

Canadian Politics and Public Policy

Policy

A close-up portrait of Bob McLeod, NWT Premier, smiling slightly. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, and a red and black patterned tie. The background is dark and out of focus.

The
North

NWT PREMIER
Bob McLeod

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Policy

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Printed and distributed by St. Joseph Communications, 1165 Kenaston Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 1A4

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In This Issue

2 From the Editor: The North



NWT Premier Bob McLeod with Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Photo: NWT

COVER PACKAGE:

3 Q&A: A conversation with Bob McLeod

8 David M. Brock Power in Consensus Government

11 Glen Abernethy A Unique Challenge: Health and Social Policy in Canada's North

14 Terry Audla Inuit—Stewards of the Arctic

17 Pierre Gratton Look to Mining for the North's Golden Opportunity

20 Geoff Norquay Nation-Building on Permafrost: Three Prime Ministers

24 Jeremy Kinsman Arctic Sovereignty: Fear and Loathing Over Santa's Workshop

28 Elizabeth May Competing Images of the Arctic

31 Thordur Aegir Oskarsson The Arctic Council—Entering Headwind?

35 Sean Willy Partnerships for First Nations and Métis in the North: A Corporate Success Story

38 Bruce Carson Sharing the Wealth of the North: The Rightful Role of Canada's First Peoples



From the Editor / L. Ian MacDonald

The North

Welcome to our special full issue on Canada's North, a storied part of the country that is central to Canadian identity. Even if most Canadians have never set foot in the three northern territories, they agree that the North in many ways defines the country itself. From sea to sea to sea, Arctic sovereignty defines Canadian sovereignty.

In summer, the North is the Land of the Midnight Sun. In the dead of winter, there is only a sliver of light in the day. The territories and the Arctic Ocean, on a stand-alone basis, would be the seventh largest country in the world—larger than India. As it is, with 3.5 million square km out of Canada's 8.9 million square km, they make Canada the world's second-largest country. While the North has no shortage of geography, it remains thinly populated, with 115,000 people living in the three territories, half of them indigenous people. Nor does the North lack for natural resources. Since the discovery of diamonds in 1991, the mining industry has become the largest private-sector employer in the Northwest Territories. And with the melting of Arctic sea ice, 12 billion barrels of oil and 150 trillion cubic feet of natural gas will become more accessible.

We begin with a Q&A with NWT Premier Bob McLeod, who tells us why devolution last April was such an historic event for his territory. "We have province-like powers while having the benefits of being a territory," he says. He also explains how consensus government in the NWT and Nunavut is "like a perpetual minority government." And he discusses the challenges of sustainable development in the North, as well as Arctic

sovereignty and his relationship with Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

Then David Brock, chief electoral officer of NWT, takes us through the process of consensus government in NWT and Nunavut, where MLAs sit as independent members with no party affiliation, and choose the premier and cabinet from their caucus. But as he also writes: "No one should be fooled into thinking that consensus government extracts the politics from policy making."

NWT Health and Social Services Minister Glen Abernethy writes of the challenges facing northern communities. "Even with a small population of 43,000 people," he writes, "the NWT is a vast and culturally diverse territory."

Terry Audla, president of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), representing nearly 60,000 Inuit, writes how his people are stewards of the North. He notes that "Inuit have signed five very modern and comprehensive land claim agreements with the Crown that span almost 40 per cent of Canada's landmass and 50 per cent of its coastline."

Pierre Gratton, president of the Mining Association of Canada, notes that while his industry is the largest employer in NWT, "accounting for 16 per cent of GDP by industry," there are many challenges to developing mining in the North, including "infrastructure and a skilled work force." He asks: "How can we turn opportunities found underground into positive outcomes above ground?"

Contributing Writer Geoff Norquay compellingly captures the northern visions of three Conservative prime ministers—John Diefenbaker, Brian Mulroney and Stephen Harper. From Dief's "Roads to Resources", to Mul-

roney's support for the creation of Nunavut as the third territory, to Harper's "asserting Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic and the successful negotiation of a devolution agreement with the Northwest Territories." With their shared commitment to the North, all three prime ministers also learned that "as with many things in the North, progress takes time."

Contributing Writer Jeremy Kinsman considers the changing nature of Canada's relationship with its Arctic neighbours, notably the US and Russia. Canada's response to the assertive Russian presence in the Arctic has also been complicated by Vladimir Putin's annexation of Crimea in Ukraine. As an old Russia hand—a former Canadian ambassador, Kinsman brings special insights to the Arctic sovereignty debate.

Green Party Leader Elizabeth May writes that we ignore the effects of climate change in the North, not least melting sea ice, at our peril. As she writes: "It is the image of a stranded polar bear on an ice floe that says 'Arctic' to the world."

Looking at the Arctic Council, we have an informed third party assessment by Thordur Aegir Oskarsson, Iceland's ambassador to Canada, on the policy challenges to Arctic stakeholders, including sovereignty, the environment, and sustainable development. This is not a diplomatic note, but clearly something written in the Icelandic ambassador's own voice.

Finally, Bruce Carson writes about the imperative of involving Canada's First Peoples as equity partners and suppliers in developing Canada's immense natural resources in the North.

Enjoy our Canadian northern summer. **P**



With devolution, explains NWT Premier Bob McLeod, “we have province-like powers while having the benefits of being a territory.”
Policy photo: Katherine Robinson

Q&A: A Conversation with Bob McLeod

Northwest Territories Premier Bob McLeod sat down with Policy Editor L. Ian MacDonald for a wide-ranging conversation on devolution, consensus government and relations of the northern territories with the federal government, notably the prime minister. Premier McLeod also discussed sustainable development of the North's abundant natural resources, in partnership with Aboriginal Peoples. The interview was conducted in Winnipeg on May 13 during the Aboriginal Affairs Working Group (AAWG) meeting. The NWT takes over as the national Chair of AAWG in July of this year.

Policy: Premier McLeod, thank you for doing this. First of all, on devolution, why was April 1 such a historic day for the Northwest Territories and the North?

Premier Bob McLeod: I think it was very historic for the Northwest Territories. This is something I believe we've aspired to since we became a territory. All three territories have aspired to this, Yukon was the first to have devolution, 10 years later we saw the benefit of it, and now that we've obtained devolution we expect to have similar success. I think Nunavut sees that they'll be next and that the federal government is serious about devolution as part of their Northern Strategy. That's a very important plank of the Northern Strategy and the people of the NWT have wanted devolution for a long time and certainly past politicians have been waiting for over 40 years to see devolution happen.

And it was finally achieved on April 1, 2014.

Policy: So how do you see it—as a follow up to that—in both substantive and symbolic terms?

Bob McLeod: Well in symbolic terms, it's that we have province-like powers while having the benefits of being a territory, and that's most significant dollar-wise, in terms of the funding arrangements with the federal government. Substantively, it means that the people most affected by decisions that used to be made in Ottawa, will be making those decisions in the Northwest Territories so we can control the breadth and pace of development, we can make sure that we have balanced development. The people of the NWT have always had close links to the land and the environment so we will make decisions that will provide for balanced development.

Policy: So there's both power and money?

Bob McLeod: That's right.

Policy: Consensus government is something that we're not very familiar with, South of 60. If you had to sum up how it works, what would you say about it?

Bob McLeod: I think consensus government has worked well for the territories, there's only two jurisdictions in Canada that have consensus government, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. It's taken the best of the Westminster system of government, combined with an aboriginal approach to government. In the NWT, with 33 communities, it's allowed the smaller communities to be able to participate and have influence on the government of the day. It probably wouldn't have the same influence if we moved to a political party system of government.

Policy: So it's different from the Westminster model with the cabinet being in charge and the caucus going along with the cabinet.

Bob McLeod: Yes, in theory, that's

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the way it's supposed to work. Consensus government is like a perpetual minority government, that's probably the best way to explain it, where if we want to get things done, probably you need at least three friends on the other side to help you get a bill through or pass a motion.

Policy: How are the territories performing in education, and particularly the education of aboriginal people, and is this where your education reform initiative comes in, in terms of setting your prosperity agenda?

Bob McLeod: We're such a large territory, 1.2 million square kilometres of land and we're only 43,000 people in 33 communities, probably about 25 of them are under 1,000 people. Of those 25, there's probably a dozen that are less than 500, so the approach that the last few governments have taken is to move away from the residential school system and have grades up to grade 12 in the communities. I think that for the larger centres the education system works quite well.

For the other communities, outside the regional centres, it's much more difficult to have a strong education system. We have issues with enrolment and absenteeism and that's where we're working on a number of initiatives; primarily, aboriginal student initiatives. We are also doing a review of the education system and we have an education reform initiative. A lot of the parents are complaining that it's hard to keep/get kids to stay in school and also the fact that we had social passing for many years. Parents don't like that very much, because they feel that when a student graduates, a lot of them don't have the skills that allow them to move on. It's become generally accepted in the smaller com-

munities, that if students want to get into the post-secondary system, they have to go for upgrading. Parents feel that if you're going to school you should be getting a quality education. In our small communities, where we have very high unemployment—40, 50, 60 per cent unemployment, it's very important for the youth to have a good education.

Policy: What's the high school matriculation rate now in the NWT?

Bob McLeod: Well, obviously there's a big difference between aboriginal and non-aboriginal. We're getting more and more aboriginal graduates all the time, our numbers are increasing but aboriginal people probably have about 20 per cent lower graduation rate.

Policy: But for post-secondary education both for aboriginal and non-aboriginal, they have to go south, right?

Bob McLeod: Yes, although we do have a community college.

Policy: Community college, but no university?

Bob McLeod: Yes, to go to university, you have to go south. For some of the students, they can take two years at Aurora College (which has three campuses in the NWT and around 650 students), and then go south for the final two years.

Policy: But you definitely see education as the key to prosperity?

Bob McLeod: For sure.

Policy: And for competitiveness?

Bob McLeod: That's the conundrum that we're having to deal with. We have a lot of jobs that aren't filled and then we have a very high unem-

ployment rate in the smaller communities. We haven't found a way to match up the skill set to the jobs.

Policy: How do you see the role of the three territories in the Council of the Federation? Which is an organization that's relatively young, founded only in 2003.

Bob McLeod: In my experience, and the other two territorial premiers—that we play a very important role. I think we're accepted by all the premiers as equals. We don't call it the Council of the Federation anymore, we call it Canada's Premiers. We benefit quite a bit from being part of that, we gain a lot by getting the support of all of the premiers of Canada in our initiatives that are important to us, and it's been very helpful.

Policy: What's your sense of how much progress the provinces and territories are making on developing what Alison Redford called, when she was in office, and others have called, the Canadian Energy Strategy?

Bob McLeod: We already had an energy strategy that was led by Danny Williams in Newfoundland but I think we're making very good progress on working on a new revised, updated energy strategy. And at one time B.C. was not involved, and Quebec. B.C. has since become more active. We're waiting to see with the new government in Quebec, what positions they will take. Obviously for a territory like ourselves, we see it as very important, because we have a lot of resources, they're all stranded and we can't find a way to go through southern provinces or southern territories.

Policy: You've got to get resources to tidewater.

Bob McLeod: That's right.

Policy: Former prime minister Mulroney made a speech in Ottawa in April on sustainable development of Canada's natural resources. And he said that First Nations and aboriginal support, approval by the provinces, and participation of responsible en-

vironmental advocates, were pre-requisites to transporting these resources to tidewater and world markets. And you've talked about the need for balanced development, looking at the North, and the equation. And the balancing of the equation is between the resource development and sustainable development. How do you see that?

Bob McLeod: Well, I agree fully with the statements that former prime minister Mulroney made in his speech. That's the approach we've been fostering and we think it's working. When you look at the proposed Mackenzie Valley Pipeline, governments and First Nations would have owned 33 per cent of the pipeline if it went forward. If you look at the diamond mines, and you look at the businesses that are in our territory, the largest businesses in almost every sector are aboriginal-owned companies, so it's worked quite well in our territory.

I don't think we would have accomplished as much as we have done, as the 17th Legislative Assembly, without having a good strong interpersonal relationship with Prime Minister Harper. I think that the fact that we don't have a Conservative MP, despite that, we've been able to work well together. He's been very interested in the North. And I meet with him on a regular basis.

Policy: How do you see the importance of the interpersonal relationship between yourself as a territorial premier and the prime minister, Mr. Harper?

Bob McLeod: Well I think it's been very important, as I don't think we would have accomplished as much as we have done, as the 17th Legislative Assembly, without having a good strong interpersonal relationship with Prime Minister Harper. I think

that the fact that we don't have a Conservative MP, despite that, we've been able to work well together. He's been very interested in the North. And I meet with him on a regular basis. Whenever I need to meet with him, he's been very open to meeting. And he's been very supportive of many of the initiatives that we put forward and I think that the benefit is significant.

Policy: He's not the first prime minister to have been fascinated with by the North; it goes back all the way to Diefenbaker and Roads to Resources. He says his annual August trip is the one he most looks forward to all year. One of the tests for any prime minister though, in the North, is Arctic sovereignty and I was wondering how you think Canada is doing there and whether you're worried about the acquisitive tendencies of the Russians, showing up in the high Arctic?

Bob McLeod: I think that Canada is doing quite well. Whenever he comes up North now, like when he came up to sign the devolution final agreement, he was very surprised when he looked up at the gallery of our Legislative Assembly and afterward he remarked that he's been coming North so often that he knew just about everybody who was in the gallery.

We've been promoting that the best way to have Arctic sovereignty for Canada is to have strong, sustainable communities and we've been pushing Mr. Harper on that. We were very pleased when Canada took up the chairmanship of the Arctic Council. With regard to the Russians and the high Arctic—I think that with the United Nations Law of the Sea, probably that Canada will be able to maintain a large part of the resources.

Policy: Speaking of the Arctic Council, how do you see its role in advancing circumpolar issues?

Bob McLeod: I think it plays a very important role. It's a very good forum for us. It brings the circumpolar world to our door. And we have to take advantage of the opportunity, as much as we can to educate them about the North and also work with

the other circumpolar countries so that we can work together to protect the Arctic.

Policy: Climate change in the North. Is this a big issue for you? And is the melting of the sea ice evidence of that?

Bob McLeod: Climate change is a very big issue to us. For a number of reasons, the melting of the sea ice is evidence of that for sure. But it also manifests itself in many, many ways. When you look at the North, the treeline is moving north, the permafrost is melting, we're starting to see it affect wildlife.

