

Environmental History Review

Volume 19

Spring 1995

Number 1

Voices from the Hydrocarbon Frontier: Canada's Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry (1974-1977)¹

Paul Sabin

University of California at Berkeley

As industry and governments have pursued oil and gas far into tropical rainforests and into arctic and sub-arctic regions, hydrocarbon development has revealed its tremendous power to shape regions distant from national economic and population centers. In 1967, Texaco discovered substantial oil reserves in the eastern rainforests of Ecuador; in 1972, the Mexican state petroleum company located a massive oil field in the southeast of the country; during those same years, oil and natural gas were found in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska and across the border in Canada's Northwest Territories. Ecuador, Mexico, the United States, and Canada—in all four of these countries, government and industry planners have viewed their hinterlands as distant resource frontiers. Yet because a variety of indigenous peoples have seen these areas not as economic frontiers but as their centuries-old homes, since the late 1960s oil and gas development has sparked intense controversy in each region. Sometimes local protest clashed with government determination, as in 1976 when 7,000 Mexican farmers, many of them Chontales Indians, blocked access roads to oil installations and took over compressor and separation stations before being violently removed by the Mexican Army.²

Conflicts in Alaska and northern Canada have been similarly charged. Instead of seizing installations, northern natives have used their political voice to challenge the energy projects of national governments and international corporations. Yet when native people have spoken out against hydrocarbon development, their intentions and meanings have not always been clear to outsiders. What are the issues at stake for these people? Do indigenous groups oppose resource extraction itself? Or do they have other concerns? Advocates for indigenous peoples frequently portray them as stock characters, locked within a traditional world or devastated by their exposure to modern society. Is such a depiction complete? To explore such questions about native attitudes towards "development," this essay examines the rich body of public testimony collected in the Canadian Government's Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry. During the years 1974-1977, Commissioner Thomas Berger and his staff carried out extensive hearings on the socio-economic and environmental impacts of natural gas pipelines proposed for the Northwest Territories.³ Listening closely to how residents of the Mackenzie Valley responded to the proposals, particularly the native Dene (of direct Athapaskan heritage) but also the Métis (descendants of mixed unions between natives and Europeans) and northern whites, revealed that all of these Northerners wanted something that sounded similar: local control over economic development that included revenue-sharing, participation in the planning and operation of extraction, and strict assurances of minimal environmental impact.⁴ While few Northerners were anti-development on principle, the meaning of "local control" varied widely with individual valuations of economic and cultural change.

