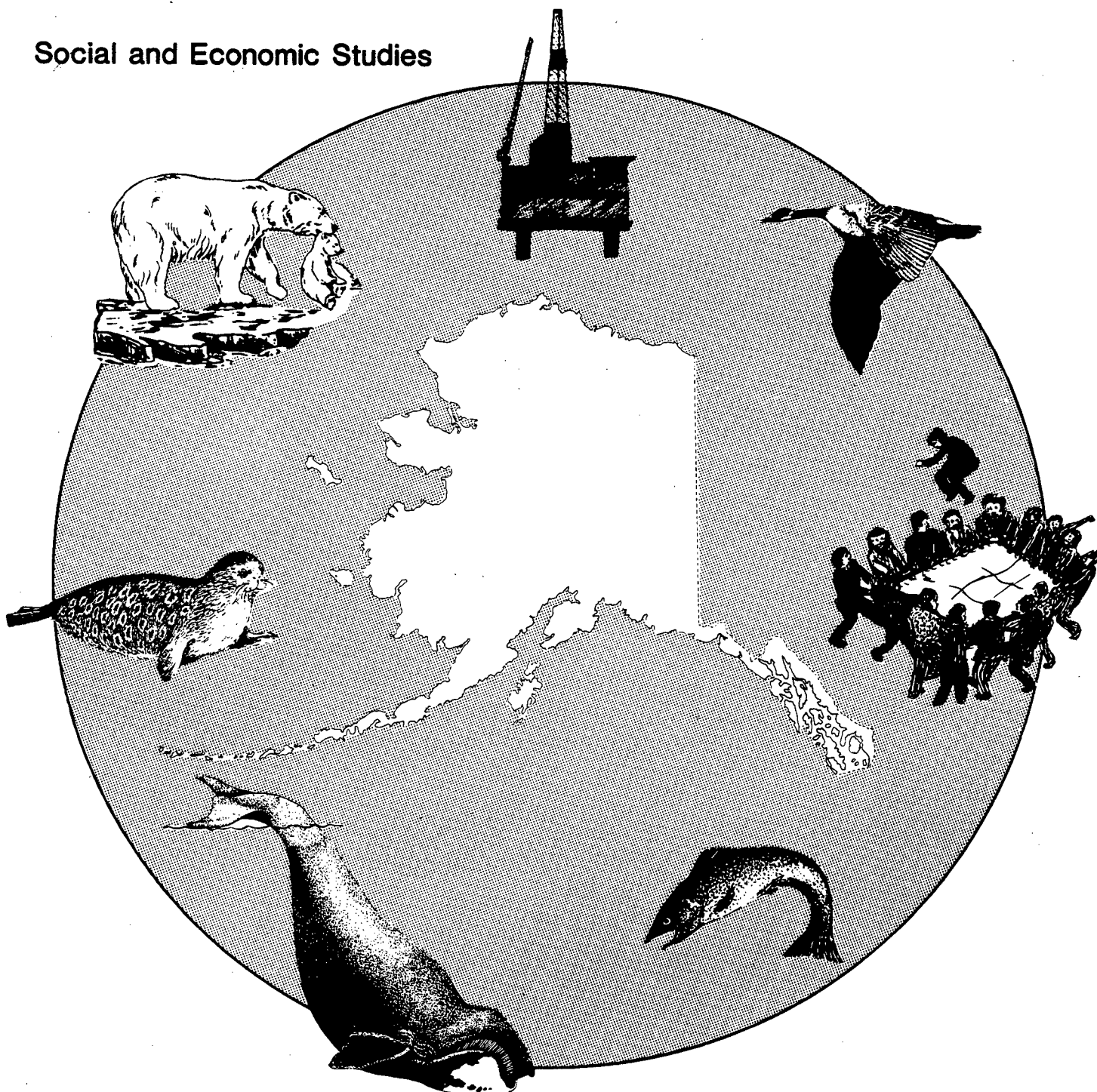


# Hope Basin Socioeconomic Baseline Study Volume II

Social and Economic Studies



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**FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT SUMMARY**

**HOPE BASIN SOCIOECONOMIC BASELINE STUDY**

**Volume II**

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Hope Basin Socioeconomic Baseline Study Volume III

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## FOREWORD

This Summary is a condensation of the much lengthier Final Technical Report for the Hope Basin Socioeconomic Baseline Study. For the sake of brevity, the summary omits the voluminous supporting tabular data and graphics, textual details and bibliographic citations that are included in the full Technical Report. Readers who wish to examine the detailed supporting documentation are referred to the Technical Report.

## CHAPTER 1 SUMMARY: ANALYSIS OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

### Historic Overview of Post-1900 Regional Economic Development

The Northwest Arctic Borough's (NAB) present economy is the culmination of a lengthy and faltering process of economic modernization that began at the end of the nineteenth century. Early explorers, whalers, traders and miners first introduced the region to western ways and goods. The first two decades of this century were a busy era of thriving, enterprising Alaska Native adaptation. Contemporary census data showed that Iñupiat of the Kobuk River Valley and Kotzebue Sound perimeter ranked among the highest of all Alaska Native tribal groups in rates of school attendance, English fluency and literacy. Also, this region's indigenous population gravitated toward stable, permanent settlements earlier than any other regions of western Alaska.

This developmental impetus flagged when mining and trapping slumped. Private economic development lapsed and the basis for the region's economic evolution gradually shifted from commercial enterprise toward governmental services. The post-World War II emergence of Kotzebue as the region's administrative, commercial and transportation hub was a key developmental step.

### Wage Employment

Nineteen-seventy was a benchmark year in the NAB's recent economic development. Thereafter, several momentous events transformed the regional economy: Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act passage; trans-Alaska pipeline construction;

development of the rural secondary school system; the State of Alaska's oil income boom/bubble/bust; massive federal and state investment in community infrastructure; and "Nativization" of political and administrative control of rural governmental institutions.

Post-1970 statistics show the NAB region's increasing reliance on wage work and the cash economy. Between 1970 and 1987, wage employment growth grew 170 percent, substantially exceeding the growth of population (+47%), working age population (+70%), and households (+73%). By 1987, many more residents worked for wages; more working-age people joined the wage labor force; and wage work contributed to the livelihood of more households.

Meanwhile, the wage employment disparities between the NAB's developing economy and the more mature state and national economies narrowed. By 1987 the NAB's ratio of wage earners per household roughly equaled state and national figures. Still, because of larger households, many more people depend on fewer jobs for cash income at least through the late 1980s.

In the early 1970s, the region's wage employment showed a pronounced seasonal pattern, but its annual employment cycle is now more stable than the state's and much flatter than the decidedly seasonal cycle of Bristol Bay/Lower Kuskokwim/Lower Yukon commercial fishing communities or Nome's mining and tourist economy. Still, for many unskilled workers summer provides the seasonal "window of opportunity" for wage employment.



The state's recent economic recession affected the NAB less severely than Anchorage or Fairbanks. The region rebounded sooner and stronger than those regions, partly thanks to the stimulus of the Red Dog Mine project. The latest Alaska Department of Labor (ADOL) employment statistics show that the region's economic recession bottomed out in 1987 and is now experiencing a broad-based revival. Wage employment and earnings reached all-time highs in 1989 and in the first quarter of 1990.

### The Structure of Industry

Though wage employment tripled from 1970 to 1989, the industrial make-up of the region's wage employment remained relatively static. The public sector continued to dominate the job scene, accounting for 63 percent of wage employment in 1970, 66 percent by 1989. Nearly two decades of unprecedented public investment in community infrastructure, human resources and economic development did not stimulate emergence of a private economy.

The most prominent structural change from 1970 to 1988 occurred within the public sector as federal and local governments reversed their relative employment roles. In 1970 the federal government accounted for nearly 47 percent of all wage employment and nearly 75 percent of all public sector employment. By 1989 the federal government provided only less than 5 percent of all employment and less than 7 percent of governmental employment.

Meanwhile, local government employment jumped from an estimated 8 percent of the total in 1970 (the combined figure for state/local government employment was 16

percent, of which perhaps half was local government) to about 57<sup>1</sup> percent of total employment in 1989. By then, local government accounted for five-sixths of all public sector employment.

These statistics reflect three fundamental politico-administrative changes that transformed federal/state/local governmental relationships over the past two decades: more state and federal funds to support local government; transfer of educational authority first to state, then to local administration; and the shift to local or regional administration through grant or contract funds of numerous programs that formerly had been managed by federal and state agencies.

Surprisingly, even though the public sector dominated the region's wage employment, the percentage of governmental workers and public sector earnings compared to population was exceeded by some other urban and rural regions of the state. The region's gross imbalance in public/private employment was less because government jobs were so abundant, more because private jobs were so exceedingly scarce.

Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) earnings data by industrial sector also show that the region's economic structure has been relatively static since 1971. The long-standing weakness of the region's market production economy shows in the negligible role of private sector basic activities (agriculture/forestry/fisheries, mining and manufacturing) since 1971. Before the Red Dog Mine, the region virtually lacked industries producing export goods. The

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<sup>1</sup> This figure includes employees of nonprofit regional service agencies such as Maniilaq Association and Northwest Inupiat Housing Authority.

NAB's share of personal earnings from market sector export production totalled about one-quarter the statewide average, about one-fifth the national average and much less than any other Alaska census division. Per-capita earnings in 1987 from commodity-producing industry for the NAB was the lowest figure for any of Alaska's 23 census divisions and less than half the level for Alaska's poorest census division.

### Personal and Household Income

In the NAB region's mixed economy, noncash income is almost as vital to livelihood as cash income. Noncash income includes in-kind transfer income in the form of goods and services supplied by nonlocal governments, as well as subsistence income. As a rule, official income and consumption statistics generally ignore both in-kind transfer income and subsistence.

Cash and non-cash, or in-kind, income can each be subdivided into earned (e.g., wages) and unearned (e.g., transfer payments, dividends) cash income and earned (e.g., subsistence production) and unearned (e.g., subsidized health, educational, and housing services) in-kind income.

BEA personal income data indicate that total real per-capita cash income nearly doubled between 1971 and 1987, most of the gain occurring in the early 1970s. Meanwhile, the income gap between NAB and the state and nation narrowed, by 1987 reaching about 67 percent of the state figure and 79 percent of the national figure. By 1987, the NAB ranked in the 43rd percentile of U.S. counties in per-capita cash income. This rank suggests that the region's economy can no longer

be meaningfully characterized as "in transition" from a subsistence to a cash economy.

As of 1987, earnings were by far the region's most important of the three sources of personal income (earnings, transfer payments, and dividends and interest). Compared to state and nation, transfer payments are relatively more important in NAB; dividends and interest relatively less important.

Earned Cash Income. The basic sources for personal cash income data for NAB are the Alaska Department of Labor, the Internal Revenue Service and the federal Bureau of Economic Analysis. Their cash income data series are not directly comparable, but generally consistent once adjusted for their distinctive methodologies. All three data series combine data for Native and non-Native persons and households. Overwhelming circumstantial evidence indicates that non-Native incomes are much higher than Native incomes, but these data series unfortunately shed no light on that issue.

ADOL employment and payroll data for the NAB region from 1970 through 1988 show that, in real terms, annual payrolls tripled from \$12.6 million in 1970 to \$38.4 million by 1988, while average annual employment almost tripled from 641 in 1970 to 1,785 in 1988.

Regional payrolls declined steadily after 1984, dipping to a pre-1981 level by 1987. This retreat matches the general economic downturn that beset south-central, interior, and much of western Alaska after the early 1980s drop in state

petroleum revenues and the ensuing cutback in state outlays for pump-priming public expenditures.

BEA data on total personal cash income, including locally earned income, support several points about recent (1982-1987) trends in earnings. Personal income rose every year, but earned income flattened out after 1984 and wage and salary income actually declined. Meanwhile, earnings contributed a shrinking share of total personal income from 81 percent in 1982 down to 69 percent in 1987, while unearned income, mainly from transfer payments and dividends, continued to grow. Notable was an abrupt fourfold increase in proprietors' income beginning 1980.

IRS data for 1978 and 1981-1985 for NAB communities show that: wages are by far the main source (90 percent) of taxable cash income; Kotzebue, with only 44 percent of the region's population, captures about two-thirds of the region's wage income; and incomes vary widely among the region's communities. Kotzebue income levels were well above its satellite villages, but the NAB as a whole ranked near the bottom of the state's census areas.

For 1987, BEA estimated a modest net outflow (-2.7 percent) of earnings from the NAB, well below the statewide average outflow of -5.4 percent. Similarly, ADOL reports that the NAB region was among the lowest of the state's 23 census areas in its rates of nonresident workers and earnings.

Part of the region's workforce has traditionally sought seasonal and temporary employment outside the region, more so than most rural Alaska workers. Many NAB residents have worked away from home on projects such as pipeline construction,

fire-fighting, North Slope oilfield employment, Red Dog Mine construction, and Exxon Valdez oil spill cleanup.