Climate change is a very big issue to us. For a number of reasons, the melting of the sea ice is evidence of that for sure. But it also manifests itself in many, many ways. When you look at the North, the treeline is moving north, the permafrost is melting, we're starting to see it affect wildlife.

Policy: Most famously, it affects the polar bears.

Bob McLeod: That's right, we have cross-breeding between polar bears and grizzly bears, what they call the "grolars". And we're seeing species, animals that have never been in the North before. Like cougars and white-tailed deer. We're seeing waters warming up, so certain species of fish, you can't catch them where they used to be.

Policy: So this affects indigenous ways of life?

Bob McLeod: Yes, for sure. And water levels also; you know, we depend a lot on ice roads, and climate change affects ice roads. And then the last few summers, there have been very few mosquitoes. I don't know if they attribute that to climate change or not, but that's the reality.

Policy: What are the implications of all that for open navigation of the North, of the Arctic Ocean and the oil and gas resources up there?

Bob McLeod: Well, I think that you know we were starting to see a lot more people coming up. I think there have been some people who have tried to go through the Northwest Passage on Sea-Doos, there's some who try to paddle a boat through there. We're hearing now that there's a group of women who plan to scuba dive through the Northwest Passage. A couple of years ago, 75 cruise ships went through the Northwest Passage. So I think that it remains to be seen but there was a Chinese ship that went through the Northwest Passage recently. Although the Americans are saying that they don't see it as a viable shipping route. But as far as the development of oil and gas, I think that it will facilitate that, so it's very important for us to have a port in the Beaufort Sea, as far as I'm concerned.

Policy: What are the infrastructure needs of the North, in particular in the NWT, in terms of roads, pipelines, and ports to get products to global markets?

Bob McLeod: We need all of those., We're building a highway from Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk that's been under construction for a little over a year now. We'll be driving over it in probably three years from now. The cost of living is very high in the North, so infrastructure is the best way to reduce the cost of living. I talked about our stranded resources, we need pipelines and ports, to get it out, get it to market.

Policy: In a sustainable way.

Bob McLeod: That's right.

Policy: Fracking has been in the news recently, with the report of the Canadian Council of Academies which acknowledges possible risks to groundwater and of CO₂ emissions, but concludes there's no definitive evidence of it. What's your sense of that?

Bob McLeod: It's something that we're working on. And near Norman

Wells in the Mackenzie Valley in the central part of the Northwest Territories, there's a world-class tight oil, tight gas plate. It's still in the exploration stage, where the companies are wanting to prove out the size of the fields. The local, regional aboriginal governments have been supportive and they want the exploration to prove out how much oil and gas is in there. The expectation is that before it goes into development it will probably have to go through environmental assessment. We're getting a lot of pressure from environmental groups from the South, which are totally opposed to any sort of fracking. So, again, it's part of the balance that we talked about.

Policy: How about the potential of the oil and gas industries in the North? The numbers are pretty striking—proven reserves of 12 billion barrels of oil and 150 trillion cubic feet of gas.

Bob McLeod: Yes, there's very significant potential. And the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline has been approved. They're just waiting for the price of natural gas to go up. When they first applied to build the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline, the understanding was that if natural gas was approximately \$6 to \$8 per thousand cubic feet, that the pipeline would be feasible. The last time I checked the price of Natural Gas is pretty close to \$5—so, it's getting pretty close to that range. Even if the United States becomes self-sufficient, I talked to British Columbia Premier Christy Clark, and she's developing LNG and she's saying our natural gas could go through there once we get a pipeline through.

Policy: What's the appropriate partnership role for aboriginal people in mining and extractive resources?

Bob McLeod: Our experience to date has been aboriginal people have been negotiating impact benefit agreements with mining companies, they've been negotiating jobs, business opportunities, and I think that's worked well. As all the land claims are settled and self-government comes into effect, they'll be the own-

ers of their resources. So they'll be partners and owners in development at some point.

Policy: The mining industry is NWT's largest private sector employer. How do you see that relationship between industry and government going forward? Is it "Diamonds Are Forever"?

Bob McLeod: Well I wouldn't say "Diamonds Are Forever" because diamond mines have finite lives. But I think the diamond mines will be there for quite a long time. We have three diamond mines now and the fourth one has received regulatory approval and construction will begin very soon. And there's also work being done to extend the life of at least one of the existing diamond mines. And I expect that by 2020, we'll double our GDP, and we'll have at least seven new mines in operation.

Policy: Your government's engagement process with Aboriginal stakeholders, titled, "Respect, Recognition and Responsibility" was the context for the Mackenzie Valley Highway project, that came second overall, in the IPAC (Institute of Public Administration of Canada) awards for innovative management. Is this a template for engagement?

Bob McLeod: I certainly think so and by taking that approach we got the devolution deal. I think it proved very helpful because when we got elected as the 17th Assembly our whole caucus agreed to have a meeting with the aboriginal governments, the seven aboriginal governments in the Northwest Territories, before we'd even selected a premier or cabinet. When I was elected premier and along with my cabinet, we made it a priority to develop a strategy for aboriginal government engagement. I was keeping track of how many meetings I was having with aboriginal governments and I think after the first year and a half, I was up to about 60 meetings with aboriginal governments. So we took an approach that, if you're going to work together, you've got to build trust and the best way to build trust is to get to know

each other, to meet on a regular basis, and that's how we were able to move forward and get aboriginal governments to support devolution.

Policy: NWT has, as you know, the highest per capita personal income in the country—\$67,000 a year. Which compares to the national average of \$46,500. And even Alberta, oil rich Alberta, is second to you, at \$56,000. Obviously, your costs are higher in some ways, in terms of bringing in goods and services. What are the challenges in managing this kind of prosperity in the North and in particular NWT?

So we took an approach that, if you're going to work together, you've got to build trust and the best way to build trust is to get to know each other, to meet on a regular basis, and that's how we were able to move forward and get aboriginal governments to support devolution.

Bob McLeod: Well, the biggest challenge is that we've got a very leaky ship. All the money that comes into the North, probably 70 per cent of it leaves to the South right away. We have some issues that we've been struggling with as a government. First and foremost, the cost of living is very high, and so people move to places that are cheaper. We believe if you work in the North, you should live in the North but we have, we estimate, about 3000 "fly in, fly out" workers. Some of them have been working there 10 years, some of them have never set foot in the communities. So that's a problem.

Policy: They have the same issues in the oil sands, don't they, with the workers from Newfoundland and Cape Breton, who fly in, and fly out?

Bob McLeod: Yes, and then you're trying to build an economy and now we have probably, on a per capita basis, we probably have the best airline coverage, at least in Yellowknife,

where we have four airlines that are flying in and out of Yellowknife, sometimes twice a day. A story I like to tell is about 10 years ago, if you wanted to fly out of Yellowknife to Edmonton, return, it would probably cost you about \$1200 and we had two regional carriers. We had First Air, and Canadian North. About six years, maybe eight years ago now, Air Canada started flying, back and forth just to Yellowknife, and so the cost went down to probably \$600. And I think three years ago WestJet came in and the cost went right down to \$150 round trip. You can still get a seat for about \$150.

Policy: Do you have some of the same challenges and issues Alberta's had, on a smaller scale, managing growth?

Bob McLeod: On a smaller scale because people work, get jobs, get skills and then move South, so we're losing a few people. At one time Newfoundland and the Northwest Territories were the only two jurisdictions that were having population decline. Then Newfoundland became a have province. The NWT has the only population on the decline, not by much, mind you, but we're down 100 to 200 people a year. We had to figure out what was going on, so we worked with the mining companies to do surveys and we realized that we were the victims of our own success. That we trained up people, workers would move south where it was cheaper and then fly in and fly out. We never thought aboriginal people would do that as well, but they're just like anybody else; they want to do what is best for their families, their children. So now, we are working with all our governments and communities. We realize that we had to have more housing and more infrastructure. We have the best student financial assistance program in Canada. We have good health care, a clean environment, lots of outdoor activities, if that's what you are looking for. We are finding that we have to promote ourselves. People who come up North live there because they like it, they like the lifestyle. **P**



The opening of the third session of the 17th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories in Yellowknife. Consensus government is a perpetual minority. Photo: Bill Braden

Power in Consensus Government

David M. Brock

For anyone observing Canadian politics on a regular basis, the model of consensus government can seem like an unattainable ideal. In the North, where perspective comes in hundreds of kilometres and survival can depend on collaboration, partisanship can be toxic. Consensus government works in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut for reasons that may have little to do with geography. Or so the rest of us can hope.

The Northwest Territories and Nunavut both employ a system of consensus government, which is often identified by what's most conspicuous in its absence: political parties. More broadly, consensus government is defined by a number of distinct characteristics: no registered political parties, a governing policy mandate set by all elected members, a premier and cabinet elected by fellow members and serving in perpetual minority, no official opposition, a strong role for legislative committees, and a predisposition for civil dialogue. Though there are distinctions between the application of the consensus system in the two territories, the primary characteristics of the system are reflected in both jurisdictions.

Although small points of distinction between Nunavut and the NWT are interesting, it is the contrast between consensus government and the party system that fascinates most. What the consensus system means for political behaviour, resource allocation, and policymaking is worthy of study.

To this end, the making of election law serves as a useful point of comparison between the partisan parliamentary system found in most Canadian jurisdictions and the northern system of consensus government.

Election outcomes shape policy decisions. Elected representatives in all Canadian legislatures thus have an infinite appetite for the examination of election law. They know that the rules of the game mediate the path to power.

In June 2014, the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories passed Bill 26—*An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act*. Anyone familiar with recent debate over the federal *Fair Elections Act* (C-23) would be struck by the contrast in legislative process. As in all jurisdictions, suggested changes to the electoral system begin with a report from the chief electoral officer following an election. In a consensus system, the report of the CEO is tabled, and then referred to committee for study and public review. The report of committee is then brought back to the House with a motion to adopt the committee's recommendations. Where legislative amendment is recommended, a bill is sponsored by a member of the Board of Management of the Legislative Assembly. Drafting instructions are prepared by the CEO. After the bill is introduced, and following second reading, the bill is referred to Committee of the Whole for consideration before third reading. Assent is given by the territorial commissioner.

A familiar term is missing from the paragraph above: government. In the consensus system, the executive council plays no special role in the making of election law. The views of the individuals who occupy the positions of premier and minister are of no lesser importance than those of other members, but also no greater.

In the consensus system, the executive council plays no special role in the making of election law. The views of the individuals who occupy the positions of premier and minister are of no lesser importance than those of other members, but also no greater.

One should not be fooled into thinking that consensus government extracts the politics from policy making. Questions can be tough and divisions deep. However, on matters of rules and procedure, such as changes to election administration, the structure of the consensus system decreases the likelihood that policy will be shaped by the contours of partisanship. Where divisions do appear, they are more likely to form along lines of culture or geography.

Another example of how the consensus system mediates partisan disputes on matters of democracy comes from the redistribution process. Following a recent review of NWT electoral boundaries by an independent commission, the House voted 11—7 to maintain the current number of electoral districts while adopting one significant change to how the boundaries are drawn. More to the point, amongst the seven members who voted against the bill were two cabinet ministers. The reasons for their dissent were evident, and there was no suggestion that they would, or should, be sanctioned for their positions. This example underscores the important point that consensus is not a synonym for unanimity.

In the past decade there have been too many instances in Canada where perceived partisanship has molded changes to election administration. These instances have raised questions about electoral fairness, and, cumulatively, can cultivate concerns about democratic legitimacy. At the national level, partisanship was perceived to motivate Liberal government legislation on state subsidies for political parties in 2003 as well as the Conservative government's comprehensive election legislation in 2014. At the provincial level, in 2012 election financing legislation was passed in Alberta despite opposition protests and in Saskatchewan the

province went four years without an appointed chief electoral officer due to partisan quarrels. And, despite the Canadian tradition of independent electoral boundary commissions, recent redistribution exercises in provinces such as Nova Scotia and British Columbia have triggered intense partisan wrangling.

Minimizing partisan divisions in the making of election law is crucial to upholding the integrity of the electoral system. Seeking as wide a consensus as possible—or, in the cases of NWT and Nunavut, institutionalizing consensus—is likely to increase citizen trust in the fairness of the electoral process.

Minimizing partisan divisions in the making of election law is crucial to upholding the integrity of the electoral system. Seeking as wide a consensus as possible—or, in the cases of NWT and Nunavut, institutionalizing consensus—is likely to increase citizen trust in the fairness of the electoral process.

The Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories has 19 single member electoral districts compared with 22 for the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut. With total territorial populations of approximately 43,000 and 33,000, respectively, this means that the NWT has an average of 2,282 persons per riding while Nunavut averages 1,509 per riding. These are small electoral districts by any national comparison.

Without political parties, not only does the making of election law differ, elections themselves operate differently. For those familiar with national and provincial elections, the closest com-

parable equivalent is when an 'independent' contests an election in a party system. Each candidate for territorial election is nominated in their district by gathering the signatures of a minimum number of eligible electors and submitting the approved forms to their returning officer. This nomination process helps to avoid some of the pitfalls of nomination contests held by riding associations, such as exclusion based upon gender, but at the same time it removes a vehicle for candidate recruitment.

There are no legal restrictions on a candidate advertising himself or herself as a member or supporter of a political party, but there is also no mechanism to register or officially recognize any parties. As such, the name (and photo) of a candidate will appear on the ballot but without any indication of party affiliation. Past territorial candidates who have publicly claimed affiliation with an established national party or upstart local party (actually, society) have never been successfully elected in either territory. This fact perhaps illustrates not only the institutional barriers to creating territorial political parties, but also a political culture that appears to reject party affiliation at the ballot box.

The reasons advanced for this political culture range from honouring traditions of dialogue in aboriginal political systems that existed prior to colonization and persist today, to the historical origins of territorial government and the desire of colonial powers to maintain control over executive decision-making.

After the close of polls, residents know who will be the elected representative for their riding but do not yet know who will serve in cabinet or as premier. The first minister and each individual minister are elected, a few weeks later, among members themselves, during a territorial leadership meeting. However, the portfolio(s) held by any one minister, are the prerogative of the premier. At present in NWT, the executive council is comprised of seven of 19 members; in Nunavut, the executive composition



The NWT Legislature in session. As in Nunavut, MLAs sit in their own name, not as party members. Photo: Bill Braden

is nine of 22: thus leaving territorial governments in a perpetual legislative minority.