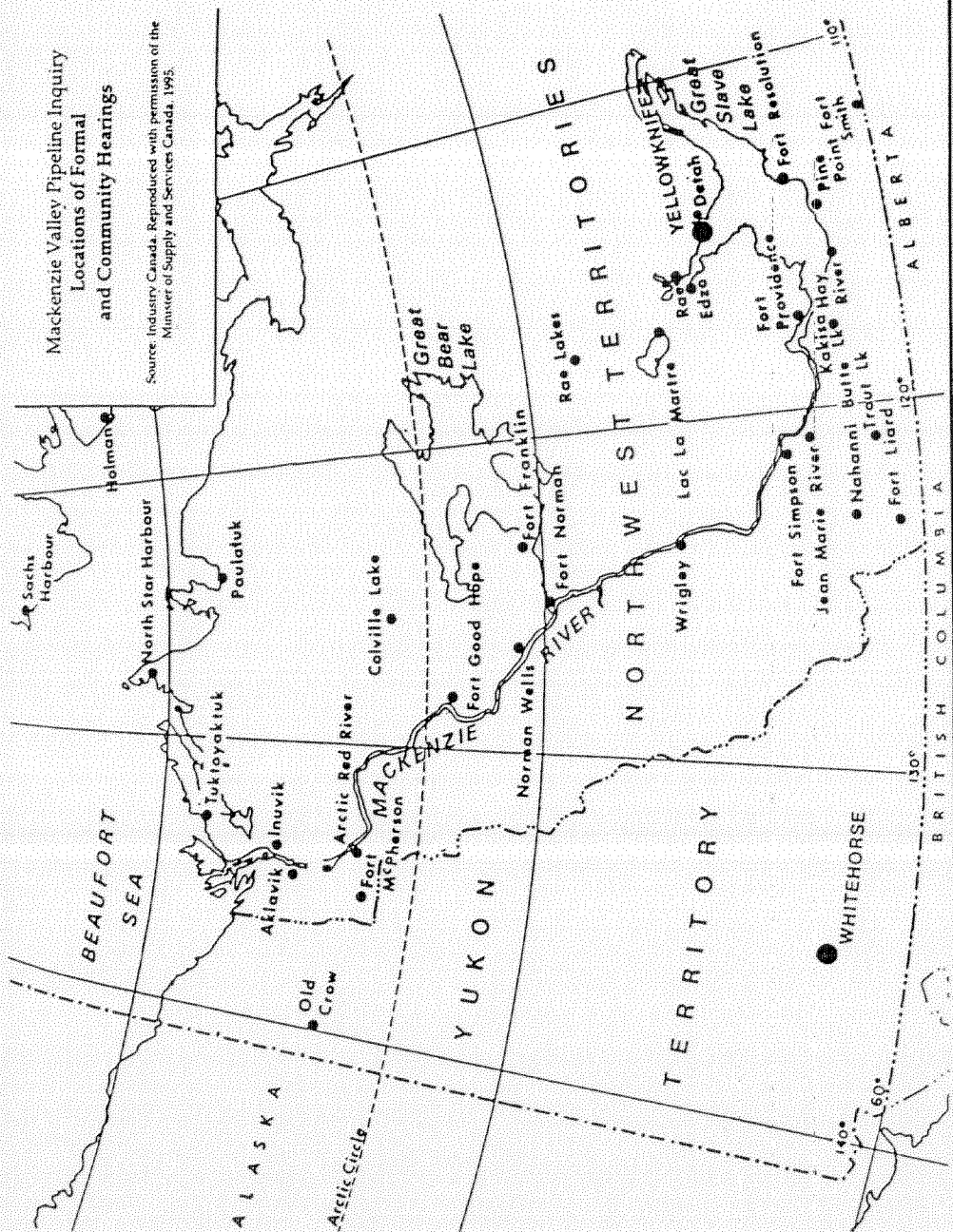
The relative success of northern natives in asserting their distinct visions of northern development has marked a major change in native-non-native relations, creating a situation in many ways analogous to that of the Algonquian people of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Algonquians derived their ability to force political and cultural compromises from the strategic weakness of Europeans in regions remote from the imperial center. More recently, in the context of overwhelming military and economic power, native insistence and non-native restraint, based on moral and legal principles, have mutually created the outlines of a modern "middle ground."⁵ In concert with decolonization and civil and human rights movements during the past forty years, the voices of indigenous peoples have acquired increasing political force in the non-native world.

Pipelines and the pipeline inquiry

Proposals for a natural gas pipeline down the Mackenzie Valley drew their impetus directly from the major oil strike in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, in 1968 and from high energy prices in the early 1970s. In March 1974, Canadian Arctic Gas Pipeline Limited, a consortium of 27 United States and Canadian oil and gas firms, advanced a plan to build a 2,625 mile pipeline east from Prudhoe Bay, Alaska to the Mackenzie Delta in northern Canada, and then south down the Mackenzie River Valley to southern Canada and the United States.⁶ The following fall, one of the members of the consortium, Foothills Pipeline Company, withdrew to propose an all-Canadian pipeline to transport gas only from the Mackenzie Delta.

Neither of the proposed Mackenzie Valley gas pipelines was ever built, and in fact, the natural gas reserves of the north remain undeveloped. Proposed amidst the rising energy prices of the early 1970s and encouraged by the discovery of tremendous oil reserves in Prudhoe Bay, plans for northern natural gas pipelines were initially stopped by Berger and the opposition voiced through his inquiry. Berger's final report in 1977, entitled *Northern Frontier, Northern Homeland*, highlighted the threats posed by a gas pipeline to the delicate environment of the Mackenzie Delta and northern Yukon, important calving areas for the migratory Porcupine caribou herd and white whales, as well as critical snow geese staging zones. In the Mackenzie Valley to the south, Berger did not predict grave environmental dangers. Rather he warned of the impact of a gas pipeline on the subsistence activities and culture of the region's native peoples. Following Berger's report, Canada's National Energy Board rejected the Mackenzie Valley pipeline proposals for some of these same reasons. Disappointing finds on the Mackenzie Delta and technical concerns about burying a gas pipeline in permafrost contributed to the Board's decision. Instead of the Mackenzie Valley routes, the Board approved a little-examined pipeline project along the Alaska Highway. This proposal also foundered with declining demand for northern natural gas in the early 1980s, leaving arctic gas underground to this day.⁷