The NANA Regional Corporation (NANA) and its subsidiaries have become major employers of NANA shareholders, providing an average of 538 job opportunities for shareholders over the seven-year period 1982-1988. In 1989 NANA's combined enterprises produced 745 jobs and \$9.1 million in payroll earnings for residents and/or shareholders. In 1987, about one-third of NANA shareholder employment was based outside the region.

The Red Dog Mine is a major new source of resident employment. About one-third of construction-phase employees were region residents and almost 60 percent of mine operations positions were initially held by region residents. The mine operator, Cominco Alaska, estimates its annual payroll at about \$10 million, more than triple the region's total 1987 earnings--about \$3 million--from all commodity-producing industry (agriculture, fisheries, mining, construction, manufacturing).

Unearned Cash Income. Two sources of unearned cash income are transfer payments<sup>2</sup> and dividends, interest, and rent.

Transfer payments provided a fluctuating but substantial share of NAB total personal cash income from 1971 (24.2 percent) to 1987 (30.1 percent). The 1975

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<sup>2</sup>"Transfer payments" consist largely of cash payments for social security and other retirement benefits; medical and unemployment insurance benefits; income assistance programs; veterans benefits; and, in Alaska, permanent fund dividend and longevity bonus program payments.

figure (\$3,259 per-capita in constant 1982-84 dollars) actually was slightly higher than the 1987 figure (\$3,243). In current 1987 dollars, total per capita transfer payments reached \$3,697 for the NAB, \$2,769 for the state, and \$2,368 for the nation. Two unique Alaska transfer programs account for most of the difference between NAB and national figures is accounted for by Alaska's unique permanent fund and longevity bonus programs.

Overall, NAB residents are not inordinately depend on public income assistance programs. In 1987, NAB residents received \$2,526 per capita in income assistance (about 5.5 percent of total personal income), compared to the nation average of \$2,197.

"Dividends, interest and rent" became a more important income source to NAB residents between 1971 and 1987, rising from \$47 to \$866 per capita and from about 2.0 percent to 7.1 percent of total personal income. Still, residents' income from "dividends, interest and rent" falls well below state averages and even further below national averages.

In-kind or noncash transfer income consists mainly of goods and services provided or subsidized by nonlocal governments. Important examples of in-kind transfer income in the NAB include public education; health and housing services; subsidized energy; and most public works and services.

In 1986 and 1987, noncash benefits conservatively measured by the cost of federal and state in-kind transfers (1986: \$65.1 million; 1987: \$61.3 million) nearly equalled the region's total personal cash income (1986: \$71.4 million; 1987:

\$72.6 million). Thus, consumption of in-kind goods and services provided by government almost matched the region's total income as personal cash income.

In FY 1989, federal expenditures and obligations in NAB totalled \$26,897,000, or about \$4,152 per capita, with grant awards comprising half this total. Per-capita federal expenditures were about 40 percent higher in the NAB than nationally.

Grant awards comprised the largest component (50.0 percent) of this federal outlay, followed by direct wages and salaries (18.7 percent), procurement contract awards (13.3 percent), direct cash payments to individuals (12.1 percent), and loan guarantees and insurance (5.5 percent). More than 94 percent of federal outlays in the region that year were for civilian purposes.

Direct cash payments (\$1,733 per capita) to persons were the most important expenditure type at the national level, but least important (\$513) in the NAB. Per-capita federal salaries were higher in the NAB (\$584 vs. \$281), reflecting the greater role of the federal government in direct delivery of services. For the NAB, federal grants and contracts (\$2,776, or 71.7 percent of the regional total) were the most important type of federal outlay, topping the national average (\$715 per capita, or 26.2 percent of national total).

The NAB's high level of federal grants, contracts, and salaries underscores the historic and continuing special involvement of the federal government in public facilities and services for Alaska Native communities. The disparities in the federal government's national and regional outlays imply fundamentally different



political and administrative relationships. At the national level the federal government typically sends entitlement checks; for the NAB, the federal government sends grants and services.

In FY 1988, state and federal governments funded 95 percent of the NAB school district's operating costs, with the major part of the "local contribution" actually stemming from investment earnings on state grant fund advances held on deposit by the school district. All NAB school district facilities have been constructed with state or federal grant funds. Between FY 1979 and FY 1990, state school construction grants totalled \$52,389,500, or an average of \$5.3 million annually. Two other state-funded public institutions provide post-secondary educational and training services at a cost approximating one million dollars annually.

Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development public housing subsidies for the years 1986 through 1988 ranged from \$7.4 million to \$8.8 million annually.

The Alaska Area Native Health Service provides free medical care services to qualifying Alaska Natives. Federal FY 1989 expenditures for in-region health care programs was \$7,303,376 or a per-capita expenditure of \$1,230. This is a conservative measure of the cost of subsidized health care for the region's residents omits state health services and health services provided by referral hospitals outside the region.

The State's Power Cost Equalization Program subsidized NAB communities for FY 1983 through FY 1989 in amounts ranging from \$1.1 million to \$1.6 million. The

federal Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program provided lesser subsidies. The State provided capital grants for electrification and fuel storage facilities totalling \$4.4 million from FY 1981 to FY 1990.

For the eight-year period FY 1983-1990 the region received \$95,060,761 in state capital grants for local facilities, projects, and programs or an annual average of \$11,882,595. The largest grant amounts were earmarked for transportation improvements (\$26.7 million), educational facilities (\$18.9 million) and water and sewer facilities (\$15.4 million). Substantial capital funds also were awarded for energy projects (\$4.6 million) and erosion control (\$4.6 million).

The region's local governments obtain funds under the State Revenue Sharing and Municipal Assistance Programs to defray costs of local government services. Since FY 1985, these grants have totalled from about \$1.5 to \$1.8 million annually.

The prominence of noncash transfer income profoundly affects the region's political and market economies and its economic culture. The conventional analysis that focusses on cash work, cash income, and cash spending miss half of this region's livelihood.

For most Americans, consumption patterns result mainly from their personal spending choices in the marketplace and, secondarily, from public choices to authorize and fund governmental services. But in the NAB, nonlocal governments ultimately determine about half of what people consume. This arrangement gives

residents access to extra economic resources but at some cost to their personal and institutional economic and political autonomy.

In effect, the scope of the public in-kind transfer economy marks the bounds of the private commercial economy. How people spend their cash income in the marketplace depends on what basic needs are left unmet by housing, health care, utilities, and other governmental programs. These sorts of in-kind transfer income free up cash income to be spent in the private sector for other goods and services.

In-kind transfers have repercussions on the region's labor economy as well. Transfer programs that raise the region's standard of living induce persons to stay in the region who might have moved elsewhere for better living conditions. These persons add to the region's labor surplus.

Coincidentally, it may be speculated that government's dominant role in setting wage standards, subsidization of select goods and services for select consumers, and subsidization of select infrastructure costs ultimately impairs the operation of private sector labor, consumer, and production markets. Economic development strategies may tend to stress governmental intervention to subsidize jobs, infrastructure, and living standards to offset market disadvantages rather than a market-disciplined pursuit of entrepreneurial opportunities and improvements to efficiency and productivity.

## Household/Personal Consumption Expenditures

The 1985 Alaska Geographic Differential Study analyzed Alaska regional differences in household cash expenditure and consumption patterns and illustrated several important features of the NAB's cash and in-kind economy.

Prices in the NAB in 1985 were generally higher compared to Anchorage, especially for basic necessities such as food (159 percent of Anchorage base), transportation (145 percent), and shelter and shelter utilities (134 percent). Prices were higher for all other expenditure categories (recreation: 119 percent of Anchorage base; medical care: 108 percent; and miscellaneous expenses: 144 percent) except clothing (99 percent). These price differences account for part of the NAB's higher cost of living.

Two basic consumption categories (food and utilities) absorbed almost half (47 percent) of NAB disposable cash expenditures compared to the national average of 25 percent.

The amount of money and time that NAB households expend to put food on the table is a serious constraint on the region's economic development. Food prices (unlike housing, utility, and medical costs) are not significantly subsidized. NAB households spend more of their cash income (32 percent) for food than typical national (19 percent) households. They also spend more of their time at subsistence food production. In its food economy, the NAB has the worst of both economic systems: high food prices in the cash economy; low return on its

investment of time and money in the subsistence economy. Putting food on the table leaves relatively little money and time for other productive purposes.

Compared to national norms, NAB residents also spend more of their cash income for domestic energy and utilities and for transportation services, about the same for housing and clothing, and much less for medical care, recreation, and discretionary items.

Overall, this pattern of cash expenditures is consistent with regional economic conditions, especially the crucial contribution of government-provided goods and services to the region's material standard of living.

#### Workforce Characteristics

Nineteen-eighty census data illustrate basic differences between the Native and non-Native segments of the region's workforce. Many adult non-Natives workers are sojourners who come to the region to work; without jobs, they leave. They have extraordinarily high (86 percent) participation rates and low (4 percent) unemployment rates.

Working-age Natives, on the other hand, are comparatively immobile. They live in the region because it is their home and most stay regardless of economic hardships. Their labor force participation rate was low (44 percent) and their unemployment rate was high (29 percent). Alaska Native male unemployment (40 percent) was almost triple the Alaska Native female rate (15 percent).

There was a wide gap in Alaska Native participation in the wage economy between Kotzebue and the village residents. Fifty-four percent of Kotzebue's Alaska Native residents were in the labor force, but only 39 percent of village residents. Fewer Kotzebue residents were unemployed (18 percent vs. 38 percent), and nearly twice as many persons 16+ years old (44 percent vs. 24 percent) were employed.

For all age groups, male unemployment was substantially higher than female; indicating women have more success at filtering into the wage economy. Young adults of either sex had the highest unemployment rates.

Labor economists agree that official labor statistics systematically underreport labor force size and unemployment rates in rural Alaska. A recent ADOL study concluded that the standard unemployment rate for nonwhites was more than double the rate for whites; "discouraged workers" were ten times more frequent among nonwhites than whites; and the unemployment rate, including "discouraged workers," for nonwhites was triple the rate for whites.

These statistics suggest that rates of unemployment and "discouraged workers" are higher among rural Alaska Natives than among urban or non-Native Alaskans and that Alaska Native male workers experience higher rates of unemployment and far higher rates of "discouraged worker" status than Alaska Native females.

Labor economists distinguish between aggregate unemployment (too many workers for too few jobs) and structural unemployment (available labor does not match occupation mix of available jobs). Structural unemployment appears to underlie

NAB residents' stubbornly high unemployment and underemployment. Nineteen-eighty occupational and educational data showed a striking mismatch between the region's labor supply and demand. The job market was top-heavy in managerial and professional occupations, but the educational and skill levels of the resident Alaska Native workforce were below national, state, and regional figures for whites as well as Alaska Natives statewide.

Structural unemployment, perpetuated by the affinity of most residents for their home region and amplified by rapid growth in the resident workforce, helps explain several odd features of the region's labor market: the persistence of chronic resident unemployment along with substantial employment growth; very high indigenous unemployment coexisting with very low non-Native unemployment; rapid population growth despite high unemployment; and net emigration of Alaska Natives simultaneous with an influx of non-Natives.

#### Future Workforce and Employment

Much of the NAB region's economic progress from 1970 to 1990 stemmed from better opportunities for cash employment. The labor force grew rapidly, but the job market grew faster. Stronger demand for wage labor brought labor supply and demand into closer balance. Nevertheless, compared to a fully developed economy, the region still has an acute job deficit and falls short of normal employment ratios.

Future progress toward fuller employment depends partly on how fast the job pool grows compared to the pool of working-age residents, partly on such factors as

labor and occupational mobility, labor skills, participation rates, and population migration. To assess future resident employment prospects, we projected (a) the resident labor force by village and for the region for the years 1990, 1995, and 2000; and (b) future regional employment.

The region is projected to add nearly 600 residents to its working age population between 1990 and 2000, a net increase of about 17.4 percent over the decade. Young men newly entering the working-age group are likely to outnumber young females, partly because males currently outnumber females in each age group that will mature to working age by 2000. Also, more young adult females than males historically have tended to leave the region, while newcomers to the region disproportionately tend to be young adult males.

The projected rate of labor pool growth varies widely among communities, with Buckland, Selawik, and Ambler each projected to grow by more than 25 percent, but Noatak and Shungnak projected to increase less than 10 percent.

Both basic and support sector growth are likely to swell the NAB economy over the next decade. The Red Dog Mine will inject new private basic employment and earnings into the region's cash economy. Through the "economic multiplier," this new resident purchasing power will create more demand for goods and services already provided locally. Further, this new purchasing power, pooled with existing demand, may make it feasible to expand the selection of local goods and services. This would raise the value of the "economic multiplier" and improve the quality of life by enlarging the range of consumer choices open to residents.



Available employment statistics show that public sector employment has continued to grow strongly in recent years, despite often-voiced concern about federal and state budget reductions. For the future, it is expected that public sector employment will remain strong, partly because key services such as local education, health care and housing are relatively secure from major funding reductions.

The proposed Hope Basin OCS lease sale tentatively scheduled for 1992 extends from Point Hope in the north to Wales on the Seward Peninsula. It appears unlikely that OCS exploration activities resulting from the Hope Base Lease Sale (or any later development and production activities) would significantly boost employment of the region's indigenous labor force.