Without a party platform to shape the agenda, the governing policy mandate is crafted with input from all elected members, a group commonly known as 'caucus'. Those not elected to cabinet sit on the opposite side of the circular chamber and are known as 'regular members'.

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The peculiarities of consensus government don't end with the election of members and the formation of government. It truly is, however, Westminster in the Arctic. Many aspects of consensus government mirror those found in other Canadian parliamentary systems. The orders of the day for legislative sessions are relatively familiar with statements, question period, the tabling of documents, and reading of bills. Most legislation introduced, including supply

bills, emanates from government. Motions still must pass by majority. Parliamentary privilege still applies. On the government side, the cabinet conventions of collegiality, confidence, and collective responsibility all hold. Those members not in cabinet still have pivotal roles as representatives and ombudsmen.

There is, perhaps, less certainty regarding other parliamentary pillars. With expanded legislative authorities devolved to territorial governments, what is the appropriate balance for regular members as they relate to the government as both policy advisors and opposition critics? Is it possible for a motion of confidence to defeat the government, cause the dissolution of the legislature, and result in a general election before the fixed date? The mere existence of such questions speaks to the evolution of responsible government in the North.

Consensus government as it is practiced today in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut may not be a panacea, but, as the territorial making of election law demonstrates, it does offer useful innovations in governance that may assist other jurisdictions in thinking about how to modernize Canadian democracy. **P**

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Delivering health and social services to 33 communities, and improving the quality of life for seniors, is part of the challenge in the NWT.
Photo: Tessa MacIntosh

A Unique Challenge: Health and Social Policy in Canada's North

Glen Abernethy

Governing in the North is as different from governing elsewhere as life in the North is different. The health and social challenges of the Northwest Territories range from addictions and mental health to poverty and homelessness issues that exist across Canada. But as Minister of Health and Social Services Glen Abernethy writes, life in the North demands different policy approaches. That need has spawned innovation and collaboration to produce unique solutions.

The Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories has a vision of strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits and responsibilities of a unified, environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories. With a wealth of natural resources and new powers and authorities recently transferred from Ottawa to the NWT for land and resource management, the NWT is well positioned to create jobs and economic opportunities that will contribute to territorial—and national—pros-

perity and well-being. Yet prosperity in the Northwest Territories will not be measured on economic terms alone; economic development must be accompanied by corresponding social development.

Supporting and sustaining long-term improvements in health and well-being for our residents is an integral part of creating a strong, prosperous NWT. Encouraging healthy, educated people who are able to participate meaningfully in the economic, social and political life of the territory and share in its benefits is a critical goal for government and a critical measure of success. To achieve that success, we are taking innovative steps to ensure our residents have the support they need to overcome personal and social challenges so they can realize their full potential and achieve their own aspirations.

The NWT's small, relatively young population presents great opportunity for positive shifts in social determinants within a generation.

The Northwest Territories is uniquely positioned within Canada to contribute innovative perspectives and new approaches to confronting difficult social issues such as addictions and mental health. The NWT's small, relatively young, population presents great opportunity for positive shifts in social determinants within a generation. We will make those shifts through strategies that aim to address root causes in an integrated fashion, understanding the social inequities and systemic failings that often contribute to and exacerbate challenges such as mental health, addictions, poverty and homelessness, rather than addressing the symptoms alone. We will involve communities and individuals in identifying solutions that are culturally appropriate and integrate their own unique strengths and resources, thus avoiding the pitfalls of "one-size-fits-all" approaches that may not adapt well to our many diverse communities. And we will give our children a solid start on a good life, offering programs and services that will promote



A Dene First Nations child joins in a celebration of Addictions Week in N'Dilo. "The prevalence of addictions," writes Glen Abernethy, "has been a long-standing concern for NWT communities." Photo: Tessa MacIntosh

their early health and educational development to eliminate problems before they even arise.

When the 17th Legislative Assembly took office in the fall of 2011, all 19 members met as a caucus to hammer out a vision for their term. They set an ambitious goal of "Healthy, educated people free from poverty"; and identified five key priorities, including to, "Ensure a fair and sustainable health care system by investing in prevention, education and awareness and early childhood development, (and) enhancing addictions treatment programs..." These priorities mirrored recommendations from a

report on services for children and families done in 2010 by a standing committee of the Legislative Assembly. That report highlighted the need for broad social interventions, citing as "essential recommendations" a focus on prevention and early intervention in order to help families to heal; ensuring readily accessible alcohol and drug treatment in all communities; and developing a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy.

The government responded by establishing a Social Envelope Committee of Cabinet (SECOC) chaired by me and including ministers from departments charged with delivering social

programs in the NWT. Our mandate is to address “a range of actions designed to promote, preserve and help manage the long-term health and social well-being of NWT residents.” Our first steps included several foundational initiatives meant to promote overall health and wellness at a fundamental level: developing an anti-poverty strategy, updating and expanding the existing early childhood development framework, and enhancing the government’s response to mental health and addictions.

Even with its small population of 43,000 people, the NWT is a vast and culturally diverse territory. With 11 official languages and eight aboriginal groups negotiating self-government agreements, there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution that is right for every one of the territory’s 33 communities.

Assigning these initiatives to a cabinet committee, as opposed to a single ministry, represented a new way of doing business for the government. Our committee recognized that the challenges facing northern communities are not new, and that previous efforts have not been as successful as needed. They wanted to find new and innovative ways to reach out to communities, and to build partnerships that could lead to lasting change. They also recognized that even with its small population of 43,000 people, the NWT is a vast and culturally diverse territory. With 11 official languages and eight aboriginal groups negotiating self-government agreements, there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution that is right for every one of the territory’s 33 communities.

Further complicating our work is the fact that approximately 50 per cent of the population of the NWT is aboriginal, either First Nations, Métis, or Inuvialuit; and aboriginal people in the NWT face a multitude of challenges stemming from rapid social

change, a history of colonization, and the legacy of residential schools. With educational achievement levels and population health trends that are generally worse than territorial averages, aboriginal communities suffer higher rates of unemployment and face daunting social problems.

Ministers agreed that addressing these challenges meant focusing on the client, rather than departmental mandates and programs. It meant leveraging limited government resources to achieve maximum value and collaborating across silos to ensure efficiency and avoiding duplication of effort.

June 2012 saw the completion of *A Shared Path Towards Wellness*, a three-year plan to combat addictions and improve mental health services in the NWT. In June 2013, the government completed two additional major strategies. *Right from the Start: A Framework for Early Childhood Development in the NWT* outlines major new investments and new initiatives to promote early childhood programming. *Building on the Strengths of Northerners: A Strategic Framework toward the Elimination of Poverty in the NWT* identifies five priorities tackling the root causes of poverty in the territory. These initiatives will benefit many segments of the population at large, but a key focus is on increasing success rates for aboriginal children and families by addressing the basic social determinants of health in the NWT’s small, remote communities.

Not surprisingly, the same themes have emerged in most communities, including the need to promote healthy eating, early childhood intervention, programs for families, and on-the land programs that support and strengthen aboriginal culture, priorities that are being reflected in all our planning.

Another important step has been the development of community wellness plans for all communities with funding provided by Health Canada. Local gov-

erning bodies—band councils, hamlet councils or community wellness committees—have established plans that outline clearly what each community’s priorities are. Not surprisingly, the same themes have emerged in most communities, including the need to promote healthy eating, early childhood intervention, programs for families, and on-the land programs that support and strengthen aboriginal culture, priorities that are being reflected in all our planning. Another demonstration of this commitment to meaningful regional and community input into identifying new solutions was the development of *Right from the Start: A Framework for Early Childhood Development in the NWT*, which began with the GNWT convening engagement tables in every region of the NWT. Elders from each community were then invited to an Elders Sharing Circle. Sixty elders, representing every region, gathered in December 2012 to share traditional knowledge about early childhood development and learning. This knowledge about traditional ways of raising children informed the development of the framework, and is reflected throughout the final document.

The prevalence of addictions, and particularly alcohol abuse, has been a long-standing concern for NWT communities, and continues to be so in spite of numerous efforts over the years to tackle it. Yet there are many success stories.

The prevalence of addictions, and particularly alcohol abuse, has been a long-standing concern for NWT communities, and continues to be so in spite of numerous efforts over the years to tackle it. Yet there are many success stories, and inspiring leaders in all communities who have become important role models and helped others to deal with addictions issues. The Minister’s Forum on Addictions and Community Wellness was established in 2011 to draw on this wisdom. The forum travelled to all regions of the NWT and met with peo-



Kids drawing “healing hands” in N’Dilo, a Dene First Nations community of 200 on the outskirts of Yellowknife on the tip of Latham Island.
Photo: Tessa MacIntosh

ple suffering from addictions, their families, government staff, teachers and RCMP officers, in an effort to find out what has worked at the community level.

Their report, *Healing Voices*, was delivered to the government in the spring of 2013 and identified key priorities based on community input. Among these priorities was the need for on-the-land healing programs that are rooted in aboriginal culture and combine the wisdom of elders and traditional knowledge with contemporary treatment modalities. Other primary recommendations included more programs for youth, improved access to a range of treatment programs to respond to individual needs, and more emphasis on celebrating successes.

These recommendations informed our updated Addictions and Mental Health Action Plan, and resulted in new funding to support on-the-land healing programs. As land-based healing pro-

grams become more prevalent in the NWT and elsewhere, the lessons we learn from our own programs will help identify best practices for integrating aboriginal values and culture into efforts for supporting Aboriginal health and well-being.

Collaboration and accessing the shared wisdom of community partners was critical in developing *Building on the Strengths of Northerners*, our Anti-Poverty Strategic Framework, drafted by a partnership involving the NWT government, aboriginal governments, the No Place for Poverty Coalition representing a broad base of NGOs and community governments, and business. There was no road map for this kind of collaborative effort in the NWT and many lessons were learned about how to work together. The government has developed its own anti-poverty Action Plan in response to the framework, including establishing a fund to support community-based projects designed to combat poverty. A stakeholders’ advisory committee has been set up to lead the development

of a broader action plan, supported in part with government funding but leveraging direct and in-kind contributions from other parties.

Creating the kind of society where our citizens can grow and thrive, support themselves and their families and realize their own dreams is a priority for our government. Successfully doing this means pioneering new ways of doing business, forging broad partnerships at all levels of society and seeking opportunities for innovation. With new programs and strategies aimed at building a strong foundation supporting social and individual health, the government is making progress on its goal of healthy, educated people free from poverty who will benefit fully from the territory’s bright future. **P**

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Inuit leaders from across Inuit Nunangat discussed new goals for the evolving Inuit-Federal partnership with Prime Minister Stephen Harper and members of his cabinet during the first meeting between Inuit leaders and representatives of the Crown on August 22, 2013 in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut. From Left to Right: Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt, Environment Minister Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council; Thomas Anguti Johnson, President of the National Inuit Youth Council; Duane Smith, President of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (Canada); Terry Audla, President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami; Nellie Cournoyea, Chair of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation; PM Harper, Cathy Towtongie, President of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated; Rebecca Kudloo, President of Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada; Joe Oliver, then Minister of Natural Resources, Sarah Leo, President of Nunatsiavut; Jobie Tukkiapik, President of Makivik Corporation. Photo: PMO

Inuit—Stewards of the Arctic

Terry Audla

The people of Inuit Nunangat have made the rocky transition from “Eskimo” to “Inuit” in a generation. The Inuit way of life has changed drastically in that time, with traditional practices from hunting and fishing to child-rearing and education being replaced with modern ways from the South. At the same time, Inuit possess a rich ancestral wisdom and a unique current perspective that can educate the world on issues from climate change to governance. Terry Audla, President of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, demystifies the stewards of the Arctic.

Inuit look at our world in a completely unique way. The vantage point from our Arctic homeland—what we call Inuit Nunangat in the Inuit language—offers an expansive perspective of our world. Particularly in the context of our planet’s changing climate and our intensified efforts to explore additional resource development, assert modern sovereign lines and establish newfound transportation channels, our Arctic perch has offered Inuit an unmatched observatory to witness these enduring changes.

But Inuit are not—nor do we want to be—simply observers in a changing world. Inuit have a vision for our homeland and we will continue to be active, adaptive players in this modern world.

The remoteness and relative isolation of our communities for thousands of years has afforded Inuit the opportunity to learn from history. Inuit have only had earnest and sustained contact with the outside world for a generation. In fact, there are many Inuit alive today who were raised in nomadic communities, travelling the Arctic land and sea by dog-team and kayak, tracking game and marine mammals for survival.

In a matter of decades, Inuit have moved from living in igloos and skin tents to settling in static communities in (often inadequate and overcrowded) houses. Where we used to get our food exclusively from the land and sea, we now go grocery shopping for packaged food items from the South at exorbitant costs, supplementing our diet with traditional food sources regularly. Where providing for a family until very recently entailed hunting, gathering, sewing and building, for the majority of Inuit, it now means going to school and getting a job.

Where providing for a family until very recently entailed hunting, gathering, sewing and building, for the majority of Inuit, it now means going to school and getting a job.

We have made the rocky transition from “Eskimo” to “Inuit” in a generation and the incredibly rapid speed of this transition has come with its share of challenges to our communities and our people manifesting in a number of ways.

There is a troubling health gap between our population and the rest of Canada. Inuit life expectancy rates are much less than non-Inuit (9.8 years less for men and 8.5 years less for women) while infant mortality rates remain high. Inuit carry a strikingly disproportionate burden of communicable diseases such as

The remoteness and relative isolation of our communities for thousands of years has afforded Inuit the opportunity to learn from history. Inuit have only had earnest and sustained contact with the outside world for a generation.

tuberculosis—in 2011, the reported incidence rate of TB among Inuit was almost 254 times that for Canadian born, non-Aboriginals.

Inuit also face specific challenges to obtaining adequate supplies of safe, nutritionally balanced and culturally acceptable foods. A large-scale health survey found that the prevalence of food insecurity among Inuit was up to six times higher than the Canadian average and a separate study found that nearly 70 per cent of Inuit preschoolers were residing in food insecure households. This represents the highest documented food insecurity prevalence rate for any aboriginal population residing in a developed country.

Mental health and addiction treatment remain significant challenges in our communities. In 2004-2008, children and teenagers in Inuit Nunangat were more than 30 times more likely to die from suicide as were those in the rest of Canada.

