ... 1988 Joint Dene/Métis Assemblies Hay River Motion To Improve the AIP

APPENDIX B [of Motion No. 15/1988]

continued ... INSTRUCTIONS TO NEGOTIATORS

h) Water Rights

The Dene/Metis should be able to own part of the waterbed of a river or lake. Compensation should be payable by authorized users of water if their authority did not specifically permit the damage caused.

Dene/Metis ownership of water on Dene/metis lands should be negotiable.

Hydro revenues should be negotiable as part of the resource revenue sharing, and leading to an increased share of resource revenue in the AIP.

i) Taxation on Dene/Metis Lands

Tax-free activity on Dene/Metis lands should be negotiable.

3. Land and Water Management

a) Relationship between Boards and Minister

This should be set out in the Final Agreement. Ministerial review should only be by disallowance.

b) Terms for Implementation

These should be set out in the Final Agreement.

c) Impact Review

There should only be one review process, with 50 : 50 Dene/Metis and government representation.

d) Land Use Planning

Plans should be binding on government agencies and users of the land.

4. Renewable Resources

a) Legislative Restrictions on Harvesting Rights

There should be no such restrictions except as are necessary.

Reference to restrictions under the Migratory Birds Act should be removed.

continued ... 1988 Joint Dene/Métis Assemblies Hay River Motion To Improve the AIP

APPENDIX B [of Motion No. 15/1988]

continued ... **INSTRUCTIONS TO NEGOTIATORS**

b) Other Limits

Limits on Dene/Metis harvesting of trees where it would conflict with authorized activities on Crown lands should be removed. Park management plans should not be allowed to override Dene/Metis harvesting of trees.

The protected area clause should be deleted.

The arbitration clause should be deleted.

c) Harvesting Compensation

Compensation should be payable for losses relating to all renewable resources. It should be based on loss of opportunity as well as past use. It should be payable on a family or community basis.

d) Wildlife Management Board

The Minister should not select the chair; the Dene/metis component of the quorum should be in the Agreement, and Dene/Metis Board Members should not be removed without Dene/Metis consent.

The Minister should not be entitled to change an interim decision of the Board.

Negotiations respecting the Boards responsible for land and water management should also be based on these instructions.

Ownership and management of a herd of free-roaming bison in the Slave River Lowlands should also be negotiable.

e) Economic Measures related to Harvesting

There should be negotiation regarding income tax and other taxes on activities related to traditional harvesting. In the Economic Measures section, government's commitments should be binding, and reform of existing programs should be required where necessary.

DENE NATION: AN ANALYSIS

continued ... 1988 Joint Dene/Métis Assemblies Hay River Motion To Improve the AIP

APPENDIX B [of Motion No. 15/1988]

continued ... INSTRUCTIONS TO NEGOTIATORS

5. General Provisions

a) Interpretation Clauses

The clause requiring that doubt should not be settled in favour of either party should be removed. The clause permitting the Final Agreement to be used to assist in understanding settlement legislation should also refer to the Treaties.

b) Indemnity Clause

The indemnity clause should be removed.

c) Surrender of Rights South of 60; Protection of Non-Resident Rights

Aboriginal rights and all Treaty rights south of 60, outside Wood Buffalo National Park should not be surrendered.

Dene/Metis in the Provinces should not be prejudiced by the provisions of the Final Agreement.

6. Settlement Corporations: Permitted Activities

This entire part should be reviewed. If it is kept, the Final Agreement should clearly state that the Settlement corporations will not be requested to spend money on programs and services that should be provided by the Government of Canada or the Government of the Northwest Territories.

7. Language and Incidental Amendments

Amendments which follow from the changes noted above, but which are not mentioned, should be made in the Final Agreement.

Prior to the Final Agreement, there should be a comprehensive review of the wording of the Agreement, to make it more precise, and to clarify government's commitments.