## CHAPTER 2 SUMMARY: EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

### Introduction

Formal education, training, and socialization for work are integral parts of the region's overall social, economic, and political development. This chapter discusses the role of region's educational institutions within the context of the region's overall development--mainly how the Northwest Arctic Borough prepares its young people to take advantage of and contribute to economic opportunities.

The development of the region's educational institutions can be divided into four distinct eras: the Federal Territorial Era (pre-1959); the Early Statehood Era (1959-69); the Alaska Pipeline Era (1970-79); and the Prudhoe Bay Era (1980-89). These four eras mark major changes in the institutional relationships among the federal government, the State of Alaska, and the Alaska Natives of the Northwest Arctic.

First, our approach to assessing school performance is briefly described, followed by a discussion of schools and education in each development era.

### Assessing School Performance

Education, labor supply and work are intertwined. Available work or labor demand typically influences the type of educational services offered. The supply of educated or trainable workers may influence employers' locational decisions.

If qualified workers are not locally available, employers will need to attract outside workers. Conversely, if residents cannot find suitable work within the region, they are apt to seek work elsewhere.

School performance can be usefully evaluated on four grounds: (1) What goes into education and training (resources, students, and community support)? (2) What are the educational goals, strategies, curriculum and performance rules? (3) What are the educational outcomes, including participation of local youths in the regional labor force? and (4) What are the major issues and opportunities related to education and work?

We assembled published information on the human and financial resources allocated to education and training, and the resulting levels of educational attainment and performance. That information was augmented by interviews with key local informants. Those informants identified and assessed major education and work issues and opportunities.

#### Federal Territorial Era (Pre-1959)

From 1867 to 1959, Alaska was a territory of the United States. The Organic Act of 1884 authorized education in the territory, but provided scant funds. At the close of the nineteenth century, the federal government's presence in the Northwest Arctic consisted largely of a few administrators posted to jobs related to mining activity. Missionaries first introduced formal Euro-American education to the Northwest region. Three missionaries from the California Yearly Meeting of Friends arrived in 1897. The federal government shipped supplies for the

first school building in Kotzebue in 1902. Forty-one students enrolled in school year 1903-1904.

The goals of schooling in those early years related to Christianity and to literacy in the English language. Students were disciplined for speaking Iñupiaq in school. Teachers exercised broad authority, viewing their role as civilizers of the Natives.

The federal Bureau of Education soon assumed operation of existing mission schools and established new ones, until responsibility was shifted to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in 1931. BIA policy favored transfer of schools to territorial government, but political considerations and lack of funds made this course impracticable. Darnell notes, "All but the last territorial commissioner of education, who served from 1952 to 1958, supported the policy that native education was the responsibility of the federal government."

BIA administered elementary education region-wide through the eighth grade, until the 1950s when the first two schools at Kobuk and Ambler were transferred to territorial control. There was no secondary education available in the villages for most of this period. A few select students were encouraged to go to high school and pursue a vocation. At first, high school students attended boarding schools outside Alaska, later Mount Edgecumbe school in southeast Alaska. In 1960, 820 students were enrolled in the region's school system, only 73 of them in high school.

## Early Statehood Era (1959-69)

During the first ten years of statehood, the new state government concentrated on establishing its administrative apparatus. Northwest Alaska remained part of rural Alaska's "unorganized" borough, with no regional government and few city governments. The region's lackluster post-statehood economic growth matched the fiscal austerity of the new state government, which had little revenue to support services in rural Alaska. BIA continued to operate the region's schools, even though the state constitution obliged state government to provide a system of public education for all its citizens.

The Friends Church opened a high school in Kotzebue for ninth and tenth grades in 1959 and operated until 1965. Then, completion of a regional BIA school in Nome, with another planned for Kotzebue (completed in 1970) prompted its closure. The Friends school was leased to the BIA for ninth and tenth grades.

A federal task force on education in Alaska reported problems with rural education, particularly the limited opportunities to attend high school. In response, emphasis shifted to dispatching the region's youth to high school boarding home programs. By 1970, the number of students in high school had grown to 350--up dramatically from just 73 in 1960.

Numerous studies have documented the trauma that high school boarding home programs inflicted on Iñupiat students. But some students who got their high school educations at Mount Edgecumbe benefitted from their friendships with Native students from other villages and regions. These friendships later

fostered statewide and regional political alliances, particularly on the native land claims.

The Johnson administration's "War on Poverty" reached rural Alaska in the mid-1960s. Rural Alaska Community Action Program (RurALCAP), a community action agency, helped Native regional associations organize to represent Native interests throughout the state, including the Northwest Area Native Association (N.A.N.A.). From the mid-1960s through the early 1970s, N.A.N.A. focused on the land claims settlement. Head Start was another locally important "War on Poverty" program. This pre-school program was designed to help students from economically disadvantaged families get an early start in their schooling. Both Head Start and a Parent-Child Center were in operation in Kotzebue in 1970.

#### Trans-Alaska Pipeline Era (1970-79)

The discovery of oil at Prudhoe Bay was a financial bonanza for the State of Alaska. In 1969 the State collected \$900 million in oil lease bonus bids. With this windfall, the state expanded its role in rural education. In 1970, the legislature established the Alaska State-Operated School System (ASOSS) to administer public education in unincorporated rural areas. Still, the delivery of educational services remained highly centralized and bureaucratic. Secondary education for most villages continued to be available only at boarding or regional schools.

The state did accelerate its takeover of rural BIA schools, including Northwest schools. In the 1970-1971 school year, BIA schools at Buckland, Deering,

Kivalina, Noatak, Noorvik, Selawik, and Shungnak began operation as rural schools under state management. BIA operated schools at Kiana and Kotzebue until 1976.

Meanwhile, the Johnson-O'Malley Act and the Indian Education Act, enlarged the local role in education. These federal laws authorized local Native advisory committees to oversee the expenditure of federal funds to develop educational programs that were more responsive to Native needs and concerns. The Indian Self-Determination Act also encouraged Native American tribes to provide services previously delivered by federal agencies. N.A.N.A.'s non-profit association (today known as Maniilaq Association) became a major service provider for the villages of the region.

Thus, by the early 1970s the region had begun to develop effective, indigenous regional institutions. By the mid-1970s this political development extended to education when the much-criticized ASOSS was replaced by a more decentralized public school system. The state established authorized 21 separate state-funded Regional Education Attendance Areas (REAs) to form regional school districts.

The Northwest region formed the Northwest Region School District, governed by an elected board designed to ensure broad village representation. Each village school also had an advisory school board. The REAA gave regional residents more authority over their public schools. Key informants reported that residents first began to think of the schools as belonging to them at that time.

The region made significant gains in educational attainment during the 1970s. The percentage of adult Natives over the age of 25 with four years of high school

or more grew from less than 2 percent in 1960 to almost 36 percent by 1980. That increase is attributable to the region's young people, who attended high school in much larger numbers after 1960. The median years of school completed jumped from 5.4 to 8.8. Non-Natives still held most of the professional jobs in the region, mostly teaching school. The median years of schooling among non-Natives in the region was 13.5.

By 1980, a notable shift in the occupational status of Native workers had taken place. The proportion of employed Natives at work in professional and managerial positions increased from 11.8 percent in 1960 to 29 percent in 1980. Native employment in clerical jobs increased even more dramatically, from 8 percent to 23 percent. These increases were offset by decreases in the share of Natives at work as craftsmen, operators, and laborers. These shifts were partly due to changes in employment opportunities, partly to improvements in educational attainment.

#### Prudhoe Bay Era (1980-Present)

The economy of the Northwest region continued to expand during the 1980s. Regional residents continued to expand their control over and through regional organizations that administered education, utilities, housing, health care, and social services.

NANA expanded its influence in the region's economic development. One critical step was NANA support for the region's incorporation in 1986 of a borough government, partly to secure local governmental jurisdiction over its Red Dog



mine venture. The Northwest Arctic School District was also transferred to the new borough. This transfer, the fourth major restructuring of the region's public school system since statehood, was essentially administrative. Still, it confirmed the region's authority over local education.

Native employment in the region became increasingly professional and managerial between 1970 and 1980, a trend that likely persisted during the 1980s. Consequently, educators and students are confronting a work environment that demands higher levels of education. That more Native residents are filling these professional and managerial jobs is a measure of the region's educational progress and of its capacity to meet the demands of the workplace.

Alaska Native women's role in the region's workforce is changing. By 1980, nearly 66 percent of Native women aged 18 to 24 years of age had graduated from high school, as compared with 53.8 percent among men of the same age. By 1980, Native women participated in the labor force in almost the same proportion as men--43 percent of women were in the labor force as compared with 46 percent of men. Many interviewees mentioned that more women are in the workforce and more women are graduating from high school and succeeding in college. If established trends hold, more women will enter the labor force; higher percentages of women will graduate from high school; and more women than men will have the higher education required to fill the professional and technical jobs within the region.

In 1980, the percentage of youths aged 16 to 19 enrolled in school was roughly comparable--68 percent for the region and 66 percent for the state. But many fewer northwest high school students actually graduated than statewide.

Twenty-eight percent of regional high school graduates were employed, compared to only 2 percent among non-graduating students. High school graduates were much more likely than non-graduates to look for work. The 1980 employment rate for the region's high school graduates (28 percent) was, however, less than half the statewide rate (62 percent).

Key informants among the region's largest employers report that labor shortages, employee turnover, and employee absenteeism and tardiness are the three most common workforce problems in the region.

Notwithstanding low rates of labor force participation and high rates of unemployment, these employers consistently reported difficulty in hiring and retaining workers. The worker shortage applies to both entry level and professional workers.

The small pool of qualified, dependable employees are in high demand, which contributes to workforce turnover. Several organizations contract with outside firms for services because qualified service workers are not available locally. Even airline companies and retail stores report difficulty in hiring and retaining entry level workers. Regional retailers with 30 to 35 entry level positions report hiring between 100 and 150 workers each year for those positions. Entry level workers often work only a few weeks before quitting or being fired.

Most employers attributed absenteeism to the schools' failure to train students in dependability. Several attributed employees' poor attendance to cultural differences, noting that traditional activities were governed more by the seasons and migrations than by the clock. Employees' personal and family problems also hurt job performance. Several employers were developing flexible work schedules to accommodate employees' need for time off.

Employers consistently reported that older workers were more dependable than younger workers. Women are also seen as more dependable workers than men, particularly among the younger generation. Many employers believe young people are simply unprepared for work when they leave school, which employers ascribe to lack of discipline at school. Many informants also said the schools need to teach basic work skills.

Although 1990 census statistics are not yet available, the pattern of enrollments throughout the 1980s suggests that the rate of school participation has remained at the 1980 levels, with possible erosion in the high school participation rates. Graduation rates have fluctuated sharply over the past decade. The proportion of 18-year-olds graduating from high school in the Northwest region appears to have hit a low point in the early 1980s, peaked in 1986, and fluctuated but been mainly down since then.

School district budgets since 1980 reveal wide fluctuations in funding levels. Expressed in expenditures per student (per average daily membership or ADM), the region saw a 76 percent increase in spending between 1980-84, a 19 percent decrease between 1985-87, and a 20 percent increase between 1987-90. Adjusting

expenditures for inflation, current spending per pupil (ADM) is about the same as it was in 1982, or about 12 percent above what it was in 1980.

The share of the education budget allocated to instruction grew from 46 percent in 1980 to 49 percent in 1990, offset by a decline for operations and maintenance--from 28 percent to 25 percent. Instructional expenditures for vocational education were cut in half, but spending for both special education and bilingual/bicultural programs tripled. By 1990, spending on bilingual/bicultural programs absorbed almost 10 percent of instructional spending--a major new educational emphasis. The pupil/teacher ratio (PTR) for both high school and elementary school programs increased over the decade, reflecting both fewer resources and possibly some economies of scale.

In the 1984-85 school year, the region adopted a village pre-kindergarten program to introduce children to the school program earlier and to expand early childhood education. This is a deliberate strategy to compensate for the disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds of the region's students.

The issue of academic preparation is partly reflected in the State's standardized testing program for all school districts at three grade levels--fourth, sixth, and eighth grades. NABSD students tested by grade levels fell roughly between the 18th and the 30th national percentile levels on the three subject matters tested. For all grade levels and subjects, more than three quarters of Northwest students scored below national averages. Students did worst in reading, somewhat better in math. Fourth grade students tested lower relative to national averages than sixth and eighth graders.

These NABSD test scores are not dramatically different from scores in neighboring predominantly Native school districts but are far below the statewide average. These low scores suggest that Native students are likely to be disadvantaged when competing with higher scoring non-Native students. And by implication, the quality of the regional workforce will also be disadvantaged when competing with outside workers.

Overall, in the past 40 years, education in the region improved in several important ways: Native adults became on average much better educated; the state government established high schools in all the villages; local residents gained more control of schools; and bilingual and bicultural programs reflecting language and traditions of Native people became a part of school curricula.