The proposals made by Canadian Arctic Gas and Foothills sparked an extended and bitter controversy throughout Canada and in the Mackenzie Valley and Mackenzie Delta in particular. Many protagonists and analysts construed the controversy in stark moral terms, as a titanic struggle between greedy capitalists and an alliance of idealistic environmentalists and native activists. Even historian



Robert Page, who acknowledges the complex problems facing the north, yields to pressures inherent in the debate and accepts this polarized conceptual framework in his fine work, *Northern Development: A Canadian Dilemma*. Page, one of the few scholars to examine the subject, characterizes the controversy over the Mackenzie Valley pipeline as part of "a basic split between materialist development goals and idealism."⁸

While it is perhaps true that supporters of the pipeline evinced little idealistic concern for either the northern population or the northern environment, the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry records themselves—totalling over 40,000 pages and filling 28 rolls of microfilm—present a more complex reality than the contest suggested by pipeline opponents. The testimony and exhibits collected by Berger during formal hearings in the territorial capital of Yellowknife and through informal community sessions in northern settlements as well as southern cities provide a fascinating cross-section of Canadian opinion organized around the single and salient issue of northern development. (See map.) The breadth and complexity of Canadian sentiment on northern development expressed in the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry deepen simple critiques of capitalist imperialism and show clearly the cultural and economic contradictions of northern Canada, with implications as well for other "economic frontiers."

The success of the pipeline inquiry as a public forum, particularly the community hearings in the north, depended in large part on Judge Thomas Berger, the inquiry commissioner. In many ways a surprising choice on the part of Pierre Trudeau's Liberal Party government, Berger had earlier led the leftist New Democratic Party in British Columbia and had strong ties to Trudeau's political opposition in the Canadian parliament. Berger had also distinguished himself as an advocate for the rights of native Canadians. In 1973, just a few years before he undertook the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, Berger represented the Nishga Indians of British Columbia in their claim to aboriginal title to traditional lands. Although he lost that particular legal case, Berger won partial judicial recognition of the idea of aboriginal title to land and also proved himself sympathetic to the cause of native claims in Canada.⁹

In addition to his support for native rights, Berger was a determined advocate of freedom of speech. In 1981, four years after he completed the inquiry, Berger published a respected book of case studies of minority groups, *Fragile Freedoms: Human Rights and Dissent in Canada*. In that book, Berger forcefully supported what he characterized as the fundamental freedom of members of a minority

to be themselves: to speak their own language, practice their own religion, or otherwise follow a way of life that differed from the majority.¹⁰ As he incorporated these concerns into the pipeline inquiry, Berger proved himself determined to hear all points of view on the pipeline issue. He struggled with his government funders to ensure that public interest groups, such as the indigenous organizations and environmentalists, received funding—\$1.74 million dollars (Canadian)—adequate to allow them to participate as vigorously as the lawyers representing the various natural gas companies.¹¹

Berger's handling of the inquiry ensured that all possible viewpoints were fully aired. As he travelled to remote communities throughout the north, he offered an open microphone to all who wished to speak, often staying until after midnight to hear the last of the testimony. Native residents received him enthusiastically. Chief Frank T'Seleie of the small riverside community of Fort Good Hope, located some 80 miles south of the Arctic Circle, declared that "this is the first time in the history of my people that an important person from your nation has come to listen and learn from us."¹² The *Native Press* the newspaper of the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories, also described the inquiry as a novel and welcome approach by the Canadian government, the first time that the people themselves had actually been consulted before the government went ahead with a major project.¹³

