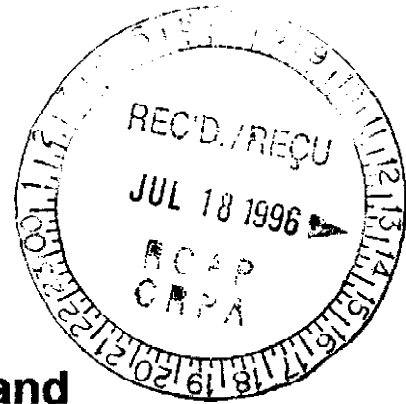


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**Inuit relocation policies in Canada and
other circumpolar countries, 1925-60.**

**A report for the
Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples**

by

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Abbreviations

ACND	Advisory Committee on Northern Development
DIAND	Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development
DNANR	Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources
DOT	Department of Transport
DRD	Department of Resources and Development
HBC	Hudson's Bay Company
NSO	Northern Service Officer
NWT	Northwest Territories
OIC	Officer in Charge
RCAF	Royal Canadian Air Force
RCAP	Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
USAF	United States Air Force

Officer ranks within the RCMP:

Cst.	Constable
S/Cst.	Special Constable
Cpl.	Corporal
Sgt.	Sergeant
Insp.	Inspector
Supt.	Superintendent

Terminology

The Canadian federal government department which has had responsibility for the administration of the Canadian North has evolved through various restructuring efforts and name changes over the years. From 1873 to 1935 it was the Department of the Interior, then the Department of Mines and Resources, and in 1950 it became the Department of Resources and Development, only to be renamed in 1953 the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. That name remained until the latest change, in 1966, to the present Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. In order to avoid confusion, unless one of the above departments is referred to by name I will simply call it "the Department". The Hudson's Bay Company will be referred to as "the HBC" or "the Company", the Royal Canadian Mounted Police will be referred to as "the RCMP" or "the Force", and the Anglican and Catholic missions will at times be referred to collectively as "the Churches".

Until the 1970s, officials used the word "Eskimo", which I will use in direct quotations or in that context; otherwise I will use the word "Inuit". Several terms in common usage are employed here: the "High Arctic Islands" include those islands north of Lancaster Sound which in 1954 were given the name "the Queen Elizabeth Islands". The community of Port Harrison in Northern Quebec was known by the Inuit as "Inukjuak", which is the name of the town today. Both names are used in this study, depending on the context. A distinct Inuit social group is known as a "band", and used to be comprised of a number of "camps" containing extended family units. The identity and geographical location of an Inuit band is described by the suffix *-miut*, meaning "people of". The Inuit living in the area of Port Harrison are the "Inukjuamiut" (people of Inukjuak).

Introduction

On 25 August 1953, thirty-four Inuit men, women, and children were placed on board a barge and taken to the government Eastern Arctic Patrol ship C.G.S. *C.D. Howe*, which lay anchored off the coast in Hudson Bay. They were members of the Inukjuamiut Inuit who had been living near the Port Harrison settlement on the Ungava Peninsula in Northern Quebec. The families were selected by officials to participate in what the government described as a "voluntary migration" experiment which involved transporting the group 2,200 kilometres to the High Arctic Islands. Canada's two northernmost colonies were to be established for them on Ellesmere and Cornwallis islands. This relocation was envisaged as the spearhead of an ambitious government initiative to resettle Inuit in unoccupied regions of the Arctic in the 1950s.

Why were these "pioneer migrants" being encouraged to find a new homeland in the far north? Why was the government so interested in repopulating the far North, and shifting Inuit from one part of the Arctic to another? The government's motives for the operation and the social implications of the experiment have since become the subject of intense controversy and political debate in Canada. Was this an isolated example of relocation, or were there other similar instances? In Part I, this study seeks to place this act of relocation to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord within the broader context of the Canadian government's relocation policies during the years 1925-60. In Part II of this report, relocation experiences in other circumpolar countries will also be examined.

Specific themes which will be explored in this report are motivations for undertaking relocations, including economic, social and geopolitical factors. Officials' descriptions of relocation projects, including terms such as "voluntary migration", "rehabilitation" and "experiment" will be emphasised. Information regarding the reactions of Inuit participants to the moves will also be provided when available.

Executive Summary

The on-going debate over the relocation of Inuit from Inukjuak (Port Harrison) to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord in 1953-55 has confounded observers by its complexity and divisiveness. To borrow Diamond Jenness' Arctic chessboard metaphor, did the relocatees become "pawns of history", to be used by the government to satisfy geo-political interests or social reformist ideologies? Or, did they become victims of a humanitarian effort gone wrong? In order to find answers to these questions it is necessary to explore whether the relocation took place in a vacuum, or whether officials developed other relocation projects which were designed and implemented in a similar fashion. In this way one might be able to place this case study within a broader historical context, and to examine if it had anomalous characteristics. I have therefore presented a number of other Canadian relocations which bracket the Resolute Bay/Grise Fiord project between 1925-60, and four comparative instances of relocation cases in Greenland, Russia and Alaska.

- Was the Resolute Bay/Grise Fiord project designed to fulfil geopolitical motivations to demonstrate effective occupation? There is every indication that this "colonization project", as it was called, was intended as an extension of the RCMP presence in the High Arctic, to show a human presence by establishing the two northernmost Canadian settlements in an area where sovereignty had been a sensitive issue at various times during the twentieth century. Prior to the 1953-55 relocation the plan to use aboriginal people to demonstrate effective occupation in a colonization exercise had been used in the case of Scoresby Sund, Ostrov Vrangelya and Devon Island. The plan to "seed the High Arctic" with Inuit colonies in the 1950s and to encourage aboriginal people to resettle in specific sites, including Banks Island, Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, has all the hallmarks of a geopolitically-motivated colonization policy.
- Was the Resolute Bay/Grise Fiord project an act of social reform? While the Department may have seen the 1953 relocation from Port Harrison predominately as a geopolitical or depopulation experiment, their public rationale and the beliefs of planners such as Supt. Henry Larsen were that the project provided the Inuit with an opportunity to better themselves (Marcus, 1993). All of the right components were in place to support this

social reformist ideology. The Inuit would be released from their economic and spiritual bondage to the traders and missionaries, and transported to a land potentially rich in game where they could prosper under the benevolent guidance of the RCMP. It also offered the heroic prospect of returning the Inuit to ancestral territory. Therefore, the planners were in effect drafting a new "map of morality", identifying the southern areas where Inuit had become dependent on "handouts", and seeing the High Arctic as a place free of contamination, offering the prospect of moral redemption. This idealism had much in common with the views of General William Booth and proponents of a British emigration policy for "shovelling out paupers" during the nineteenth century. The object was to encourage emigration to the "unpopulated and virgin lands" of Canada, the United States and Australia, both as a means of socially reforming unwanted indigents and reducing "surplus populations" in Britain. (see Booth, 1970 [1890]; Johnston, 1972; and Constantine, 1991).

To the Department, the project presented a paradigm of social action – an inexpensive, quick-fix, trial solution to the complex "Eskimo Problem", irrespective of any geopolitical merits. The scheme had the advantage of being cost-effective because the Eskimo Loan Fund allowed for the operation to be self-financing (the Inuit would pay for it themselves), and the RCMP had volunteered to supervise it in the field. It was only later that the government realized it would be too expensive to reproduce the prototype in other isolated locations of the High Arctic.

Reports indicate that the Inukjuamiut were seen by some officials as an unnecessary nuisance for the local White personnel based in Port Harrison, and a people addicted to living on "handouts" (Marcus, 1993). When the Inukjuamiut were moved by the RCMP out to the Sleeper and King George Islands in 1951-52, they returned after several months, and the operation was later repeated. When the Ahiarmiut drifted back after being relocated to Nuelin Lake in 1950, the measure was repeated in 1957 to Henik Lake. This repercussive pattern of pushing the Inuit away from the White settlements coincided with the notion that the prospect of better game could draw the Inuit further north. Therefore in the 1953 move the Inuit were transported northwards to wilderness sites, more distant than in the earlier moves, such as to the King George and Sleeper islands, and away from their lands which had become centres of White occupation.

- Was the Resolute Bay/Grise Fiord relocation a voluntary project, or is there evidence to suggest that this was a forced relocation? The Department assured the public at the time of the move that the Inukjuamiut were voluntary migrants. The basis of this claim was linked to the Department's statements that the Inuit were attracted by the prospect of being assisted to move to a land rich in game. How important was this feature of the projects? When Capt. Ejnar Mikkelsen described his Scoresby Sund colonization project of 1924 in East Greenland, discussed in Part 2.2, he found that the Inuit "are very conservative and do not take kindly to the idea of leaving their place of birth". Thus Mikkelsen discovered the effective method for encouraging Inuit to embark on a government-sponsored relocation: "They have, consequently, to be cajoled to go, tempted by accounts of better hunting and living conditions" (Mikkelsen, 1951). Mikkelsen's candid advice was published in the *Canadian Geographical Journal's* August 1951 issue, the year prior to the Canadian Department's decision to use similar tactics in their relocation discussions with the Inukjuamiut.

The enticement of food was the foremost tool employed by the government in 1934, 1951, 1953-55, and 1957 to publicly legitimize the need for relocations. Yet no scientific resource studies of the destination sites had been undertaken prior to either relocation, nor did the planners have conclusive knowledge that the relocatees would be able to sustain themselves there. These were purely speculative experiments. Was food a sufficient lure in itself to entreat the Inuit to permanently leave their homelands? If the Department had closely examined the results of its two earlier relocation experiments in 1934 to Devon Island and in 1950 to Nuelin Lake they would have discovered that although the prospect of food had been used as the primary inducement (and publicly stated objective), both projects had ended in failure. This result was in part due to a lack of informed consent as well as a scarcity of game. Officials agreed after reviewing the Henik Lake tragedy that consensual acceptance of the scheme was compromised because of the Ahlarmiut's strong associational ties with the Ennadai Lake area, and their reluctance to move to the Padlei district.

The Department's efforts to describe the relocation experiments as "migrations", or as "assisted moves", suggests that the word "migration" could be interpreted as a metaphor – even a euphemism – for social

reform and rehabilitation (Marcus, 1995). Using the word "migration" could imply that the planners were not obtrusively intervening in Inuit society, rather they were assisting the Inuit to migrate naturally to a land rich in game. Because the reformers went to considerable lengths to state and restate that the project was voluntary, one might consider that it was honestly their intention to help the Inuit "to help themselves". The relocation to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord was envisaged as a self-contained, self-reforming scheme. Larsen (n.d: 44) stressed that the opportunity of the 1953 move for the Inukjuamiut would be to give "these natives . . . a chance *to prove themselves under new conditions in a completely strange country*" (italics mine). This concept of self-improvement appears in statements made by officers directly supervising the Resolute Bay/Grise Fiord project and the 1957-8 Ennadai Lake move. Cst. Fryer (1954) stated that two weeks after the RCMP had moved the relocatees to Lindstrom Peninsula on Grise Fiord, "this concluded the assistance intended to be given by the detachment, so that *it was now up to the natives to make a success of their undertaking*"; similarly, Cpl. Gallagher (1957b) reported that six months after being relocated to Henik Lake the Ahiarmiut "have made little, if any progress towards *rehabilitating themselves* in their new environment" (my italics). In fact, the nature of the selection process magnified the project's reformist subtext.

Based on her comprehensive study of Inuit mobility patterns, Susan Rowley (1985b: 3) observed that traditionally migration could play an important role in Inuit society as a "risk buffering strategy in times of environmental and social stress". Thus under the guise of an "assisted migration", many of the projects could be seen as justifiable from officials' point of view. From this perspective officials were helping the Inuit to do what they might have done if the White man not been there – namely to use migration "as a means of escape from a region when resources became scarce" (ibid: 17). For the Inukjuamiut it would mean leaving what officials described as the "overpopulated" and "resource-poor" area of Northern Quebec to move to a land thought to be "more suitable"; and the Ahiarmiut would be abandoning an area with increasingly limited prospects for caribou, in order to adopt a "more balanced" diet of fish and other game at Henik Lake. In the case of the moves to Devon Island, Nueltin Lake, Banks Island, Fort Chimo, and Resolute Bay, officials stressed that there were also economic incentives for the relocatees to become more self-sufficient.

Yet Cst. Gibson's "chosen people" were bound for a land of which they knew very little. Resolute Bay, Grise Fiord and the High Arctic environment were an unknown territory for the relocatees. The Inuit's expectations of temporary displacement from Inukjuak (or an extended hunting expedition), and the planners' expectations for permanent High Arctic colonies, went against any preconceived notion that this was a voluntary experiment. Fear of the police and other officials, and intimidation by them, combined with an inability to traverse the cross-cultural barriers and language difficulties, confounded any thoughts the Inuit might have had of effectively extricating themselves from the "migration" schemes.

Part I: Canadian resettlement projects

1.1 1934-36 Devon Island relocation

The 1953-55 relocation from Port Harrison to the High Arctic bears certain important similarities with an earlier resettlement project undertaken jointly by the Hudson's Bay Company and the Department. In 1934, Inuit families from three Baffin Island settlements were recruited for relocation to Devon Island. At the time, there were no Inuit permanently camped on the island. Like the 1953 relocation, the Devon Island scheme was described as a project to remove ten Inuit families from "overpopulated" areas where they were apparently experiencing hardship, to a virgin land potentially rich in game. As a "colonization project", others have concluded that the scheme had a sovereignty objective of securing "effective occupation" (Barr, 1977: 9). This objective was identical to that of the 1953 move, which will be discussed later in this report. In 1934 and in 1953, the Department acted in a distant supervisory capacity, though less so in the later move. The field responsibilities for the relocations were alternatively managed by secondary agents, the RCMP in 1953 and the Company in 1934.

The Company had opened trading posts at Arctic Bay on north Baffin and at Prince Leopold on north Somerset Island in 1926, but had closed them two years later due to provisions under the Arctic Islands Preserve Act. The Company later asked the Department of the Interior (the Department) if it could reopen the posts (Stevenson, 1977). The Department informed the Company that if they applied instead for a permit to establish a trading post at Dundas Harbour and resettled a group of natives to the site the application would be approved. The Company did so in March 1934, and the Deputy Minister agreed to the plan with the proviso that the Company would assume full responsibility for the natives, and if the Company should close the post it had the responsibility to return the Inuit to their homes at its own expense, or to transfer them to such other trapping grounds as might be designated by the Department. Dundas Harbour on Devon Island had been established as a post by the RCMP in 1924 as a means of demonstrating Canadian sovereignty in the High Arctic (Morrison, 1985). The RCMP detachment, which had been established in 1924, was vacated in 1933 and the Company arranged to take over the police buildings (Barr, 1977).

This colonization operation of 1934-36, which has been referred to as Canada's "first official Eskimo relocation project" fulfilled two needs (Stevenson, 1977). As a commercial resource experiment it provided a possible source of game for a small group of Inuit and furs for the Company; more importantly, it assisted the government in displaying effective occupation in support of Canada's claim to the northern Arctic Islands, whose sovereignty had been contested by Norway since Sverdrup's explorations (ibid.). In 1934, the Inuit "colonists" and two Company employees being moved to Dundas Harbour would be the only Canadian citizens in the Arctic Islands north of Lancaster Sound. The Company manager chosen to lead the operation, Chesley Russell, explained that "The move was made on an understanding between Company and government representatives and the Eskimos that, if they were dissatisfied in any way after two years at Dundas Harbour, they would be returned to their homes" (Russell, 1978). Ten native families from Pangnirtung, Pond Inlet and Cape Dorset were selected as "volunteers". In the summer of 1934 the Company supply ship *Nascopie* picked up 53 Inuit men, women and children together with 109 dogs, and possessions, including sledges, kayaks, and boats and relocated them to Devon Island.

The Department of the Interior authorized the colonization of Devon Island in 1934, with the explanation in its Annual Report that: "In general the health and well-being of the white and native population [in the Eastern Arctic] was found to be above the average due to a large extent to the abundance of game and fur-bearing animals. However, it was found desirable, in the interest of good administration, to transfer several Eskimo families to more congenial localities" (Canada, 1935-36). "Good administration" could have several meanings. In 1934 and in the 1950s the lure of more plentiful game was used by the government as an inducement to the Inuit for relocation and as a justification to the public for carrying out their experiments. In this case, a 1935 document in the government's files provides a more complete explanation:

In addition to the placing of the Eskimos in new regions where game is more abundant and work more regular, there is the angle of occupation of the country, now that aerial routes, mineral developments, and other reasons make possible the claims of other countries to part of Canada's Arctic, which now reaches to the North Pole. To forestall any such future claims, the Dominion is occupying the Arctic islands to within nearly 700 miles of the North Pole (Montagnes, 1935: 56).