Despite the very substantial improvements in education and the region's economy, there are signs of serious problems in how well contemporary Native youths are being prepared to move into the workforce. Very low scores on national standardized tests indicate that Northwest youths will be at a disadvantage when looking for jobs. The rate of high school graduation has dropped in recent years, and high school enrollment in may also be declining. Reportedly, the high school dropout rate, particularly for Native males, is rising. A number of employers in the region described younger workers--again, particularly young men--as less reliable than older workers and generally poorly prepared for work.

We now turn to an analysis of the major issues the Northwest schools face in trying to prepare youths for the workforce, and an assessment of what the schools are already doing and what more they might do to resolve those problems.

### Outlook for Education and the Region's Workforce

The region's recent experience underscores the relationship between education and work. As its schools offered more educational programs and local employment increased, Native residents became better educated and got more and better jobs. However, the region still imports much of its professional and technical workforce, particularly in the fields of education and health care.

Future progress in resident educational attainment and employment will depend partly on the quality of education, partly on the nature of available jobs--both of which depend on state and federal support for education and other public services.

Data on high school graduation rates and youth employment substantiate employers' concerns that many young people, particularly young Native men, are less active and successful in the work place than older workers. There is consensus among employers, educators, and students on the key problems that limit students' ability to realize academic and career potential. These problems clustered around five major issues discussed below. The region's future educational attainment will be largely shaped by the school district's success in addressing these five major issues.

## Cultural Conflicts and Educational Goals.

Many key informants stated that students, parents, and communities are caught in a dilemma: they want to preserve their culture and to change it so they can succeed in the workplace.

Employers frequently cited punctuality, reliable attendance, openly acceptance and offer of criticism, working under stress, and working independently as examples of attitudes students need to succeed in the work place. Whether the lack of such attitudes represents conflicting cultural values or is a sign of social disorganization, employers emphasized the importance of schools' teaching and reinforcing those basic work values. The recent shift in the school district's spending from vocational to bilingual education conflicts with employers' suggestions that the school district offer educational programs that would socialize students in work skills. Employers also want the schools to improve basic communication and problem solving skills. Several noted that poor comprehension of written material limits workers' ability to benefit from technical training manuals.

Key informants from the region's education community report improvements in the school program which address some of the employers' concerns but which may not yet be reflected in students' performances on standardized test scores. Among the improvements cited were the adoption of policies related to grade levels and attendance.

The school district has adopted policies to ensure that promotions from one grade to the next are based on academic standards and that students meet these standards before being promoted. It also adopted an attendance policy that resulted in half of Kotzebue's high school freshman class being suspended the year the policy was adopted. Since then, attendance has improved and the number of suspensions has dropped significantly.

Students often resist higher standards. "If they (the kids) don't like something, they just walk off (the school grounds)" was how one respondent said school children resist raising standards and expectations.

Students also frequently encounter inconsistencies between what is expected of them at home and what is expected at school. Several respondents cited conflicts parents have with the school district over expectations and rules on matters concerning attendance, discipline, and homework.

A commonly expressed view was that many parents were unwilling to hold students to the higher academic standards schools were trying to set, and that some parents actively undermine such efforts, feeling that they place too much stress on children. Key informants reported a small but increasingly vocal group of parents who view schools as having a destructive influence on the Native culture and are openly hostile to schools. Several informants said that few children have educational materials at home and few are encouraged to read and discuss what they read with other members of the household. Thus assigning students homework is difficult and unpopular in many households.



Employers we talked to urged the school district to get parents and teachers to raise academic standards. Educators responded that to do so required expanded community participation in the schools. "What needs to happen to create success is the quality of relationships need to be improved between the school district, private sector, the community, the parents--basically everybody" is how one informant described what was needed. Some employers feel the schools might be able to make students and their parents more active in the schools by creating incentives for involvement.

The district has over the past four years given a priority to meeting both state standards and local objectives. A school administrator reported that special emphasis was given to junior and senior high language arts programs and that teachers have been more actively involved in curriculum and staff development. The district expanded in-service training for both teachers and aides. The curricular development activities also include Iñupiat Studies, which are designed to make students more aware of their origins and traditions.

The region's educators have already incorporated bilingual and bicultural programs into the curriculum. The integration of academic curricula with regional cultural content is time consuming and complex. The region had the good fortune in the early 1980s to receive a separate appropriation of funds to develop some such curricula and materials, although respondents said more was needed.

## Social and Economic Opportunities

The region has been quite successful in expanding local employment opportunities. Still, economic opportunities remain limited in the small, remote villages. Children have few chances to learn how to cope with strangers or urban places. Part-time work opportunities are limited, as is exposure to career opportunities. These limitations may contribute to students' lack of goals, ambitions, and career plans. Unless parents expect and students aspire to higher achievement levels, the region may continue to forego resident placement in the well-paid, socially influential professional positions now staffed mostly by imported employees.

Over the past decade, the number of youths who came of working age exceeded the number of new jobs. These new working age residents added to the existing pool of adults, many of whom were already either unemployed or not in the labor force at all. The limited potential for growth in the region's economy argues for preparing youth to explore options outside the region as well as within it. Most key informants commented on the need for more "successful" role models for young people and children and for the expansion of job opportunities within the region.

## Personal and Social Problems

A key informant expressed young people's personal and social problems by saying they have "lots of unhappiness from within" and that they engage in self-destructive behavior that harms family and friends.

Educators report many students use drugs and alcohol, although they think use is declining (particularly marijuana use). They say students typically start using drugs and alcohol just before or during junior high school. Several said they have seen a surge in teenage pregnancies and an alarming increase in the number of fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) births in the region. School board members and health professionals also said there had been a significant rise in FAS births. The poorer performance on standardized test scores of lower grade students may partly reflect the mental impairments FAS imposes on its victims.

Educators praised Kotzebue's decision to close local bars and liquor stores. School attendance improved. Children came to school more rested.

#### Transient Educators, Traditional Schools and Resource Constraints

Employers and educators alike said that teacher turnover, estimated at about 20 percent per year in Kotzebue and much higher in the villages, hurts local education in several ways. Key informants particularly cite the district's difficulty in recruiting math and science teachers. Turnover complicates relationships with students, parents, and the communities. It disrupts educational continuity. It undermines the district's effort to shift educational initiatives from district administration to classroom teachers.

Teacher turnover also impedes communities reaching the consensus on educational goals and standards that both educators and employers believe essential for schools to improve education.

Several informants stress the importance of infusing the Iñupiat culture into the educational curricula and programs. Several suggested that teaching Iñupiat culture could build bridges between schools and communities. Several experienced educators said the challenge was to introduce culture in a way that would be consistent with and reinforce curricular and academic goals. Bicultural programs must have legitimate academic goals. Ten percent of the instructional budget is now devoted to bicultural education.

Fluctuating school budgets have hampered staff and curricular continuity. Students and parents get upset when classes are consolidated or dropped or only offered once every several years due to staff reductions. Future budget reductions are likely to aggravate high teacher turnover, teacher recruitment, and parental dissatisfaction, especially if enrollments grow.

#### Student Ambitions and Academic Achievement

Several employers reported that many young people, particularly young men, have limited ambitions and lack the self-discipline to work, or get vocational training, or go to college. One former student observed, "A lot of guys are probably just going to stay around here. . . they like the hunting and everything." Another observed, "I see a lot of Natives who are very, very into having their own time." Some employers suggested that young men have few incentives or rewards for study or hard work, that they can get by with minimal resources and may prefer to have time to hunt and fish.

The scarcity of job opportunities, even part-time, for students is another lost incentive. Nonetheless, informants reported that parents are increasingly aware that education is a key to success in the wage economy.

Two informants suggested that some college students soon discover their academic disadvantages, then choose to withdraw rather than fail. One informant suggested that a college preparatory program after high school might give students a chance to remedy their academic deficiencies before starting college. Numerous employers and educators said that schools could help students by making them more aware of career possibilities, initiating more internship programs, and generally better preparing them to move into the workforce.

## CHAPTER 3 SUMMARY: SUBSISTENCE

### Introduction

The basic ecology of Northwest Alaska has changed little over the past thousand years, but the supply of renewable subsistence resources has fluctuated in long- and short-term cycles. Since the start of the nineteenth century, contacts with Euro-Americans have altered subsistence patterns. Despite change, the land and the familiar cycles of renewable resources provide continuity. Thus, today's subsistence users in the region can be seen as modern exemplars of the thousand-year-old Arctic Woodland subsistence pattern.

The term "subsistence" signifies "the production of raw materials by the same individual intending to be the ultimate consumer(s) of those materials" and implies the distribution and consumption of those materials. Burch's definition views subsistence as "a continuous variable that covers a wide range of activities" and that "specific concrete activities are not inherently either subsistence or nonsubsistence in nature, although they typically emphasize a particular orientation." Using Burch's definition, subsistence can be analytically distinguished as one component of a modern, industrializing "foraging" adaptive strategy. "Subsistence" is a mode of production and distribution rather than a type of economic system or a lifestyle. Subsistence production may be seen as a constant while technology and/or the systems organizing labor, or the distribution and consumption of resources may undergo change.

The perspective adopted here does not flag "customary" and "traditional" activities. Cultural change or development is explicitly recognized as a dynamic, plastic aspect of subsistence. New sociocultural adaptations or adjustments are linked to preexisting sociocultural states and thus are amenable to historical analysis. Among the principal causes of cultural change are technological innovation, inter-group contacts, population growth, and political innovation.

Burch cautions against a static view of cultural development in northwest Alaska:

Most of us think in terms of a 'traditional' or a 'contact' or an 'aboriginal' state of affairs as having been somehow immutable until massive European interference suddenly changed everything. This is a tendency we must resist. Life seems always to have been in a state of flux in Northwest Alaska, particularly at the individual society level.

Since the first contacts with Europeans about 150 years ago, accelerating changes in the region's social organization, technology, and demography, in response both to Euroamerican influences and to fluctuations in renewable resources, complicate the designation of "customary" or "traditional" activities. Because local resource availability varies in any year and over longer cycles, activities cannot be fixed as "traditional" or "customary." For example, Euroamerican goods became available in some parts of the region before others. Firearms had little impact on subsistence production when first introduced, but revamped the organization of production after 1850. When the Western Arctic Caribou Herd collapsed in the nineteenth century, Iñupiat living on the range margins were affected several decades sooner than groups living in the herd's core range.

Subsistence studies often focus on a generalized seasonal cycle of activities. Ray identified three subsistence "patterns" for the Seward Peninsula--the Caribou Hunting Pattern, the Small Sea Mammal Pattern, and the Whaling Pattern. Each general pattern remains evident in northwest Alaska. But these general prototypes slight the Arctic Woodland Pattern's characteristic foraging flexibility.

Idealized, simplified descriptions of seasonal harvest cycles impart a contrived rigidity and narrowness. Northwest Alaska is more accurately described as a crazy-quilt, sporadically productive environment. In a given season, differently configured subgroups of a single foraging group may be in different areas harvesting different resources.

Subsistence harvesters are acutely aware that many variables affect the location, timing and concentration of subsistence resources. For this reason, subsisters are reluctant to formulate static maps of subsistence areas. At best, harvest area maps are composite maximum use maps for a given period, commonly the lifetime of the informants.

#### Subsistence Since the Prehistoric Era

Contemporary subsistence can be viewed as the culmination of cultural and historical developments which can be divided into six historic periods: the prehistoric period known from archaeological sources only; the traditional period known primarily through ethnohistoric reconstruction and ending in mid-



nineteenth century; the transitional period initiated by protracted contacts with Euroamericans and further subdivided into early (1850-1890), intermediate (1890-1940s), and recent (1940s-1970) transitional periods; and the post-ANCSA period.

Each historical period can be characterized in interrelated terms of supply, social organization, settlement and population, economic processes, and social integration. The region's renewable resources are unevenly distributed. Each subregion has different harvestable resources. Currently the region is enjoying a period of resource abundance unprecedented since the start of the nineteenth century. Even caribou are widely available for subsistence harvest and at different times. Resource availability has always been the prime determinant of the various annual cycles. There have been minimal changes in these annual cycles within individual subregions and the changes relate primarily to new technology and sedentarization.

Periodic (short-term) and cyclic (long-term) fluctuations in resource supply compounds the uneven geographic distribution of subsistence resources. Harvesters have no control over resource supply or other natural factors, such as weather, that affect their harvest. Thus, drastic failure in the harvest of one or more resources may occur. Shifts to alternate resources help compensate. But more important are social and economic arrangements for averaging out these failures over a wider geographic area.

## Traditional period

Traditional nineteenth century societies in northwest Alaska occupied well-defined territories. Settlements focussed around productive locations. Societal boundaries followed zones of relatively low productivity.

Famine loomed constantly. Famine could strike any society, any year, any season, and any place. The subsistence scheme anticipated intermittent famine. When famine struck, traditional societies turned to alternate, less desirable resources or redeployed themselves within their home range or region according to defined social ties. The domestic family units of local families would invoke kinship relations with another local family in the societal territory or even in another society's territory. Failing that, they faced extinction.

Early nineteenth century societies in northwest Alaska were segmental. The basic unit was the domestic or nuclear family, though the operative unit politically and economically was the "local family". The local family was a lineally and collaterally extended family.