For scholars, the testimony of indigenous organizations in the formal hearings and of northern residents during the community meetings provides unusually rich material on the changing nature of northern life. Dene, Métis, Inuit, and non-native speakers often ranged far from the topic of the pipeline to articulate other concerns, as when Dene elders expressed their anxiety that their children and grandchildren were growing up differently. Alene Baton, of Willow Lake, spoke movingly through an interpreter of the changes in native life from the perspective of a Dene elder:

We are getting old and all these meetings and all this and that is getting me a little bit worried, I don't know what it's all about. When I was a young girl some of the boys I knew, we are young, we all work the same in the bush. When time came and we have got husbands, our husbands used to go into the bush and kill caribou, moose, and we were drying meat and all that, and really working. We used to get lots of fish too, everything was work. We had to make clothes too. Today, she said, you take young girls that come back from the school, you take them into the bush, and they could freeze to death. They can't make the bush fire

or anything. This school seems to be ruining them, they are no more good in the bush, I mean young boys that come back from school.¹⁴

Baton worried specifically about historical changes that had occurred before the controversy over oil and gas exploded in the north. And while modifications in Dene life as a result of European intrusion date at least to the 1780s, Alene Baton spoke to Berger about the boarding schools that became important only in the mid-twentieth century.¹⁵ Baton's thoughts about these generational changes are especially poignant since she would be unable to discuss her concern with her Dene great-grandchildren. Largely as a result of the schools that she criticized, many of Baton's descendants spoke English instead of her native language.

A changing, unstable world: the Mackenzie Valley before the pipeline inquiry

The Mackenzie Valley is a vast space, bounded by the Mackenzie and Franklin mountain ranges and dominated by the massive Mackenzie River that flows north from headwaters in British Columbia, Yukon Territory and Alberta to the Beaufort Sea. The land is generally flat, pocked by lakes and rivers, and otherwise covered by the spruce, birch, aspen and other vegetation that make up the "bush." This landscape supports diverse populations of mammals, fish, and birds, including moose, caribou, beaver, fox, marten, whitefish, trout, geese, and duck.¹⁶

The patterns of human settlement in the valley derive from the dynamics of the fur trade as well as from more recent mineral exploitation and governmental expansion. During the nineteenth century, the Dene of the valley tended to live in small family-centered bands loosely associated with particular forts of the Hudson's Bay Company. During the past century, these native people settled into permanent communities along the Mackenzie River and other waterways like Great Bear Lake. These settlements are separated from each other by fifty to a hundred miles—some six to eight hours distant by motorboat in the summer—just as the trading posts were. A winter road now extends to Fort Good Hope before it expires in the vastness of the north, but as recently as the 1970s, when Berger visited the northern communities, winter transport beyond Norman Wells was limited to foot, dogsled, occasional snowmobiles, and infrequent airplane flights. In the summer, one could go by road only to Fort Simpson, and otherwise had to travel north by boat or plane.

By the time of the pipeline inquiry, large populations of non-natives had migrated into the southern part of the valley and dominated places such as Yellowknife, a center for mining and government, as well as Hay River and Fort Smith. Scattered traders and missionaries had been the only non-native presence until the 1890s, when trappers and prospectors followed high fur prices and the gold fever into the far north. After the discovery of gold in the Klondike in 1896, prospectors rushed to the Mackenzie District as well, searching for gold and other minerals around Pine Point, Bear Lake, and Yellowknife. Though most of the 800 men who reached Fort Simpson in 1898 did not stay in the north, in 1901 there were 137 non-native residents in the Mackenzie District, and in 1911, 519.¹⁷

As for trappers, few non-natives followed the pair who settled in Fort Resolution in 1894 until a post-World War I price rise drew both non-native trappers and independent traders up from the south. Fur prices peaked in 1920—when a white fox pelt had jumped from \$2.50 to \$40, marten from \$2.50 to \$31, and mink from \$1 to \$14—and then swiftly fell, first due to overtrapping and then to the onset of the Great Depression. Although relatively few in number compared to the native population, white trappers worked determinedly for profit rather than for a subsistence income. Some individuals reportedly set as many as 300 traps while native trappers tended to use perhaps a tenth of that number. When trappers around Fort Resolution caught 60,000 muskrats during 1923, only 37 white trappers brought in half of that number. By 1932, non-native trappers in the Northwest Territories had peaked at over 500.¹⁸ Overtrapping by non-natives and natives sent populations of fur-bearers into decline and led to the establishment of game management regulations. Protest by native trappers also brought new restrictions on non-native trapping, limiting licenses to current holders and to the children of residents of the Northwest Territories.¹⁹