Carving out a place in the world and finding new hope and meaning in an unfamiliar system presents difficult obstacles that are intensified by the devastating legacy of the Residential School System, as well as the government’s relocation of Inuit families to the high-Arctic and the alienation that comes from prejudice and misunderstanding.

As we work to combat these troubling challenges in our communities, we need to find ways to improve our economic prospects with innovative investments, new jobs and renewed confidence among our populations.

With the renewed global interest in our homeland as the next frontier, it is our commitment to be at the table ensuring respect for each other and our land that will determine our future.

It is important to remember that Inuit are the only players who have

the advantage of building on a rich ancestral wisdom that allowed us to thrive for thousands of years in one of the harshest climates. It is this intrinsic and pragmatic traditional knowledge that should ensure that we have an irreplaceable seat at any Arctic table.

Inuit have signed five very modern and comprehensive land claim agreements with the Crown that span almost 40 per cent of Canada’s landmass and about 50 per cent of its coastline. This is an area somewhere between the size of India and Australia.

From our isolated Arctic observatory, we have witnessed the successes and the failures elsewhere in the world, taking note so we can chart a favourable course for our people.

As a result, Inuit have signed five very modern and comprehensive land claim agreements with the Crown that span almost 40 per cent of Canada’s landmass and about 50 per cent of its coastline. This is an area somewhere between the size of India and Australia. Indeed, as a result of these agreements, Inuit hold exclusive rights and title to collective lands equivalent to the size of Spain and Portugal.

The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement was signed in November, 1975. It was the first modern land claims agreement in Canada, driven by the massive James Bay hydro-electric development in northern Quebec. At the time, litigation was required to stop the bulldozers in their tracks and engage in land claim negotiations with Quebec and Canada. In this historic agreement, Inuit agreed to give up their exclusive use of their ancestral lands in exchange

for other guaranteed rights, in the form of land, wildlife management and financial compensation. This agreement was followed three decades later by the Nunavik Offshore Agreement, the fifth comprehensive Inuit land claim agreement to account for the exclusion of offshore areas in the 1975 agreement.

The Inuvialuit final agreement was signed in June 1984 after 10 years of negotiations. It was the first comprehensive land claim agreement signed north of the 60th parallel.

The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, signed in May 1993 is the largest land claims agreement in the world. The agreement was the basis for the creation of the territory of Nunavut, which was officially established on April 1, 1999.

The Nunatsiavut Land Claim Agreement was the last to be signed, in May 2005. It provides for the establishment of the Nunatsiavut Government to represent Inuit and non-Inuit residents of the land claims area and also Labrador Inuit living throughout Canada.

Through the recent establishment of these agreements and the accompanying Inuit Land Claim Organizations across the North (Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Nunavut

Tunngavik, Inc., Makivik Corporation, Nunatsiavut Government), we have established governance and decision-making structures to assist our 53 communities and nearly 60,000 Inuit as we establish our status in the modern world on issues that matter to us.

Climate change is a prime example. The Arctic has proven to be a harbinger of change in our global environment—the proverbial “canary in the coal mine.”

In recent years, Inuit have seen countless campaigns, oftentimes well-intentioned, emerging from the South to “Save the Arctic” but few of these campaigns actually make an effort to engage those who still live in and off the Arctic land and sea.

Inuit experience the ongoing changes in the Arctic firsthand and we know that much of what we are now seeing in our homeland did not originate here. “Save the Arctic” campaigns created in the South need to first look at what is happening closer to their own backyards before setting their sights on our homeland and Inuit must be actively involved in developing and implementing innovative solutions to the complex challenges we are facing in our region.

Despite the long history of efforts towards cooperation, Inuit still find it difficult to raise awareness among those not resident in Inuit Nunangat about the value of our governance and decision-making systems, as well as our knowledge and our Arctic vision.

It is troubling when our homegrown capacity to address the intensifying pressures we are witnessing within our homeland is discounted. That is why Inuit must continue to assert ourselves as modern participants in today's world. Much of my work involves communicating these messages to audiences in the nation's capital, across the country, and to some international audiences as well on a wide spectrum of policy issues affecting the Arctic.

Despite the challenges, we are making strides and I have great hope for our communities and our people now and in the coming generations.

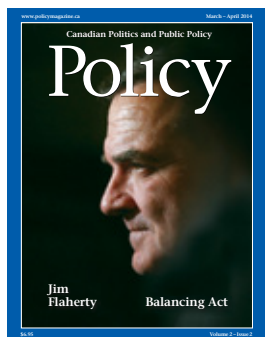
Because, in the end, Inuit remain the stewards of the Arctic. We are its keepers and will continue to be for millennia to come. **P**

Terry Audla is President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), representing nearly 60,000 Inuit in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, northern Quebec and northern Labrador. president@itk.ca Twitter: @taudla

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An aerial view of EKATI, the NWT's first diamond mine, and Canada's largest. Mining is NWT's largest employer, accounting for 16 per cent of GDP. Photo: CMAC

Look to Mining for the North's Golden Opportunity

Pierre Gratton

How transformative could mining be to Canada's North? Thanks to the discovery of diamonds in 1991, mining has become the largest private sector contributor to the NWT economy, accounting for 16 per cent of the GDP by industry. Mining representatives and policy makers agree that more can be done to seize the incredible opportunities in Canada's North and to contribute to the economic prosperity of our northern communities. In today's investment climate, where global mining investment is highly mobile and competition for it is fierce, it takes much more than rich mineral deposits to build a mine.

With Canada now in the driver's seat as chair of the Arctic Council and with a newly-minted Northern Strategy in hand, never has there been a better time for us to assert our nation's sovereignty and enhance the social and economic opportunities of our northern communities at the same time.

The federal government's vision is to create dynamic growth, trade and vibrant northern communities in Canada's three territories. The mining in-

dustry can help turn that vision into reality. When done responsibly and in partnership with northern and Aboriginal communities, mines can be positive catalysts of change well beyond the mine gate. They provide good jobs, lucrative business development opportunities, and useful industrial and community infrastructure and services that would not otherwise exist.

Yet, building and operating mines in Canada's North is easier said than done. While a region rich in resources, it lacks fundamental building blocks for mine development, namely infrastructure and a skilled workforce. So how do we turn the opportunities found underground into positive outcomes above ground? It's worthwhile to examine what successful mining development looks like by shining a light on the thriving mining industry in the Northwest Territories. Using the NWT as a case study, we can understand the vast benefits that can be realized through mining. Finally, we will uncover barriers to new mining development in the region, and discuss how the Canadian mining industry and the federal government can work to overcome these challenges.

How transformative could mining be to Canada's North? Thanks to the discovery of diamonds in 1991, mining has become the largest private sector contributor to the NWT economy, accounting for 16 per cent of the GDP by industry. This is well above the oil and gas, real estate, trade, transportation and construction industries, which, incidentally, also rely on mining activities and products to prosper.

A 2013 report by BHP Billiton, Rio Tinto and De Beers Canada—operators of the NWT's EKATI (now operated by Dominion Diamond Corporation), Diavik and Snap Lake diamond mines—detailed their operations' contributions to employment, business development and community investments. The three mines collectively employed more than 1,500 full-time northern workers as of 2011, 400 more than originally predicted. They have also invested heav-

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ily in skills-training programs, often in partnership with governments, aboriginal communities, educational institutions, and with agencies like the NWT Mine Training Society, which by 2012 had trained more than 1,400 people for well-paying jobs in the diamond mines.

The economic spin-offs of the mining industry are also of enormous benefit to local communities in the realm of business development. From 1996 to 2011, the three operations spent \$12.8 billion to build and operate the mines. Of this, an impressive \$9.25 billion, or 72 per cent, was spent with northern companies and joint ventures, including \$4.2 billion, or 33 per cent, with aboriginal companies. This level of aboriginal business participation is unprecedented in the North.

NWT residents have also indirectly benefitted from the taxes and royalties paid by the mining companies. By the end of 2013, the diamond industry had paid \$3.6 billion in mining royalties and federal and territorial corporate taxes, and this amount is estimated to grow to \$5.6 billion by 2020. These funds ultimately help support community services like education, health care and social programs.

Considering that diamonds were only discovered in the early 1990s, this example shows just how quickly the mining industry can positively transform a region.

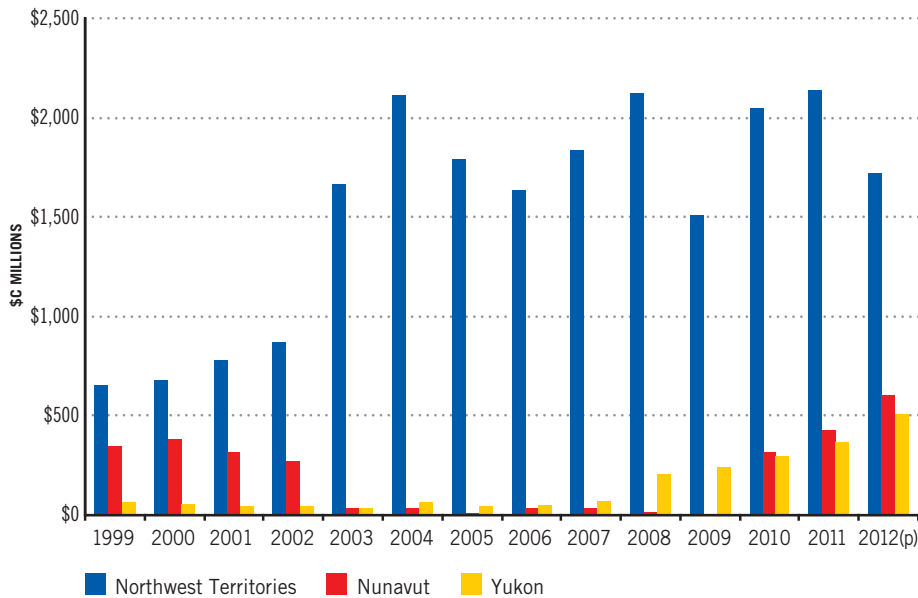
In addition to diamonds, Canada's North is rich in other resources, including gold, rare earths, copper and zinc. Continuing federal funding for geo-mapping will support ongoing exploration activity that will undoubtedly result in the discovery of new commodities. According to

MAC's *Facts & Figures 2013* report, Canada's three territories together received 20 per cent of total Canadian spending on exploration and deposit appraisal in 2012, reflecting global interest in Canada's northern mineral potential.

In addition to diamonds, Canada's North is rich in other resources, including gold, rare earths, copper and zinc. Continuing federal funding for geo-mapping will support ongoing exploration activity that will undoubtedly result in the discovery of new commodities.

With four active mines, the NWT is currently the largest in terms of mining production, and activity is poised to increase. There are six major projects currently in the environmental assessment and permitting process and several additional projects could be commissioned by 2020. As critical as that growth is for the North, more projects are needed to sustain economic growth. In fact, even if all six of the potential projects in the NWT become mines, they would not be enough to displace the job losses when the EKATI and Diavik diamond mines eventually close.

The settling of some of the NWT land claims has helped ease uncertainty for operations near or on aboriginal land and this, along with the devolution of resource management responsibilities to the territorial government, has put more decision-making in the hands of those who most benefit from mining development. The federal government has a major role to play by actively negoti-

Chart 1: Territories, Nunavut and Yukon mining production

Source: Natural Resources Canada—March 2013

For mines to operate in remote environments, they require power, permanent roads, ports and people to operate. Likewise, getting mining products to ports and smelters efficiently is critical, especially given that Canada competes with other countries with significantly shorter supply routes.

ating the remaining unsettled claims and by supporting the NWT government in meeting its aspirations of attracting new mining investment, thereby strengthening the territory's competitiveness.

Building and operating mines is not easy, particularly in Canada's North, where companies face higher operating costs, a lack of critical infrastructure, significant human resource constraints, and a complex regulatory environment.

For mines to operate in remote environments, they require power, permanent roads, ports and people to operate. Likewise, getting mining products to ports and smelters efficiently is critical, especially given

that Canada competes with other countries with significantly shorter supply routes. Solutions may lie in improving the tax system to incentivize infrastructure components of private sector investments that can provide larger community benefits, and by increasing federal and territorial investments in northern infrastructure. We need to build it for mining growth and the jobs that go along with it.

Development cannot move forward without industry and local communities working together. Mining companies also have to do their part to ensure they are listening to communities' needs, and operating in environmentally and socially-responsible ways.

We have the opportunity to provide well-paying employment for northerners and aboriginal people, while alleviating some of the industry's acute skills shortage. This was acknowledged during the prime minister's northern tour in 2013, when

he announced critical skills funding, including \$5.8 million over two years to support the NWT Mine Training Society for a new sector-skills training program. This is exactly the kind of investment that catalyzes and accelerates the participation of aboriginal Canadians in the mining sector.

As the current chair of the Arctic Council, the federal government has signaled the need for northern economic prosperity and enhanced sovereignty in Canada's North. This provides a unique opportunity for northern aboriginal communities—First Nations, Inuit and Métis alike—to capitalize on future mine development. As we have seen with diamond mining in the NWT, there are significant jobs, business development opportunities, community services and infrastructure that flow from mining development. But development cannot move forward without industry and local communities working together. Mining companies also have to do their part to ensure they are listening to communities' needs, and operating in environmentally and socially-responsible ways.

Mining representatives and policy makers agree that more can be done to seize the incredible opportunities in Canada's North and to contribute to the economic prosperity of our northern communities. Before we can get there, it's important to understand that in today's investment climate, where global mining investment is highly mobile and competition for it is fierce, it takes much more than rich mineral deposits to build a mine. Inefficient regulatory processes, the lack of infrastructure and unsettled land claims all contribute to the costs of mining, and are particularly challenging in Canada's North. However, as we've seen with diamond mining in the NWT, barriers can be overcome when communities, government and industry work together to create sustainable mining development. **P**

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Prime Minister Stephen Harper participates in OP NANOOK 13 in Gjoa Haven, Nunavut, with members of the Canadian Rangers August 21, 2013.
Photo: PMO, Jason Ransom

Nation-Building on Permafrost: Three Prime Ministers

Geoff Norquay

From the infrastructure ambitions of John Diefenbaker to the governance breakthroughs of Brian Mulroney to the resource development dreams of Stephen Harper, the North has enthralled and sometimes confounded Canada's political leadership. Longtime political strategist and former prime ministerial aide Geoff Norquay traces half a century of policy trials and triumphs in a part of the world where change comes slowly.