Burch suggested that early nineteenth century societies were associated with well-defined territories and distinct seasonal cycles. The constituent local families were able to satisfy almost all of their basic needs themselves. Still, regional and local resource surpluses and shortages promoted some interfamily and intersocietal trade.

Eventually, the decline of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd between 1850 and 1860 and the demographic disruptions stemming from Western contacts contributed to the social and cultural disintegration of traditional societies.

### Early Transitional Period

Social organization probably remained essentially unchanged throughout the Early Transitional Period. Within societies, population losses probably disrupted social relations. Diminishing resources meant smaller families. After 1850, the spread of firearms enabled individuals and small groups to hunt independently, making traditional group hunting practices obsolete.

Historic accounts of this era give only fragmentary glimpses of life in northwest Alaska during the middle and late nineteenth century. New social stresses apparently promoted extra-local kinship and societal ties. Ray writes that, "at times of famine everywhere, the kinship and tribal [societal] boundaries expanded to allow greater latitude of interaction". Burch agrees that the "Northwest Alaskan Eskimos were involved in a single comprehensive system, or 'chain,' of kinship ties, but adds:

The extensive kinship networks referred to are the result of the widespread population movements which took place in the last half of the 19th century and the first few decades of the 20th. They did not exist during the first half of the 19th century. At that time, extensive operating kinship networks were restricted to the single society level. Inter-societal marriage and inter-societal migration did occur, but neither was common enough to erase the abrupt discontinuity in kinship ties that occurred at each society's borders.

## Intermediate Transitional Period

The Intermediate Transitional Period began with the establishment of permanent schools, missions, and stores in the region. Native and white populations became interdependent. Whites established permanent settlements for community services and commerce. Natives gathered in these settlements which provided non-kinship bases for social organization just when traditional kinship-based social units were being depopulated and dislocated. McNabb reports that "Village aggregation, then, proceeded fitfully: in 1910 the majority of residents lived outside permanent villages. As late as the 1930's about 20% of the population lived in mobile camps, dozens of which dot planning maps of this period." By the 1930s, the settlement pattern in the region reached its present form.

Burch writes, "During the first half of the Intermediate Transitional Period, the two major demographic trends of the previous period--population reduction and dislocation--continued largely unchecked." Dislocated families gravitated towards settlements with missions, schools, and stores. Here they associated on a non-kinship basis. Church groups, reindeer herding associations, and organized village activities were established. Village councils were founded to mediate and resolve conflicts among the numerous kin-based factions. New forms of livelihood--mining, trapping, and reindeer herding--became available at some localities. For a while, trapping and reindeer herding, both of which required long periods away from settlements, countered the trend to sedentarization, until the collapse of the fur market and demise of the reindeer industry. With caribou unavailable, fish became the most important subsistence food.

The Great Depression of the 1930s hit the region hard. Federal projects paid some wages during the depression, but production of local resources relapsed to the subsistence level. Fur, mining and reindeer industries declined.

During the Intermediate Transitional Period social organization changed immensely. Western institutions assumed many of the political, educational, religious, and recreational functions of traditional kinship units. This period ended as World War II and the "Cold War" prompted increased federal interest in Alaska and its affairs.

#### Recent Transitional Period

"By 1940, virtually all of the native population of Northwest Alaska was concentrated permanently in school-mission-store communities," according to Burch. By then, the region's people depended on commercial goods but lived in communities with very limited wage employment. Subsistence provided a safety net, but permanent residence narrowed the foraging range.

World War II revived northwest Alaska's economy. Military service took many Native men to the world beyond the region. Alaska's wartime and post-war construction boom boosted employment, reaffirming a pattern of men leaving the region periodically for wage work. After the war, fur prices rose tenfold. The market for native crafts thrived. Seal and wolf bounties added a new cash income source. Mining exploration revived. Overall, more cash earnings spurred

purchase of outboard motors, washing machines, and other consumer goods, tightening the bonds between the region and outside economies.

Traders bought salmon as early as the first decade of the twentieth century. A commercial salmon fishery began operating in Kotzebue in 1962. Commercial fishing fitted easily into the local economy, as the midsummer commercial season did not conflict with subsistence harvests. The commercial catch usually exceeded subsistence harvests. Commercial fishing, like trapping, linked the region's economy to external markets.

Meanwhile, new community facilities, transportation and other infrastructure were built. During the 1950s the Public Health Service began a massive hospitalization program for infectious diseases, especially tuberculosis. Public health programs reduced infant mortality and extended longevity. This reinforced the sedentary lifestyle, for larger families and more elders worked against a mobile, foraging lifestyle.

Smith's Kotzebue fieldwork during summer 1965 found that the number of jobs available to Natives was "sufficient to provide a cash income for every household containing an employable member." She concluded that Kotzebue's residents depended "substantially upon a cash economy." In other regional villages, summer employment away from home in Kotzebue and elsewhere supplied most of the year's cash earnings.

Smith noted of Kotzebue families, most of whom had come from the outlying villages, "The traditional Eskimo values of familial interdependence, mutual

support, and subsistence survival have waned; the nuclear family, as a single survival unit with a desire for the assurance of a wage economy and for the White man's social values, is in the ascendancy." During the Recent Transitional Period many families showed an extended patrifamily pattern in which adult sons took seasonal wage work to support fathers and younger siblings in hunting activities at home.

Residents were exposed to the larger society during the Recent Traditional Period through three major institutional services: the Public Health Service's long-term hospitalization programs; boarding high schools for local students elsewhere in or out of the state; and the 1960s BIA program to train and relocate young people and families for jobs in the lower 48 states. Separation from family and homeland disrupted the transmission of language, cultural values, subsistence skills, and sentiment and sorely tested the strategies of affiliation of the earlier periods:

. . . close affiliation with large numbers of kin was sometimes disastrous for people with ambition. No matter how hard one worked, and no matter how much money he earned, his kin would be sure to spend it, either directly, or indirectly by consuming the goods one acquired with it. Reserves could rarely be accumulated for the kinds of investments needed to create wealth in a modernized society. Here we have the final irony: the accumulation of wealth for most Northwest Alaskan Eskimos in the recent period meant either the absence or the rejection of the very sort of relationships that had been so essential to its attainment in the traditional era.

These disruptive effects were buffered by integrating forces at the regional level. For decades, the Friends Church's quarterly and annual meetings provided a new focus for the regional solidarity once rooted in the traditional trade fair. This solidarity facilitated formation of the Northwest Alaska Native

Association (NANA) in 1966 to protest Project Chariot. NANA's institutional framework reflects the model of the Friends meetings.

Throughout this era, subsistence maintained its importance. Foote and Williamson's picture of the Noatak Eskimos fits all the region's villages and most of Kotzebue during the Recent Transitional Period:

The Noatak Eskimos could not survive on a diet composed solely of foodstuffs available to them in the native store. They could not afford to import fresh meat and vegetables as substitutes for their own meat harvest. If the supply of food for humans failed to attain at least 175,000 lb of meat during the 9 months Noatak is fully populated (September to May), the health of the Noatak Eskimos would be seriously jeopardized. Moreover, any failure in the supply of dog food would deplete the harvest of food for humans.

#### Post-ANCSA Transitional Period

Passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in 1971 consolidated the political energies of the northwest Alaska Iñupiat. ANCSA authorized eleven village corporations and a regional corporation (NANA) to receive cash payments and land. The region's Natives acquired corporate power. During the 1970s the BIA also transferred administration of Native education to the State of Alaska. In 1976, the state formed rural regional school districts governed by locally elected boards. Meanwhile, Maniilaq Association, a regional non-profit corporation, began to consolidate administration of social programs and other services previously delivered by state and federal agencies.

Between 1975 and 1985 the State of Alaska underwent great expansion. Trans-Alaska pipeline construction provided high-paying jobs for many NANA sharehold-



ers, significantly, both males and females. Billions of oil revenue dollars flowed into the state treasury. The financial power of the ANCSA corporations magnified the political clout of rural Alaska. As a result, state government funded rural capital improvement projects on a large scale, which increased local wage employment.

The reversal of Kivalina's community fortunes after ANCSA typifies a region-wide village trend. Kivalina's population nearly doubled between 1964 and 1982, partly from return migration after ANCSA. Burch wrote that, "In 1966 Kivalina seemed on the verge of becoming a dying village; families and individuals were leaving, and prospects for the future were poor. But by 1982, all of the families, and most of the individuals, had returned. More outsiders had married in than villagers had married out during the intervening years." Significantly, "all of the local families that had operated in Kivalina in the mid-1960s were still operating there twenty years later. A number of developmental changes had taken place, of course, due to births, deaths, aging and marriage, but the level of social continuity between the two study periods was extremely high."

Burch's Kivalina data confirm that major fluctuations in harvest from year to year continue and that "variation [in harvest] exists not only in the absolute size of the harvests of the different species, but also to the proportion a given species contributes to the total."

Like the Recent Transitional Period, the Post-ANCSA Period has been marked by a relative abundance of widely distributed harvestable resources. Sea mammals and fish have been in good supply. The commercial salmon catch has fluctuated

from year to year. This affected commercial fishing profits. But subsistence harvesters were less affected, partly because there are fewer dog teams to feed, partly because other species can compensate for fewer salmon.

Except for a brief, rapid decline in the mid-1970s, caribou have offered a steady supply of meat throughout the region (except for Deering). Unfortunately, no systematic studies were done of the effects of the caribou decline on other subsistence activities and harvests. In 1979, the beluga hunt at Elephant Point was very unsuccessful, and as caribou numbers still were considered low, Alaska Department of Fish and Game regulated their harvest. Buckland was allowed a special caribou hunting season, and 110 caribou were harvested. Feldman reports that in 1979 the Buckland store sold twice as much meat as in the previous year. Also, the number of households using food stamps increased 300 percent from 1978, but by February 1980, after the special caribou harvest, food stamp use dropped off sharply. Beluga hunters at Elephant Point suffered some poor years after 1979, but caribou have been in good supply, caribou hunting has not been restricted, and, presumably, increased winter caribou harvests compensated once again for the lack of beluga set aside for winter.

One of the most striking features of the social organization in the Northwest Arctic Borough today is the all-pervasive orientation to kinship. Ironically, the geographic extent of today's kin relations stems from the dislocations of the Early and Intermediate Transitional Periods. Far-flung kinship relations are still cultivated, indicating their lasting relevance to modern social interaction. Thus, "Formal kinship remains a central organizational principle that shapes customary patterns of mutual aid and subjective sentiments. Kinship

principles are still used to discover, create, or allege social ties that, if present, justify affiliations between people".

Residence during the Post-ANCSA Period was almost entirely sedentary and village based. In the villages and in Kotzebue, public housing projects have replaced the owner-built homes of the 1950s with typical American houses suitable for suburban nuclear families. House design constrains the composition of the household, while the siting of new housing obscures the relationship between domestic units. Once, related domestic families built adjacent to each other. Now, related families are scattered around town regardless of their economic and social links.

The Post-ANCSA Period is marked by increased wage work both without and especially within the region. More wage work has boosted disposable incomes, along with demands for better community services.

Subsistence goods and services, though nonmonetary income, have real cash value. Subsistence frees dollars for other purchases. Pooling of expensive durable goods such as seines, outboard motors, and snow machines and costly expendables such as gasoline, for cooperative ventures lowers the expense of local foraging. Although no quantified data are available, cooperative activities seem to be organized most often along kinship lines.

All the Post-ANCSA Period studies stress the prevalence of locally produced food and the economic and cultural importance and the extent of the distribution system for this food. Informants report that Native foods and cash circulate

throughout the region and to Barrow, Fairbanks, Anchorage, and elsewhere. Gal found that food got from a single Native allotment in the Teshekpuk Lake area north of the Brooks Range was distributed to a minimum of forty individuals, including some living in Barrow and Anchorage. In spring 1987, a Point Hope man married to a Kiana woman and living in Kiana enlisted kin and various "partners" in town to amass caribou meat and hides. These were shipped to Point Hope for use by whaling crews. The whalers shipped black maktak back to Kiana.

Uhl and Uhl describe an exchange network extending from Kotzebue Sound to Shungnak to illustrate the close links between the cash and noncash elements of the economy. Burch tells of two persons who had never met exchanging goods via mail and air freight. Northwest Iñupiat regularly attend the whaling feasts at Point Hope, Point Lay, Wainwright, and Barrow at which Native foods are redistributed. These anecdotal data are suggestive but do not measure the economic and social importance of transactions involving locally produced foods and their significance in the overall economy of the region.

As noted above, kinship remains a strong integrator at the village and regional levels. Additionally, the number of sodalities (voluntary non-kin associations) within the region steadily increased throughout the Post-ANCSA Period. McNabb listed twenty-six non-political organizations--advocacy groups, sports and recreational clubs, civic associations and various special interest groups--that compete with kin-focused activities for people's time and energy.