Even as the fur economy slumped into the 1930s, many non-native Northerners turned away from trapping to extractive industries. Still more people arrived from the south as well. A small oil field at Norman Wells, discovered in 1920, and a pitchblende mine in Port Radium initiated in 1932 provided foci for concentrated industrial activity. During World War II, the United States Army pressured Ottawa to allow them to develop the Norman Wells oil field and to build a 4" pipeline across the Mackenzie Mountains to Whitehorse. In Whitehorse, the oil was to be refined to provide Alaska with a secure source of energy during the war.²⁰ Further south, around Great Slave Lake where gold had first been found in 1905, far greater quantities

were discovered in 1933. The success and apparent promise of companies like Consolidated Mining and Negus Mines quickly made the town of Yellowknife the center for non-native economic activity. By the end of the 1930s Yellowknife was complete with a school, bank, post office, general store, and newspaper. Non-native women moved north as wives and as workers, starting laundries and cafés, and finding employment in offices and stores.²¹ Mining revenues climbed rapidly, exceeding fur production for the first time in 1938 and continuing to grow during the subsequent decades. By 1970, gold, silver, copper, and lead-zinc mines throughout the Northwest Territories yielded \$124 million in revenue, while wild fur production earned mostly native trappers only \$1,110,000 during that same year.²² Two different worlds—native and non-native, trapping-based and extractive—existed simultaneously in the Northwest Territories. They were tied together by geography and the dynamic connections of work, religion, education, and government.

When Berger brought his pipeline inquiry to the Mackenzie River Valley, he met a society in flux. Until thirty years earlier, the majority of native people had lived away from the trading posts during most of the year while they trapped, hunted, and fished. By the time of the inquiry, the balance between the bush world and village life had shifted.²³ Almost all of the native people had settled permanently in the communities. Men continued to leave the settlement for hunting or trapping trips, and many families went out to summer fish camps. Yet families increasingly combined bush foods—such as moose or fish—with store-bought food. While many Dene and Métis continued to derive their cash income from trapping, the sharp decline in the relative value of furs after World War II made the fur trade increasingly inadequate for supplying native cash needs. According to a 1956 report of the Territorial Council, trapping income after the war dropped to less than one third of its earlier value. As the value of fur fell in the 1950s and merchandise prices rose, the Council concluded that "it is not possible for a person to live and to provide the minimum needs of his family at the present prices of fur."²⁴

Native men and women in the Northwest Territories turned increasingly to wage employment and government assistance to replace the missing trapping income. A 1964 estimate of "Percentage Distribution of Indian Income by Source" reported that trapping and guiding accounted for 23 percent of total income; skilled and unskilled labor 30 percent; forestry and fishing 8 percent; and transfer payments such as old age and other pensions, treaty payments and annuities, and welfare, 28 percent.²⁵ The dependence on government assistance

that had begun with the institution of federal family allowance and old age pension programs in the 1940s continued to rise through the 1960s. Between 1968 and 1972, welfare payments by the federal government in the western Arctic more than doubled to more than one million dollars.²⁶

Dene political and cultural life, as well as economic practices, also changed substantially during these years. Beginning in the 1950s, a generation of Dene children had been uprooted from their communities and sent to regional boarding schools. By the close of the 1960s, between 95-98 percent of school-age children were in school.²⁷ These students returned to their families with new habits, a different language, English, and even new ideas about social and economic justice. This younger generation—represented at the pipeline inquiry by men in their twenties, such as Frank T'Seleie of Fort Good Hope, James Washee and George Erasmus of the Indian Brotherhood, Jim Antoine of Fort Simpson—moved quickly into positions of local leadership. In 1970, these young men and women from communities throughout the Mackenzie Valley created the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories, the first Dene regional organization, modelling it after the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood that some young leaders visited in 1968.²⁸