Chesley Russell became concerned about the Inuit's response to an increasingly "dreary situation" (Russell, 1978). "From the time we landed on Devon Island, the Eskimos had a depressing and pessimistic attitude towards the venture. The weather was stormy and cold and the coastline was very inhospitable", recorded Russell. Like later at Resolute and Grise, the colony at Dundas was sited by the ruins of old stone Thule houses, "their whale-rib rafters sticking eerily out of the ground in the semi-darkness". Russell wrote candidly about his early thoughts about the success of the experiment. "Predictions of gloom and mishap continued to mark our first few months of occupation on Devon Island. There were moments when even I felt sceptical about the outcome of the venture" (ibid.). The month following their arrival, the relocatees experienced severe hurricane force winds which destroyed their camps. The few buildings were chained to the rocks to keep them from blowing away. "At that time," recorded Russell, "we were probably the most northerly settlement in Canada, entirely cut off from the rest of the country with no prospect of contact with anyone outside for another twelve months". The sense of total geographical, climatic bound isolation Russell was expressing in 1934 on Devon Island, were similar to the feelings expressed by the Inuit moved to Cornwallis and Ellesmere Islands in the same region twenty years later.

Without an intimate knowledge for the land, a memoryscape (as Nuttall, 1993, refers to it), the Inuit were "curiously reluctant to break trails over strange unknown territory", and would not establish traplines beyond walking distance from the camps. Like Cst. Gibson at Resolute Bay, Russell noted the effect the dark period had on the trappers. "The continued darkness at the higher latitudes had a disconcerting effect on some although, with the combination of moonlight and reflection of light on snow, there was always sufficient light to keep traplines in order". In order to familiarize the Inuit with the landscape, Russell and his assistant accompanied the trappers on all their expeditions across the southern coast of Devon Island, feeling this way that his presence mediated the natives' "own particular sphere of fear and superstition" (Russell, 1978). Hunting was reportedly good, and after a while there was an economically viable catch of white fox traded and "no serious lack of country food". However, even though the Inuit "now were in a happier frame of mind" reported Russell, "the unanimous opinion now was to vacate the site and return home on the ship at the end of the two-year period. This decision made the prospect of staying on for the season of 1935-36 easier to take".

The impression is of a manager who had clearly informed the Inuit of the two-year promise of return. Despite Russell's mandate to establish a "viable operation with a meaningful future for an Eskimo community", he and they appeared to look on the experiment more as a two-year hunting expedition, which might develop into something else if conditions are favourable, rather than strictly as a colonization project. The difference with the 1953 settlement creations at Resolute and Grise, is that in those cases the official arm of the government was placed in charge in the form of the RCMP. Policemen, whose responsibility it had always been to establish an isolated post, and to man it continuously until a decision was made in Ottawa to do otherwise. Russell's attitude as an experienced and judicious trader was quite different in this respect. In the past, he would have manned or established a trading post in a location where there were Inuit. In this instance, he was to find a place for the Inuit to trap, and if they were not willing to trap there permanently, then he would abide by their wishes. As an experienced trader, it would have been untenable for him to adopt a position with the natives, forcing them to abide by his will. Russell became one of the Company's best well-known managers, precisely because his humanist approach to working with the Inuit trappers proved economically fruitful. In the case of the Devon experiment, Russell explained his personal position to the Inuit: "Regardless of the financial outcome of the venture, I always endeavoured to impress upon the hunters and their families that their welfare was of first importance" (*ibid.*). Unlike the Scoresby Sund and Ostrov Vrangelya experiments (see Part 2.2 and 2.3), there were no fatalities during the two-year Devon resettlement.

Russell explored the surrounding region by dog team with three Inuit during the spring of 1936. They travelled 1,700 miles from Devon across to Cornwallis Island, and along the south coast of Ellesmere Island. According to Russell, the region was abundant in game and "could be truly classed as a hunter's paradise". He saw large numbers of seals, polar bears, walrus, musk-oxen, Peary deer in their thousands in the Ellesmere fiords, and plentiful numbers of narwhal and beluga during the short period of open water in the summer. Despite the abundance of game, Russell was aware that the Inuit did not want to remain in the area. It was not their homeland. It was clear to Russell the feeling of the Inuit on the issue of being able to return to their homes, and their feelings about Dundas Harbour and its sense of place. "The people from Cape Dorset on south Baffin Island, in particular, could not adapt to the new environment", wrote Russell, "and had made plans right

from the beginning to stay no longer than the stipulated period" (ibid.). Russell's realization of the inappropriateness of permanently resettling Inuit from south Baffin to the High Arctic highlights the fundamental impracticality of expecting Inuit from an even more southerly region in Arctic Quebec to happily adjust themselves to Ellesmere Island, a place even more northerly than Devon. Those relocated in 1953 to the High Arctic would experience an even greater climatic contrast than the Baffin Islanders moved in Devon. Yet, the learned experience of acclimatisation aptly demonstrated by conducting the 1934 Devon experiment, does not appear to have been considered fully by the planners of the 1953 relocation, which otherwise bore strong similarities to the earlier move.

When the *Nascopie* arrived in the summer of 1936, all of the Inuit were waiting at Dundas Harbour. The colonists "were informed that the decision had been made to move everyone and everything off Devon Island . . . The news was received with elation, " recorded Russell, "until we learned that the intention was not to return the people to their homes, but rather to move them to Arctic Bay on the north coast of Baffin Island where a trading post was to be re-opened" (ibid.). This would not affect the Pond Inlet Inuit, who were comparatively close to Arctic Bay, as much as it would those families from south Baffin. "To say the least, the Dorset people were terribly disappointed," recalled Russell, "I was disappointed and vexed as well, and stated my feelings accordingly. A number of plausible reasons were given for the move, the main one being that the group would be better off at Arctic Bay". This reason was used as a legitimizing motive for most relocations.

Russell felt that it was not a sufficient reason, though, for the Company not to fulfil its two-year promise of return. "This turn of events was a bitter disappointment. The Eskimos had faithfully fulfilled their part of the bargain and felt that the white men should live up to theirs. The question of whether the families were better off or not was not the issue. The Cape Dorset people, I felt, should have been given the choice of returning to their home settlement or of remaining with the other members of the party at Arctic Bay. Eventually they were shuffled from Arctic Bay to Fort Ross and finally to Spence Bay, where the survivors and offspring of the original party live permanently today". There is a discrepancy about whether two of the families from Pangnirtung were returned to their community in 1936 (Jenness, 1964: 61, and Russell, 1978: 47). The group remained in Arctic Bay only one year before spending ten years at Fort Ross, and were then permanently relocated

to Spence Bay. While they were still in the vicinity of Fort Ross, Insp. Larsen visited them while on patrol on the *St. Roch* in January 1942. Larsen reported to his C.O. of G Division, that the 24 Cape Dorset Inuit from the relocation were subsisting almost entirely on tea, hard tack and flour, and food which could be obtained from the store through trading furs (Larsen, 1942). Although "a good number of the original number have died", Larsen informed his superior that the people wanted to return to their homeland: "Everyone I spoke to expressed ardent desire to be taken back to Cape Dorset, Baffin Island as their present location did not agree with them" (ibid.). The 1953 relocation to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord was almost a re-enactment of the 1934 Devon Island relocation experiment. In both cases the Inuit were told of better hunting conditions, and promised that they would be enabled to return home in two years. However, in neither case did officials abide by the original terms of the agreement.

Diamond Jenness, the Canadian anthropologist, called the group relocated in 1934 "the homeless Ishmaelites", and wondered about "the desires and aspirations of the Eskimos themselves . . . a factor that both the government and the Hudson's Bay Company largely neglected when they shuttled the south Baffin Islanders from one Arctic trapping-ground to another" (Jenness, 1964). In this regard, Jenness made the connection with an article which appeared in the journal *Eskimo* on the Keewatin resettlements of 1958: "The movements of population are the most delicate kind of operation. Eskimo are not pawns on a chessboard". The analogy of human pawns being moved on an Arctic chessboard is perhaps never more strikingly illustrated than in the instance of Devon Island, of relocating a small group of Inuit to four new sites in succession, as it suited the experimental economic interests of the Company, and set against the background geopolitical interests of the State.

1.2 1951 Nuelin Lake project

The Ahlarmiut were considered by the Whites to be among the most "primitive" Inuit in the Canadian Arctic (*Life*, 1956). They were a band of Caribou Inuit who lived on the Keewatin barrens. They depended almost entirely on the caribou for their sustenance. The Ahlarmiut had migrated to the Keewatin interior from the coast sometime in the mid-nineteenth century. Thus they were called "Ahlarmiut" (inland people) by those Inuit who lived on

the coast. The Ahiarmiut migrated between seasonal camps, sometimes living in the south near Nueltin Lake, sometimes in the east at Kasba Lake or Windy Lake (where they encountered Farley Mowat in 1947), and at numerous river points throughout their territory. In 1949 the Canadian Army Signal Corps built a radio station at Ennadai Lake, which was taken over by the Department of Transport Air Radio Branch in 1954. No other government, mission, or trading representatives were resident in the immediate area.

The encounter between the Ahiarmiut and the radio-station personnel soon set in motion a series of events. When the radio station was opened, officials initially took a dim view of the Inuit's interest in camping nearby. Pointing out that fish and caribou were plentiful in the adjacent district, one report suggested that "the Eskimos preferred the occasionally received 'hand-out' from the personnel of the Radio Station to fending for themselves farther afield" (Sivertz, 1959a). This statement suggests that Department officials, at least, saw the Ahiarmiut as a nuisance to the Ennadai personnel.

An official indicated the social hazards by remarking that "concentrating at this point, subtle degeneration set in and they became more and more reluctant to move from the site" (Sivertz, 1959b: 2). At the same time, the Department learned of possible starvation amongst other Caribou Inuit, though not the Ahiarmiut. The threat of starvation coupled with the Ahiarmiut's growing dependency on the radio station was perceived by the Department as problematic. In retrospect, Sivertz felt that the Ahiarmiut themselves "were unaware of the demoralizing consequences to those who lose their initiative and become dependent on relief". Shortly after the Ennadai radio station was built, Sigurdson and Martin, a private firm of merchants from Churchill, sent a message to the RCMP at Eskimo Point: "Re: Natives Ennadai Lake. We are in position to feed and put to work all who can reach new post. Suggest your department fly them down immediately" (Rowley, 1956).

The firm had just opened a private trading post at Nueltin Lake and intended to develop a fishery. This sudden offer presented the Department with a timely solution to "the Ahiarmiut problem". The Department responded favourably to the plan, on the condition that the Department be responsible for transporting the Inuit from Ennadai to Nueltin, after which the firm would supervise them. The radio-station log noted in April 1950: "found true –

preparations for evacuation to Nueltin, since natives starving" (Steenhoven, 1955).

On 2-3 May 1950, at a cost of \$1,270, the Department relocated the entire Ahiamut group of forty-seven people by air from Ennadai Lake to Nueltin Lake, 100 kilometres to the south-east, to work in the commercial fishery scheme of Nueltin Lake Fish Products (Sivertz, 1959b). Despite the fact that no other Inuit lived near the lake, the company had advised the Department that the lake was capable of providing a livelihood for every Inuk from Baker Lake southwards. Three months after the relocation an evangelical missionary, Mr. Ledyard, contacted officials to inform them that he had recently visited Nueltin Lake. He reported that the Ahiamut had poor skin clothing, and that they were not fishing, but did have a few nets in the lake and were obtaining enough fish for their needs (Larsen, 1959). An RCMP report noted that Ledyard advised the police that the Ahiamut did not like Nueltin Lake, saying that it was strange to them, and they were talking of returning to the Ennadai Lake area (*ibid.*).

By December 1950, the Inuit had drifted back to Ennadai of their own accord. Pongalak, one of the two headmen, returned to the Ennadai radio station within weeks of being moved, and appeared to the staff to be "very disgruntled . . . claiming it to be a terrible place for hunting. He insisted there were so many trees around that it was extremely difficult to be at home and impossible to kill any game. [He] intends to remain here" (Steenhoven, 1955). Meanwhile, the company had found it did not have the capital to finance the operation after being refused a government loan, and therefore dropped the project. Between May and October a number of conflicting reports were received about the welfare of the Ahiamut, but officials commented that "one thing seemed clear – they were really no better off than they had been in their former home and they were not particularly happy in their new environment" (Rowley, 1956). Not only were the Ahiamut dissatisfied with the change in habitat, but their trading relationship with the Nueltin merchant was less favourable than the one they had with the radio personnel. They therefore returned to Ennadai.

A Department report later revealed that consensual arrangements for the relocation were compromised by the fact that officials overlooked the need for an interpreter to explain to the Inuit why they were being moved and the nature of the work the company expected them to do (Sivertz, 1959b).

Sivertz acknowledged that "this unfortunate omission was our fault and a considerable factor in the project's failure". Indeed, one Inuk was recorded as having said that he thought the Whites were going to fish for them at Nueltin Lake. The Department accepted that the lack of success was not surprising, for the Ahlarmiut "did not take to fishing and in any case they did not have any boats or other equipment to fish properly" (Rowley, 1956). A senior Department official later advised that "if we added any further explanation it might only tend to draw attention to the incident, which I do not think would be useful" (ibid.). The outcome of this relocation experiment demonstrated that an attempt to turn caribou hunters into commercial fishermen by moving them to a location not of their choosing, and with little or no support, stood little chance of fulfilling White expectations (Marcus, 1995).

Officials did not achieve consensus with the Inuit when planning the project. The Department developed a plan and the Inuit acquiesced, not because they understood or agreed with the need for or aims of the experiment, but because they were doing what the Whites wanted them to do. Unlike the Inukjuamiut relocatees in 1953, who had no means of escape, the Ahlarmiut could return to their homeland of their own volition soon after being relocated to Nueltin Lake. They were able to do so because they had been transported across a contiguous area of land, and a distance of only 100 kilometres, whereas the Inukjuamiut had been relocated over 2,200 kilometres from their homeland. Thus, the geographical factor provided the Ahlarmiut with a safety valve which the Inukjuamiut did not have (Marcus, 1993).

1.3 1951-53 Banks Island project

In the early 1950s, the government explored various options for re-establishing permanent Inuit populations on the northern Arctic Islands. The first step towards colonization was to establish trading stores on the islands, in order that the Inuit could remain there without having to return to the mainland to trade. Initially, James Cantley sought the assistance of the Company in establishing new stores, for example on Banks Island in the Western Arctic. In his struggle to wrest field control from the RCMP and give it back to the Company, Cantley (1950a: 49) had tried to reassure the Northwest Territories Council that "if a suitable plan for direct co-operative action between the Company and one responsible Department were put

forward, they would willingly co-operate to the fullest possible extent". Yet, when Cantley approached the Company about establishing a store on Banks Island, they responded that it was an uneconomic proposal, and the Department therefore had to ask for police co-operation.

In 1953 the Department created an "Eskimo Loan Fund" with the Treasury Board so that "returnable advances could be made to Eskimo groups or individuals to assist them to purchase necessary supplies and equipment" (Eskimo Affairs, 1952b: 3). It appears that the Loan Fund was set up specifically to facilitate the Department's resettlement plans, although this has not been suggested in the available literature. A memo of March 1953 outlined the five "assisted Eskimo projects" to be financed under the Fund (Cunningham, 1953). All five were connected with resettlement. The first three loans were for establishing government trading stores, to be operated by the RCMP, at the proposed Inuit colonies at Cape Herschel (Alexandra Fiord) and Craig Harbour on Ellesmere Island, and Resolute Bay. The fourth loan was to equip Inuit to trap and resettle on Banks Island, and the fifth loan was to purchase trade supplies for a new RCMP-operated government store on Herschel Island.

In the case of Banks Island, the Department wanted to encourage Inuit trappers who had formerly lived on the island (and were known as Bankslanders), and were now living in the Mackenzie Delta, to return permanently to Banks. In 1951-52, the Department experimented by making advances to fifteen families, many of whom had hunted on the Island in previous years. They were equipped by the Department, and realized a profit each year, thereby establishing a precedent which emphasized that the advances were "self-liquidating" and not "handouts". The Bankslanders had their own schooners and journeyed across to Banks Island from Aklavik or Tuktoyaktuk for their supplies. Under the provisions of the newly established Loan Fund, in 1953 11 trappers and their families wintered on the island, and in 1954 17 trappers were again equipped to trap on Banks, earning around \$50,000 (Canada, 1957b). Including family members, 27 Bankslanders lived on the island in 1951-52, rising to 54 in 1954-55 (Usher, 1970: 65).