Significant variations occur in subsistence activity according to age, sex, and status. Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act

clumsily acknowledges these differences by granting subsistence priorities based on place of residence--rural or urban. Virtually all of the literature published by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Subsistence Division, confirms that subsistence is not uniformly practiced across communities nor even within a single community. Empirical evidence shows that the socioeconomic factors that condition harvest arrangements--financing and capital, access to human resources via networks of collaborators, and availability of time--vary along with a wide range of employment and harvest criteria. Economic roles differ, too. Hence, capital needs aside, older and younger persons and men and women tend to act differently.

Elders and young adults tend to be food recipients. As the young adults mature and improve their skills, they begin sharing larger quantities of foods just as their senior kin wane and grow more dependent on the labor of their juniors. Two-thirds of the seniors (60 + years old) reported that someone in another household gave them subsistence food within the last two days compared to twenty percent of the youngest cohort. Only about 20 percent of the oldest respondents harvested subsistence food for their own consumption over the last two days, compared to 60 percent or more of the younger persons. Other data even more strongly support this suggested relationship between age and subsistence dependencies.

Some of the ethnographic literature asserts that young adult Iñupiat constitute economic linchpins who, because of robust health, strength, and limited family duties (many are unmarried), are able to share subsistence foods widely. The data do not entirely support that picture. McNabb's observations and other

research reveal high capital demands and a general trend away from labor-intensive subsistence activity. Aggressive subsistence by young adults is curtailed by their lack of stable, predictable financing. Dietary habits also are probably changing. Still, it is unclear whether the cross-sectional differences seen here reflect real changes in behavior or whether younger adults, as they themselves age, will assume the roles and habits now evident among older adults.

How fluctuating wage work opportunities interact with subsistence activities is not well documented or understood. Mixed subsistence-cash economies often are described as "in transition" to the cash economy. Two points are clear about northwest Alaska. First, even though the people of the region no longer make their entire living off the land, its resources are economically important. The region's traditional lifestyle has incorporated Western trade goods and cash since the early nineteenth century without abandoning subsistence. Secondly, even in traditional times, production never was purely for domestic family consumption. At a minimum, the production of local resources was intended for an extended local family. Surpluses were circulated in a system of delayed reciprocity and trade that buffered the periodic and cyclic resource failures and bolstered social prestige and solidarity. The introduction of American goods and wage work yielded different sorts of surpluses. Some families always produced more than others.

Thus, Uhl and Uhl observe that,

In any discussion of the subsistence scene in northwest Alaska there is always the need to explain that within the realm of resource use there are the harvesters and there are those that share in the

harvest. The first number is quite small and the latter often in the unbelievable thousands.

Similar participation occurs in the "cash scene" in northwest Alaska today. McNabb found that less than one-third of the work force worked in any particular month and suggested that the occupational and income histories of employed and unemployed residents may be similar. The intriguing implication is that in the NANA region neither harvesters nor wage earners constitute a large percentage of the population and that harvested resources and cash are somehow redistributed throughout the society. Sahlins pointed out that one characteristic of foragers was an "underuse" of objective economic opportunities, and asserted that "Clearly in subsistence as in other sectors of production, we have to do with an economy of specific, limited objectives. By hunting and gathering these objectives are apt to be irregularly accomplished, so the work pattern becomes correspondingly erratic." McNabb has speculated that "Household economic well-being is therefore better explained in terms of political economy and the Native cultural idiom--harvest, sharing and consumption of wild resources--than by factors relating to individual attainment in a Western, competitive mode.

Summarizing four years of study data collected for 31 rural Alaska communities, McNabb found:

. . . that the persistence of traditional activity, measured by the harvest, sharing and consumption of wild resources, occurs across all subpopulations and is not restricted to persons or households who lack educational and employment opportunities. Persons with greater job mobility, higher educational attainment and more substantial incomes may harvest and share resources more widely, for in fact they possess wealth necessary to underwrite these practices. Their harvests, when shared, may then supply more impoverished kin and friends, making resource consumption a general feature of Native life, despite employment and financial inequalities. Hence, this idiom of Native life may persist alongside structural inequalities

created and sustained by a commercial economy . . . (A)chievement by individuals in employment, income, and capital formation is a limited and secondary factor in explaining economic practices in rural Native villages.

In northwest Alaska, the traditional mode of production, combining a subsistence and cash economy appears stable. The resource base and relatively steady income derived from the public sector (both transfer payments and employment) seem able to provide all the goods needed to sustain the region. It is worth note that the region's population has only recently exceeded its early nineteenth century level, at which time all of the region's needs were met from the land.

The family-oriented kinship system remains in place, although it no longer subsumes all the functions it once did. Mandatory education and increased exposure to the larger society erode and threaten the perpetuation of the traditional kinship system. Local secondary schools and Iñupiaq cultural studies may help prepare children to continue production of subsistence foods. Revival of the Iñupiat Ilitqusiatic program with specific goals could help even more. For now, the people of the region seem to be maintaining their traditional mode of production and distribution alongside the commercial and public transfer economy.



## CHAPTER 4 SUMMARY: IÑUPIAT VALUES, THE ELDERS COUNCIL, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Progressive ideologies with distinct social and economic dimensions are not new to Northwest Alaska. Traditional stories about the prophet Maniilaq fuse indigenous and Christian beliefs about Iñupiaq values, the roles of elders, the foibles of the young and naive, and progress. Contemporary movements such as the NANA Regional Strategy, Iñupiat Iilitqusiat, and the Elders Councils spring from such antecedents. Today's ideology about Iñupiaq values, roles of elders, and economic development are grounded in historic family patterns and roles and emphasize values that sustain traditional forms of social organization.

### Family and Society

The traditional Iñupiaq people of Northwest Alaska were organized in social groups labeled "tribes" or "societies" by anthropologists, but perceived as "nations" by people actually raised in them, signifying that these small societies were like countries as Westerners understand them. Each nation's citizens held dominion over a specific territory of several settlements and hunting and fishing grounds. They shared a "national ideology," and spoke a distinct subdialect of the common Iñupiaq language.

Each of the region's eleven traditional societies was a network of self-sufficient families, and lacked political roles or organizations that transcended family boundaries. The conjugal family--husband, wife and child(ren)--was the society's building block. But the large extended family or "local family" was the primary operating unit. Most villages consisted of a single, mostly self-

sufficient, local family. Family members worked together, ate together, played together, and suffered together. People spent their lifetimes in this familial social world, rarely even saw anyone outside their own family unit. Members of modern societies can hardly imagine how the family dominated traditional Iñupiaq life.

The umialik--a mature adult male--led each local family, mainly by personal example and persuasion. Authority generally flowed outward and downward from the umialik according to a person's age, generation, and gender, in that order. Local families exhibited rather clearly defined hierarchical systems. Everyone knew who had authority over whom concerning particular activities. Elders acted as advisers, and a respected elder's views carried great weight in family affairs.

Between about 1875 and 1900, famine, disease and population dispersal virtually destroyed traditional societies, reducing their populations by more than half. Beginning about 1905, the Native population began to recover as schools, missions, and trading posts were established in the region. A rising fertility rate offset high infant mortality and high overall mortality rates. During the 1960s, health conditions improved considerably, so population continued to rise despite falling fertility. A slow, steady inflow of Euro-american immigrants, especially after 1970, also fed population growth. In the 1970s the region's population exceeded its early contact size for the first time in a century, and continues to grow rapidly today.

Family size and composition have changed radically since traditional times. In early and middle nineteenth century most couples had from one to three living offspring. The typical conjugal family comprised four people. Larger families were very rare, and even three children were uncommon. The typical household was an extended "domestic" family containing about seven persons, perhaps including a grandparent or two and one or two unmarried siblings of one of the adults. Perhaps a third of the members of a typical household were subadults. Iñupiaq children grew up in the almost constant company of adults. Adults gave the children consistent role models and the nurture needed to develop into competent adults. The burden of child rearing was lightened, since the relatively few children could be tended by adults engaged in their routine activities.

This family system changed in the twentieth century. Small, family-controlled settlements gave way to large, multifamily communities. Neighbors were often not even relatives. Once self-sufficient families became dependent on other social institutions for survival. The extended family's educational, recreational, and religious functions became subordinate to nonfamily agencies. Control of disruptive behavior, once an important duty of the extended family, became the duty of the police. Jobs took people outside the home, often away from town.

Sharing and mutual support among extended family members still remains far more common than among American families in general, but it is now well below traditional Native standards. Extended families are still more important, but are less well integrated into the local society than formerly.

These trends reflect partly acculturation to the more widespread American pattern, partly an increase in the number of offspring per conjugal pair. Where few nineteenth-century couples had as many as three children, few Iñupiaq couples now have less than four children; most have more. In traditional Iñupiaq households, adults outnumbered children by about two to one. Today, family households are usually made up of conjugal rather than extended families, and the ratio of adults to children is about one to three or four, a complete reversal of the traditional pattern.

#### Elders Councils and Iñupiat Iilitqusiatic (IñI)

The roots of the Elders Councils and IñI mesh with the broader social and historical context of life in northwest Alaska today. Both developments are reformative, focussing on society and changes in the existing social order rather than on individuals alone. They share fundamental goals with other indigenous social movements and sociopolitical events such as opposition to Project Chariot, the 1960s land claims battles, and more recent self-determination efforts. A common ideology links these activities to the past and promotes self-reliance, preservation of Native culture and rights, and reestablishment of eroded social and political arrangements. Reflecting this common ideology, key goals of the NANA Regional Strategy, Multi-Board, Maniilaq Association, and NANA Corporation parallel those of the Elders Councils and IñI.

Elders Councils and IñI goals were designed to reestablish traditional forms of social organization as a link to the past, to "cultural heritage," and as a bridge between present generations of Iñupiat. Elders have significant roles

as mentors, socializers, and conservators of historical wisdom and lore. Their social and economic niche in traditional and contemporary society accentuates the links between generations. The "family cycle" installs elders in positions of economic dependency on kin and local institutions even as they continue to provide key sources of capital and social support.

#### Socialization and Cross-generational Interaction

Traditionally, early Inuit childhood was marked by indulgence and tolerance. Adults gradually increased demands on youths as they matured to instill diligence, hardiness, restraint, and self-control, social behavior that stressed dignity, stoicism, and conflict avoidance in most (but not all) circumstances. Subdued, quiet, task-oriented socialization characterizes interactions between youngsters and older kin. Traditional Inuit socialization relied on learning by precept and example, with little overt pedagogy, encouragement, evaluation, or pressure.

Today, grandparents and older kin have a diminished role in child-rearing. Young men now tend to look first to their fathers and young women to their mothers.

#### Cooperation and Sharing

Generous sharing of food, weapons, tools, services, and other items was one of the strongest traditional Inupiaq ideals. The primary arena of social cooperation and reciprocity was the large extended family. Men and older boys

regularly hunted together and worked together. Women, older girls, and infants spent most of the day together sewing, processing food products, or at the other tasks that were part of the female repertoire. Wild foods harvested by the several hunters in a local family were pooled and redistributed as needed by the umialik's wife.

Since most traditional settlements were occupied by just one local family and sharing was community-wide, elders today naturally recall that everyone in the village used to share with one another. There was, however, relatively little opportunity for frequent cooperation between families because villages were so far apart. Inter-societal sharing was at a minimum.

The traditional ideal of sharing has changed little in Northwest Alaska, but the context has changed so that the ideal cannot be realized as often as before. Today, sharing is probably most common in the distribution of wild foods, but wild foods are now only a portion of diet even in the smaller villages. Cash, too, is shared rather freely among close relatives, as are major fishing or hunting gear. But the obligation to share is not nearly as strong now as it was a century ago.

Traditionally, even in the few larger settlements, sharing outside the extended family was uncommon, being limited to special festivals and feasts. Given the larger size of modern villages in Northwest Alaska, cooperation and sharing is rarely village-wide, but it does occur on special occasions such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter feasts.

## Institutionalization of Social Support

The family's one-time monopoly of social support roles has given way to institutions such as Maniilaq Association which now provides most social services. In FY 1989, Maniilaq Association's social services budget topped \$15 million. Its services targeted all needy groups, including needs of prominent at-risk groups such as youth and their families, and elders. Maniilaq Medical Center provides health services to the general population, including at-risk groups.

The profile of institutional support services to some extent reflects cultural assumptions about caregiving. Decisions of kin and caregivers about caretaking (e.g., for a senile parent or an abused child) reflect beliefs and culture as well as medical or caseload management.

There are two dominant models of caregiving in the United States. One is based on the prototypical infant-parent link, stresses the "childlike" status of impaired or needy persons, and emphasizes personal intimacy and bonding. The other is based on the concept of exchange, repayment of debts, or reciprocity of services and stresses obligation to the needy and impaired. Other models prevail in other cultural systems.

Anecdotal evidence and personal observations suggest that neither of these dominant models fits Inupiat cultural values. Although the concepts of dependency and obligation may superficially apply, the region's institutional and nonformal caregiving more typically define needy persons as "resource poor."

They are seen to lack key capacities or skills, finances, or communal human resources. These deficiencies make at risk groups--e.g., youth, young adult, and elderly--more vulnerable to adversities such as malnourishment, alcohol abuse, suicide, and various infectious and chronic degenerative diseases. This notion of resource impoverishment typically orients social support services towards self-help, empowerment, rectification of defects, and provision of skills and opportunity.