John Diefenbaker, Brian Mulroney and Stephen Harper are united by more than the fact that they were all Conservative prime ministers and politically dominant in their respective eras. For all three, northern Canada held a special place in their national policy agenda, they each had their “northern visions” and they took significant steps to advance the economic and constitutional development of that region.

In the case of Diefenbaker, it was his “Northern Vision” and “Roads



John Diefenbaker's northern vision was Roads to Resources, while Brian Mulroney created the third northern territory of Nunavut in the eastern Arctic. Photos: Library of Parliament and *Policy*

to Resources" programs; for Mulroney, it was the commitment and negotiations that led to the creation of Canada's third territory, Nunavut; and for Harper, it has been asserting Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic and the successful negotiation of a devolution agreement with the Northwest Territories.

Diefenbaker's northern vision was a product of the late-1950s, about securing Canada's economic independence in an increasingly integrated North American economy, as well as addressing the threat posed by communism.

On February 12, 1958, John Diefenbaker kicked off the election campaign and launched his northern vision with a direct link to the nation-building legacy of his hero, Sir John A. Macdonald: "He opened the west. He saw Canada from east to west. I see a new Canada—a Canada of the North.... We will open that northland for development by improving transportation and communication and by the

development of power, by the building of access roads."

Diefenbaker's northern vision was a product of the late-1950s, about securing Canada's economic independence in an increasingly integrated North American economy, as well as addressing the threat posed by communism. It was also the result of two key advisers, Dr. Merrill Menzies, the PM's key economic adviser and Alvin Hamilton, the key Diefenbaker caucus confidant and minister of northern development. As Menzies described the challenge in 1956:

"What is lacking is a national policy and the realization that without one we must inevitably drift into economic continentalism in which we can have little economic independence or effective sovereignty. The regional north—south pull of the American industrial colossus is such that only by the most determined and ceaseless efforts can we hope to maintain our integrated national economy."

The "Roads to Resources" element of the National Development Policy, (on which Hamilton was a major influence) contained this striking piece of Cold War rhetoric:

"The challenge of communism now and in the years ahead demands that our vast northern resources be made accessible and available to industry, for vast resources undeveloped and hidden in the earth will not fashion or forge the shield of freedom or contribute to the survival of the Free World."

As a pan-Canadian program, Roads to Resources was available to both provinces and the territories. The theory, as described by Philip Isard in his 2010 Masters thesis, (*Northern Vision: Northern Development during the Diefenbaker Era*), was that transportation infrastructure was the key, and that "northern development would stimulate economic activity nationwide, expand the domestic processing of oil, ore and mineral resources, and encourage the financial participation of Canadians in their own economy."

In Yukon and the Northwest Territories, the initial 1958 plans were ambitious, including over 1,200 miles of roads and six major bridges at an estimated cost of more than \$31 million. The Alaska Highway would be connected to the Arctic coast, and a 500-mile road would be built between Fort Rae and Coppermine. Site-specific feeder roads would stimulate resource development and mining activity. All in, these projects would require a federal investment of \$100 million in the two territories, and the completion target for this first phase was only five to seven years.

By 1960, Roads to Resources was in deep trouble. Diefenbaker and his northern development minister, Alvin Hamilton, had woefully misunderstood the delays and costs involved in northern construction, and as a result, expenses were escalating and progress was slow.

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vin Hamilton, had woefully misunderstood the delays and costs involved in northern construction, and as a result, expenses were escalating and progress was slow. Only 110 km of the Dempster Highway extension had been completed by 1960; it was finally completed in 1979, and at a cost more than 12 times the original estimate. The railroad from northern Alberta to the Pine Point mine was ultimately completed, but not until 1964.

Diefenbaker faced other challenges. While it was clearly far-reaching and aspirational, his northern vision was the subject of relentless questioning and criticism by the media, the public and opposition politicians. Liberal leader Lester Pearson accused Diefenbaker of building highways “from igloo to igloo.” The time-frame was much too ambitious and the benefits of the program slow to arrive. And by the early 1960s, the prime minister was losing interest and beset by other issues—continental economic disputes, a testy relationship with US President John F. Kennedy, debilitating defence issues and challenges to his own leadership. When the Liberals came to office in 1963, they effectively killed both Northern Vision and Roads to Resources and reoriented their northern programs towards social welfare and aboriginal affairs.

The idea of splitting the Northwest Territories into two territories first emerged in the 1950s when the non-aboriginal population of the Mackenzie Valley argued that the move would hasten the development of responsible government and spur the economy in the western part of the region. John Diefenbaker’s government actually proposed such legislation in 1963, but it subsequently died on the order paper.

The more modern story of Nunavut began in 1976, when the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada proposed the creation of a new territory in northern Canada as a means of resolving two huge issues—settlement of Inuit land claims and the future of political development in the eastern Arctic. To reflect their majority status in the eastern Arctic, the Inuit asserted the bold ob-

The idea of splitting the Northwest Territories into two territories first emerged in the 1950s when the non-aboriginal population of the Mackenzie Valley argued that the move would hasten the development of responsible government and spur the economy in the western part of the region.

jective of securing both land rights and a public government through the division of the Northwest Territories.

While the federal Liberal government of the day accepted the land claim for negotiation, for several years they resisted the idea of dividing the existing Northwest Territories to create a new territory. By the early 1980s, however, the federal government relaxed its opposition to partition of the NWT and in April of 1982, 56.5 per cent of its residents voted in a plebiscite to divide the territory. In November of that year, federal Indian Affairs and Northern Development Minister John Munro told the House of Commons that the federal government agreed in principle to the division of the Northwest Territories and the creation of Nunavut.

The Tungavik Federation of Nunavut was created in 1982, assuming the role of negotiating a modern treaty with the Government of Canada, and the 13-year long negotiating process began in earnest. It was slow and painstaking work, with a lot of moving parts. A major breakthrough was the Mulroney government’s 1986 decision to adopt a Comprehensive Land Claims Policy that narrowed the requirement to give up aboriginal title through negotiations, while broadening potential rights and benefits. In 1992, a plebiscite throughout the Northwest Territories supported the proposed boundary line between the NWT and Nunavut.

An agreement in principle on the land claim was reached in 1990 and finalized in April of 1993, with both the details of the land claim and the Nunavut Act being ratified by Parliament in June of that year.

The federal government would pay more than \$1 billion to Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., the organization created to ensure that the promises

made to Inuit beneficiaries of the land claims were kept, and the new territory of Nunavut would come into existence on April 1, 1999.

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As Terry Fenge and Paul Quassa describe in their 2009 Policy Options article (*Negotiating and Implementing the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*), the successful land claims agreement and the launch of Nunavut were the product of three critical factors:

- Inuit negotiators and politicians were consistent in their vision, patient and tenacious, remained united and were willing to compromise;
- The Government of Canada’s negotiators were professional, diligent and creative, “providing continuity and corporate memory that spanned the governments of different political persuasions”; and
- The Mulroney government stayed with the Nunavut project through the many long years of negotiations. As Fenge and Quassa point out, three federal ministers of Indian and Northern Affairs over the period—David Crombie, Bill McKnight and Tom Siddon—provided support and encouragement throughout, with Siddon personally calling Prime Minister Mulroney in 1993 to recommend both the land rights and political development provisions of the final agreement.

If change in Canada comes slowly, change in the North takes even longer. Much of the promise contained in the Nunavut Agreement remains to be fulfilled, and perhaps it created expectations that were too great, given challenges and capacities. But the creation of Nunavut shows that people of goodwill, gifted negotiators and a prime minister and government with an enduring commitment, can beat the odds and collectively accomplish much. These are lessons that could profitably be applied today in First Nations-federal government relations South of 60.

When Stephen Harper spoke in Inuvik on January 8 this year to mark the beginning of construction of the all-season road to Tuktoyaktuk on the Arctic Ocean, John Diefenbaker was very much on his mind:

“Prime Minister Diefenbaker knew then what our government is undertaking today: construction of a highway will improve the lives of people living in the North for generations to come, facilitating economic development, creating jobs and enabling cost-effective, safe and reliable transportation of goods to and from northern communities.”

There are 10 major mining developments in various states of planning in the NWT alone, and a recent Conference Board report estimated that the value of mineral production in the territory could grow from \$732 million in 2011 to \$1.3 billion by 2020.

Fifty years after Diefenbaker's Roads to Resources ran out of gas, some northern issues have evolved, but many remain the same. Transportation infrastructure is even more important to the future of the North than it was five decades ago, but the

If change in Canada comes slowly, change in the North takes even longer. Much of the promise contained in the Nunavut Agreement remains to be fulfilled, and perhaps it created expectations that were too great, given challenges and capacities.

development of hydro-electric capacity and transmission lines to potential mining development sites are now becoming urgent.

The difference today is that we now know the resources are there and they are there in abundance. There are 10 major mining developments in various states of planning in the NWT alone, and a recent Conference Board report estimated that the value of mineral production in the territory could grow from \$732 million in 2011 to \$1.3 billion by 2020.

With the devolution agreement signed in 2013 between Ottawa and Yellowknife and ratified by Parliament in 2014, all of these developments are now firmly in the hands of the territorial government. Devolution provides the people of the NWT a greater voice in decisions about how public land, water and resources are managed, how the economy will be developed, and how the environment will be protected.

Additional challenges remain. As the prime minister told the *Globe and Mail* in a January interview, the North “requires better levels of social development and obviously we all know about the challenges that exist in terms of education, housing and other living standards issues.” The environment will be another issue of concern, as climate change raises the possibility of increased shipping through the Northwest Passage. Resource development raises the possibility of oil and tailing spills that will be much more difficult to manage in the harsh northern climate, both on- and offshore. And thawing permafrost raises the possibility of damage to infrastructure: roads, airport runways and water and sewage systems.

Stephen Harper's northern vision remains a work in progress and has attracted some criticism. The promised Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships have fallen victim to the normal delays of

military procurement and development of the Arctic port of Nanisivik has been put off until the ships are at least on the horizon. The promised icebreaker John G. Diefenbaker remains a distant hope. There are still no Fixed Wing Search and Rescue aircraft based in the north. Huge basic capacity and social development challenges remain in Nunavut.

Stephen Harper's northern vision remains a work in progress and has attracted some criticism. The promised Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships have fallen victim to the normal delays of military procurement and development of the Arctic port of Nanisivik has been put off until the ships are at least on the horizon.

On the other hand, construction on the road to Tuktoyaktuk is underway. The \$188 million Canadian High Arctic Research Station slated for Cambridge Bay is on schedule and will open in 2017. The geomapping that is so critical to both mineral development and asserting Arctic sovereignty has been renewed with a \$100 million commitment. And Environment Minister Leona Aglukkaq is in the middle of a two-year term as chair of the Arctic Council.

As with many things in the North, progress takes time. **P**

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Three Polar bears approach the starboard bow of the Los Angeles-class fast attack submarine USS Honolulu (SSN 718) while surfaced 280 miles from the North Pole. Photo: U.S. Navy

Arctic Sovereignty: Fear and Loathing Over Santa's Workshop

Jeremy Kinsman

In the past 30 years, the geopolitical world's relationship to the Arctic has changed. Climate change has produced geographical change, which has significantly influenced political and military debates over who controls what. Canada's claims to Arctic sovereignty, including its claim to the North Pole, comprise a crucial component of our bilateral relationships with both the United States and Russia. On the US file, the keyword is cooperation. With the Russians, it's a little more complicated these days.

The North Pole is one of the remote places on Earth that compel the human capacity for wonder. Sir Edmund Hillary completed the ultimate trifecta; after being the first to climb Mount Everest (with Sherpa Tenzing Norgay), he reached the South Pole by land. In 1985, he made it to the North Pole, where he shared a bottle of champagne with astronaut Neil Armstrong, just as the Arctic began to open up under a rapidly changing climate.

In 1986, there was the first access by dogsled; in 1987, the first surfacing by a submarine, the USS Charlotte through 61 inches of ice; in 1988, a 13-man team of skiers made it—nine Soviet citizens and four Canadians.

Soon, loosening ice conditions made North Pole visitations almost routine: By 2007, the Pole had been reached 66 times by surface ships—including 54 icebreaker visits from Russia, and one by Canada's only heavy icebreaker, the Louis St.-Laurent, back in 1994. All-terrain vehicles also crossed from Russian to Canadian coasts on increasingly floating ice on which the Russians had been setting up seasonal operational camps.

Russia's Vladimir Putin and Canada's Stephen Harper espouse respective nationalist narratives about the North that dwell on threats. The two countries, according to Icelandic Arctic expert Nikolaj Petersen, have become the Arctic region's "most militaristic" in tone. Who knew the Arctic Ocean's melting would prompt a Russia-Canada territorial competition for the North Pole that is itself more rhetorical than real, riddled with inflated nationalist identity-fiction on both sides?

Russia's military buildup in their North is notable. Degraded after the break-up of the USSR, the Northern Fleet is again stocked with nuclear and conventional icebreakers, submarines, and a nuclear missile cruiser as flagship, though most of these ships have operational limitations, including in heavy ice. Is this normal Russian recovery, or does it portend something dark about their Arctic intentions as suggested by Canadian Arctic expert Rob Huebert? How does Canada connect to its adjacent Arctic neighbour at a time when the Canadian prime minister is shunning any "normal" business with Russia because of what US Secretary of State Kerry has called its "land grab" in Ukraine?

As Canada's ambassador to the fledgling beaten-up democracy that was Russia in the 1990s, representing Brian Mulroney and then Jean Chrétien, both buddies of Boris Yeltsin, I scarcely

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imagined that 20 years later a Canadian prime minister would come across as the world's leading adversary of Yeltsin's successor. The lofty language of cooperation invoked by Mikhail Gorbachev's call in 1987 for an Arctic Zone of Peace, and by Brian Mulroney's 1989 Leningrad speech urging Arctic nations to work together on Arctic governance, has been replaced by comparisons of Putin to Hitler, though not by Harper, yet he digs into the old Cold War freezer left in the national basement for rhetoric about "the poison of communism."

The commonplace notion that the biggest threat to the Arctic region is spillover from conflict elsewhere is becoming real. Until the Ukraine crisis, Harper had insulated the Arctic from geopolitics elsewhere. But now the deteriorating relationship is closing off an avenue of bilateral cooperation both countries and the region itself vitally need.

