

SUBMISSION - CIRCUMPOLAR CONFERENCE - POINT BARROW, JUNE 1977

BY THE COMMITTEE FOR ORIGINAL PEOPLES' ENTITLEMENT

Economics and Trade

East-West Trade

Shipping routes - water - air

Traditional food exchange

Industries - joint or co-operative

Business involvement - Inuvialuit Development Corporation

(1) Today there exists little East-West trade, or transportation system in Canada's Arctic. Most transportation routes are South-North.

Larger Western Arctic communities, are the Mackenzie Water ways or close to it receive summer barging of supplies, while Inuit communities on the coast receive barge services generally once a year.

Lack of volume a short season is the main reason for the unreliable barge transportation. In the last few years has been an increase in traffic, however, there had been little co-ordination or planning to include native participation, or long range planning.

In the Western Arctic it is felt that this would facilitate the exchange of local foods. The surplus food in smaller communities could be brought and sold to larger wage-employment communities. The co-operative sharing of food between region and jurisdictions could supply areas that were suffering from a decline of some animal populations. Hunting, trapping and fishing equipment factories tanneries could become possible because of volume use.

Traditionally Inuit moved extensively East-West along the coast. Over the past fifty years we have seen this East-West travel come to a stand still. In hindsight the reasons for this may be obvious.

With the opportunity to trade renewable resource products from the Arctic (whole by-products - furs) for manufactured articles from the South come the dramatic shift to the North-South movement of goods.

Movements of families should and finally ceased as schools and wage employment kept people close to settlements.

(2) East-West trade routes would encourage the cultural and social interaction of circumpolar Inuit and the development of co-operative industries.

With the discovery of oil and gas in the Arctic a new era or East-West co-operation and travel is again possible. Although raw materials (oil and gas) are still flowing south and manufactured goods (construction equipment - heavy equipment) are still coming

north, this new source of energy provides the potential for economic manufacturer of articles for trade within the circumpolar region, in addition to the possibility of trading oil and gas itself.

The Arctic Region is now putting the advantageous position of having relatively cheap energy which provides new possibilities for East-West economic co-operation.

Cheap energy can be used for such things as steel factories, to re-cycle scrap steel. This should promote secondary industry, and East-West trade, articles such as traps, caution articles such as stoves, cooking ware, boats.

(3) Our land rights proposal rights suggests the structure that would investigate these new opportunities - Section 810 - the I.D.C. should have reserved for it, 10 billion cubic feet of economically recoverable natural gas so it can develop long term economic opportunities. Section 811 - the I.D.C. can use at no cost any oil and gas by-products that would be floored and wasted. The challenge of the future will be to develop usable manufacturing industries that can support new East-West transportation routes.

RESOLUTION #1: That a sub-committee be made up from a representative from each region shall investigate and report on possible new economic opportunities and trade routes.

The discovery of oil and gas and the ownership or royalties provides the capital that would be available for reinvesting in and promoting Inuit industry.

RESOLUTION: 2: That a sub-committee on energy be set up to develop and investigate the feasibilities of a circumpolar energy policy.