The impetus for the Banks programme, according to Cantley (1950b), was not simply to establish seasonal trapping on Banks, but "to encourage these people to break away from the Delta entirely and to build up their own community on the island". He acknowledged whether they "would be content

to stay there indefinitely or not would depend largely on how attractive the proposition could be made to them". Cantley's advice was that the Department should assist the trappers financially by setting up and operating a co-operative store on Banks Island.

When Jim Wright (1950), Chief of the Arctic Division, wrote to R.H. Cheshire, General Manager of the Company's Fur Trade department, in 1950 about the plan for repopulating Banks Island, he advised that if a post were to be established on the island, arrangements could be made "to transfer the Banks Island natives back there permanently". During the drop in fur prices in the late 1940s, the Bankslanders had moved to the Mackenzie Delta on the mainland for three years. Wright now emphasized "it would be preferable . . . to endeavour to break their connection with the Delta entirely". The Banks resettlement scheme had two advantages: it colonized an unoccupied island, and it improved the participants' standard of living by eliminating their dependence on relief and encouraging them to be self-supporting. The Department thought that "they would have a much better chance of doing [this] on the island than on the mainland" (*ibid.*).

Once an Inuit population had been re-established on Banks Island, the RCMP built a detachment there at Sachs Harbour in 1953, coinciding with the creation of the Loan Fund, and the opening of detachments at Alexandra Fiord and Resolute Bay. Had the Department's initiatives failed to encourage the Bankslanders to reoccupy the island, or had the advances not been repaid, plans for further resettlement of the High Arctic Islands in 1953 might not have been pursued as keenly as they were. The successful Banks Island resettlement project established a prototype for colonization experiments, both in demonstrating that Inuit relocation could fulfil a sovereignty objective of demonstrating territorial occupation (Usher, 1970: 56; Williamson and Foster, 1974: 13), and in institutionalizing Departmental support of these operations through the Eskimo Loan Fund.

1.4 1951-53 resettlement from Inukjuak

While the Department was concerned about Inuit dependency on relief, as publicized by the 1952 Conference, it was also disconcerted by changes in Inuit settlement patterns. The Department's general view at the time was that "Eskimos are better off while living in small communities and moving from

place to place hunting" (Cantley, 1953). As a result of this moral concern the Department's Officer in Charge of the 1951 Eastern Arctic Patrol, Alex Stevenson, received orders that "consideration should be given to the feasibility of breaking up the present concentrations of population around the main centres" (Sinclair, 1951). Inspector Larsen was convinced that by dispersing Inuit who lived around settlements, and relocating them to sites rich in game, their standard of living would improve:

At the present time there are concentrations of Eskimos at certain places, which, if they could be broken up by providing the Eskimos with boats and other means of travel, would I feel result in a better standard of living for the Eskimos in so far that they would have a better chance of obtaining more meat and skin clothing and thereby living more their native way of life (Larsen, 1951: 3).

Officials at the 1952 Conference on Eskimo Affairs agreed on the policy directive "that the immediate need was to assist the natives to continue to follow their traditional way of life as hunters" (Eskimo Affairs, 1952a: 4). Thus they sought to keep the native "native", despite the growing intrusion of the post-war modern world into northern society (Diubaldo, 1989: 173). Relocation was seen as a way of returning Inuit to a self-reliant state by removing them from areas considered to be overpopulated. In order to rehabilitate the Inuit selected for relocation, it was necessary to move them to sites thought to be rich in game. Officials emphasized the plan's advantages for better conservation and utilization of food resources. This point had been developed previously in Cantley's report in 1950:

Experience with the primitive races in both Canada and Greenland has shown that if the natives are to live off the resources of the country, they must be distributed in small communities over as wide an area as possible. There are few places where the resources are sufficient to support a large population for any length of time, but there are innumerable places where a few families can hunt and obtain a living indefinitely. They will have seasons of moderate abundance and extreme scarcity, just as their forefathers had, but overall they will obtain, not luxury, but at least a higher standard of living than could ever be provided for permanently in larger communities (Cantley, 1950a: 28).

Northern Quebec became a target for relocation in the early 1950s, when the Hudson's Bay Company considered a project for moving Inuit from the south coast of the Hudson Straits to Boothia Peninsula. Initially the Department looked at the possibility of relocating Inuit from Quebec to Baffin Island in 1952, before organizing the relocations in 1953-55 from Quebec to Ellesmere and Cornwallis islands in the High Arctic. The project was to be

the first Inuit relocation wholly organized and implemented by the Department together with the RCMP. The relocations which took place during the 1920s–50s had similarities in the way they were conceived and executed (Marcus, 1995).

The first evidence of a plan to relocate Canadian Inuit to Ellesmere Island is found in a report drafted by Alex Stevenson when he was serving as the Department's Officer in charge of the annual Eastern Arctic Patrol in the summer of 1950. The patrol was a celebratory occasion, for it was the maiden voyage of the government's new ship, the *C.D. Howe*. Insp. Larsen was on board the vessel, and when they reached the RCMP detachment at Dundas Harbour on Devon Island, which was the northernmost point of the voyage, Larsen and Stevenson discussed the possibility of an Inuit relocation further north. Under the heading 'Establishing Eskimo Camps North of Lancaster Sound', Stevenson (1950: 7) noted that there were two North Baffin Inuit families employed at the RCMP Dundas Harbour detachment (open 1924-33 and 1945-51) on Devon Island. Because the Force was planning to reopen the Craig Harbour and Bache Peninsula detachments on Ellesmere Island soon, Stevenson suggested that at least four Inuit families could be moved to Devon, and others should be established on Ellesmere Island and other High Arctic Islands. He reported that Insp. Larsen thought such a plan was quite feasible and, provided the Inuit were willing to move, he could see no reason why it should not be a success. Stevenson suggested that once the Inuit had been relocated, the RCMP could be responsible for their welfare (ibid.).

When the RCMP detachment at Dundas Harbour was closed and the Craig Harbour detachment was reopened the following summer in 1951, Stevenson and Larsen were present at the ceremonies. Two Inuit special constables and their families, comprising sixteen people, were also relocated from Dundas Harbour to Craig Harbour. When preparing to reopen the Bache Peninsula (Alexandra Fiord) detachment, Larsen (1952a) sent a memo the following year to Commissioner Nicholson entitled 'Proposed Movement of Eskimo Families from Baffin Island to Ellesmere Island, N.W.T.'. Larsen recommended that:

we should in addition to the two native families employed permanently by the Police, endeavour to recruit three or four good Eskimo families from Pond Inlet area to be transported up there for the purpose of trapping, hunting, etc., and thereby in a general way improve their economic circumstances.

With the exception of the RCMP Inuk special constable (S/Cst.) and his family living at the detachment at Craig Harbour, there were no Canadian Inuit living on Ellesmere Island, or on any of the Queen Elizabeth Islands. Commissioner Nicholson (1952) responded to Larsen's request by contacting Major-General Hugh Young, Deputy Minister of the Department, with regard to the plan's "implications, particularly insofar as it may touch on the movement and welfare of the natives".

At the same time that Larsen was planning a relocation from North Baffin Island to Ellesmere Island, the Department was discussing a relocation from Port Harrison to South Baffin Island. In his report on the 1952 Eastern Arctic Patrol, the Department's Officer in Charge, R.G. Johnston, described his attempt to encourage Inuit from the Port Harrison area to take part in a relocation scheme:

If it is desired to move any native families off the Quebec coast and north to Baffin Island, Inukpuk E9-904, Pellypushie E9-720, and eight other families of the Port Harrison area have signified their willingness to move. In order that we might encourage natives to move from Quebec to better hunting grounds it is suggested that these people be moved next summer on the "Howe" (Johnston, 1952).

The Department's plan to move Inuit families from Port Harrison to Baffin Island was an extension of the RCMP's instructions in 1951-52 to equip and relocate small groups of Inuit away from Port Harrison to the nearby King George Islands and the Sleeper Islands off the coast during the autumn months. According to the RCMP, this action had proved to be effective in aiding the hunters to obtain more game and making the families more self-reliant. A relocation to Baffin was a more extreme measure than "assisting" Inuit to hunt on the islands in Hudson Bay, but both were in keeping with officials' desires to "break up concentrations" of Inuit around settlements. However, there was a fundamental difference between the types of assisted movement being considered. Whereas the earlier efforts by the RCMP were moves of a temporary nature, to locations near Port Harrison, the Department's new plan, to move families from Port Harrison to Baffin Island, would be moves to more distant sites, on a more permanent resettlement basis (Marcus, 1993).

The RCMP proceeded to develop their own plan for the Inuit relocation project, and in September 1952 Insp. Larsen informed Commissioner Nicholson of his idea to move several Inuit families to Craig Harbour, Cape

Sabine, and Dundas Harbour, "where colonization by them appears to be suitable and feasible" (Larsen, 1952b). At the first meeting of the Special Committee on Eskimo Affairs, held on 16 October 1952 in Ottawa, a policy of relocation in accordance with Larsen's plan was discussed. Officials agreed that a project "of assisting natives to move from over-populated areas" to Ellesmere Island should be investigated (Eskimo Affairs, 1952b: 4).

The connection with the relocation of Inukjuamiut to the High Arctic was established when Larsen's plan to move a group of Inuit from North Baffin to Ellesmere Island and the Department's plan of moving a group of families from Port Harrison to South Baffin Island were brought together in one relocation scheme. The coupling of the two schemes was a crucial moment in the genesis of the plan. Some observers have suggested that the Inukjuamiut were relocated to the High Arctic so that there would be no risk of the colonization scheme failing, because the "volunteers" would be physically unable to leave of their own accord (Inukjuamiut informants, personal communication). It is my contention that the link had simply been made for administrative convenience, thereby converging two northward moves into one "cost-effective" scheme (Marcus, 1995).

In virtually all the Department and RCMP accounts, as well as in press releases, officials emphasized that the families were "volunteers". In November 1953 Cantley and Stevenson prepared a statement about the relocation for the journal *The Arctic Circular*. Their rhetoric suggests how they wanted the project to be perceived:

Food supplies were reported to be plentiful and there is every indication that this *migration* should prove a success. This *transfer* of Eskimos was organized by the Department of Resources and Development . . . If the results this year warrant it, other natives can be moved to these *pioneer points* and to other points selected later. For the present, however, this migration is being considered as an *experiment* to determine if Eskimos can be *induced* to live on the northern islands . . . All the Eskimos moved this past summer, did so *voluntarily* (Cantley, 1953) (*italics mine*).

Cantley and Stevenson did not use the word "relocation", which might imply dislocation or intervention. Instead, the rather benign word "transfer" and the more distinctive word "migration" were used. "Migration" suggests a naturally occurring annual movement, or possibly a permanent move. How significant was the use of this word in the context of a relocation project? Historically, Inuit have migrated for various reasons. The Inukjuamiut, like

many Canadian Inuit in the 1950s, were a semi-nomadic people, who moved cyclically in search of game between traditional summer and winter camps in a well-defined area of about 50 square miles (Willmott, 1961; Smith, 1991). Much has been written on the importance of the rotational patterns of Inuit migration (*aullaartut*) which took place within a specific territorial range, for reasons of resource harvesting and fellowship (Birket-Smith, 1929; Damas, 1963 and 1968; Freeman and others, 1976; Riches, 1982).

However, at times Inuit have migrated away from areas they traditionally exploited, as Susan Rowley (1985a) has shown in her excellent ethnohistorical study of population movements in the Canadian Arctic. Rowley reviewed twenty-seven cases of Inuit migration and identified the causal factors as being associated with environmental and social pressures. In the event of famine and scarcity of game, Inuit moved on in search of better areas. Rowley (1985a: 102-3) noted that starvation camps were almost never re-inhabited by the same group. Mobility played an important role in conflict resolution (Condon, 1982: 157). Rowley (1985a: 103) cites fear of revenge as a primary social cause for migration. If a murder occurred, fear that the victim's family could seek revenge prompted the murderer and his family to flee the area (Rowley 1985b: 16). A person who committed an anti-social act, or series of acts, and who was seen to be a threat to the rest of the band, might be banished from the area. Feuds between individuals or families might cause one group to leave their homeland altogether.

In the case of the relocation experiment organized by the Department in 1953, there appear to have been no factors within Inukjuamiut society which might have motivated any traditional migration response mechanisms (Marcus, 1995). This was an externally conceived project which was introduced by the Department. The planners' standard use of the word "migration" to describe the relocation in press releases and in other documentation is of fundamental importance for understanding how the project was perceived. Because the scheme was described internally as a "rehabilitation project" (Fryer, 1954), I would argue that one could interpret official use of the word "migration" as a metaphor for social reform (Constantine, 1991: 62), and as a term of self-justification. The official view was that when, as in Port Harrison, Inuit were seen to be "loitering" around a White settlement, one could reform them by removing them from their traditional homeland, and moving them to an isolated, unoccupied site where they might be encouraged to behave in a Nanook-like, independent manner.

It was assumed that once again they would rely on their own capabilities and wild game, rather than on "white man's handouts".

Yet, in the Department's press release quoted above, the description of the relocation project in naturalistic (and self-motivating) terms, calling it a "migration", is offset by the use of the words "pioneer points", "experiment", and "induced", which raise questions about the consensual nature of the project. This is perhaps why the authors emphasized that the participants had moved "voluntarily". However, the Inuit today think that "induced" or, coerced, would be a more apt description of the recruitment process (Inukjuamiut informants, personal communication; Canada, 1993).

A few months after the arrival of the Inuit at Grise Fiord, Cst. Fryer wrote an article on the relocation for the Force's in-house publication *RCMP Quarterly*. Entitled "Eskimo Rehabilitation Program at Craig Harbour", the article exemplifies official attempts to persuade people of the success of this social experiment. Cst. Fryer was serving at the Craig Harbour detachment during 1953-54 with Cpl. Glenn Sargent. Fryer explained his understanding of the rationale for the move, stating that relocation was designed to rehabilitate the Port Harrison Inuit. With this plan, he stated, "the Eskimo could follow the native way of life and become less dependent on the white man" (Fryer, 1954: 139). Fryer's remark encapsulated the social-reformist spirit of the project.

Gibson instructed the Inuit at Resolute that the military base was out-of-bounds, as was the base dump. There was to be complete segregation of the Whites at the base and the Inuit camp. Larsen agreed that such a practice was necessary if they were to keep the Inuit pure, otherwise "had Gibson allowed everybody to run about as they liked, those Eskimos would have been ruined the first winter" (Larsen, n.d.: 48). He was particularly concerned about "indiscriminate association" between the Whites and the Inuit women. Base personnel were informed that they were not to approach the Inuit camp, and any request to do so had to be approved by the constable (Gibson, personal communication). Gibson pinned a note on the bulletin board in the base recreation room, though, stating that he would give guided tours of the Inuit camp, so that people could take pictures of the relocatees (Larsen, n.d.: 47). The Inuit called the base *aupartualuk*, meaning "the big red one" because of its red buildings. Thus Gibson, nicknamed *Auparttuq*, "red", lived in quarters at the *aupartualuk*.

The practice of isolating the relocatees from the store was also followed by the constables at Grise Fiord. They moved the relocatees to Grise Fiord, while they stayed in Craig Harbour, where the RCMP detachment and store remained until 1956, when the officers also moved to Grise Fiord. This action was in part a precautionary rehabilitation measure so that the Inuit would not become too dependent on the detachment and store. Similarly, in the Scoresby Sund colonization of 1924, referred to in Chapter 2.2, Mikkelsen (1927: 218) and the settlement planners decided to scatter the huts for the "prospective colonists" along the coastline, thereby counteracting "the intelligible but regrettable desire of a people . . . to gather around the store, whereby their economic status suffers". When the Russians relocated the Eskimo families to Ostrov Vrangelya in 1926 (see 2.3), the project manager, Ushakov, was told that the natives should not be encouraged to become too reliant on the trading store; he was instructed: "never allow the development of a parasitic attitude among the settlers" (Barr, 1977: 12). Gibson pursued the same strategy at Port Harrison in order to keep the Inuit away from the town and out hunting on the land.