#### Political-economic Context of Care

Income transfer and social support programs represent political policies. Political decisions create them, and political decisions trim and terminate them. Regional service agencies have been innovative and politically skillful in service development and advocacy. This has helped preserve regional programs and secure scarce funds for new or existing programs. Even so, programs for vulnerable subgroups--seniors, young parents, and youth--are perpetually insecure.

Certain regional trends foretell increasing demands on social service programs. At-risk subgroups continue to grow in numbers. Rural Alaska's birthrate has exploded and the number of infants is rapidly growing. And the fastest growing population group is the elderly (65 years and older).



## Perspectives on Social Problems

Social indicators that focus on the "quality of life" help identify social problems. Typical statistical indicators include scholastic achievement, medical intake and discharge records, and arrest and sentencing rates. The Elders Councils have identified certain regional social problems in more qualitative terms. Two perspectives emerge--the institutional view describing problems in conventional statistical terms, and elders' perceptions expressed in their own words.

Records of Elders Councils and Regional Elders Conferences show that elders have diverse views about social problems, Iñupiaq values, and economic development. The traditional cultural style emphasizes broad qualitative goals over specific issues. For example, elders are clearly concerned about environmental health issues--water and vehicle safety, wilderness survival-- but their concern is rarely articulated in explicit terms. Elders are more likely to talk about heritage and "the ways we used to do it." The audience is left to make the implicit connection between traditional skills and current problems. Rarely, environmental issues may command center stage, mainly when crises or emergencies are seen or anticipated.

In many ways, the Elders Councils and elders-at-large function much like traditional village councils. Their typical style is informal consensus building, a style which characterizes other indigenous sociopolitical institutions. Issues are approached in a seemingly random fashion. Broad goals, for which greatest support and sympathy can be gained, are favored over specific

positions. The fundamental aim is "adjustment" and "integration" rather than formalistic adjudication of fine points. Interestingly, elders thought that traditional village councils and traditional leaders were far "tougher" than present-day councils, which are seen to waver, delay, and capitulate to special interests. Few elders or Elders Councils believe village councils exemplify this toughness now, despite a desire to emulate those ideals, since the authority of elders is ambiguous. Elders usually guide by example, historical recitation, folklore, or allegory rather than by covert instruction. They commonly address problems in the context of ideals or solutions, which mutes the stigma or criticism that more direct discussion of pathologies might entail.

Bureaucratic agencies typically take a different approach to social problems than do elders. Agencies couch needs in formalistic terms geared to define specific problems and then develop procedures to address the problem, monitor progress, and document results. In contrast, the elders articulate problems in everyday language and appeal to common understandings in the audience. They link and express statements of problems in broad, global terms, followed by evaluations, statement of ideals, and solutions. This procedure is grounded in traditional Iñupiaq culture. It ratifies the values of the elders as a special source of guidance and counsel with substantial historic roots.

Since elders seldom articulate specific "plans of action," the burden of program formulation falls to agency staff. In this respect the Elders Council model departs from the traditional council procedure, since under the council model the adult (and usually elder) males were brokers between village life and

external authorities. Under the Elders Council model, both elders and agency staff have brokering roles.

Among the issues and problems commonly discussed at recent elders' meetings were abuse of drugs and alcohol, the economic status of elders and other at-risk groups, and law enforcement and public safety.

Elders Council members seldom mentioned economic development issues *per se*. With probing, most elders said that more jobs were needed in the villages. But they did not volunteer specific projects and job development initiatives to attain that goal, nor did they much debate the positive and negative dimensions of development. Rather, elders' prevailing responses to development issues are almost entirely indirect. Their concerns center on the modern ramifications of social and economic change over past decades (e.g., changes in skills among youth, social problems, shifting dietary or discipline patterns, etc.). They did discuss obstacles that may prevent a healthy and productive adaptation to potential social and economic change.

Some common themes in elders' dialogues link with concrete economic issues. For example, one common apocalyptic view is that a massive economic decline will occur some day, and jobs, services, and facilities will disappear. Subsistence would again become the centerpiece of the regional economy, and to survive then, elders warn, knowledge of subsistence skills must endure. This apocalyptic view is very common in elders' dialogues about routine subsistence matters.

So, it appears that elders possess a "multidimensional" viewpoint that stresses an overall social and cultural context for life rather than a one-dimensional or mechanical perspective that seeks to optimize isolated goals. For example, no elders suggested that educational should be improved just to get jobs. Similarly, the availability of jobs alone never surfaced as a key issue. In line with previous analysis, preeminent goals of the Elders Councils and their members appear to be "adjustment" and "integration."

As noted above, the solutions that Elders Councils do propose to social problems are often "indirect" and aim to achieve results by improving a general socio-cultural context. Their solutions focus on the quality of life and seek to revitalize Iñupiaq culture. They emphasize the special needs of vulnerable subgroups such as elders and youths. They often reflect the concept of "resource impoverishment," that is, the notion that providing opportunities and skills can solve many problems. In other words, problems are not seen as deficiencies inherent in persons or communities but as a scarcity of opportunities or privileges.

Recommendations adopted at the 1990 NANA Regional Elders Conference's generally repeated familiar themes, but called for more direct and aggressive political action. Examples included: closer communications on educational policies between School Board and villagers; Board review of policies on Native and non-Native staffing; incorporation of Iñupiaq values and Iñupiaq studies into school programs; and remedies for high-school drop-out problems. The themes of communication, equity, role models, cultural values, self-determination, and youth, are clearly evident in this sample of recommendations.

The Elders Councils do not wield power or authority per se; they lead through influence and example. For example, they can urge the Northwest Arctic Borough School District to act, but they cannot make it do so. They can express dismay over the drop-out problem but can't issue funds or establish policies to alleviate the problem. A measure of the effectiveness and prestige of the elders who work with Councils is the extent to which residents, policy makers and administrators voluntarily comply with their recommendations. Elders' influence stems from their strength of character and their acceptance in the community.

## CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY: INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

### Introduction

Northwest Alaska Iñupiat have developed a unique institutional approach to identify regional issues, consider solutions, and decide on actions to meet their common social, economic, and cultural needs. The underlying philosophy holds that the survival of the region's Native people, culture and traditions depends on a unified approach to the issues they confront. This philosophy is embedded in the ethos of the region's major institutions.

Gaffney identified four key features of the region that fostered this philosophy: cultural homogeneity with common linguistic traditions and historic social alliances among the villages; a relatively compact geography; common jurisdictions for indigenous regional institutions; and a high rate of shareholder residence and participation in traditional subsistence. Gaffney suggests that these unifying factors explain why this region experienced relatively little of the post-ANCSA division and conflict that have afflicted other Native regions.

The region's characteristic approach to political, social and cultural issues is best illustrated by an historic account of how a succession of indigenous organizations have dealt innovatively with critical regional issues.

In the 1950s, Project Chariot was a catalyst for the political and organizational development of northwest Natives. This proposed federal project provoked and unified young Native leaders who challenged the federal government's posture

toward Native people and Native land claims. The reaction led to formation of the Northwest Alaska Native Association (N.A.N.A.), the first region-wide Native organization. N.A.N.A. was a precursor to the NANA Regional Corporation (NANA) and to Mauneluk (later Maniilaq) Association, the regional nonprofit social services agency. Two N.A.N.A. leaders, founder Willie Hensley of Kotzebue and first chairman Robert Newlin of Noorvik, played major leadership roles in the region's political and economic development in following decades.

Soon after ANCSA passage, the region's leadership realized that the individual small village corporations were poorly prepared for corporate management of their land and cash assets. NANA proposed a merger with the village corporations. In 1976 all the village corporations but Kotzebue's Kikiktagruk Iñupiat Corporation (KIC) voted to merge with NANA and pool their assets. NANA expanded its board to include two representatives from each of the merged corporations' villages, plus a representative from Kotzebue. Thus, though the NANA region has one of the smallest shareholder enrollments, it has one of the largest corporate boards. The merger agreement specified that NANA would consult village councils on pending actions that affected village lands. Altogether, these decisions were emblematic of the region's unified approach to many issues.

### The NANA Regional Strategy

Reflecting their common origins, NANA and Maniilaq Association had structural and operational similarities. Their boards represented every village in the region. The boards travelled regularly to discuss their activities with village

constituents and to consult IRA or traditional village councils before important decisions. Both boards stressed the social well-being of their members.

Soon after the NANA-village corporate merger, NANA and Maniilaq Association sought to strengthen regional influence over regional development. They got state support for a region-based body to coordinate the diverse, often conflicting state and federal programs. This initiative materialized into the NANA Regional Strategy whose goals were to provide a unified voice for region residents, create a regional political decision-making mechanism, and coordinate capital projects and social services.

The central concept of the regional strategy was engagement of all concerned parties to discuss issues and reach a consensus for action. The concept was largely implemented through several task forces that involved representatives of key public and private organizations. NANA, Maniilaq Association, the School District, and other state, federal and regional organizations as appropriate, met to consider issues and options. The villages and Elders were routinely consulted. The overriding goal was to reach consensus on decisions through thoughtful, open deliberation. This process became the model for decision-making on regional issues.

#### The Multi-Board

The presidents of NANA and Maniilaq Association and the Northwest Arctic School District superintendent comprised the Steering Committee (Tri-Board) for the NANA Regional Strategy. Initially, the Governor's Office and the state and federal



agencies that first funded the Regional Strategy were also represented. But, as the regional strategy increasingly expressed regional interests, participation by nonlocal representatives faded. As regional decision-making influence developed, the Tri-Board became the Quad Board, then the Multi-Board.

The NANA Regional Strategy was the first local-sponsored program designed to formulate and impose regional priorities over nonlocal public agencies. The next logical step in the region's pursuit of self-determination was regional government--the Northwest Arctic Borough.

When the Northwest Arctic Borough incorporated in 1986, it joined what then became known as the Quad Board. Meanwhile, IRA and traditional councils and the newly formed Northwest Inupiat Tribal Council became politically more active. These and other organizations, such as KIC became more active in the Inupiat Ilitqusiatic (IñI) program. These organizations began to address and act on IñI resolutions at their own meetings. The Quad Board began being referred to as the Multi-Board.

Generally, the region's leadership reserves the Multi-Board for major regional issues which no other forum can effectively deal with. By the time an issue reaches the Multi-Board, the regional leadership already agrees that it is an issue worth the joint attention of participating organizations. The Multi-Board does not supercede the routine decision-making authority of other organizations. Member organizations convene only after top officials have reached consensus that the Multi-Board forum is appropriate.

The region's recent efforts to deal with chronic substance abuse problems shows how the Multi-Board may be convened to address an important issue. Alcohol and drug abuse has been a longstanding concern in the region. The Regional Elders' Council, concerned about this epidemic problem, sought a regional conference on alcohol abuse in 1988. Noorvik had just previously held a day-long meeting on alcohol abuse, attended by NANA, the School District, and all Maniilaq Association program managers. About the same time several meetings were held at the Kotzebue Senior Center. The City of Kotzebue had scheduled a special election on retaining the ban on the sale of alcoholic beverages that had been enacted by Kotzebue voters the previous year. Willie Hensley, then a state senator, spearheaded the 1988 Alcohol/Drug Conference as a forum to discuss the positive results of the year-old ban. The conference brought together the leaders of NANA, Maniilaq, and the Elders as well as public safety officials, agency staff, and elected officials from around the state. It was the first conference of this magnitude to address alcohol abuse in the region.

Multi-Board meetings are usually scheduled in conjunction with Regional Elders' Conferences and regularly scheduled meetings of the borough assembly and school board, whenever possible. During the Regional Elders' Conferences, the participating boards recess and reconvene as the Multi-Board. If appropriate, the Multi-Board will adopt resolutions passed by the Regional Elders Conference. Then the individual boards will meet independently and enact their own resolutions in support of the Multi-Board resolutions. At one Multi-Board meeting the boards of the individual organizations discussed and adopted resolutions in the same room with all of the other boards in attendance doing

the same. It was an extraordinary display of consensus-building and organizational integration.

### Iñupiat Iilitqusiatic

At the Regional Elders' Conference, the key regional organizations (NANA, Maniilaq, and the Northwest Arctic Borough) report on their programs and their responses to concerns raised at the previous Conference. This responsiveness indicates the great respect afforded the Elders by the regional organizations.

IñI evolved from a series of Elders Conferences held from 1976 through 1981 to revive Iñupiat oral traditions. The Elders also considered specific social issues facing the region's people, eventually focussing on the severe problems of alcohol and drug abuse and suicide. These meetings prompted key leaders to found the IñI (literally, teaching and learning Iñupiat) program.

The interrelationships between the NANA Regional Strategy, the Multi-Board, and the IñI movement are profound. Each evolved separately; all evolved harmoniously. Eventually, the IñI became central to all the region's efforts at self-determination.

NANA, Maniilaq Association, the School District and other organizations funnelled funds and/or staff support to the IñI program in various ways appropriate to their organizational missions and resources. NANA, perhaps more than any other organization, committed its resources and prestige to the success of the IñI program.