First, a review of Arctic facts:

- Antarctica is a non-national continent surrounded by water. The North Pole is its opposite, lying under a frozen ocean surrounded by five coastal nations. Russian coast forms half the latitudinal Arctic Circle, Canada's a quarter, and Norway, the US via Alaska, and Denmark via Greenland, the rest. Unlike international governance specified for Antarctica by treaty, Arctic governance is a composite of national sovereignty and the multilateral Arctic Council in which the five coastal states join three Arctic states—Finland, Iceland, and Sweden—without coastal access to the Arctic Ocean, and representatives of six indigenous peoples. The Arctic Council attempts to chart some common policies and approaches on science, environmental protection, shipping, and mutual commitments to respect

international norms and the rule of law regarding competing territorial claims.

Here are some facts crucial to understanding governance issues:

- Russia is the dominant Arctic presence. Of four million Arctic inhabitants, two million are Russian citizens; 650,000 are Alaskans, and 115,000 are Canadians (half indigenous). Presidential stand-in Dmitry Medvedev depicted the region as the resource base for Russia for this century. It already accounts for 20 per cent of the Russian GDP, and 22 per cent of exports, largely northern Siberian oil and gas.

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- The Arctic Ocean's ice cover and passages through the archipelago are melting at a rate three or four times faster than global warming elsewhere. It opens the region to shipping short cuts between Europe and Asia, over the already navigable Russian Northern Sea Route, or through the still problematic but rapidly changing Northwest Passage that Canada claims as internal waters. It also promises the hypothetical if complicated extraction of seabed resources the US Geological Survey estimates contain up to 25 per cent of the world's oil and gas.
- There are no significant disputes over respective sovereignties on land. Disputes relate to: a) Claims and techniques for deter-

mining territorial waters, such as Canada's assertion of sovereignty over the Northwest Passage or Canada's dispute with the US over national jurisdiction in the Beaufort Sea, and to some extent to Russia's claim the Northern Sea Route is entirely internal waters; and, b) Seabed claims under provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Critical to the controversy concerning the North Pole is the UNCLOS entitlement beyond the Exclusive Economic Zone of 200 miles to a further 150 nautical miles of national monopoly on seabed resource development if it can be proven the area is a natural extension of the continental shelf.

Vladimir Putin's subtraction of democratic space in Russia is a story told elsewhere. But arguably pertinent to the Arctic is his campaign to create a new patriotic narrative for Russian identity to fill the void left after the abandonment of the all-embracing communist system. Drawing from pre-revolutionary imperial pride, and historic Orthodox culture, his patriotic narrative was invoked to justify the unilateral annexation of Crimea.

Western reaction has been to sanction Russia for its illegal action, not enough for some but too much for others. The question here is whether to trust Putin's assertions, as reported by the *Globe and Mail* on May 25, that he intends, "to respect international law in the (Arctic) region and to negotiate with all interested nations."

The planting by submersible of a Russian flag on the seabed beneath the North Pole in 2007 was brushed off as just a stunt to commemorate a notable feat, roughly like the US flag placed on the moon. "I don't see anything scary in it," Putin said.

But Putin's actions on Ukraine have been "scary" for many. Stephen Harper terms Putin's "expansionism" a "long-term menace...with serious long-term consequences." It is hard to see how Arctic issues could be exempted from this warning.

Putin's reassurances will need to be supported by positive actions to restore requisite minimal trust in his intentions. On Arctic issues, Putin recently described the Russia-Norway agreement, after 10 years of negotiation on offshore rights around the Svalbard archipelago, as being "the best path to resolve all questions with regard to the Arctic."

It was the path identified by the "Arctic Five" at an exceptional meeting at Ilulissat, Greenland in 2008, especially on the issue of extended seabed claims extended outward toward the North Pole.

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Subsequent to agreement in 2010 between Foreign Ministers Sergey Lavrov and Lawrence Cannon that respective Arctic seabed claims would be solved through the UNCLOS process based on scientific evidence, Canadian legal negotiators concluded with Russian counterparts that their national claims were essentially not overlapping. But after Prime Minister Harper ordered the Canadian claim to be re-done, the preliminary submission in January 2014 signaled the belief the North Pole is Canadian, even though no scientific evidence has emerged to back up such an ambition. It will be years before the issue is resolved, at which point Canadian politics will be in a different place.

Ranking Arctic authority Franklyn Griffiths credits Harper's belief in Canada's northern vocation as sincere and he welcomes the elevation of profile the prime minister has given the Arctic. But Professor Griffiths speaks for many in deploring Harper's rhetoric as excessively dramatic, postulating threats that create a form of "possession anxiety," warning Ca-

nadians we have to "use it or lose it" in a kind of "sovereignty fetishism."

As for concrete action, steel has still not been cut on three heavy icebreakers promised seven years ago. Mapping goes on but Canadian infrastructure is very modest. The North is expensive, especially in an age of austerity. Multilateral cooperation on the issues and bilateral programs on science and shared infrastructure could enhance economies of scale to develop our North.

As for concrete action, steel has still not been cut on three heavy icebreakers promised seven years ago. Mapping goes on but Canadian infrastructure is very modest.

Canadian professionals with experience working with the Russians on Arctic issues believe that Russian transgressions of international law on Crimea should not be transposed as relevant to the very different international northern context. They believe we need to learn together as partners. Former Canadian ambassador to Moscow John Sloan cites melting permafrost as an urgent shared issue ripe for cooperation, as it affects northern communities, transport, and resource extraction.

Michael Byers points out that in substance, the Arctic has "been more cooperative on the whole than anywhere else on Earth" and scientists argue that cooperation should not be interrupted, especially as there are no regional developments or serious challenges to Canadian sovereignty to change the assessment of former chief of defence staff Walter Natynczyk who in 2009 reported no conventional military threat to the Arctic.

Our biggest sovereignty challenge used to be from the US, over whether the Northwest Passage was internal Canadian waters or an international strait. Pierre Trudeau asserted Canadian control after the provocative pas-

sage of the Manhattan in 1970. After the US icebreaker Polar Sea transited from Greenland to Alaska in 1985, the Mulroney government pressed Canada's assertion of legal authority more strenuously by enclosing the waters under "straight baselines." On President Reagan's visit to Ottawa in 1987, Prime Minister Mulroney showed him an antique globe he had received from Paul Desmarais that depicted the Passage as Canadian. "Brian, this wasn't the map they showed me on Air Force One coming up here," the president said. Gen. Colin Powell, who was then Reagan's national security adviser took thereafter to referring to "Mulroney's Rube Goldberg map." But the warm personal relationship encouraged a "pragmatic solution;" the Arctic Cooperation Agreement of 1988 whereby the two countries "agree to disagree" on the territorial issue but registered US commitment to seek Canada's consent for surface transits through the passage.

It's unlikely a relationship of personal confidence is available between the leaders of Russia and Canada, who portray themselves as opposites but whose adversarial, top-down, and secretive instincts and styles have a lot in common. Their shared default position is chronic distrust and misrepresentation of the professed motivations of others, including fellow citizens. For Putin, human rights de-

fenders and protesters in Moscow are pawns of Russia's "enemies," as were protesters in Kiev. Harper invents non-existent Canadian "academics and bureaucratic circles" who allegedly favour giving up Canadian Arctic sovereignty to some kind of Antarctic internationalism.

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The political reality is that Harper's profession that Russia represents a real threat to "world peace" and needs to be shunned by G7 countries makes Canada-Russia partnership and cooperation untenable for now. Given that Canada chairs the Arctic Council until 2015, it will handicap multilateral work as well.

The Arctic Council needs a stronger mandate for cooperative action without encroaching on the need for consensus among the eight sovereign members. US Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg said in 2010

that the Arctic is a test-case of the international community's ability to deal with the great trans-national issues of the 21st century. But progress requires belief in multilateralism and resolution to tackle climate change, where Canada sadly lags in official belief or effort.

The Arctic region badly needs fresh policy leadership on the bilateral level. Mary Simon urges Canada and the US to be "first movers" on Arctic climate change strategy. More convergence with the US might even, in P. Whitney Lackenbauer's concept, lead to a "grand compromise" comprising a bilateral deal on the Beaufort Sea and on continental energy supply and climate change.

As to Russia, we need to hope events will permit us to move from collisions of the Cold War to tackling together the imperatives of the Arctic's future, including consultation on the North Pole. As John Sloan puts it, "If we don't have a Russian policy on Arctic issues, we don't have an Arctic policy." It's past time we did. **P**

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Kugluktuk, formerly Coppermine until 1996, is a hamlet located at the mouth of the Coppermine River in the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut, on Coronation Gulf, southwest of Victoria Island. It is the westernmost community in Nunavut, near the border with the Northwest Territories. Photo: Wikipedia, Andrew Johnson

Competing Images of the Arctic

Elizabeth May

In defining his own branding, Stephen Harper has attempted to re-brand the Arctic. The effort has left Canadians with a narrative about our North that obscures the real picture. The real story in the Arctic now is that its warming is having a disproportionate effect on global warming generally, and the same man whose energy and environment policies are doing nothing to offset the problem claims to love the region.

There are two strikingly different images of the Arctic that dominate the Canadian imagination. Both are iconic.

Stephen Harper's branding of the Arctic has been a key part of his remaking of the Canadian identity. In his award-winning book, *The Longer I'm Prime Minister*, Paul Wells describes how Stephen Harper set out to remake Canada's identity by spinning traditional symbols into Conservative emblems: The insertion of "royal"

into the military titles; the revisionist history that inspired spending \$28 million on the bicentennial of the War of 1812; and any other homage to war dead while ignoring the plight of those living with the wounds of war. Most indelibly: the re-branding of the Arctic.

The prime minister has made it an annual summer ritual to travel to our North. His core messages are about protecting Canadian sovereignty, although the enduring visual may be his jumping on an all-terrain vehicle while declaring he “make(s) the rules.”

The prime minister’s Arctic is muscular. No “fragile North” for him. Harper declared “use it or lose it.” “Use it” is not a call to greater eco-tourism. The prime minister’s vision is linked to opening up resources in oil, gas and minerals.

Yet, his promises for deep sea ports, ice breakers and new research stations are now more notable as absent than fulfilled.

For example, the icebreakers were promised in 2005 and again in 2008, and have been delayed once again. China, with no Arctic coastline at all, now has icebreakers in Canada’s waters while our Coast Guard’s Amundsen is in dry dock.

The construction of the deep water naval port in Nanisivik promised in 2007 has yet to begin, despite promises it would start two years ago. Also two years ago, the prime minister announced a major new satellite project, the Radarstat Constellation Mission. That now appears to be mired in budgetary delays.

Meanwhile, there is a very different picture of the Arctic. It is of a canary in a coal mine: a global warning sign of dangerous levels of climate change. Ironically, those very policies with which Stephen Harper is most identified—rapid exploitation of fossil fuels—speed the rate of change in Canada’s Arctic.

My sense is that globally, it is the image of a stranded polar bear on an ice floe that says “Arctic” to the world. A politician on an ATV riding through

There is a very different picture of the Arctic. It is of a canary in a coal mine: a global warning sign of dangerous levels of climate change. Ironically, those very policies with which Stephen Harper is most identified—rapid exploitation of fossil fuels—speed the rate of change in Canada’s Arctic.

a sensitive eco-system is not an image that comes to mind.

Canadians need a crash course in climate science. And understanding what is happening to the Arctic is a key place to begin.

The rate of climate change in the Arctic is galloping. It is warming approximately three times faster than the global average. It drives up the global average.

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The melting of Arctic ice had been an anticipated climate change impact for decades, but the *pace* at which the ice is melting exceeds earlier projections.

When I first learned about the threat of climate change, it was 1986 and I was senior policy adviser to the federal minister of the environment, Tom McMillan. I was fortunate to be serving an environment minister who was committed to progressive environmental policies; McMillan was fortunate to be serving under a prime minister who still operated a cabinet government. McMillan could take his concerns to Brian Mulroney, and the prime minister actually listened. Public policy was based on sound science, ground through the lens of a highly competent, non-partisan civil service. So when Tom McMillan learned about the climate crisis, Mulroney agreed to position Canada in the lead.

What the Environment Canada scientists told us back in the 1980s was

based on modelling the impact of trapping more greenhouse gases near the earth’s surface. There was no debate about the science. The industry-funded campaigns to create doubt had not yet begun. The doubt that existed was about the regional impacts. There was no uncertainty about the basics—dumping millions of metric tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere would destabilize the climate system and could wreak havoc.

Globally, we were told that unless our economies started using less fossil fuels we would experience more frequent and more severe weather events, that the sea ice could melt, and glaciers could retreat.

I remember clearly that Environment Canada scientists thought the glaciers would begin to retreat by 2030. That the melt started decades sooner has to do with two things. Firstly, we have not, in Canada or globally, reduced our use of fossil fuels. On the contrary, the emissions of greenhouse gases have climbed due to the increased use of dirty energy. Secondly, the impacts have been accelerating through positive feedback loops.

We are rapidly losing sea ice and permafrost. Each of these phenomena contains feedback loops that accelerate the rate of change. Understanding positive feed-back loops is key to understanding why we must rapidly reverse course.

We are rapidly losing sea ice and permafrost. Each of these phenomena contains feedback loops that accelerate the rate of change. Understanding positive feed-back loops is key to understanding why we must

rapidly reverse course. Positive feedback loops create more serious impacts and a potential runaway global warming process that we could be helpless to address.

Here's the core notion of a feedback loop: Human action in burning fossil fuels releases greenhouse gases that put in motion a change that itself serves to increase global warming.

There are two very pronounced feedback loops occurring in the Arctic: loss of ice and loss of permafrost.

As the Arctic warms, permafrost melts. Permafrost is, as the name suggests, ground that has been—or was—permanently frozen. As it melts, whole communities can be destabilized.

As the permafrost melts, it releases vast quantities of methane. The released methane warms the atmosphere, driving more permafrost melt.

As sea ice melts it also triggers a dangerous feedback loop. The loss of ice compromises the *albedo* effect, a cooling effect. The white ice bounces the sun's heat back to space, whereas the

dark ocean water absorbs it, speeding the warming. Less ice equals warmer waters, melting more ice.

The warming Arctic has devastating impacts on the entire planet. Research at Rutgers University identified a plausible mechanism by which the melting Arctic has impacted areas far to the south, causing increasingly serious extreme weather events. It turns out the difference between Arctic cold and equatorial heat has kept the jet stream moving fast and relatively horizontal over mid-latitudes. With the warming Arctic, the difference in temperature is lessened. As a result, the jet stream has gone wobbly.