Larsen (1952b) insisted that the RCMP were the most logical persons to control and to have supervision over Inuit welfare. He believed in the malleability of human beings, and thought that under the rehabilitative ideal of RCMP supervision the Inuit could be reformed (Allen, 1981: 18), but the isolation component of the rehabilitation project was vital. At Port Harrison the Inuit had become accustomed to interacting with the various Whites who lived there, including the trader, the teacher, the minister, the nurse, and the police. One advantage of the presence of so many Whites was that the actions of one official were mediated and validated by the presence of the others. At Resolute and Grise, the Inuit were alone with the, and except for the day when the annual supply ship called at the settlement, the police had sole authority in the colonies. In effect, police supervision of Inuit welfare as envisaged by Larsen turned the new colonies into reformatory camps. Cst. Fryer (1954) at Craig Harbour outlined the need for a rehabilitation program by reporting that the "first impression given to the members of this detachment by the Port Harrison natives, was that they were a depressed, lifeless group of individuals, who were looking for too many handouts from the white man".

In the experiment the officers sought to persuade the Inuit to live off the land, without aid from the government. According to Gibson, Larsen's

instructions were that "above all else keep them in their native clothing and foot gear". However, such plans were difficult to put into effect. In August 1956, it was reported that Cst. Gibson tried to keep them wearing sealskin boots, however, there was a demand for rubber boots, partly for the children in the spring (Jackson, 1956). Larsen was distressed that increasingly the natives were becoming more poorly clad in store-bought clothes, which he felt were inadequate for the northern climate compared with the traditional skin clothing. Larsen (1951: 2) was bothered that the Inuit were no longer using native-made clothing or seal skin. As James Cantley pointed out, Larsen had overlooked the fact that in the Eastern Arctic many Inuit had limited access to caribou skins (because of a reduction in caribou populations) with which to make winter clothing.

Sealskin clothing was considered by the Inuit to be unsuitable for winter clothing, Cantley said, which explained why this form of traditional clothing was not worn as much as in the past. Under these circumstances, remarked Cantley (1951), the Inuit had no recourse but to get what clothing they could from the trade stores. Such were the conflicting attitudes of the RCMP and the Department. After visiting the Inuit settlement at Resolute Bay, J.C. Jackson, the Department's Officer in Charge of the Eastern Arctic Patrol in 1956, advised his superiors that since these people had earned their own money, a delaying action was about all that could be done to provide them with rubber boots and other "civilized apparel" (Jackson, 1956). Jackson noted that indeed much of the men's clothing comprised items discarded by the Air Force personnel stationed at the base.

A party of senior officials, including two Air Commodores and Ben Sivertz, visited Resolute Bay a few days after the Inuit arrived on 7 September 1953. In a report on the trip, the arrival of the Inuit was discussed, together with the initial problems associated with their encampment at Resolute:

The reasons for moving this family are grounded in an attempt to keep the Eskimo in his native state and to preserve that culture as primitive as it is. However, by moving the Eskimos to an area where they come into intimate contact with White men destroys the basis of this reasoning while leaving them untrained to cope with the problems presented by this contact (Stead, 1953: 6).

The report's author commented on the view widely held at the time that Inuit relations with military and transient civilian personnel should be closely

monitored and discouraged. He suggested that by placing Inuit near the Resolute base, the project's objective of preserving "nativeness" was being jeopardized. The report therefore advised that legislation should be considered to make Inuit settlements out-of-bounds to non-Inuit. In what one might characterize as a "keep the Eskimo an Eskimo" approach to social development at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, it is interesting to note the somewhat paradoxical statement by Jean Lesage (1955), Minister of the Department, at the time of the second relocation to the High Arctic in 1955: "the preservation of the Eskimo in his primitive state is not a real alternative . . . It would involve segregation and isolation [and] denial of the most humane services". In this case, the social policy the Department was advocating in public did not accord with what it was putting into practice.

For the Inuit transported to Ellesmere and Cornwallis islands in 1953-55, geographical isolation from their homelands was complete. They were separated from their kinship groups to the south, and the Inuit at Grise Fiord were even separated from their relations at Resolute Bay. The relocatees were wholly dependent on their government guides for repatriation. Because the relocatees had difficulties adjusting to the new environment, they told their "guides" they wanted to return (*utirumalirniq*) to their homeland. They often spoke of being homesick (*anarrasiktuq*). "I think all people, all human beings, have distinct attachment to the place where they grew up and were raised", observed Samwillie Eliasialuk (Canada, 1993a: 47). In fact, the officials promised the passengers that if they wished to return to their original homes after two years, they would be enabled to return.

To inform the public about its relocation plans for the second shipment of Inuit from Port Harrison in 1955 to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay, the Department issued an enthusiastic press release (*italics mine*):

It will be moving day this summer for 35 Eskimos in Canada's Arctic. And they are moving further north.

The 'moving van' for the Eskimos will be the Arctic Patrol vessel 'C.D. Howe' . . .

This is a *purely voluntary migration*, the continuation of a policy started two years ago by the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources . . . The programme has been an unqualified success, and the Eskimos have been enthusiastic about *their new homes* farther to the north. Although they are *free to return* if they wish, the response so far has been to urge their friends and relatives from the "south" to join them (Canada, 1955a).

Not only was the relocation supposedly "a purely voluntary migration", but the Inuit were "free to return if they wish". The question of whether the Inuit were actually free to return home, and whether a promise was made to return them within two years if they wished to leave the colonies, has featured prominently in discussions about repatriation the Inuit have held with the government regarding . Until recently the government has disputed that a two-year promise of return was ever given. In 1984 the Department commissioned a report to investigate the alleged promise. Marc Hammond (1984), the author of the report, concluded that the Pond Inlet Inuit moving in 1953 "received such a promise in no uncertain terms". The Port Harrison Inuit moving in 1953 "quite likely received such a promise, but if they did not, it is clear that they were not discouraged from thinking that they did". Hammond added that the Pond Inlet and Port Harrison Inuit who were moved in the second-stage relocation in 1955 probably moved with the same understanding as Inuit moving in 1953.

In a more recent investigation, the Department's "Hickling Report" addressed the question of when the Inuit first asked to return to Port Harrison for a visit. It stated that "the earliest example of such a request, that we could find, occurred around 1960" (Hickling, 1990: 55). Curiously, Department planner Alex Stevenson (1977) remarked that there "were rumours from time to time in the first seven years that there were some dissatisfied or were homesick but this was never confirmed nor were there any approaches on record having been made to officials of the Federal or Territorial Governments".

However, there is ample evidence that early on the Inuit wanted to move back to Port Harrison and their old camps (*nunaliviniq*). J. C. Jackson, the Department's Officer in Charge of the Eastern Arctic Patrol in 1956, notified his superiors that at Resolute Bay on 21 August he had held a meeting attended by all of the Inuit men, Supt. Larsen, Cst. Gibson, and an interpreter. The presence of two strong figures, Johnny Echalook and Joseph Idlout, both of whom had arrived in Resolute in 1955, may have strengthened the group's resolve to make a number of their complaints known to the officials from the Eastern Arctic Patrol. The role of a lay preacher, such as Echalook, and that of an *isumataq* like Idlout, were highly respected in Inuit society (Matthiasson, 1992: 121). Jackson's report on this meeting with the Inuit is crucial, since the meeting took place just three years after the move, when the Inuit would have expected the "two-year promise" to have fallen

due. "The question of returning to Port Harrison for a visit was raised", noted Jackson, and "there seems to be some thought that this was in the original agreement" (Jackson, 1956). In response to their request Jackson stated:

I pointed out that transportation difficulties might require that visits be for a year and that it would be expensive to transport a family there and back . . . I do not know what the agreement may have been when the move was first made, but aside from any definite promises, if there were any, I would be inclined to suggest that if any family goes back for a visit, the family should pay part or all of the transportation cost and be able to guarantee to be self-supporting during the visit.

Officials appear to have been not only unsympathetic to requests to return home, they also made it seem almost impossible for the Inuit to do so. The Inuit had no means of funding their return to Port Harrison, and there was no commercial transport available, so they were completely in the hands of the Department. Jackson's account was confirmed three months later, in November 1956, when Cst. Gibson at Resolute Bay reported that the Inuit "from time to time express their desire to return to friends and relations at Port Harrison" (Gibson 1956). This report was sent to Commissioner Nicholson, and a copy was sent to the Department's Director of Northern Administration, Frank Cunningham.

In October 1956 Ben Sivertz, Chief of the Arctic Division, sent a memorandum to his superior, Frank Cunningham, about the settlements at Resolute and Grise Fiord. Sivertz wrote:

It should be remembered that we are feeling our way in these projects. So far things have gone well, – better than we could properly have hoped. After two years the people seem content to stay on, whereas they only agreed to go in the first place on condition that we promise to return them to their former homes after "two or three years" (Sivertz, 1956b; first cited in Marcus, 1990).

The planners in Ottawa knew that Inuit wished to return and, as Sivertz's memo to Cunningham indicates, privately they acknowledged the Department's two-year promise of return, but nevertheless ignored the Inuit requests. In fact, Larsen had informed his constables in Port Harrison and Pond Inlet by teletype messages on 14 April 1953 that the Inuit selected for the project should be told that they "will be brought back home at end of one year if they so desire" (cited in Grant, 1993: appendix, 71).

At the same time as the relocatees at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord were asking to return home, some of the Fort Chimo Inuit who had been

relocated to Churchill in 1953 were making similar requests. Two years after their relocation, sixteen of the thirty Inuit informed the Department's Northern Service Officer at Churchill, Bill Kerr, that they wanted to be returned home. The Department's most fluent speaker of Inuktitut, Leo Manning, asked them why they wanted to go. Manning told Phillips (1955), who reported to the Deputy Minister, that the Inuit expressed "an undefinable longing to return to familiar grounds far distant from this strange place whose material rewards could not outweigh its alien ways".

Deputy Minister Young communicated with C.M. Drury, Deputy Minister of the Department of National Defence. "I agree that it would be the responsibility of the Department of Resources and Development", Young (1953e) assured him, "to return to his original settlement any Eskimo who proved unsatisfactory or who did not wish to remain at Churchill". Indeed, a number of Chimo Inuit were returned home by the Department. Yet, because the Inukjuamiut had been placed in colonies as remote as Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay, the Department did not follow the same policy of right of return.

This was a repeat of the events of 1934-36, when the Department had authorized the Hudson's Bay Company to relocate fifty-three Baffin Inuit to Dundas Harbour on Devon Island in an attempt to establish the northernmost permanent colony in the High Arctic. The Inuit only agreed to go on the condition that, if they were unhappy on Devon Island, the Company would return them to their homeland after two years (Russell, 1978: 41). After one year, the Inuit told the Company manager supervising the operation, Chesley Russell, that they wanted to go home. The following year the Company ship *Nascope* came to evacuate the group as agreed. However, the Company's officials told the Inuit they would not be able to take them home, and instead transported them to Arctic Bay where a new post was opened. They were moved again in 1937 to Fort Ross, and then again ten years later to Spence Bay. Jenness (1964: 61) referred to them as "the homeless Ishmaelites". Russell recorded that both he and the Inuit were "bitterly disappointed" that the promise had not been kept. Insp. Henry Larsen visited the relocatees at Fort Ross in January 1942 while on patrol on the *St. Roch*. He reported that although a good number of the original number had died, the remaining twenty-four Inuit wanted to return to their homeland (Larsen, 1942). Everyone he spoke to "expressed an ardent desire to be taken back to Cape Dorset, Baffin Island as their present location did not agree with them". The 1953 relocation to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord was a near re-enactment of the

1934 Devon Island relocation experiment. In both cases the Inuit were told of better hunting conditions, and promised that they would be enabled to return home in two years. However, in neither case did officials abide by the original terms of the agreement.

From discussions with the Inukjuamiut relocated in 1953 to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, it is apparent that many of them thought the relocation was planned as an extended hunting and trapping expedition, and not as a permanent separation from their homeland. One relocatee said that when the Whites had talked to the Inuit about going north, "they made him believe" (*uppirnaqsititsugu*) they would return home to Port Harrison (Eliasialuk, personal communication). Markoosie Patsauq recounted that when Gibson came and talked to his father about a land rich in game, his father got very excited about trapping lots of foxes. Most importantly, Markoosie said that his father hoped to get a lot of foxes "so that he might have enough money after we returned to Inukjuak to buy a boat" (Patsauq, personal communication). He thought they were only going for two years, and had every intention of returning home. Perhaps surprisingly, Supt. Larsen later described the establishment of the "little trial colonies" at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord as a temporary measure. Inuit could be moved to the new locations on a temporary basis, he thought, until areas to the South had been developed to such an extent that the Inuit could make a living again or obtain employment and thus "regain their self respect" (Larsen, n.d.: 998-99).

The relocation to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay had the effect of separating families permanently from their relations. They were separated from a collection of camps which had strong bonds of kinship, the families were placed in distant colonies from which they were unable to communicate with their relatives down south. The Inuit asked themselves *qanurli taga*, "what now?", "what can we do now?" (Nungaq, personal communication). Cst. Gibson was uneasy about the effect the lack of communication would have on the families. He notified Supt. Larsen that he was going to try to arrange for the relocatees to speak over the radio to their people at Port Harrison, feeling that this measure would "keep the people more settled at this point" (Larsen, 1953). Anna Nungaq insisted that she never heard from her relatives at all. She recalled getting one letter after being there many years. There was no means of communication and therefore no contact with relatives (*Inuktitut*, 1981). The relocatees experienced a profound sense of loneliness (*hujuujaqnaqtuq*) for their relatives (Canada, 1993a). (For a good

discussion of Inuit feelings of loneliness and isolation see Briggs, 1970: 202-8.) The Port Harrison trader, Reuben Ploughman, confirmed Anna's recollection. He told the Royal Commission that from the time they went north until he left Port Harrison two years later, "I don't think any mail had come out from those places" (Canada, 1993b: 85). Gibson confirmed that he did not think the Inuit received any mail from their relations in Port Harrison during his four years in Resolute Bay (*ibid.*: 206).

In the 1950s it would have been difficult for the families to return to Port Harrison to visit or to live. Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay were supplied once a year by the government ship the *C.D. Howe*. "It was a one-way ticket", says former constable Bob Pilot (personal communication). The *C.D. Howe* stopped at Port Harrison on the way north, but not on the return trip. Not only was it impracticable for the families to make their own way home, it was also actively discouraged by the officials. "When discussing moving back to Inukjuak with the police, they used to try to convince me not to go", recalled Samwillie Eliasialuk (Makivik, 1986).

According to Samwillie, the constables tried to discourage him from leaving Grise Fiord by telling him that he would be leaving his mother's grave behind and that the economic situation in Port Harrison was poor. Death did play a role in the relocatees' desires to leave Grise Fiord. After Aqiatasuk died within the first year, the others felt insecure and unhappy about staying (Inukjuamiut informants, personal communication). In 1958, when a one-month old baby (Johnassie) died, followed by Thomasie's two sons, Allie (12 years old) and Salluviniq (9 years old), who drowned in an accident, Cst. Bob Pilot reported that "morale was at a very low ebb at the native camp" (Pilot, 1958). Furthermore, he noted that these Inuit still had their superstitions, and several men stated that "they wished to move from this area". Pilot also noted that they were unhappy that the store was out of basic provisions such as flour, oats, milk, and tobacco. Cpl. Sargent confirmed that "all of the Eskimos had talked to him about leaving Grise Fiord because of the food shortages" (Gould, 1958b: 7). When the Officer in Charge of the 1958 Eastern Arctic Patrol was informed of this situation upon visiting Grise Fiord, he duly reported it to his superiors at the Department. He added that he too had spoken with one of the Inuit, Thomassie, who had said that if the police did not stock more food this winter at the store, they would all wish to leave Grise Fiord next year (*ibid.*: 6).

Unable to return to Port Harrison, some Inuit tried to move between Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord to join their relatives. The RCMP at times discouraged this practice. In 1959 Elijah and his wife and mother asked to move from Grise Fiord to Resolute Bay to join Elijah's brother Samwillie, who had gone to Resolute Bay in search of a wife (Pilot, 1959). In his report, Cst. Pilot at Grise Fiord recorded that he was against such a move as it was known that others from this area would like to live at Resolute also, and if one moved more would follow. He then listed the names of other Inuit who had requested to leave the settlement for Resolute Bay. Consequently, Cst. Pilot discussed the matter with his colleague at the Resolute Bay detachment, Cst. Jenkin, and asked that he report to Headquarters and request that the Department write to the Inuit concerned and discourage the move. In his report, Jenkin (1960) warned that if these families were not successfully discouraged from moving to Resolute three other families will also move with them.