The key cultural and social components of the IñI program were latent in the regional strategy. But formalization of the IñI did not take place until 1981, when key leaders concluded that restoration of the traditional Iñupiat values was vital to Iñupiat cultural survival.

The 1982 Regional Elders' Council meeting developed and adopted the original IñI goals. They were prepared as part of the Regional Strategy.

The principles and goals of IñI were forged after many long, emotional and painstaking meetings. The upshot was that IñI was conceived as a vital element in the people's lives. People reaffirmed faith in the Elders as key to the IñI program's success and to Iñupiat well-being.

IñI was originally called the Spirit Movement, a name later discarded partly because its suggestion of pre-Christian shamanism offended many people. The IñI program won greater acceptance once proponents stressed its basis in fundamental values of Iñupiat culture and the central role of the Elders as culture-bearers.

At the core of the IñI program are the Iñupiaq values of respect for persons and nature, family values, traditional skills, hard work and sharing. IñI goals and values were built into the NANA Regional Strategy. Since the major regional organizations were involved in the regional strategy, its incorporation of IñI goals added extra credence and commitment.

The Elders are central to the IñI movement, whose overriding goal is survival of the Iñupiat people. The Elders, as bearers of Iñupiat traditions, convey this experience and traditional Iñupiat values to succeeding generations.

The Elders took responsibility for implementation of IñI. Local Elders' Councils were established in each village. The Regional Elders' Council meets quarterly to address concerns of local Elders' Councils. Representatives of regional organizations attend Regional Elders' Council meetings to discuss how their activities relate to IñI goals. The regional organizations also provide assistance to the Elders as a part of their ongoing programs. NANA, Maniilaq, and the Northwest Arctic Borough each have a full-time staff person primarily assigned to work with Elders. Elders teach the cultural values of IñI and Iñupiat traditions in the village schools. This fusion of IñI and western education, and improved education overall, are fundamental IñI goals.

For an initial period, there was no overall vision of the IñI Program shared by the leadership of the individual regional organizations. Each regional organization carried out the IñI Program as it fitted within its particular realm of activities. A need remained to fashion an overall structure for the IñI Program within which all of the region's organizations would operate their respective portion of the program in a complementary and supportive manner.

To that end, NANA is developing a revised and updated IñI plan that would more precisely define the respective roles of the region's organizations, among other tasks.

Of particular interest here is the degree to which education is stressed as an important component of the IñI program. A May 1988 Multi-Board meeting devoted solely to education, underscored its importance. NANA, Maniilaq Association, Northwest Arctic Borough School District, Chukchi College, Northwest Iñupiat Tribal Council, and the Northwest Arctic Borough all participated. Top officials from each organization and both of the region's legislators attended.

The first resolution adopted by the Regional Elders Council in 1989 concerned education. The Elders urged youth of the region to pursue education beyond high school.

The 1990 Regional Elders' Conference held three days of discussions and workshops on the educational system. This resulted in recommendations urging more school board consultation with villages on educational policies; recruitment and promotion of Native teachers and administrators; and stronger Iñupiat cultural and language curricula.

#### Red Dog Mine

Red Dog Mine, the region's first large private economic development, is another example of the region's distinctive approach to political, economic, and social decisions. The Red Dog Mine property is owned by NANA and was jointly developed by NANA and Cominco Alaska, Inc. Cominco is operator. NANA's planning strategy and negotiations for mine development put priority on shareholder hire, subsistence protection and long-term social and political stability.

Under their joint operating agreement, NANA and Cominco Alaska established a Management Committee to oversee operations. The committee addresses issues such as employment, job training, and work schedules. The agreement also authorized a Subsistence Committee, composed of Elders from the two villages (Kivalina and Noatak) nearby Red Dog. This committee monitors the mine's effects on subsistence and on residents' cultural and spiritual status. If the mine threatens subsistence resources, the committee can shut it down. In summer 1989 the mine-to-port road was closed during caribou migration through the area.

The Employment Committee oversees training and employment, and is involved in policies regarding substance abuse and local hire. With the support of regional organizations, Cominco has instituted an effective program to control import and use of alcohol and drugs at the mine. Before the mine opened, Maniilaq Association urged Cominco to institute a comprehensive drug and alcohol testing and screening program. NANA called for a drug- and alcohol- free minesite. So did the Multi-Board, along with the Regional Elders' Council, Northwest Arctic Borough, Chukchi College Community Council, Northwest Arctic Borough School District, and the Northwest Inupiat Tribal Council.

Cominco screens all job applicants for evidence of alcohol or drug use. Applicants who test positive are not hired. As a well-publicized company policy, employees' baggage and rooms are subject to search. Cominco dismisses employees in possession of banned substances, who are eligible for rehire only after six months and with proof of participation in a rehabilitation program. Both staff and management are subject to random drug tests at any time.

The pre-employment physicals screen out applicants with substance-abuse problems. In the first year, no mine site workers failed the random drug test. At first, the failure rate for pre-employment physicals reached as high as 75 percent, but the failure rate has since dropped steadily. Applicants have learned they will not be employed if they fail the screen.

The agreement requires Cominco and its contractors to employ resident Natives whenever possible. The agreement sets a local hire goal of 100 percent within twelve years. The hiring preference for qualified Native residents extends to all jobs. This shareholder (i.e., resident) hire preference for Red Dog was unique among Cominco mining operations.

(Coincidentally, in 1987 the Quad Board adopted a resolution urging member organizations to implement their own local hire plans. Signatories included NANA, Maniilaq Association, Northwest Arctic Borough School District, Northwest Arctic Borough, Kikiktagruk Iñupiat Corporation, Regional Elders' Council, and Northwest Iñupiat Tribal Council.)

During mine construction, NANA and Cominco instituted onsite and offsite job training programs geared to the needed construction phase skills. Cominco's ability to achieve the 100 percent local hiring goal will depend upon the success of the training programs, including those offered by Cominco itself at the mine site. Once the mine began operation, Cominco provided onsite training for entry-level positions. Cominco now employs three full-time trainers, funded by a three-year federal Vocational Education Indian Program grant got by NANA, to train employees in mine and mill operations. Cominco encourages aspirants for



technical positions to pursue training at the Alaska Technical Center in Kotzebue and the Seward Skills Center, with good results. Cominco also actively recruits college and technical school students from the region for technical and managerial positions.

In January 1990, a few months after production began, more than half (56 percent) of mine workers were NANA shareholders. These employment levels reflect Cominco's commitment to local hire and the success of Cominco's training programs.

Shareholder participation was high--about 70 percent--in positions such as mill operators, mine workers, maintenance personnel, and other support positions, but much lower--about 10 percent--in managerial and technical positions. Cominco has aimed its on-site training programs toward the former employment categories. Cominco believes that some future mine management and many of the technical personnel may emerge from the ranks, but that formal education will best qualify residents for most technical and higher managerial positions. Cominco officials stated that the more technical and top-level management positions eventually will be filled by Native residents because it is fast tracking qualified and successful training candidates.

NANA-Marriott, a joint venture of NANA and Marriott Corporation, achieved the highest shareholder hire rate--75 percent--of the three mine subcontractors. Arrow Transportation, the trucking subcontractor, employed shareholders in more than half of its workforce throughout 1990.

## Leadership

The region's corporate and political leadership has been very stable over the past two decades. Until 1986 NANA had only one president and, until 1989, only one board chairman. Some board members have served since the corporation's founding. Nine of 23 directors on the revamped board after the 1976 merger were still on the board in 1989.

The region has also had stable and consistent political representation over the past 25 years. For example, Willie Hensley was elected to the Alaska State House in 1966, then served in the State Senate from 1970 to 1974. Frank Ferguson was the state representative from 1970 through 1974 and senator from 1974 until 1986, when he resigned for health reasons. Hensley was appointed to complete Ferguson's term. Al Adams was the region's state representative from 1980 to 1988 when he was elected to the Senate, succeeding Hensley, who returned to his position as president of NANA.

Gaffney, in his analysis of the region's sociocultural unity, stresses the formative milieu from which the regional leadership has evolved over the past three decades. Several indigenous organizations arose to deal with Project Chariot, the Native land claims, and then other regional issues. N.A.N.A. was formed in the mid-1960s to seek a just land settlement for the Alaska Natives and to improve basic health and social status of region residents. Shortly thereafter, the Kotzebue Area Health Corporation was formed to advocate for the health needs of the region.

Years of stability and continuity in regional leadership came to an end between 1986 and 1990 due to deaths and retirements. Still, the organizational apparatus refined over the years functioned smoothly as these key persons were replaced. A new organization--the Northwest Arctic Borough--was also been incorporated, relieving other institutions of some governing duties they had shouldered by default. NANA is stronger financially than ever. Maniilaq Association has solidified its role as the region's social services provider, after transfer to the borough of its quasi-governmental functions (e.g., planning). The Red Dog Mine is providing basic private jobs and earnings never before available in the region.

The Kotzebue Sociocultural Monitoring Study cited the resourcefulness of the regional political leadership in dealing with external political forces. The leadership has been very effective at reconciling internal regional issues as well. Its ability to find solutions that satisfy broad interests of diverse groups is the touchstone of decision-making in the borough. This performance has fostered a network of mutually supportive regional organizations, each with a defined sphere of responsibility. It has spared the region from the internal conflicts that have afflicted several other Native regions in the post-ANCSA era.

The management styles and operational procedures of the region's major institutions embody a cooperative philosophy based on traditional Iñupiat values. For example, NANA's original goals stressed "instill pride and confidence in the shareholders and Natives of the NANA region" and "preserve and protect the resources essential for continued subsistence living." Corporation objectives sustain the connection between cultural heritage and land use, fostering

shareholder employment and the shareholder participation to encourage consensus and solidarity. The corporation strives to attain these goals by maintaining a large, inclusive board, rotating the annual meeting between villages, regularly consulting with the village councils on land matters, and holding shareholder votes on critical corporate decisions.

This centralized yet inclusive management and decision-making philosophy permeates other regional organizations. Despite the extent of village-based representation on the boards of regional organizations, the rate of interlocking memberships is low, indicating broad-based participation in decision-making.

This participatory decision-making framework attests to the abilities of organizational leaders to operate effectively in a very demanding and time-consuming management environment. The success of this approach depends on the commitment of managers and administrators. The persistent application of this philosophy--maximizing local participation and consensus--evidences profound support for this approach and trust in its ability to achieve results.

The 1982 subsistence preference referendum saw the region's political leadership make use of a unifying and important issue to mobilize the local electorate. The leadership committed itself to a voter registration and turnout campaign for this critical referendum. As a result, voter turnout was 53 percent higher than for the primary election three months earlier. Apart from helping defeat the referendum, this voter registration effort permanently boosted the region's electoral influence.

This example is typical of the purposefulness and effectiveness of the region's leadership over the past decade. When an issue threatens the region's central interests, its leadership has responded in ways that are respectful of the region's cultural and social values and politically effective.

### Future Leadership

Many present leaders were educated outside the region or outside Alaska in company with other talented, able Native youth from around the state. The friendships they forged became the basis of professional and political ties that strengthened the Native community in the region and state.

Generally, the leaders who developed the IñI Program were raised with regard for traditional values. They recognized the importance of traditional values for their own children. They created the IñI Program in large part to perpetuate traditional values for their own children and to restore the vitality of Iñupiat culture for the success and self-esteem of succeeding generations.

The future leaders of the region will emerge from very different circumstances than their predecessors. Most persons now between 20 and 45 years of age were educated in the REAA or borough school system. They did not experience the educational and personal challenges that their parents' generation faced. Also, some of the agents that instilled traditional values and life skills (extended family, churches, national guard) have eroded. The child-rearing role of elders has diminished. The materialism and social demands of Western culture superceded acquisition of traditional skills for many youth.

Many issues--lack of jobs, substance abuse, subsistence, and the quality of education--are long-standing and pervasive. These issues demand leadership time and energy. The formation of the Northwest Arctic Borough in 1986 further stretched the region's human resources. Balancing economic development with traditional Iñupiat lifestyles will always be controversial. Subsistence protection is perhaps the most critical element of this issue. Local hire and training and education programs require constant effort.

Future leaders will also have to grapple with many new issues. The character of future leaders will doubtless differ from past leadership. But it is plausible that the positive cultural and social forces that formed the past and present leadership will similarly and positively influence the next leadership generation.

#### Conclusion

In the past, the region's leadership effectively identified the needs of the region's people, then formulated practical means to address those needs. N.A.N.A., created to represent the Iñupiat in their land claims, was the first in a succession of indigenous institutions established to serve the region. After passage of ANCSA and formation of the regional and village corporations, NANA's leadership recognized the inherent limitations in this corporate structure. The result was the merger with NANA of 10 of the 11 village corporations, a prophetic action that strengthened the region as a whole.

Maniilaq Association, also a N.A.N.A. spinoff, became the region's social services provider.

Since 1971 the achievements of NANA, Maniilaq Association, and other institutions in the region have been remarkable by any standard. This is the true measure of the contemporary viability of Inupiat culture and of the leadership capabilities of the organizations and individuals that were instrumental in this transformation.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interest of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in Island Territories under U.S. Administration.