Working with sympathetic Catholic priests and with members of the Company of Young Canadians, a federally supported program of community mobilization, the Brotherhood activists began to question whether treaties signed in the early twentieth century had ceded control over northern lands or had simply been agreed to in order to achieve peace and nothing more.²⁹ In 1968, the band chief of Fort Rae led a community boycott of the five-dollar annual treaty payment that the people had been receiving since they signed Treaty 11 in 1921. By 1973, the fledgling Indian Brotherhood had organized to file a legal caveat challenging the federal government's claim of jurisdiction over most northern lands. Although the decision was subsequently overturned, the court recognized aboriginal title and determined that Dene leaders had signed the treaties to establish friendship, not to give away their tribal lands.³⁰ This partial success spurred the Indian Brotherhood to continue to press for a settlement of land claims.

Simultaneous with political organization, northern natives began to reaffirm their ethnic ties. During the four years from 1968 to 1972, native language radio programming and a native newspaper were established. The first Northern Games for the native people of Alaska, the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories were held in August of

1970. Local communities founded social and cultural associations like the Sunrise Association in Hay River, the Tree of Peace Friendship Center in Yellowknife, and the Deninoo Association in Fort Resolution. Many activists began to agitate for restrictions on alcohol in an effort to address this major social problem. By the end of the 1970s, residents of many communities, including Rae, Aklavik, Snowdrift, Lac La Martre, and Forts Resolution, Good Hope, and Franklin, had voted to prohibit the sale of alcohol in their communities.³¹ At approximately the same time, economic organizing in the communities resulted in the formation of local cooperatives. In Fort Franklin, a group organized to market handicrafts, while in Snowdrift, the native co-op bought out the local store.³² In Fort Smith, native people formed Thebacha, an association for employment.³³ The Adult Vocational Training Centre was also established in Fort Smith to train heavy equipment operators.³⁴ All of these social, cultural, and economic activities demonstrated the new spirit of unity in the native communities. Similar changes occurred simultaneously throughout North America, both within Native American tribes and pan-tribally.

Ironically, the Canadian federal government, a frequent target for native criticism, financed much of the native mobilization that occurred in the Northwest Territories and elsewhere in Canada. Across Canada between 1971 and 1976, the federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs had provided \$40 million to native associations.³⁵ Beginning in March 1971 with its support of the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories, the federal government began to provide "core funding" to the emerging native political groups in the territories. The groups used the money for basic expenses such as salaries, utility bills, and travel. They financed political organizing and research into land claims, traditional land use, and health.³⁶ The native groups even used the money to hire lawyers for their cases against the federal government. Where this volatile mix of tradition and innovation, of internal and external influences, would lead was not clearly evident when corporate gas companies formally proposed the Mackenzie Valley natural gas pipeline in March, 1974. This remote economic frontier was neither a pristine nor a stable world.

The Dene confront the pipeline and "development"

Throughout the pipeline inquiry, the Dene declared their fierce opposition to new development. Their united stance reflected two separate strands of Dene political opinion. Some Dene opposed

development out of a primary concern for the land and the animals, the foundations of the traditional Dene economy. Others, specifically the new generation of young Dene leaders, demanded delay not so much to preserve the old economy as to gain control for the Dene over decisions that would shape how that economy changed and determine who would benefit from the changes. Since the Dene lacked legal title to their traditional lands and therefore had little control over development decisions, the two strands of thought merged during the inquiry into a seemingly unitary resistance to the pipeline proposal. George Erasmus, president of the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories, explained his outrage and opposition by placing the pipeline in the context of a long history of outside pressure on the Dene:

Too often in the past we have been compelled to adjust to changes that were beyond our control. For decade[s] there has been encroachment on our land without our permission and without compensation. Lands and resource[s] have been illegally alienated and appropriated and our people have experienced serious disruption—socially, economically, and environmentally. Contemporary pressures are greater still—and the potential for further disruption is vast—but now more and more of our people are saying “enough.”³⁷