Isolated from their families and social groups and unable to return to Port Harrison, some Inuit wrote to their relations asking them to move north to join them in the colonies. Having failed to assess the game resources in the Queen Elizabeth Islands, the Department became concerned after 1955 about overpopulating the region, and therefore placed a restriction on further Inuit relocation to the colonies. Cst. Jenkin at Resolute Bay reported in 1960 that there were growing difficulties in enforcing this policy. He wrote that two other families had been corresponding with relatives from Port Harrison to have them settle at Resolute (*ibid.*). The Inuit claim that some of their letters to relatives were destroyed. John Amagoalik remembered that they found their letters were thrown in the dump (Canada, 1990a). In order to dissuade the families at Resolute from writing to encourage relatives to come north, Cst. Jenkin (1960) warned them that they would lose many of their present advantages such as free electricity, a fair amount of employment and good hunting and trapping. Aided by the sheer distance from Port Harrison and the overall isolation of the colonies, the RCMP and the Department were successful for a number of years in their attempts to limit immigration and keep southern Inuit from joining their relations. The sense of confinement the relocatees experienced on Cornwallis and Ellesmere was conveyed by their vivid descriptions of isolation (Canada, 1993a).

1.5 1953-55 Fort Chimo relocation

Inuit relocation became one of the three policy options developed by the Department, as outlined in a classification system formulated in 1953 (Canada, 1953). In this taxonomy, Canada's Inuit were divided into three broad categories:

1. In areas where the natural resources would support the inhabitants, it was decided that their basic way of life was to be maintained.
2. In areas where permanent White settlements existed, the Inuit would be educated to adapt them to this new situation.
3. In areas which could not continue to support the present population, attempts would be made to move the Inuit to areas with greater natural resources.

Fort Chimo in Northern Quebec was temporarily included in the relocation plans with Port Harrison to move Inuit to the High Arctic. During World War II, it had been the site of a U.S. air base which employed local Inuit as labourers. As such, Chimo could expect to fall within category 2, but because the base was now closed, the loss in wage-employment had to be offset by comparatively large allocations of state benefits. As an alternative the Chimo Inuit were also considered for relocation under category 3. However, after receiving an RCMP list of potential relocatees from Fort Chimo, the Department reversed its earlier decision to add them to the Port Harrison Inuit for relocation to the High Arctic. Shortly before the move, Deputy Minister Hugh Young came to feel that the Fort Chimo Inuit had become too acculturated, and might therefore be unsuitable for inclusion in the experiment. Young's concern was whether they would be able to adapt themselves to conditions at such a place as Resolute Bay (Young, 1953a). Furthermore, he understood that few, if any of them, still had the knowledge to build snow-houses and would therefore have to be housed and be guaranteed full time employment at the base at Resolute.

The concern about the assimilation of the Fort Chimo Inuit and their housing requirements was discussed in Cantley's 1950 economic survey. He noted that in the area around Fort Chimo "there is a growing inclination on the part of the natives to give up their rather nomadic ways" and to settle in a permanent location (Cantley, 1950a: 28). At Fort Chimo, where there were supplies of wood, the Inuit constructed houses and "endeavour to set themselves up in the manner of white men". However, Cantley advised that

in places "where the natives have little regard for hygiene" any attempt by them to build permanent dwellings should be discouraged (ibid.: 29).

In June 1953, the month before the move, the Department informed Larsen that the Inuit families selected from Fort Chimo were being dropped from the High Arctic relocation plan (LeCapelain, 1953). The Department decided to experiment with a different type of relocation and in 1953 move five of the Fort Chimo Inuit families to a site of wage-employment, with housing, at a Canadian Army base in Churchill, Manitoba.

According to the Department's criteria, the Port Harrison Inuit should have been classified in category 2, since the village had been a permanent, White, settlement for forty years. For example, Port Harrison was one of the first Arctic communities to acquire a federal school. However, the Department decided to include Port Harrison in category 3, using relocation as a means of depopulating the region. Unlike the Fort Chimo Inuit, whom the Department decided would have to be housed, the Port Harrison Inuit would not have to be provided with housing or wage-employment.

A comparison between the 1953-55 Fort Chimo relocation and the 1953 Port Harrison move is particularly relevant when considering the issue of return. For the Inuit transported to Ellesmere and Cornwallis islands, geographical isolation from their homelands was complete. They were separated from their kinship groups to the south, and the Inuit at Grise Fiord were even separated from their relations at Resolute Bay. The relocatees were wholly dependent on their government guides for repatriation. Because the relocatees had difficulties adjusting to the new environment, they told officials they wanted to return (*utirumalirniq*) to their homeland. They often spoke of being homesick (*anarrasiktuq*). "I think all people, all human beings, have distinct attachment to the place where they grew up and were raised", observed Samwillie Eliasialuk (Canada, 1993a: 47). In fact, the officials promised the passengers that if they wished to return to their original homes after two years, they would be enabled to return (Marcus, 1992: 42-5).

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It should be remembered that we are feeling our way in these projects. So far things have gone well, – better than we could properly have hoped. After two years the people seem content to stay on, whereas

they only agreed to go in the first place on condition that we promise to return them to their former homes after "two or three years".

The planners in Ottawa knew of the Inuit's desire to return and, as Sivertz's memo to Cunningham indicates, privately they acknowledged the Department's two-year promise of return, but nevertheless ignored the Inuit requests. At the same time as the relocatees at Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord were asking to return home, some of the Fort Chimo Inuit who had been relocated to Churchill in 1953 were making similar requests. Two years after their relocation to Churchill, 16 of the 30 Inuit who participated in the scheme informed the Department's Northern Service Officer at Churchill, Bill Kerr, that they wanted to be returned home. The Department's most fluent speaker of Inuktitut, Leo Manning, asked them why they wanted to go. Manning told Phillips (1955), who reported to the Deputy Minister, that the Inuit expressed "an undefinable longing to return to familiar grounds far distant from this strange place whose material rewards could not outweigh its alien ways".

Deputy Minister Young communicated with C.M. Drury, Deputy Minister of the Department of National Defence. "I agree that it would be the responsibility of the Department of Resources and Development", Young (1953b) assured him, "to return to his original settlement any Eskimo who proved unsatisfactory or who did not wish to remain at Churchill". Indeed, a number of Chimo Inuit were returned home by the Department. Yet, because the Inukjuamiut had been placed in colonies as remote as Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay, the Department did not follow the same policy of right of return. This was a repeat of the events of 1934-36, discussed in Part 1.1, when the Department had authorized the Hudson's Bay Company to relocate Inuit to Devon Island in an attempt to establish the northernmost permanent colony in the High Arctic.

1.6 1957-58 relocation from Ennadai Lake

After the failure of the government's attempt in 1951 to resettle the Ahiarmiut away from their homeland at Ennadai Lake by moving them to Nueltin Lake, as discussed in Part 1.2, officials decided to temporarily assist them using the new radio station personnel and facilities at Ennadai. Although in the mid-1950s the Ahiarmiut were under the jurisdiction of the Department's Northern Service Officer (NSO) and the RCMP detachment in

Churchill, the Officer in Charge (OIC) of the Ennadai radio station, of his own volition, collected their fox skins, forwarded them by air to Churchill, and arranged for the distribution of goods, of provisions in lieu of family allowances, and relief rations if necessary. The OIC arranged for the weekly distribution of goods amongst the Inuit at what were called "tea days". The effect of this practice was that the Inuit could not live further than one day's travel from the station, whereas in fact they would have preferred to live at sites somewhat further from the station, where fishing was known to be better (Steenhoven, 1962: 11).

The Ahlarmiut first began trading with Brochet in the Chipewyan territory in 1868, probably through Chipewyan intermediaries (Csonka, 1991: 455). Between 1906 and 1941 the Hudson's Bay Company, Revillon Frères, and a number of independent traders operated posts in the Ennadai Lake–Windy Lake–Nueltin Lake area (Harper, 1964; Usher, 1971). During the 1930s, when the price of fox fur fell, many of the traders left and the Company closed its Nueltin Lake post permanently in 1941. One family of White trappers continued to trade with the Ahlarmiut until 1949, when they too left the area due to the collapse of the fur market (Harper, 1964: 15, 63). So when the radio station was constructed in the same year, the Ahlarmiut viewed its personnel potentially as substitute traders, although the staff were probably unaware of this perception, or of the Ahlarmiut's history of trading with Whites.

RCMP Cst. Gallagher (1957a) at the Eskimo Point detachment reported a steady decline since the early autumn of 1956 in the economic conditions of the Inuit living in the E1 District. He stated that the economic conditions in the Eskimo Point and Padlei areas were the worst they had been for some years. Further epidemics and a change in caribou migration paths were to blame for the situation. Curiously, Gallagher still maintained that the district could support a larger population. However, Supt. Larsen dismissed Gallagher's opinion and informed the Department that he did not agree with it, citing the large amounts of relief being disbursed to the Inuit in the district. Larsen (1957) argued that "if other Eskimos were moved to the area there would be a heavy drain on country resources, which would cause the present economic conditions of the Eskimos in the areas mentioned to deteriorate". The Department pressed on with their plans for relocation of the Ahlarmiut.

In February 1957, Robertson (1957) wrote to Commissioner Nicholson about Kerr's request that the Inuit be moved in May, and asked him to confirm RCMP cooperation. Nicholson (1957a) agreed that he had instructed his Officers Commanding "G" and "Air" Divisions to provide the co-operation necessary to facilitate the relocation. On 9 May 1957 NSO Bill Kerr, Cst. Mascotto from Eskimo Point detachment, HBC Padlei trader Henry Voisey, and Department field officer Lewis Voisey (a cousin) arrived by plane at Oftedal Lake (thirteen kilometres south-west of North Henik Lake), where they had selected a new campsite for the Ahlarmiut. Tents and supplies were purchased from the Padlei post with the Inuit's family allowance credits. Kerr and Lewis Voisey, acting as interpreter, flew to Ennadai Lake, and the following day, in bad weather, the RCMP plane made four flights to transport the Ahlarmiut families to the site at Oftedal Lake. A total of fifty-nine Inuit and their six dogs were moved. Unfortunately, there was not enough space in the plane for the Inuit's canoes, which they depended on for hunting caribou (Mascotto, 1957).

On 24 May 1957 the Department's Information Division issued a press release about the Ennadai move, entitled "Eskimos Fly to New Hunting Grounds". The document announced:

A community of some of Canada's most primitive citizens has moved – but they did it the modern way. Eskimo hunters and huskies left their ancient ways for a day to travel in the comfort of an aircraft to new hunting grounds (Canada, 1957a).

Referring to the relocatees as "settlers", the press release uncharacteristically named the individual in charge of the operation. It stated that, with the co-operation of the RCMP and the Hudson's Bay Company, the move was made under the supervision of Northern Affairs officer Bill Kerr. Furthermore, the press release established the connection between the relocation of the Ahlarmiut and the paradigmatic High Arctic experiment:

This is not the first time that Eskimo hunters and their families have volunteered to leave their homes because game was scarce. For the same reason, Eskimos from the east coast of Hudson Bay were moved to Cornwallis and Ellesmere Islands in 1953. If the success of these earlier settlers is any guide, the Ennadai Eskimos can hope to find relative prosperity in their new surroundings (ibid.).

This linkage between the two relocations was made now for a reason. The Department wanted to describe the relocations publicly as consensual projects, and to portray the Inuit as "volunteers" who moved because game

was scarce in their home district (Marcus, 1995). No mention was made publicly of the other aims that featured in internal reports, such as "rehabilitating" the Inuit from "loitering" around settlements (Gallagher, 1957b). The Department wanted to give the impression that it was essentially a self-motivated move and that officials were merely providing the technical assistance, in the form of a plane, to support the Inuit in their endeavour.

Shortly after the relocation of the Ahiarmiut, reports of trouble began to circulate. One of the two camp leaders, Pongalak, aged 57, died of suspected malnutrition. Pongalak died within a month of relocation and the camp boss Aqiatasuk died eight months after being moved to Grise Fiord in 1953. In each case, the death of a headman of the group not long after resettlement contributed to an uneasiness about the new location, and a wish to leave.

In June 1958 the Ahiarmiut were reported to have broken into a storehouse at the Sherritt Gordon Mining Camp at Bray Lake, thirteen kilometres from their campsite. The theft was reported to the RCMP Eskimo Point detachment by the geologist in charge of the mining camp, who apparently felt that the Inuit "had become a nuisance by hanging around the prospector's camp" (Sivertz, 1959c). Police reports cited theft and general vandalism of the premises, which were unoccupied at the time. Officials could find no explanation for the vandalism, though Steenhoven (1962: 74-75) has suggested that the destruction of another person's cache can be an act of vengeance. If the Inuit did vandalize the cache, which they have denied (Ahiarmiut informants, personal communication), it could have been the result of frustration about their resettlement (Marcus, 1993).

The police flew in to Henik Lake on 2 August and arrested lootna (21 years old), who came from the Padlei area. Five days later they arrested two Ahiarmiut hunters, Mounik (23 years old) and Oohootok (37 years old). The three were flown back to Eskimo Point to await trial on charges of breaking the "White man's laws" (*Qallunaat piqujangit*), namely "Breaking, Entering and Theft". The police reported that although the three who were seized

were the ring leaders and broke into the camp in the first instance, all the Eskimos at Oftedal Lake were connected with the offence and to prosecute all the offenders would have necessitated moving the entire colony at Oftedal Lake to Eskimo Point to adequately care for the dependents of the offenders and prevent undue hardship. This was the reason why only the ring leaders were prosecuted as it was necessary to make these people aware of their wrong doing in a hope

that it would be a deterrent to further occurrences of this nature (Larsen, 1959: 5).

The RCMP responded to the break-in by selecting three men of whom to make an example by incarceration as a warning to the other Inuit. As punishment for breaking into the mine shed, in order to obtain sufficient food supplies for the group, the three men were held at the Eskimo Point detachment. In September 1957, while the men were waiting for the Territorial Court to arrive, Cpl. Gallagher ordered them to break rocks. Perhaps Gallagher felt that this form of penal activity would be therapeutic for the "offenders" (Allen, 1981: 46), but in the absence of effective supervision there was an accident. Oohootok was injured when a rock splinter entered his eye, blinding him permanently.

On 20 September a trial was held in Eskimo Point, presided over by the Judge of the Northwest Territories, Justice Sissons. Through the defence counsel, who had been appointed by the State, the men pleaded not guilty. Nootaraloo (wife of Owljoot) informed me that she told her eldest son Mounik to get the food from the shack because the children were starving. This view and the three men's lack of guilt according to the rules of their own society is further explained by a passage from Birket-Smith's study of the Caribou Inuit: "During a famine all right of possession to food is abandoned; all hunting spoils are common property and anyone who is hungry may simply take from another family's meat cache what he needs without thus making himself a thief" (Birket-Smith, 1929: 263).

For the Whites, however, the crossing of the threshold in order to obtain food was rendered illegal by the presence of the lock. Thus the three Inuit were found guilty of Breaking, Entering, and Theft under Section 292 (1)(b) of the Criminal Code. Mounik and lootna were sentenced to two months in police custody at Eskimo Point, and Oohootok was sentenced to time already served (RCMP, 1957). Due to his eye injury he was not returned to Henik Lake, but hospitalized in Churchill and then brought to Eskimo Point.

The effect of removing three of the hunters from the group just three months after their relocation was to be profound (Csonka, 1993), and was to demonstrate how an injurious situation could develop from the imposition of a foreign code of rules (Rasmussen, 1931: 21). Not only were there fewer men to trap and hunt, but the absence of those three further undermined the social stability of the group. Because the three hunters were removed at the

beginning of August and two of them were held until 20 November and the third man indefinitely, these men were not able to assist the other hunters of the band during the crucial autumn caribou migration. This placed a greater burden on Owlijoot and the other men who had to provide food for Mounik's wife Ookanak and her young son, and Oohootok's wife and two children. In their report the officers admitted that:

it did appear that a food shortage among the Oftedal Lake Eskimos was the main reason for the B.E. & thefts, however, if this was so, it would indicate a gross mismanagement of food on the part of the Eskimos, as they had all received an adequate relief and family allowance issue on approximately May 15th, 1957, at the time of their transfer from Ennadai Lake to Oftedal Lake (Larsen, 1959: 5).