Arctic sovereignty, if it means nothing else, means that if we can no longer arrest the decline in summer ice, we need to at least keep the winter ice intact.

Fires, floods and droughts have increased globally as the jet stream slows down due to a warming Arctic. Mov-

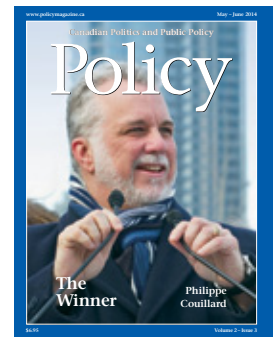
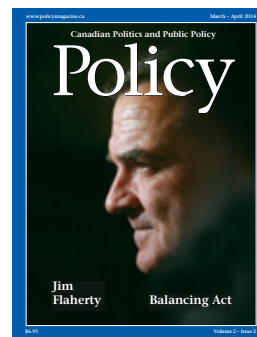
ing more slowly, it lies in lazy loops, leaving high pressure and low pressure zones in place for unusually long periods. It is too early to diagnose the causes of the ferocity of Hurricane Sandy, but clearly the melting of the Arctic is implicated.

There is not much harm in letting Stephen Harper play nature boy every summer, using the Arctic as his stage. However, there is serious and long-term damage in ignoring what is really going on in our North. Arctic sovereignty, if it means nothing else, means that if we can no longer arrest the decline in summer ice, we need to at least keep the winter ice intact. It requires that we arrest the galloping increase in greenhouse gases and meet the commitment Harper pretends to have embraced—stopping the global average temperature increase from rising above 2 degrees C. This must become our central focus. **P**

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An Icelandic fjord affords a stunning view of the aurora borealis, better known as the Northern Lights. Photo: Embassy of Iceland

The Arctic Council—Entering Headwind?

Thordur Aegir Oskarsson

Since its inception in 1996, the eight-member Arctic Council has evolved from a policy shaping body to a policy making one. As climate change has drastically increased both commercial and scientific interest in the region, the council has both broadened its observer membership and increased its strategic importance. But as recent geopolitical developments in Ukraine have shown, the Arctic Council is not immune from politics below the 60th parallel. Iceland's ambassador to Canada offers an informed third-party assessment.

The Arctic Council has enjoyed a solid political tailwind for over a decade now, resulting in constructive work moving it from being an exclusively policy shaping body into the territory of pragmatic policy making. There are already two Arctic-wide agreements negotiated under its auspices, one on search and rescue and the other on prevention of oil spills. This has profiled the Arctic Council as one of the most robust and productive multilateral institutions today and even as a model for international cooperation.

However, there are signs that the council might be facing increasing challenges from within and in particular due to external events. The stewardship of the Arctic Council for the regional issues could now be tested more than ever before.

For most of the last century, the High North was considered a region where indigenous peoples eked out a living in traditional ways, a few hardy scientists did their work and cold warriors had a playing field for military hardware.

This changed radically when the Arctic Council came into being with the Ottawa Declaration of 1996. Since then, it has been the main forum for promoting cooperation in this large remote region among the eight member states—Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States. A unique aspect of this organization has been the permanent direct participation of regional indigenous peoples associations. In the beginning, the forum addressed common issues and concerns facing the governments of the Arctic countries and the indigenous peoples in the region, almost exclusively focused on science cooperation and environmental issues. At the time of the council's creation, peace and security were deliberately omitted from its mandate in order to secure full participation.

With the accelerating advance of global warming resulting in the rapid receding of the ice sheet in the Arctic, the global interest in this region has exploded. These environmental changes promise to open up a plethora of economic activity in the region, both in the exploitation of its immense natural resources and commercial shipping.

This interest is manifested in the increased number of observer states in the Arctic Council, where the United Kingdom, Poland, Germany, Netherlands, France and Spain were joined by China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, India and Italy in 2013. The dynamics in the Arctic have created a new arena where many of the

With the accelerating advance of global warming resulting in the rapid receding of the ice sheet in the Arctic, the global interest in this region has exploded. These environmental changes promise to open up a plethora of economic activity in the region, both in the exploitation of its immense natural resources and commercial shipping.

global political and economic heavyweights, apart from the eight member states, are seeking long term presence and even influence over Arctic development.

During its mere 18 years of existence, the Arctic Council has matured and transformed into a successful forum for treaty negotiations, wide ranging agreements and practical activities related to environmental protection and sustainable development. It has not lost sight of its global responsibility and has, through the extensions of observer status, recognized the importance of developments in the Arctic for the world community.

During its mere 18 years of existence, the Arctic Council has matured and transformed into a successful forum for treaty negotiations, wide ranging agreements and practical activities related to environmental protection and sustainable development.

For centuries, Iceland's economic well-being and livelihood have been shaped by the natural riches and climatic conditions of the North. Being so heavily dependent on the resources of the Arctic in all its main industries: i.e. fisheries, tourism and energy, a responsible and favourable development of the Arctic region is essential for Iceland.

Iceland, as the smallest member of the Arctic family, has been especially keen on strengthening the regional cooperation taking place within the Arctic Council and reinforcing its role as the primary international body for consultations on all Arctic issues, including moving from policy

shaping to a more assertive policy making role.

In that spirit, the government of Iceland has identified developments in the Arctic as a priority in its foreign policy. There is a broad consensus in the Parliament based on a comprehensive policy platform agreed to by the Althingi in 2011. The policy emphasizes the importance of strengthening relations and co-operation with other states and stakeholders in facing and responding to the emerging challenges and opportunities in the region.

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The main policy principles include promoting and strengthening the Arctic Council as the most important consultative forum and decision-making body on Arctic issues; securing Iceland's interests as a coastal state within the Arctic region; resolving differences that relate to the Arctic on the basis of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea; developing agreements and promoting co-operation with other states and stakeholders in the Arctic region; and safeguarding broadly defined security interests in the Arctic region through civilian means and to work against any kind of militarization of the Arctic.

The Icelandic Arctic Policy in essence promotes a holistic view of the re-



Iceland is the smallest member of the Arctic Council family, which includes Canada (the current chair), Denmark, Finland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States. Photo: Embassy of Iceland

gion. Although, as others, Iceland sees economic opportunities in the receding of the ice cap, the opening of alternative sea routes and the potential extraction of minerals, gas and oil, Iceland is very much aware of the related threats and challenges. These are not military threats or challenges and in fact, Iceland deems the risk of military confrontation in the Arctic as extremely low.

The importance of engaging the business community as responsible partners in economic development of the Arctic is paramount to ensure that any business activity adheres to highest standards regarding environmental protection of the Arctic, safety and relations with the local communities.

The challenges and threats are rather environmental and connected with

increased economic and marine activities in the Arctic, be they related to oil production or other resource developments, increased transportation of oil and gas, increased traffic of cruise ships or accidents of any sort. The Arctic Council is successfully addressing many of these security challenges, which the recent Arctic SAR Agreement and the forthcoming Oil Spill Agreement address.

With Canada now at the halfway point in its two-year chairmanship of the Arctic Council, it is too early to assess the results. Iceland has actively supported the main priorities of the Canadian chairmanship where the emphasis has been on sustainable development of natural resources for the benefit of the economic future of the circumpolar region. The first steps taken earlier this year towards establishing the Arctic Economic Council are a welcome development. The importance of engaging the business community as responsible partners in economic development of the Arctic is paramount to ensure that

any business activity adheres to highest standards regarding environmental protection of the Arctic, safety and relations with the local communities.

However, in spite of the recent successes there are reasons to be concerned as to the future developments on the Arctic front.

Already, the Arctic agenda has, in a limited way, been affected by the political developments currently taking place regarding the Ukraine. In fact, certain meetings of the Arctic Council are already suffering because of sanctions against Russia.

Already, the Arctic agenda has, in a limited way, been affected by the political developments currently taking place re-

garding the Ukraine. In fact, certain meetings of the Arctic Council are already suffering because of sanctions against Russia. The current question is how much Arctic cooperation will be affected by these events. Although the main substantive work of the Arctic Council regarding sustainable development, environmental protection and general safety is presently not at the risk of being compromised, there are clouds on the horizon.

There are already signs of fragmentation. The five Arctic “coastal” states, have carved out the fisheries as a subject matter exclusively for their discussion. One can argue that this goes against the spirit of the Arctic Council.

There are already signs of fragmentation. The five Arctic “coastal” states, have carved out the fisheries as a subject matter exclusively for their discussion. One can argue that this goes against the spirit of the Arctic Council. Iceland has been working on guaranteeing its place as an Arctic coastal state and emphasizing that a strict geographical delineation when addressing such an important issue is unsatisfactory and the legal, economic and ecological aspects of Iceland’s position in the Arctic should be re-

spected. The formation of such sub-groupings or even unilateral actions could dilute the role and legitimacy of the Arctic Council.

All Arctic Council member states have strong national interests in the development of the region regarding territorial and/or resource claims. There are international mechanisms in place for solving territorial claims, most importantly the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and their usage for solving such disputes, if any, should be continuously emphasized. Although the military issues are not part of the Arctic Council agenda, all the participating states have strong security and safety interests when it comes to this expansive region.

Iceland’s foreign minister, Gunnar Bragi Sveinsson, has emphasized the importance of ensuring Iceland’s security interests in the Arctic and defined security issues as one of the five broad themes or challenges that should be addressed in its Arctic policy. Iceland, a NATO member, has long emphasized the necessity of “situational awareness” as regards the High North, arguing that it is an important aspect of NATO’s role as a security provider. Sveinsson has further stated that the increased international importance of the Arctic

region has increased its link with the developments in the security field in other parts of the world.

Academic experts have actually pointed out that the risk of interstate conflict in the Arctic region might stem from global developments that could spill over to the Arctic region, rather than from within the region itself and could therefore not be dealt with by existing Arctic governance mechanisms. The turn of events relating to Russia and Ukraine seem to lend some support to this argument.

The relatively successful work of the Arctic Council since its launch in 1996 has always been characterized by pragmatic cooperation among the eight Arctic state members. World history would lead to the conclusion that the scale of foreseen Arctic commercialization and resource development will more than likely lead to greater security challenges that the present rudimentary arrangements for Arctic governance will not be able to handle. It is therefore of critical importance that the Arctic Council continues to play its constructive role in handling the Arctic agenda in a transparent and cohesive way. The stakes are high, even more so for smaller partners such as Iceland. **P**

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Sean Willy, right, at English River Treaty Days. Cameco is the country's largest employer of aboriginal people. Photo: Cameco

Partnerships for First Nations and Métis in the North: A Corporate Success Story

Sean Willy

Amid the steady stream of stories focusing on tension between resource companies and First Nations communities, it's hard to imagine that other models exist. While Cameco Corporation's relations with First Nations and Métis communities have not been without controversy, the company has a firm policy of engaging with aboriginal stakeholders as full partners in business, education and prosperity.

An upswing in First Nations and Métis protests against specific resource developments in Canada has led some to suggest that proposed resource projects anywhere in the country could face long delays or be cancelled outright because of lack of support from First Nations and Métis communities.

As the director of corporate responsibility for Cameco Corporation, one of

Canada's largest publicly traded mining companies, I have a much different take on the issue.

Based on our company's experience, we are optimistic that partnerships can be developed and strengthened when aboriginal communities are proactively engaged in a resource company's success. For more than 25 years, our company has been steadily building these types of relationships with First Nations and Métis communities through innovative corporate responsibility initiatives.

Today, about half of those who work at our mine sites in northern Saskatchewan are of aboriginal background. Support for Cameco's operations is at about 75 per cent and we continue to find ways of cementing our relationships with northern people.

This positive relationship may seem counter-intuitive to those not familiar with Cameco in that we mine and mill uranium in Saskatchewan, the first step in supplying nuclear fuel to the world's nuclear reactors.

While a number of prominent, globally influential environmentalists have recently changed their views on nuclear power and now see it as an essential element in battling climate change, most of the industry's long-time opponents seem unlikely to ever be swayed by these new arguments. At almost every opportunity, they demand government policymakers wind down the nuclear industry. That includes a cross section of activists in Saskatchewan demanding uranium mining be halted, including a group of protestors who demonstrated outside Cameco's recent annual general meeting.

Despite this ongoing activism, overall support for the continuation of uranium mining ranges from 75 to 80 per cent in Saskatchewan, including among people in the province's north. Long-established industry polling on support for uranium mining was recently corroborated by a University of Saskatchewan poll on the subject.

At Cameco, northern engagement programs have evolved to a five-pillar

Northern, aboriginal-owned companies have strong ties to our operations as either permanent contractors or preferred contractors on our capital construction projects. Since 2002, more than \$3 billion in contracts have been signed between Cameco and 18 different northern and aboriginal-owned suppliers and contractors.

approach that has been studied and emulated by other resource companies throughout Canada. The five pillars include workforce development, business development, community investment, community engagement and environmental stewardship.

Obviously, high-paying jobs are one of the primary benefits. About 1,300 people of aboriginal descent work at our operations, making Cameco the leading industrial employer of aboriginal people in Canada.

High-paying jobs are one of the primary benefits. About 1,300 people of aboriginal descent work at our operations, making Cameco the leading industrial employer of aboriginal people in Canada.

Many of our First Nations and Métis employees still live in the relatively isolated communities in which they grew up. They benefit from our fly-in, fly-out work schedules where people live at the mining camps for one to two weeks before heading home for an equal amount of time with their families. This enables many of our employees to maintain aspects of their traditional culture while participating in a non-traditional, wage-based economy.

An equally important pillar of our program is business development. Northern, aboriginal-owned companies have strong ties to our operations as either permanent contractors or preferred contractors on our capital construction projects. Since 2002, more than \$3 billion in contracts have been signed between Cameco and 18

different northern and aboriginal-owned suppliers and contractors.

What hampers Cameco and our employee base is that formal trades training programs are located in educational institutions hundreds of kilometres south of where our people live and work. However, through our own programs of offering post-secondary support to existing employees and working with regional colleges and others to overcome the distance education issue, we are finding ways to advance more of our northern aboriginal workforce into skilled positions.

Cameco personnel are constant visitors to the region's high schools, outlining the skill set our operations require and encouraging educational achievement. We also provide tens of thousands of dollars in annual scholarships to northerners who are pursuing post-secondary education.