B Dene Cultural Institute Elders Council Guiding Principles

1. Serve as a **RESOURCE CENTRE** for individuals and communities who want to do something for themselves.
2. **PROMOTE THE PRACTICES OF CULTURE** within our people and communities: don't just talk about it.
3. **DEVELOP MODELS AND EXAMPLES** of what can be done by people to strengthen their language and Culture.
4. **SHARE** with other people and communities the models, examples, and experience that have been developed.
5. Don't **WASTE TIME AND ENERGY** always reacting to others.
6. Always keep this goal in mind: **TO KEEP CULTURE ALIVE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.**
7. **ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT** those who are practising our Culture.
8. Help our own people **UNDERSTAND AND RECOGNIZE** the value of our own Culture.
9. **HELP NON-DENE** understand and recognize the value of Dene Culture.
10. **ELDERS** hold the knowledge of our Culture and must be part of decisions and plans for the future.
11. Work in **PARTNERSHIP** with others who share our cultural survival goals.
12. Find **ANSWERS** to modern problems from our own Culture, and take these answers and adapt them to modern times.
13. Don't forget our **RESPONSIBILITIES** given to us by the **CREATOR** to take care of each other and the land and animals.
14. Give **LEADERSHIP** through living examples not by talk.

DENE NATION: AN ANALYSIS

continued ... Guiding Principles Established by the Denendeh Elders Council for the Dene Cultural Institute

15. Don't make decisions for people. Help them **MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS**.
16. Try **NOT TO DEPEND TOO MUCH ON GOVERNMENT** because you give them power to control you.
17. Don't ask other for **RIGHTS**. Your rights will be recognized sooner or later if you practice them.
18. **PRACTICE DENE SELF-GOVERNMENT** in the way you work with our people and the way you relate to others.
19. Be **KIND** to each other and **LOVE** each other.
20. **TRUST** Dene Culture. It has worked well for us for thousands of years.
21. Don't try to become **LIKE WHITE PEOPLE** just because you believe their way is better.
22. **SHARE OUR WAYS** with others. They may want to learn from them.

**THESE PRINCIPLES SHOULD GUIDE ANY AND ALL DENE
ORGANIZATIONS AT THE COMMUNITY, REGIONAL,
AND TERRITORIAL LEVELS**

Reprinted from Dene Cultural Institute newsletter.

C Comprehensive Chronology of Dene History

SHELLY: PLEASE ADD THE MOST UP-TO-DATE LIST FROM THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL REPORT. *MAHSI* SUSAN

DENE NATION: AN ANALYSIS

people consulted

The Dene Nation and the authors of this report are grateful to the individuals who took time to be interviewed for this study:

George Blondin, Dene Cultural Institute Elders Council and a former Vice-President of the Dene Nation

Mona (Jacob) Fox, founding Interim President, Indian Brotherhood of the NWT

Bill Erasmus, current National Chief of the Dene Nation

Georges Erasmus, former manager of Community Development Program and former President of the Indian Brotherhood of the NWT/Dene Nation

Stephen Kakfwi, former President of the Dene Nation

Ethel Liske, Executive Director, Dene Nation, and on staff since 1981

Barney Masuzumi, Environment Department Manager of the Dene Nation and former assistant to Indian Brotherhood President, early 1970s

Kevin O'Reilly, former Executive Assistant to Dene National Chief and Land-Use Planning Co-ordinator of Dene Nation, and resource person to Dene/Métis Negotiations Secretariat

The researchers are grateful, too, to past and present Chiefs and Dene Nation staff who gave attentive and thoughtful responses to our questions posed informally, many of which we asked before we were certain we would be doing this study. From such discussions, we were able to build coherent atmospheres for events at which we were not present. We appreciate the endless patience of National Office staff in helping us place documents or events within a suitable context and, at times, to relate materials to one another. We regret we were not able to quote you all.

Thanks are due the Finance Department of the National Office for their assistance in the administration of this study with the Royal Commission, despite the lack of recognition or compensation from Commission staff for these efforts.

Without unlimited access to the written and taped records in the Dene Nation Library/Archives, this study could not have been undertaken. To all past Indian Brotherhood and Dene Nation staff, who have faithfully recorded events and carefully retained administrative materials that are now part of this archive: *Mahsi cho!*

m a t e r i a l s c o n s u l t e d

NOTE: The following materials include documents reviewed from the Dene Nation Library/Archives as well as scholarly literature that contributed to the contextual background against which the history of the Indian Brotherhood/Dene Nation has been analyzed. **Please note that any documents we have viewed from the administrative archives remain confidential to the organization.** We do not quote from them in the text of the report.

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