The officials were critical of the Inuit for not adhering to the plan organized for their subsistence activities. However, the Western concept of formalized planning is at odds with the flexibility and sensitivity necessary for hunting and foraging (Brody, 1981: 37). The plan also designated Lewis Voisey (23 years old), who worked as a Technical Officer for the Department, to live with the Ahiarmiut and help them to cache fish for the winter, but after just a month he was called away by officials on 21 September 1957 to work on a wolf-control programme. Voisey made his living as a trapper, hunter, and interpreter. Doug Wilkinson, the director of the film *Land of the Long Day* was now working as an NSO for the Department, and was based at Baker Lake in the Keewatin District. On 25 September he advised the Department that up to the time of Voisey's departure the Ahiarmiut had made no large kills of caribou and no winter caribou caches had been put up. He reported that Voisey had not been too hopeful about the adequacy of the future food supply for the group. Wilkinson (1957) ended his report with the prophetic warning: "I would venture the prediction that they will not be able to get through the winter without assistance".

In November 1957, Henry Voisey at Padlei reported to the RCMP that a further break-in had occurred at the mining camp as the Ahiarmiut tried to find food. Apparently the deterrent arrest of Mounik, lootna, and Oohootok had not stopped the others from trying to obtain food. Cpl. Gallagher (1957b) informed Supt. Larsen that the Ahiarmiut had to be kept under very close and strict supervision, which he said was quite difficult because of the location of the Inuit camp. In response to the reports of trouble, Insp. Fitzsimmons (1957) of the Criminal Investigation Branch suggested to Commissioner

Nicholson that the Ahiarmiut had not adjusted to their new circumstances since their move from Ennadai Lake.

A reason for selecting the Henik Lake site had been the insistence by Department officials that this would enable "closer observation" of the Inuit by Company and government personnel, who could deal more cheaply than at Ennadai with any emergency situation that might arise (Richards, 1956). Yet Cpl. Gallagher (1957b) pointed out in his December 1957 report that he was unable to provide sufficient support or to patrol Henik Lake on account of its geographical isolation. Gallagher hoped such a patrol could be carried out in February 1958. After obtaining the agreement of Bill Kerr, Gallagher therefore proposed that the Ahiarmiut be relocated again, this time to Tavani, 145 kilometres up the coast from Eskimo Point. Gallagher suggested Tavani was a better location because there were few vacant buildings "thereby removing the temptation to commit theft". Commissioner Nicholson (1957b) wrote to Deputy Minister Robertson on 19 December 1957 stating that the Ahiarmiut have "been unable to adjust themselves to their new location". Nicholson advised that the group required constant supervision, and he recommended that they be moved to Tavani.

For the previous six years, Department and RCMP officials, together with representatives of the Hudson's Bay Company, had discussed the virtues of relocating the Ahiarmiut to Henik Lake. Yet after just six months, officials acknowledged that there was every indication this relocation had been a mistake, and that the Inuit should be moved again. On 7 January 1958, Cst. Laliberte (1958) at Eskimo Point reported that on a patrol to Henik and Oftedal lakes he found the Inuit living in two large camps and other smaller ones spread out along the rivers and lakes. The larger camp of 30 people was situated beside a river which was found to be frozen to the bottom and therefore void of fish. When the officer asked about their fishing equipment, the reply was that their nets were torn and no longer fit to use. Their clothing was poor due to lack of caribou skins. Caribou had been scarce and some fox had been caught. Food resources were not sufficient to support more than the six dogs they still had. Cst. Laliberte advised his superiors that "considerable thought should be given to this band of Eskimos".

The Ahiarmiut at Henik Lake were not alone in the difficulties they faced. Laliberte noted that the health and welfare of the Inuit in the E1 district had deteriorated over the last year (*ibid.*). Morale was low, health was below

standard as a result of epidemics, trapping was poor, and many of the dogs had died of starvation because of a lack of caribou meat. The complete failure of caribou in this area for two years in a row meant many Inuit were going hungry and were unable to clothe themselves adequately. Officials resorted to criticizing the Ahiarmiut and the other Inuit in the district. Cpl. Gallagher (1958) stated that the Caribou Inuit appeared to have no initiative about obtaining sufficient fish or ptarmigan, or seal, in the case of those living on the coast. He thought they felt that caribou was their only suitable food, and "the others below their dignity". Gallagher assumed the Inuit "would rather sit and starve" while awaiting the return of the caribou.

Graham Rowley, Secretary of the Department's Advisory Committee on Northern Development (ACND), sensed that the situation was becoming serious for the Ahiarmiut. Rowley reported directly to Deputy Minister Robertson, who asked Rowley for his views on the matter. In a confidential memo to Robertson on 29 January 1958, Rowley (1958b) expressed his reservations about the relocation and its consequences:

I am concerned that this group, which is now much further away from help than before, may get into serious difficulties early this spring, possibly while trying to return to Ennadai. You might like to suggest to Mr. Sivertz that a particularly close tab should be kept on them.

Rowley's point about the group's isolation was to prove vital in the coming weeks. At Ennadai Lake the Ahiarmiut lived near the radio station, which had hourly contact with Churchill, whereas at Henik Lake they were three to five days travel from the Padlei post. The relocation's object of establishing a "disciplinary space" between the Ahiarmiut and White assistance was now revealed as defective (Foucault, 1977: 143). Furthermore, Rowley told Robertson:

the recent move seems to have been from one depressed area to another. It was, however, from an area they liked to one of which they had unhappy memories, and one which they themselves believed to be less rich. It had therefore little or no chance to succeed (Rowley, 1958a).

Drawing upon the study of the Ahiarmiut Steenhoven had prepared for the Department in 1955, Rowley noted that they liked the Ennadai region and did not want to leave it. Therefore it appeared unlikely that the move was really accepted by them. He informed Robertson that it was comparatively easy to get a temporary acquiescence from the Inuit to any suggestion put to them, "and especially from this group who go to great lengths to avoid any

form of conflict" (conflict avoidance was characteristic of Inuit relations with Whites; see, e.g., Brody, 1975: 152-53). Yet Phillips (1958) opposed Rowley's solution for the group, and on 15 January he told Sivertz:

I cannot agree with this solution. Our entire policy of Arctic development must rest upon sound economic foundations. I think that it would be folly to encourage people to move to an area where we know that there is not a solid economic basis for their future lives We are not yet in a position to make any recommendations but unless you direct otherwise, we shall confine the possibilities to areas where we think that the people have a reasonable chance of making a future for themselves on the basis of adequate resources or other forms of income.

In the midst of winter, with officials in Ottawa unsure of what course to take to secure the Ahiarmiut's welfare, Phillips's letter was the last about the situation of the Ahiarmiut until news of tragedy reached the HBC post at Padlei four weeks later (Marcus, 1995). On 12 February the post trader, Henry Voisey, sent a radiogram to the RCMP detachment at Eskimo Point to report the murders of two Inuit at Henik Lake and the deaths of others in the area. On 14-16 February the surviving Ahiarmiut were evacuated by RCMP plane to Eskimo Point under the supervision of NSO Kerr. Faced with a deteriorating situation, Deputy Minister Gordon Robertson finally responded on 18 February 1958 to the letter Nicholson had written two months earlier informing him of the hardships facing the Ahiarmiut at Henik Lake. Robertson (1958) assured Nicholson: "Something must be done, but as yet we have not been able to reach a firm conclusion on the best course to follow".

The authorities discovered that seven of the Ahiarmiut had died within the space of a week (Sivertz, 1959b). On 7 February near Henik Lake E1-627 Igyaka (a four-year-old girl) died of malnutrition; the following day E1-471 Hallow (a 44-year-old man) was shot and killed, and E1-467 Ootuk (a 42-year-old man) was stabbed and killed. On 10 February E1-462 Angatayok (a 14-year-old boy) and E1-462 Kiyai (a 24-year-old man) died of exposure in a blizzard en route from Henik Lake to Padlei. On 11 February E1-451 Ungmak (a 40-year-old man) died of exposure and exhaustion en route to Padlei, and on 15 February E1-614 Nesha (a four-year-old girl) died of exposure en route to Padlei. A relocation begun as an "experiment" had ended in tragedy, but the Ahiarmiut were not the only Caribou Inuit to perish that winter. The authorities discovered that nineteen Inuit had starved to death at Garry Lake and six more at Chantrey Lake. The Keewatin deaths produced two quick responses from the government: a decision to evacuate the Caribou Inuit into

● settlements in order to prevent further starvation; and a series of Department, police, and judicial investigations which resulted in the murder trial of Regina vs Kikkik. After the tragic outcome of the government's relocation of the Ahlarmiut, there were no further relocation experiments involving the movement of Inuit to wilderness sites (Diubaldo, 1989: 176).

1.7 1957 Duck Lake resettlement

I would like to refer to one example of Indian relocation in this study, because it serves to further highlight how the resettlement plans for the Ahlarmiut (Part 1.6) and the Inuit in Nutak and Hebron (see Part 1.8) were implemented. The relocation of the Ahlarmiut away from a site of non-aboriginal occupation at Ennadai Lake, contrasted sharply with the relocation of a band of Chipewyan Indians who were living at Duck Lake, 150 miles south-east of Ennadai. The resettlement of the Duck Lake Indians took place in the summer of 1957, as did the Ahlarmiut relocation, and the two moves bear certain similarities, though with opposite objectives in mind. The two operations were initiated by the two branches of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, and acutely illustrate the opposing points of view within the Department of how to effectively implement an aboriginal resettlement policy.

The Chipewyan Indians had a history of trading with the Hudson's Bay Company post at Churchill for 250 years. In the early 1930s, the Company established a trading post at Duck Lake, 150 miles north-west of Churchill, and just 40 miles south of the Manitoba border with the Northwest Territories. An Anglican church was also built at the site. A group of Indians established a pattern of trading with the Duck Lake post, and built log cabins in the area for use during the summer months. The Indians trapped and hunted within a one-hundred mile radius of the post, using dogteams for travel during the winter months. Like the Ahlarmiut to the north, the Chipewyans depended on the same Caribou herd as their main source of meat, and the hides for clothing and tents. They would use a similar method as the Ahlarmiut by hunting the caribou at crossing points, using spears to kill the animals from canoes. They also ate fish, ducks, geese and ptarmigans, all of which were seasonally plentiful. Aside from visiting the post at springtime, during the short summer season, and for Christmas celebrations, most of the Indians would live out on the land in tents, travelling between seasonal camps. Every

few weeks the post traders would visit the camps, buying furs and distributing supplies (Lal, 1969a).

Following the post-war slump in the fur market, many Company posts, like that at Duck Lake, became uneconomical and were earmarked for closure. The Indians Affairs Branch (IAB) became concerned that the Chipewyan living near Duck Lake would become destitute when the post closed in 1956, and therefore planned to relocate them, together with part of the band living at North Knife River, to Churchill. In the summer of 1957 IAB officials arranged to airlift the Indians to Churchill where they would be resettled in a satellite community referred to as Camp 10. As the Ahiarmiut found, there was limited space on the aircraft, and many of the Indians' belongings had to be left behind, including household goods, traps, dogteams, outboards motors and boats. A few families drove by dogteam to Churchill. Some 300 people were relocated to Camp 10 from the two Indian groups (*ibid.*).

The intention of the relocation was to centralize the Indians near a town, where they would no longer depend upon the land for their sustenance, but be provided with housing, schooling, and social services. It was presumably hoped that they would also in time find wage-employment in Churchill. Though, perhaps not executed with the same operational infrastructure as the American Indian Relocation Program (see Madigan, 1956), which also placed a greater emphasis on securing wage-employment, the two concurrent forms of resettlement are similar. They were both designed to relocate Indians off the land and into urban areas, as part of a broad trend towards assimilating aboriginal peoples.

Camp 10 was a makeshift site, intended to provide temporary accommodation for the Indians, before they were to be housed in a new townsite at Churchill. So unattractive was Camp 10, that some of the North River Indians, who lived closer to Churchill, refused to move. Those that had come by plane from Duck Lake had little choice but to accept the conditions in Camp 10. Without traps, dogteams, or credit and trading services, most of the Indians at Camp 10 were no longer able to earn an income off the land. Though the Indian agent organised for the men to obtain some menial wage-employment at the Army base or the National Harbours Board in Churchill, the group soon became dependent on relief. Whereas the Duck Lake Indians had apparently little contact with alcohol before the move, the proximity of

● Camp 10 to Churchill insured a ready supply of liquor. In 1960, treaty Indians received the legal right to drink liquor, and "consumption of beer and wine in Camp 10 soared", according to a Department official who noted that 95% of the work of the four RCMP officers at the Churchill detachment was subsequently spent policing Camp 10 (Lal, 1969a). The Indians at Camp 10 had little school education or knowledge of English, and "found themselves occupying the lowest position of the social pyramid at Churchill", thereby "receiving much rejection and contempt from local residents".

In a microcosm, therefore, the government's resettlement policies quickly failed their purpose, which was to instil self-sufficiency. The Ahiarmiut were relocated northwards away from a site settled by Whites, to a wilderness site, and in six months eight were dead. The Duck Lake Chipewyans were at the same time relocated southwards to an urban setting, where they soon experienced a stigmatization and socio-economic decline. The Ahiarmiut were then evacuated to a settlement, not of course as urban as Churchill, where they were reported by officials to be for a time in a dysfunctional state. In fact, when the relocation of the Ahiarmiut was being discussed in 1956-57, there were proposals to relocate the people to Churchill or a settlement on the coast, where they could be either assimilated like the Chipewyans, or more closely supervised. The Department's intention by moving the Ahiarmiut to Henik Lake, was to encourage them to become more self-sufficient by not being as dependent on relief and government services. The Chipewyans were moved in order to encourage them to become self-sufficient in an urban environment "to bring them close to modern things and the promised good life" (Lal, 1969b). Neither relocation was satisfactory for the aboriginal peoples involved, as they had not elected to be moved off their lands, but accepted the instructions and promises made by officials.

1.8 1956-59 Nutak and Hebron relocations

In 1956 and 1959, the two most northerly Inuit settlements on the Labrador coast were closed by the government, and the residents moved to the south. The closures of Nutak and Hebron took place at the same time as the relocation of the Duck Lake Indians, as described in Part 1.7, and are similar cases illustrating the government's use of resettlement for purposes of centralization. In both instances, aboriginal people were moved southwards to urban centres where it was considered administratively convenient and

cost-effective to provide them with housing, supplies and social services. In contrast to the camp at Duck Lake, Hebron and Nutak were permanent communities, where the Inuit lived in framed houses.

The missionaries of the Unitas Fratrum or United Brethren, known as the Moravians, established their first permanent mission in Northern Labrador in 1771 at Nain, the site of an Inuit summer camp. Five years later the first Inuk was baptised and Moravian missions were subsequently established along the northern Labrador coast at Okak (1776-1919), Hopedale (1782-present), Hebron (1830-1959), Zoar (1865-1890), Ramah (1871-1907), Makkovik (1896-present), and Killinik (1904-1924). The Moravians were granted a monopoly on trade with the Labrador Inuit, and in order for the Inuit to obtain credit at the mission's stores they were required to harvest resources having European market value, including cod, furs and seal oil. Inuit communities grew around the missions, and in the nineteenth century the Moravians encouraged the Inuit to build single-family, European-style wooden houses (Kennedy, 1985).

After Newfoundland's confederation with Canada in 1949, administrative services for Northern Labrador were transferred to the Department of Northern Labrador Affairs (the Division) under the provincial Department of Public Welfare. In so doing, the federal government's responsibility for the Labrador Inuit was constitutionally unclear until the mid-1960s. The provincial government became committed to a policy of centralizing social services, and subsequently decided to close the two most northerly Inuit communities of Nutak and Hebron. In 1956 the Division closed its store at Nutak and relocated most of the 200 people living in the area to Nain and more southerly communities, justifying its actions by stating: Nutak was abandoned because there were no services or facilities except those operated by the Department of Public Welfare, and the advantages to be gained in moving to communities where churches, schools, medical services and other facilities already existed outweighed those to be gained by remaining there" (Newfoundland, 1960: 114). Some Nutak residents moved northwards to Hebron. As a result of Nutak's closure, Hebron appeared in even more isolated, lying 260 miles north of Makkovik.