As our company's president and CEO Tim Gitzel has pointed out, the lasting legacy of our industry in northern Saskatchewan may well be the change in attitude on the importance of education and the desire by young people in our northern communities to pursue higher learning. If their ultimate destination is not the mining industry, many others have pursued careers in teaching, law and medicine, providing long-term inspiration and benefit to others in their communities.

One of our northern policy pillars is to build understanding and capacity of how uranium mining and milling works and how our company protects the local environment.

As part of the nuclear industry, we are among the most regulated industrial sectors in Canada. While our environmental monitoring programs provide sci-



Raisebore operator Darryl Bird. Photo: Cameco

entific proof to regulators that our emissions are well below limits and the environmental performance of our operations sound, there is a need to build capacity among community members, including elders, to understand and trust that this is so.

One of the ways in which we have done so over the years is through our support with community-based organizations such as the Athabasca Working Group (AWG) and the Northern Saskatchewan Environmental Quality Committee, which receive regular updates on our environmental performance.

As well, third parties such as the AWG and the province's Eastern Athabasca Regional Monitoring Program are provided financial support to sample the air, plants and water near downstream communities. This model of community-based environmental sampling conducted independently of the companies that fund it is another example of corporate outreach in Canada.

Most importantly, the community testing program samples representative animals and fish to show that "country foods" harvested anywhere in northern Saskatchewan are perfectly safe to eat. This gives our northern employees confidence that the industry providing their livelihood is not harming their ability to enjoy a healthy, traditional diet.

In more recent years, Cameco has built on previous commitments such as the 1999 Impact Management Agreement in the Athabasca Basin by pursuing more detailed socioeconomic deals with specific rights-bearing communities. We have called these Collaboration Agreements—CAs, for short.

So far, we have signed two such deals. One is with English River First Nations, whose traditional territory would encompass land around our existing McArthur River and Key Lake operations. The other has been with the largely Métis community of Pinehouse.

Both of these agreements have contained provisions for cash payments, which are tied to our production, to a community trust that would see all people in the community benefit. This is in addition to the economic gains from increased employment and business relationships with Cameco.

Cameco continues to work with other communities to expand the agreement model. We believe in the long-lasting benefits to communities provided by the business and workforce commitments in these partnerships. These, in turn, will foster additional educational and career development among community members.

In the most recent *Policy* magazine, former prime minister Brian Mulroney writes that in order for Canada to take full advantage of our natural resource potential there needs to be a "principled partnership with First Nations and the provinces that moves beyond grievances from the past to opportunities for the future."

We couldn't agree more. **P**

Sean Willy is Director, Corporate Responsibility, for Cameco Corporation, based in Saskatoon. He has worked in the mining industry for the past 19 years throughout northern Saskatchewan, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. He is a member of the North Slave Métis Alliance of Yellowknife, NWT.
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Developing the oil and gas resources of the North is essential to Canada's prosperity. So is the support of the aboriginal people in the North.
Photo: iStock

Sharing the Wealth of the North: The Rightful Role of Canada's First Peoples

Bruce Carson

Canada's dependence on resource development was made clear during the Great Recession of 2008-09. Our economy, our social safety net, our very quality of life hinge on the competent stewardship of our natural resources. This country's Aboriginal Peoples are a crucial component of that stewardship. They are now industry's partners, not an inconvenience that can be either ignored or swept away.

Upon assuming power in 2006, the new federal Conservative government had before it a vast array of policy matters to address. There were the platform commitments as well as the issues left by the defeated Martin government. One of those was addressing the residential schools settlement, which had not yet been approved by the federal cabinet. This brought the new prime minister face to face with the reality of dealing with only one of myriad issues that have plagued Cana-

da's Aboriginal Peoples since before Confederation. Add to this the announcement made in Winnipeg of his party's plan for the North in the recently completed election campaign, and the result was a prime minister whose awareness of the north and aboriginal issues was clear.

From that beginning came the annual prime ministerial visits to the North and the first ever Priorities and Planning Cabinet Committee meeting held in Inuvik in the summer of 2008. It was during this visit that Stephen Harper held an impromptu private meeting with northern aboriginal leaders to discuss the unique problems they face as people of the North. It was also during one of these early trips that the PM made it clear that when he was announcing projects that would produce jobs in the North, they were to be jobs for northerners, not for workers from South of 60.

Fast forward to the summer of 2014, another trip north, but it is to a different North, a North where both Yukon and the Northwest Territories (NWT) have jurisdiction over the development of mines as well as oil and gas. Nunavut is rich in mineral wealth and in untapped resources of oil and gas.

The ultimate potential of this area in oil and gas, including the offshore, is estimated at about 12 billion barrels of recoverable oil and 150 trillion cubic feet of gas. The extent of mineral wealth in the territories is staggering as well. Gold mining in Yukon remains important but there are undeveloped deposits of lead / zinc, silver, tungsten, copper, coal and the second largest undeveloped iron ore deposit in the world. In the NWT, mining is the largest private sector employer, with diamonds and tungsten leading the way. Nunavut is strong in diamond exploration as well as in iron ore and uranium.

A boriginal people make up the largest share of the population of both the NWT (51.9 per cent) and Nunavut (86.3 per cent) while in Yukon 23.1 per cent have aboriginal identity. One of the most important facts that can be gleaned

The ultimate potential of this area in oil and gas, including the offshore, is estimated at about 12 billion barrels of recoverable oil and 150 trillion cubic feet of gas. The extent of mineral wealth in the territories is staggering as well.

from the 2011 National Household Survey is that this aboriginal population is young, younger than the non-aboriginal population. Inuit living in Nunavut are the youngest of the three aboriginal groups with a median age of 21. A majority of aboriginal people living in the North are signatories to comprehensive land claim settlements and self-government agreements which have given them influence or control over lands and resources. In addition, Natural Resources Canada estimates that approximately 1,200 aboriginal communities are located within 200 km of mineral and metal activities and that one third are within 50 km of mines that are being developed. Many of these communities are located North of 60.

Aboriginal people make up the largest share of the population of both the NWT (51.9 per cent) and Nunavut (86.3 per cent) while in Yukon 23.1 per cent have aboriginal identity.

But the vast mineral and energy resources of the North will only be developed with the cooperation and participation of the aboriginal people of the North. The mines, as well as the oil and gas deposits are for the most part located on the territory of Canada's aboriginal people, or the infrastructure necessary to access them or take them to market by road, rail or pipeline passes through their territories. The corporations or governments that desire the development of this wealth have to deal with this reality. The other reality is that the Canadian economy has become more and more dependent for its growth

on the continuing development and marketing of natural resources.

This was clearly evident during the recent Great Recession of 2008-09 when the development and export of natural resources became the engine of Canada's economy. At that point, it was oil and gas from Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia but now Canada and B.C. are looking to the development and export of liquefied natural gas, which Premier Christy Clark says will eclipse Alberta's oil sands in its value to the economy.

The development and sale of Canada's natural resources is not an end in itself. The direct and indirect jobs plus the revenue generated through royalties and other forms of taxation provide revenue to fund Canada's social safety net, publicly funded health care, education and myriad government programs that provide the level of social and economic well being enjoyed by most Canadians. If all of this is to continue, natural resource development must continue.

The vast mineral and energy resources of the North will only be developed with the cooperation and participation of the aboriginal people of the North. The mines, as well as the oil and gas deposits are for the most part located on the territory of Canada's aboriginal people.

For this to occur it is vitally important that Canada's aboriginal people be involved as equals in the development of these resources. This is true South of 60, but is absolutely vital when one looks at the distribution of the resources and where aboriginal people live North of 60. The resource development projects, if they are to succeed, must

become forces of unity, not disunity between the developers and the Indigenous Peoples of Canada's North. It was Chief Justice Antonio Lamer of the Supreme Court of Canada in the ground breaking decision, in the Delgamuukw case, who stated when dealing with the inherent rights of Aboriginal societies and government "Let us face it, we are all here to stay". This statement could easily be extrapolated to include the relationship with those who would develop Canada's resources.

Shawn Atleo, then national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, in a speech to the Toronto branch of the Canadian Club in 2012, stated First Nations need to be full partners in the development of resources. Projects will only proceed when First Nations have given free, prior and informed consent.

If the resources are to be developed, they can only be developed in an environmentally sustainable fashion, respecting the rights and responsibilities of aboriginal people towards the land.

More recently before the Toronto Board of Trade just this February, Atleo stated in relation to Canada's resource economy:

"Now is the time for fundamental and transformative change... where it is incumbent on each and every one of us to embrace this potential [of aboriginal people], support it and empower it, to educate and employ First Nations ...to build our economies and engage in opportunities and partnerships. This is the road to success. This is the road to productivity and prosperity for all of us."

Atleo's words should ring true throughout Canada.

Putting these words and similar words from other aboriginal leaders into practice will require both gov-

ernments and the natural resource development industry to act to address a number of issues. First, there needs to be a fundamental change in attitude by these two entities towards aboriginal people. They are now industry's partners, not an inconvenience that can be either ignored or swept away. Second, to enable indigenous people of the North to fully engage and reap the benefits of resource development, there has to be capacity building which includes education and job training for Inuit, Métis and First Nation young people. It is no longer acceptable to have fly-in workers benefit from resource development jobs in the north while the indigenous population is left behind. Third, in all the decisions made by government or industry, the traditions, land and environment of the aboriginal people of the North must remain paramount. If the resources are to be developed, they can only be developed in an environmentally sustainable fashion, respecting the rights and responsibilities of aboriginal people towards the land.

Only through implementation of the commitments outlined above will the natural resources of the North be developed. One cannot sufficiently stress the need for both industry and governments to ensure that educational supports are in place. Infrastructure to allow access to the resources must also be built. And as the prime minister's special envoy on West Coast energy issues, Doug Eyford, observed on releasing his report last December: "It is never too late to engage and to do so in a process of good faith." As he noted in his report to the PM, one of the most important intangibles is the building of trust among all participants in natural resource development.

One of the most successful examples of cooperation and partnership between aboriginal people and the resource development industry was the birth of the Aboriginal Pipeline Group (APG) out of the negotiations that emerged from the Mackenzie Valley Gas Project. Negotiations which began in 2000 resulted in a memorandum of understanding with

the Mackenzie Delta Producers Group that provided for a one-third interest for APG. This interest can be used to arrange financing to support the participation of APG going forward. While there may be other versions of partnership, the APG arrangement demonstrates what can be accomplished through the cooperation of all of interested parties.

In order for Canada's economy to continue to grow, the natural resources of the North will need to be developed. They can only be developed with the cooperation and support of the aboriginal people of the North. These are the people who have occupied these lands since time immemorial and nothing should happen without their consent and participation. As First Nation elder Peter O'Chiese once said "together we lift each other up". Only by acting together and with respect, will all parties benefit. **P**

Bruce Carson was a senior adviser to Prime Minister Stephen Harper from 2006-2009, and director of the Canada School of Energy and the Environment at the University of Calgary from 2009-2011. He currently publishes a daily political newsletter, Morning Brief. He is the author of 14 Days: Making the Conservative Movement in Canada, published in June by McGill-Queen's University Press. brcarson11@gmail.com



“Our project will add over \$4 billion into the B.C. economy. Think of what that will mean for our schools, hospitals and social programs.”

- Janet Holder, Leader of Northern Gateway



Janet Holder:

Janet Holder is responsible for the overall leadership of the Northern Gateway Project. With over 20 years of experience in the energy sector, she has held a variety of senior and executive roles in liquids pipelines, energy efficiency and energy distribution. As a proud British Columbian, Janet works hard to ensure Northern Gateway will be a safer, better pipeline with lasting benefits for B.C.

Over the past several months, I have shared our priority to ensure we protect what matters most to all of us — our beautiful coastline and environment. Our world-class safety and response measures are vital for the approval and success of the Northern Gateway Project — a project that will pave the way for significant economic benefits to help us build a stronger future for B.C.

— **A long-term revenue stream** —

We estimate that over the next 30 years, our project will add over \$4 billion into the B.C. economy. Think of what that will mean for our schools, hospitals and social programs. Increased long-term revenue for these programs and services will ensure our standard of living is not just maintained, but enhanced for years to come.

— **A boost for Northern communities** —

The B.C. economy will benefit from salaries, contracts and goods and services directly related to the Project. During the construction phase alone, Northern B.C. businesses will benefit from over \$800 million spent locally on goods and services like transportation, equipment, food and hospitality.

— **Partnering in the Project's prosperity** —

Ensuring that the economic benefits of the Project are also shared with Aboriginal communities is hugely important to us. In discussions with First Nations and Métis communities, we have offered a 10% equity stake in the pipeline. Additionally, there will be an estimated \$300 million in Aboriginal employment and contracts, plus related economic activity, adding up to nearly \$1 billion in total long-term benefits for First Nations and Métis communities and businesses.

— **Jobs and opportunities for families** —

To build this Project, we will create employment that will especially benefit communities along the pipeline's route. In fact, we are already helping to connect local residents to future employment and business opportunities, and offering education and skills development. There will be 560 long-term jobs created in B.C., and our plans call for the hiring of 3,000 construction workers. These jobs will create new sources of income for the workers' home communities. It is expected that each year \$32 million in income will be earned, which will have a profound and lasting impact on B.C. families.

— **An investment in the future while protecting —
what matters to us most**

As a proud British Columbian who was born and raised here, I am motivated every day to ensure these economic benefits never come at the expense of our incredible environment. Let me assure you that my team and I are working hard to meet all of the 209 conditions for Project approval set out by the Joint Review Panel, to ensure we build not only a safer, better pipeline, but a stronger, better B.C.



Learn more at gatewayfacts.ca

Working in partnership with B.C. and Alberta First Nations and Métis Communities, and leading energy companies in Canada

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP PROSPERITY

The future is bright for the people of the Northwest Territories. With a wealth of natural resources and new opportunities from devolution, the potential for economic growth and prosperity that will benefit all our residents for generations to come is greater than ever before.

Partnership is the key to unlocking that potential and ensuring the people of the NWT enjoy the full benefits of a strong, sustainable and healthy territory.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to forging strong working relationships with the federal, Aboriginal and community governments, businesses and other stakeholders to transform potential into prosperity for the North and for Canada.





Doing more with less?

Improving energy efficiency in Canada is the most immediate and economic way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance energy security. Doing more with less makes the energy sources we have go further, curbs CO₂ emissions and improves competitiveness. www.abb.ca/energyefficiency

Certainly.

Power and productivity
for a better world™