The Division emphasized that there was a need to "rehabilitate" and "integrate" the aboriginal peoples of Northern Labrador into southern society (ibid.: 36). The heads of the three agencies with responsibility for Inuit

welfare in Labrador, Supt. Rockwood of the Division, Rev. Peacock of the Moravian Mission and Dr. Paddon, Director of the International Grenfell Association, which provided health services, jointly decided to close their facilities at Hebron in 1959, including the 130-year old mission, store, school and government offices. All non-aboriginal personnel would also be withdrawn. The relocation was described in the Division's annual report as the "highlight of the year", explaining that after Nutak was abandoned Hebron "seemed more isolated than ever, and its ultimate abandonment was a foregone conclusion" (ibid.: 111,114).

Peacock, Paddon and Rockwood informed the residents of Hebron of the impending resettlement at the Easter service in the church. An Inuk who was present, William Onalik, described the situation, and the people's anger that the news was conveyed in the church, which was significant because it was a place of non-confrontation.

At the time they had gathered people at the church, I didn't pay much attention to the first things they said because in my mind I was mad because I couldn't say anything in the church . . . These were their strong points: that there would be no minister at Hebron and also no store manager. We were told that the minister was going away on the *Trepassey*. We were told that we had to move away . . . Because we were used to our land and we didn't say we didn't want to move away – although we had a hall, if it had been at the hall that people were gathered together, they could have spoken up to say they did not want to move away. . . It was because we couldn't talk in the church . . . " (Brice-Bennett, 1977: 109).

As a report by a Royal Commission later concluded, the "resettlement was planned and executed without consultation with the displaced people", and "compulsion to resettle was achieved simply by closing the retail store operation . . . The Moravian Mission at Hebron closed its doors, the Government agency dismantled its communication system and residents were left with no choice but to resettle" (RCL, 1974: 1212). Rockwood's description, from on board the ship, in the last hours of departure is strikingly symbolic of the Inuit's relocation experience:

Howling from the shore told us that some of the dogs were being left behind, and this necessitated a final expedition on shore to round up the strays. Only two were found, one preferred death from a .303 bullet to leaving his native Hebron. The other, taking the hint, ran for all he was worth to the wharf and headlong into a waiting boat. He is now safe with his friends at Hopedale. Shortly after 11:30 p.m. the *M/V Trepassey* and the *M/V Vida Gertrude* steamed out of the harbour

leaving the darkened and deserted village of Hebron behind. No tears were shed (Newfoundland, 1960: 181-2).

As with the relocation to Grise Fiord, the Inuit arrived at their designation late in the season with winter setting in, and little forethought had been given to housing the relocatees. The nearly 300 Hebron Inuit were landed at mostly at Makkovik and Hopedale. Rockwood noted that at "Hopedale, its population nearly doubled in a matter of weeks, [as it] opened its doors to receive 150 or so people from Hebron who could not find shelter elsewhere" (ibid.: 182). It has since been recognized that the relocation of the Inuit from Hebron and Nutak "meant breaking up Inuit family units and moving to unknown, more or less alien milieus" (Brantenberg and Brantenberg, 1984: 691). The relocatees became ghettoized in the southerly towns, as the Royal Commission reported: "The resettled people have not been integrated into the receiving communities" whose established residents resented the relocatees fishing and hunting in their area (RCL, 1974: 1212).

As a result of the depopulation of Northern Labrador, some of region's most productive marine resource areas were no longer harvested. Rockwood acknowledged in 1960 that the second most important local industry in Northern Labrador, the trout and Arctic char fishery, was not as productive, "whereas in previous years the bulk of the catch came from the Hebron District, the catch declined there in 1959 because of the imminent closing of the depot"; now Nain, the northern most of the depots, "and 150 miles from the prime fishing grounds, will nevertheless have to serve as the main base for these operations" (Newfoundland, 1960: 112). Without taking into account the wishes of the aboriginal populations, or the various long-term socio-economic effects, the two communities were targeted for closure and officials proceeded with the resettlement, leaving the Royal Commission to conclude, "The northern resettlement program is a failure" (RCL, 1974: 1215).

1.9 Resettlement as a tool for centralization

From the late-1950s onwards, relocation was used by the Department and other governments to resettle aboriginal peoples into urban environments. This process of centralization was viewed by officials as a form of good administration in order to rationalize the provision of services to remote groups of people. When governments realized the social and political

necessity of providing housing, schools, health care, and other services to aboriginal peoples, the most cost-effective solution was to gather people together and concentrate their populations, either in new communities in the north, or by resettling them to established southern towns.

Early examples of the government using relocation as a centralizing tool include the 1957 resettlement of Chipewyan Indians from Duck Lake to Churchill, and the 1956-59 relocations of the Labrador Inuit settlements of Nutak and Hebron. A similar relocation policy was implemented in Greenland, known as the G-50 and G-60, and in Siberia an example of centralization involved the resettlement of the coastal Chuckchi communities. In 1960, Deputy Minister Gordon Robertson commented on the Department's appreciation of Greenland's policies: "The fact is that Greenland is far more advanced than we are in almost every phase of economic and social development . . . in part because it took a different direction and a different pace than in Canada" (Robertson, 1960). Robertson felt that "their progress in many directions has been so remarkable and has such relevance to many of our own situations . . . The comparison with Greenland is likely to remain very much in our minds in the years to come". Greenland's use of aboriginal resettlement bore strong similarities to Canada's policies, which followed or were pursued concurrently. The Danish government relocated Inuit to "frontier wilderness sites", as in the case of Ammassalik, Scoresby Sund and Qaanaaq (discussed in Part II), as did the Canadian government with Dundas Harbour, Banks Island, Grise Fiord, and Henik Lake.

By the mid-1950s, the Department in Ottawa had reached something of a cross-roads. With the creation of the new Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources and under Gordon Robertson's Deputy Ministership, there was an awareness of the need to raise the standard of living of Canada's northern citizens. In particular, the Department was keen to be seen to be making advances on finding solutions to "the Eskimo Problem" by providing education and employment opportunities and reducing the much publicized high infant mortality rate and spread of infectious diseases. The relocation to Resolute and Grise was intended from the outset to be a prototype operation, and the forerunner of future northern resettlements if successful.

In 1956-57 the Department seriously considered "a need for an experimental project involving the resettlement of Eskimos families in the

● south – a sort of 'escape hatch' to drain off surplus population from the north" (Eskimo Affairs, 1956). At a sub-committee meeting of the Eskimo Affairs Committee held in June 1956 and attended by Commissioner Nicholson, Cunningham and Rudnicki, "The observation was made that increasing numbers of Eskimos are not fit to return to Arctic conditions of life. One alternative would be to subsidise such persons until they are re-established in the south". Like in 1953, it was decided that ten families would be "a good start".

The option of southern resettlement of the Inuit was complicated by several considerations, including the dilemma of whether to initially move the natives into specially-constructed and isolated southern communities or to integrate them into society. The Duck Lake Chipewyans were moved into a subdivision of Churchill, and were as isolated as the Hebron Inuit who were relocated into a housing compound at Makkovik which was located nearly one mile from the Moravian mission and away from the settler homes (Kennedy, 1985). The result in both cases was the creation of a ghetto. In theory, the hypothetical southern resettlement programme was also remarkably similar to the American Indian Relocation Program being pursued concurrently. The difference being that after taking advice from various agencies, the Canadian Department decided not to pursue a policy of depopulating the north.

After the Keewatin deaths in 1958, the Department embarked on a policy of centralizing Inuit in order to provide them with housing and social services, in order that no more Canadian Inuit would starve to death and publicly embarrass the government. An indication of the Department's complete policy reversal on resettlement at this time, is reflected in the case of a group of Cape Dorset Inuit. In May 1960, Area Administrator John Houston (who was responsible for developing the handicrafts movement), reported to his superiors that a group of five Cape Dorset families wished to move on their volition some 300 miles north of the settlement. The 31 Inuit were provisioned by the Company to apparently spend at least one year inland without contact. Houston was surprised by the migration: "With the strong, present-day trend towards Frobisher Bay and more civilised things, it is interesting to see a group of Eskimos strike out towards a more primitive way of life. However, I hold several serious reservations so far as this particular plan is concerned" (Houston, 1960).

As an indication of the Department's sensitivity regarding the negative public image they received over the recent Keewatin deaths, Houston queried: "Is this not perhaps creating another Garry Lake or Ennadai Lake situation that could result in starvation? (ibid.). In an attempt to discourage the migration, Houston warned the group that they could not count on visits by government aircraft, and that according to game ordinances they were not to kill caribou meat for their dogs. Houston informed senior officials that "their venture may well end in severe criticism if they suffer starvation, or cost a considerable amount of money if we extend our patrols to ensure their safety".

Whereas three years before, the Department relocated Inuit away from a settlement to exist on caribou and fish, now it was actively attempting to dissuade a group of Inuit from migrating to do the same thing. Clare Bolger (1960), Administrator of the Arctic, also found it "rather interesting and somewhat surprising" that a group of Inuit should "wish to return so completely to their old way of life" in view of the settlement facilities the Department was providing for them at Cape Dorset. The group of Inuit, including hunters Etidlooie, Pudlo, Ikhadlook, Etungat, Samuelliie, their wives and 21 children did go by dog team and established two camps inland. As a means of discouraging the Inuit from leaving the community, a Department official considered laying charges against the group for hunting in the area, but decided against taking such drastic action.

1.10 Summary

The relocation of Inuit to "better hunting areas" in the High Arctic was characteristic of resettlement activity organized by the Hudson's Bay Company in the 1920s-50s. In 1925 the Company relocated a group of Inuit to Southampton Island from Chesterfield Inlet, Baffin and Port Burwell. In 1934 a group of Inuit were relocated by the Company from Baffin to Devon Island at the suggestion of the Department of the Interior; and in 1936 the Company relocated Inuit from Devon to Arctic Bay on Baffin Island (Jenness, 1964: 59-64). An Inuit relocation to Somerset Island was organized by the Company in 1937 when it established a new post at Fort Ross (Stevenson, 1977), and in 1944 the Company considered a proposal to move the entire Inuit population off the Belcher Islands in southern Hudson Bay to Prince of Wales Island in the High Arctic (Cruickshank, 1944). In 1947 the Company relocated Inuit from Somerset Island to the Boothia Peninsula (Jenness,

1964: 61). Some of these moves were "successful" from officials' perspectives; others proved not to be viable economically. In a number of cases the Inuit expressed a desire to return to their homeland.

It was against this background of relocation activity that two principal officials, Alex Stevenson and Insp. Henry Larsen, discussed the feasibility of relocating Inuit from Baffin to Devon Island and to Ellesmere Island in 1950. Because a colonization experiment on Devon Island in 1934-36 had failed (Jenness, 1964), the Company and the Department had not undertaken to relocate Inuit to the north of Lancaster Sound. The RCMP gained some experience of resettling Inuit to the High Arctic when it had moved one or two families at a time, to be employed by detachments on Devon and Ellesmere islands in the 1920s-40s. The Department's consultations with the RCMP in 1950 about a joint relocation project in the Eastern Arctic took place concurrently with the Department's discussions with the Company about an Inuit resettlement project to Banks Island in the Western Arctic. The Department and the Company held talks at a senior level to discuss the feasibility of relocating Inuit to Banks Island and establishing a trading post there to supply them. The Company was not interested, but the Department was sufficiently keen to go ahead with the plan that it funded the resettlement operation itself in 1951. When planning the relocation of the Inukjuamiut in 1951-53, the Department worked together with the RCMP, rather than the HBC, thereby making it wholly a government-run operation.

The relocation of the Inukjuamiut in 1953-55 was seen by officials as a prototype for future relocations, in which Inuit would be moved away from White settlements to unoccupied "wilderness" areas. Using the Inukjuamiut move as a successful example of this policy, the Department pursued a second Inuit relocation in 1957, when it moved the entire band of Ahiarmiut by plane from their homeland at Ennadai Lake to Henik Lake, a site which had been pre-selected by officials. These two case studies have intersecting histories and many things in common. The two groups were perhaps the best-known Inuit in Canada. Whereas the Inukjuamiut had been exhibited in Robert Flaherty's classic 1922 film *Nanook of the North*, the Ahiarmiut had featured in Farley Mowat's (1952) *People of the Deer*. The two relocations were well-documented events, and were the Department's highest-profile operations for resettling Inuit in wilderness sites. Many of the same officials, including Larsen, Sivertz, Cunningham, Stevenson, and Robertson were involved in both projects. The essential difference between the two

● relocations was that the 1953 Inukjuamiut move ushered in a bold, new relocation policy, and the 1957 Ahiarmiut move brought it to a sudden conclusion.

Almost all of the relocations described in this section can be seen as acts of social reform in response to White concern about Inuit reliance on "handouts" (relief and social benefits), and about what was perceived as the growing tendency of Inuit to cluster around settlements. The planners described the relocations as "voluntary migrations", designed to re-affirm the value of self-reliance, rather than relying on the State. Although officials may have viewed the utopian schemes as altruistic attempts to return the Inuit to a reconstituted Edenic state, oral testimonies and various documentation suggest that the Inuit saw the operations as enforced migrations to places which were not of their choosing. The geopolitical implications of the High Arctic moves to Devon Island, Banks Island, Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, bear strong similarities between them and several relocation projects undertaken in Greenland and Russia, as will be discussed in Part II.

Part II: Other circumpolar resettlement initiatives

2.1 Introduction

In Part II, I will discuss four examples of government-sponsored Inuit relocation projects which occurred in Greenland, Russian and Alaska. These include the 1925 relocation from Angmagssalik to Scoresby Sund in East Greenland, the 1926 resettlement of a group of aboriginal peoples from the Chukotka mainland to Ostrov Vrangelya (Wrangel Island), the 1941 relocation of the Priblof Islanders in Alaska, and the 1953 resettlement to Qaanaaq in north-west Greenland. Each case study bears similarities to the 1953 relocation to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, including statements that the moves were voluntary. As in the case of the Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord scheme, the relocations to Scoresby Sund and Ostrov Vrangelya were colonization projects with geopolitical objectives. The relocatees were utilized to demonstrate effective occupation.

2.2 1925 relocation to Scoresby Sund

The colonization of Devon Island in the mid-1920s, as discussed in Part 1.1, had its counterpart in Greenland. By the 1920s, the population of Greenland consisted of about 15,000 people who lived in seventy small settlements scattered along the coast. The only settlement on the east coast of Greenland was Angmagssalik, established by the government in 1894. When the Danish government attempted to extend its interests to the Northeast coast, the Norwegian government objected that such expansion would compromise the interests of its sealing fleet. Under the East Greenland Treaty between the two governments, the Norwegian sealers gained the right to establish permanent stations on the east coast of Greenland north of the sole Greenlandic settlement at Angmagssalik. The Danish government decided that it was imperative it should establish a more northerly settlement, and selected the site of Scoresby Sund. According to the founder of the settlement, Capt. Ejnar Mikkelsen, "This possible development was taken into consideration while framing the treaty, and in case Scoresby Sund should be colonized by Eskimos the whole of this huge district would automatically

become a monopoly under Danish government administration" (Mikkelsen, 1927: 214).

With the assistance of a large Danish newspaper, the private Scoresby Sund Committee was able to attract sufficient public subscriptions to fund the colonization scheme, and on 10 July 1924, the day after the treaty with Norway was signed, the Colonization Expedition sailed on their ship, the *Grønland*, from Copenhagen with men and material to construct a small settlement at Scoresby Sund. Whereas the 1953 Canadian colonization operation at Resolute and Grise would later be criticized for inadequate planning, lack of housing and sufficient supplies, the Danish operation by comparison was well-funded, and carefully thought out in advance. The Danes planned to establish a settlement and build houses for the Greenlanders prior to their arrival the following year. The *Grønland* carried a team of 22 planners, builders and scientists whose mission it was to found the colony. The ship had provisions to cover the 16 months of construction, and sufficient materials to establish a settlement for 10 to 12 Greenlandic families and supplies to equip them for three or four years.

During the year of settlement's construction, the Danes were pleased to confirm that the Scoresby Sund region was rich in game, including salmon, trout, Arctic cod, halibut, angmagset, seal, walrus, narwhal, polar bear, musk oxen, fox, and a large bird population. To ensure the success of the colonization project, the Danes arranged for the Greenlanders to be accompanied by their settlement manager from Angmagssalik. Mr. Johan Petersen became the first manager of Scoresby Sund, having previously spent twenty-five years as manager of Angmagssalik. After the 85 relocatees, "old and young and many children", were "transferred" from Angmagssalik, Mikkelsen stated that the area's abundance in game confirmed it was "a place which their legends tell them is a land of untold wealth" (ibid.: 223). As a similar incentive, the Ahiarmiut and Inukjuakmiut were told by officials that they were being moved to a land of opportunity, a land richer in game than the one they presently occupied. Unlike the Ahiarmiut, the Greenlanders were allowed to bring their kayaks with them, and unlike the Inukjuakmiut who initially only had the use of a small boat at Grise and Resolute, when the Greenlanders arrived on the ship they were able to bring their large umiaks.

Mikkelsen described the arrival of the Greenlanders to Scoresby Sund in September 1925 in glowing Edenic descriptions: "they ran about, shouting, laughing, rolling themselves in the luxuriant grass, taking possession of the land. The fires of the settlers flamed high in the calm nights, their meat pots were stuffed with steaming meat, and as quickly as emptied filled afresh; all was joy and contentment" (ibid.). Mikkelsen and the settlement planners decided to scatter the huts for the "prospective colonists" along the coastline, thereby counteracting "the intelligible but regrettable desire of a people . . . to gather around the store, whereby their economic status suffers, the number of people exceeding the capacity of the sustenance space". This rationale was identical to that employed thirty years later when the RCMP moved the Ellesmere relocatees to Lindstrom Peninsula, 100km from the store at Craig Harbour, so that they would not become too dependent on it, or loiter nearby. A similar policy was employed at Port Harrison, in wanting to keep the Inuit out of town, and at Henik Lake, by selecting a site 85km from the nearest store at Padlei. However, unlike the plan for Scoresby Sund, the relocatees at Resolute and Grise Fiord were intended to live in greater proximity to one another, and of course, no houses were provided. The Danes constructed sturdy wooden houses banked with sod and stone. Mikkelsen explained his decision to establish the Scoresby Sund dwellings at Cape Stewart, Cape Hope and Cape Tobin: "In our endeavors to find good sites we were guided by the ruins of the old Eskimo villages" (ibid.: 220). Supt. Larsen followed a similar instinctual procedure when selecting the locations for the Resolute and Grise communities where there was clear archaeological evidence of previous habitation.

When Mikkelsen returned to the settlement the following year he discovered that the colonists had a difficult winter, with four adults dying from an influenza epidemic. It seemed for a while that "the future of the settlement [was] hanging in the balance", yet by the time Mikkelsen arrived, the sickness and the people's depression had passed and "we met only happy, healthy people, enthusiastic over the country, which had given them much more meat than they could possibly eat" (ibid.: 224). Two years after the Greenlanders arrived, Mikkelsen proudly wrote that "The experiment of colonizing Scoresby Sund had its risks, but it has succeeded beyond our fondest hopes". Improvements and additions to the buildings were made and in 1927 a church and a seismographic and wireless station were built, allowing meteorological observations to be taken. Scoresby Sund became a base for northern scientific expeditions. Eight years after the relocation, Mikkelsen reported that

the population had risen to around 150 and that the hunting conditions in Scoresby Sund were better than in the Angmagssalik district (Mikkelsen, 1933: 388).

Mikkelsen later referred to the Scoresby Sund project as a "decentralization" experiment, citing the need of reducing the aboriginal population at Angmagssalik which had become "overpopulated" in the thirty years since its establishment in 1894. Following the relocation of eighty-five Greenlanders from Angmagssalik to Scoresby Sund in 1925, some 150 individuals were encouraged to move northwards to Kangerdlugsuak and southwards along the coast from Angmagssalik in 1938. By the early 1950s, Mikkelsen felt that once again the area around Angmagssalik was becoming overpopulated, and "further decentralization is necessary in order that sufficient food may become available to the rapidly growing population" (Mikkelsen, 1951: 98). His appraisal of the population demands on the natural resources of Angmagassalik in 1951 was strikingly similar to that of the Canadian government's assessment at the same time of the problems of "overpopulation" in northern Quebec on the available game resources, specifically in the Port Harrison area. Mikkelsen suggested that in view of the overpopulation problems the Inuit themselves realized the need for decentralization and relocation, but that they needed encouragement to move. Mikkelsen's relocation solution to the problems of overpopulation provided an antecedent to the Canadian policy.

2.3 1921-26 resettlement to Ostrov Vrangelya

As in the case of Scoresby Sund, the geopolitical desire to exercise sovereignty led to the relocation of Eskimos on the island of Ostrov Vrangelya (Wrangel Island) in the early 1920s. Ostrov Vrangelya lies between the East Siberian Sea and the Chukchi Sea, off the northern tip of the Chukotka mainland. In 1914 Vilhjalmur Stefansson and his crew from the *Karluk* spent six months on the uninhabited island after their boat was sunk by ice. Upon his return, Stefansson tried to persuade the Canadian government to occupy Ostrov Vrangelya, despite the fact that the island had been claimed for the Tsar in 1911 by a landing party from a Russian navy icebreaker (Barr, 1977). Irrespective of the Russian claims, Steffanson felt that because the island was not occupied, it was his prerogative to do so with the support of the Canadian government. Steffanson formed a private Canadian company, The Stefanson

Arctic Exploration and Development Company, and in September 1921 organized for a party of five to begin the process of occupying Ostrov Vrangelya. Four of the group perished, except for an Alaskan Eskimo woman, Ada Blackjack.

Steffanson sent a relief party which arrived in August 1923 and landed twelve Alaskan Eskimos under the leadership of Alaskan trapper and prospector Charles Wells, and provision for two years (*ibid.*). Steffanson had managed to secure the government's tacit support for his enterprise, as evidenced by Prime Minister Mackenzie King's remarks in the House of Commons in 1922: "The Government certainly maintains the position that Wrangel Island is part of the property of this country" (Canada, 1922: 1750). However, following news of the tragedy of the first expedition, the government changed its position, and the Minister for the Department of Interior made a public statement denying any Canadian claim to the island (Canada, 1924: 1110). The following month, Steffanson sold his interest in his company to Carl Lomen, an Alaskan entrepreneur. The enterprise now ceased to have any Canadian affiliation.

Three months later, a Soviet icebreaker gunboat arrested the American party, confiscated its furs, and raised a Soviet flag on the island. It was decided, though, that a plaque and flag were not sufficient forms of occupation to deter potential interlopers, so the Soviet government instructed the *Sovtorgflot* (Soviet Merchant Fleet) and *Dal'revkom* (Far Eastern Revolutionary Committee) to establish an aboriginal settlement on the island (Barr, 1977). A proposal was considered for resettling a group of Siberian Eskimos from Chukotka, where the hunting and trapping economy were reportedly depressed due to over-hunting and the effects of the Civil War that followed the Revolution of 1917.

The colonization team consisted of settlement manager Ushakov and two other Russians, a doctor and senior trader/trapper, together with ten Eskimo families selected from the settlements of Bukhta Provideniya, Chaplino and Uelen, on the eastern tip of Chukotka. Sixty people in all were transported to Ostrov Vrangelya together with 102 dogs and provisions for two years in August 1926. The new settlement was referred to initially as "a colony", and the internal colonization scheme was founded on principles similar to that of Scoresby Sund and Grise Fiord.

Officials stressed that the relocatees were not to become too reliant on the trading store. The settlement manager was told "never allow the development of a parasitic attitude among the settlers" (ibid.). It was the manager's plan "to disperse the Eskimos as widely as possible around the island, in order to achieve optimum utilization of hunting and trapping resources", similar to the approach taken in establishing the Scoresby Sund and the Devon Island colonies. But rather than having an advance party to construct houses for the relocatees, the Eskimos on Ostrov Vrangelya were expected to live in *yaranga*, or skin tents, which they had brought with them. Despite having cached a supply of walrus soon after arriving at the island, the settlers experienced a difficult first winter, with constant blizzards and outbreaks of scurvy. The meat supply became exhausted, the dogs began to die, and the doctor reported that the Eskimos were generally in poor health. Then in January 1927, one of the Eskimo elders, Ierok, died. Ierok's death had a great impact on the other relocatees. Due to severe ice conditions it was not until August 1929 that the community received its first resupply. After the difficult first winters, the situation at Ostrov Vrangelya improved when new Russian personnel, supplies, and dogs were landed. The Eskimos all remained on the island, until 1932-33 when two families left on the supply ship. During the winter of 1934-35, five trappers, two women and five children died of starvation on the island. In the following years, more facilities were added, a school was built in 1936, and a reindeer herd was brought to the island in 1947. Then in 1981, after the aboriginal peoples were no longer required to demonstrate effective occupation, they were all relocated to the mainland. Thereafter, the island, which had been designated as a nature preserve, was inhabited only by transient military and scientific personnel.

2.4 1941 relocation of the Pribilof Islanders

Following the Japanese occupation of the Aleutian Islands, Kiska and Attuk, in June 1942, the U.S. Navy relocated the entire Aleut population from the Pribilof Islands. The 290 Pribilofs were housed 1,500 miles from their homes in an abandoned cannery at Funter Bay on Admiralty Island, 60 miles from Juneau. The cannery had been unused for 12 years, and living accommodations were described as appalling by officials and physicians. The government's St. Paul agent resigned in protest of their treatment, and stated: "I cannot stay and watch a people I have grown somewhat attached to

... through a time of which I sincerely believe only a miracle can prevent a tragedy of sickness and cause extreme suffering to them" (Jones, 1980: 108). While the original objective for evacuating the Aleuts from the Pribilof Islands was because of the potential threat of a Japanese attack, it soon became apparent that the islands were being used to station U.S. forces. When the Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes asked that the Eskimos be returned with supervisory personnel to the Pribilof Islands to resume sealing in 1943, Secretary of War Stimson responded: "Occupation of the Pribilof Islands was made possible by using the housing of the former occupants, and insufficient housing exists for both troops and the native population. Furthermore, the return of the native civilians would incur an additional burden on our already overtaxed shipping facilities in that area" (ibid.: 109).

According to one physician who inspected the camps in which the Pribilofs were held during the war, they "are being herded into quarters unfit for pigs; denied adequate medical attention; lack of healthful diet and even facilities to keep warm and are virtually prisoners of the Government, though theoretically possessing the status of citizenship" (ibid.: 114). The Department of Fish and Wildlife Service were responsible for their welfare during this time, and at one point an assistant supervisor warned his superiors that a visiting physician was going to report them to the Surgeon General: "Scarcely a day passes that some well meaning person does not descend upon us with recriminations for our heartless methods. Censorship has kept the press off our necks thus far but this line of defense is weakening rapidly".

Officials reportedly used methods of intimidation when dealing with some of the Pribilofs at Funter Bay, as an internal memo attests: "Dr. Gabrielson (Director, Fish and Wildlife Service) told me that when at Funter in September he learned of how a native refused to obey a reasonable, simple order of Mr. Merriott, or was otherwise impudent, whereupon Mr. Merriott laid hold of him and shook him up, with the result that thereafter he behaved himself. Dr. Gabrielson was very favorably impressed by the action thus taken by Mr. Merriott" (ibid.: 115). Once the Aleuts were returned to the Pribilofs in 1944, they found their houses, which had been occupied by the U.S. military, had been ransacked. Buildings were damaged, warehouses, carpentry and machine shops had been looted and vandalized, and the plumbing, water lines and tanks were broken in the village of St. Paul.

Jones has described how government agents resorted to strong measures "to eradicate" some of the acquired habits and notions the Aleuts obtained while living in south-east Alaska. "I am not surprised that Mr. Benson has had to jail several of the natives", recorded one agent, "or even threaten to send some off the islands, in order to quiet them down" (ibid.). Jones concluded that "again protected by the isolation of the islands, management firmly believed that it could restore the former colonial relationship". As in the case of Ostrov Vrangelya, Ellesmere Island, and elsewhere, the very geographical isolation of an island colony could serve to insulate the sometimes stringent practices employed by field officials, to the detriment of the relocatees, from the supervision of well-meaning policy makers, whether they were in Washington, Moscow, or Ottawa.

2.5 1953 relocation to Qaanaaq

During the summer of 1953, when preparations were being made to establish Inuit colonies at Grise Fiord and Alexandra Fiord, directly across Smith Sound another Inuit relocation was taking place involving a group of Polar Eskimos, or Inuhuit, living in the Thule District on north-western Greenland. As part of its plan to construct air force and radar bases in the High Arctic as a defence shield against potential Soviet attack, the U.S. military in 1951-52 built the massive Thule Air Base. The construction was completed by 12,000 men, supplied by convoys of over 120 ships, and air lifts of some 3,000 flights. The U.S. Air Force base was built to house a permanent force of 5,000 to 10,000 men. Located at 76° 30' north latitude, Thule Air Base had a fitting motto, "Guardians of the High Frontier", suited to its purpose as a backup base for strategic bombers and fighters. Thule was equidistant between New York and Moscow. It also served an important function in the construction and resupply of the five high Arctic weather stations in the Queen Elizabeth Islands. The base was off-limits to the Inuhuit of the region. In order to install an anti-aircraft artillery battery to defend the base, the entire Inuhuit village population of Uummannaq was relocated, and the new community of Qaanaaq was established 180 km to the north.

In May 1953, the district governor of Thule, Egon Mørck Rasmussen, sent a wireless message to the head of the Prime Minister's Greenlandic department, Eske Brun, to report on the relocation of the twenty-seven Inuhuit families: "Removal began when shortly after our return we notified the

population the decisions made in Denmark. Many people were grieved by parting with the place but everyone understood it was for the common good" (Brøsted and Fægteborg, 1985: 213).

Danish newspapers reported that the relocation of the 116 Inuhuit was being undertaken because of a deterioration of hunting conditions (*ibid.*: 221). The same reason for moving was publicly stated for both 1953 relocations from Port Harrison and Uummannaq, and that the Inuit were being voluntarily moved for their own good. Like the Canadians, the Danes were acutely aware that in any media reportage of the relocations, there should be no hint of coercion or enforced resettlement. In each case, the governments employed the issue of supposed game scarcity, and emphasized the humanitarian nature of the relocations, effectively masking other agendas.

In contrast to the Grise Fiord move, which involved minimal provisions for the relocatees, the resettlement to Qaanaaq was a major operation, reminiscent of when the Danes established the settlement at Scoresby Sound thirty years before. It was reported that a labour force of some 190 men came from Copenhagen to Qaanaaq during the summer of 1953, and while the Inuhuit stayed in tents, the Danes constructed a new village. Many of the buildings were prefabricated, brought on board two supply ships from Denmark. The wooden houses had triple-glazed windows, electricity, and coal fired heating. The Inuhuit houses were isolated away from the rest of the village, which included administrative offices, a trading store, medical station, a school with two Finnish baths, a church, washing facilities, a launderette and warehouses. The following summer, the settlement administrator, a doctor, nurses, a teacher, a priest and the traders moved in to the new settlement. Thirteen of the Uummannaq families decided to move into the new houses at Qaanaaq, the others settled in three other nearby sites, Qeqertat, Kangerluarsuk and Qeqertarsuaq.

The Inuhuit of the Thule District had a long history of seasonal hunting of polar bear and musk-ox on Ellesmere Island. The Grise Fiord Inuit met the Inuhuit from Qaanaaq in the 1950s when the Greenlanders visited Grise Fiord. However, they were instructed by the RCMP at Craig Harbour to inform the Inuhuit that they were prohibited from hunting on Ellesmere Island.

Despite the fact that the Inuhuit were moved only 180 km up the coast from the site of their original homes, and that a new settlement had been created for them, they were, like the Inukjuakmiut relocatees at Grise Fiord

and Resolute Bay, deeply dissatisfied about having to leave their homeland. In 1959 the Hunters' Council at Qaanaaq "unanimously adopted a claim for an annual compensation for lost hunting areas due to the establishment of the base and the forced removal" (ibid.: 228). The Inuhuit found that the marine resources were not as abundant in the Qaanaaq area as they had been in Wolstenholme Fjord where Uummannaq was situated. As a result, the hunting areas became overtaxed. A series of meetings, investigations and reports were made on the compensation issue in the following years, but like the Canadian government in the Grise Fjord/Resolute Bay case, Danish officials have not sought fit to pay compensation. In a meeting, for example, in September 1985 between the Minister for Greenland and the Thule municipal council, the Minister put forward a 9-point programme "to improve the conditions in the district and liberate the relationship between the Thule community and the base. The Minister, however, refused to put the issue of compensation on the agenda for further negotiations" (Nielsen, 1986: 85).

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