In their testimony before Berger, many Dene residents expressed fear that the pipeline would disrupt local subsistence practices. They emphasized protecting the land to safeguard their economic use of it. As Gerald Meneko of Willow Lake observed, “All these people here are still making a living out of our land here and that’s the reason we don’t want this pipeline to come through. Us here depend on that and not everybody has the steady job, just trapping is one of our main ways of living.”³⁸ By protecting the land, the Dene sought to preserve their way of life against the pressures of development. The statement submitted by Shirley Baton, age 11, of Fort Franklin expressed this loyalty to a traditional life with textbook clarity:

When I say this is my land I mean it because I really enjoy living out on land and where we eat well. There is lots of work when we live out on land. We have to get firewood and branches for floor, and we get snow or ice for our drinking water and to cook with. My parents teach me how to make dry meat, and dry fish, and how to clean mouscrat. My parent had to learn from there parent and now they teach me how to live on land for a living. I don’t want pipeline or a dam, or a highway to go throw because I don’t want to lose my land where I enjoy living.³⁹

Many adult residents who testified shared Shirley Baton’s desire to retain a Dene way of life oriented around a trapping and subsistence economy. Blunt references to the destructive intrusiveness of white people differentiated between white and Dene cultures, and affirmed the desire to keep dominant society at bay. Elizabeth Yakaleya, of Willow Lake, stated her views as simply as Shirley Baton. “We don’t want pipeline,” Yakaleya maintained, “not maybe, we are saying because we don’t want the white people to destroy our land more.”⁴⁰

These Dene who sought to defend the indigenous economy sounded different notes than stereotyped romantic models of Native Americans spiritually bonded to the land. Meneko, Baton, and Yakaleya exemplify the predominant emphasis on the economic or material rather than purely spiritual bases of their opposition. They worried that a pipeline would damage the subsistence base of the northern economy. These opponents of the pipeline might well have rejected the development project under any circumstances. The traditional economic organization of their lives seemed simply at odds with large-scale industrial development. Yet as the growth in transfer payments reflected, the Dene had grown increasingly involved with Canadian society and depended on support from it. The Dene traditional world had independently incorporated many goods from outside, including the flour and baking powder that they used to make bannock, or the guns and metal traps that partly enabled their hunting and trapping. When Chief Henry Hardisty told Berger of his fears of the undesirable changes that the Mackenzie highway might bring to Wrigley, he defended the rhythms of life in a small settlement that was old-fashioned in some ways but not exactly aboriginal. It had emerged only in the previous decades:

I went to school in Simpson back in 1960’s before the highway come to Fort Simpson. There was—actually there was—it doesn’t look as today Fort Simpson look. The only thing I seen there was a small coffee shop and the Bay, then the Imperial Gas station, and then one small charter aircraft was there. As soon as the highway end at Fort Simpson, the people started coming in from the south, just took over the community completely. They do not care what had happened to the native people, they care about the income they have in their pocket—development, development, that’s what they have in mind. . . . As you can see, Mr. Berger, this settlement is nice and quiet. It has not been disturbed. If the highway is going to end here you’re going to see the same thing what they have in Simpson, it’s going to happen here.⁴¹

Many native leaders, including Henry Hardisty himself, were not committed to preserving a traditional economy against all change and they did not oppose the pipeline as intrinsically menacing. Rather, they feared the manner in which the project from its conception to its construction would be carried out. They thought of previous projects that had proceeded with little Dene involvement, such as the Yellowknife mines or the Norman Wells oil field, and they felt that the gas pipeline would be developed with similar disregard for their interests. It was with such earlier examples in mind that Gabe Hardisty of Wrigley asked "Why put the pipeline through? The Indians, we Dene people we're not going to make any money out of it, and only the white people are going to make money out of it. So we don't need the pipeline . . . We will just live like we used to, poor, and we're not going to get any richer by bringing the pipeline in."⁴²

In the years before the pipeline inquiry, Dene communities that shared Gabe Hardisty's bitterness tried to gain power over development planning and to receive greater benefits from regional projects. Their experience with two other major projects in the early 1970s prepared them for the controversy over the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. In late 1973, the Northern Canadian Power Commission announced its intent to build a third dam on the Snare River to provide electricity for the growing city of Yellowknife.⁴³ Chief Alexis Arrowmaker and the people of Fort Rae opposed the dam because it would further flood valuable shoreline hunting and trapping lands.⁴⁴ With the Power Commission determined to proceed regardless of native objection, Arrowmaker demanded that the people of Fort Rae receive free or less expensive electricity from the dam and that natives be employed in its construction. At a territorial Water Board hearing over the issuance of a land use permit, Arrowmaker revealed a new level of political engagement:

The last two dams we didn't know what to do. This time we want to know all that's going on—are we natives going to have jobs from this project. We are not saying yes right away. We make a living by hunting and trapping. We want to get a straight answer now about cheap electricity—then we will discuss yes or no about building the dam.⁴⁵

The dam license was issued in 1974. The Power Commission told Arrowmaker and the people of Fort Rae that if the Fort Rae band could prove ownership of the land it could receive royalties, but there would be no deals over free electricity.

Native communities responded in a similar way to the federal government's plan in 1972 to build a 1,000 mile year-round highway

from Fort Simpson to the town of Inuvik. Like Henry Hardisty, quoted above, many residents of the riverside settlements of Wrigley, Fort Norman, and Fort Good Hope opposed the highway because they feared the impact of the Southerners that the road might bring. Where Arrowmaker had demanded jobs and free electricity, Hardisty and others argued for construction contracts, payments for the gravel and other materials used, influence over the route the highway would take, and support for a community cooperative that would establish secondary businesses. In a letter to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development office in Yellowknife, a previous Wrigley chief, David Horesay, asked the ministry for control over and royalties from gravel and other materials used for the road.⁴⁶ Horesay asserted that the lands in question have

always been part of the traditional hunting and fishing area of the Fort Wrigley people. Since we are the original owners of this land, we naturally expect to derive some of the benefits which the land has to offer in terms of a rich storehouse of mineral wealth.⁴⁷

In Wrigley, as in Rae, a combination of resistance and demands from the communities marked the growing assertiveness among the native people of the Mackenzie Valley in the early 1970s. The central issue of contention was the power to decide what happened on the land and who should benefit from it.

As they saw official land rights become the basis for inclusion, Dene leaders came to regard the resolution of their land claims as essential to achieving a fuller say in decisions regarding northern development. Even as they sought to use the pipeline controversy to settle their land claims and thus protect the land-based sector of their economy, they also hoped that a settlement would allow them to participate in new development through jobs, royalties, direct investment, and project supervision. No development without a land claims settlement became the rallying cry throughout the pipeline inquiry.

How could the pipeline controversy help to resolve their land claims? By stalling the pipeline, Dene leaders hoped to improve their negotiating position and advance the process of settlement. Similar situations in Alaska and James Bay had shown how large-scale development projects could be turned partially to native benefit. Oil in Alaska and hydropower in James Bay had enabled rapid and substantial, while not entirely satisfactory, conclusions to claims negotiations in both cases. The Dene, as well as the Métis, began to

expect a similarly large claim settlement. A full-page picture of a woman carrying wood in the snow carried this exciting promise as its caption in the *Native Press* in 1974:

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THIS WOMAN WILL BE ONE OF THE RICHEST RESIDENTS IN THE NWT. WHY? BECAUSE A LAND CLAIM SETTLEMENT WILL BRING MILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO HER PEOPLE, AND HER LIFE OF HARD WORK WILL BE REWARDED BY A CHANCE TO FINALLY PLAN A GOOD LIFE FOR HER FAMILY. WHEN YOU'VE BEEN POOR ALL YOUR LIFE, IT IS HARD TO "THINK BIG" BUT WE WILL ALL BE ABLE TO SOON.⁴⁸

In an earlier article entitled "Alaska Natives Get Huge Land Settlement," the *Native Press* optimistically concluded that "the large amount of money and land Alaska got shows that native people's rights are important to the Canadian Government." Native leaders, the article declared, would compare Ottawa's offers to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and "token rewards will not be enough."⁴⁹ Dene leaders intended to get at least as good a deal as the Alaskan natives and the Cree, and projects like the gas pipeline were to be a central bargaining chip.⁵⁰

Legal title, they believed, would then also give them a firm basis for full participation in any pipeline or other development crossing their lands. Henry Hardisty of Wrigley expressed this view to Berger: "In order for the Dene to benefit from the pipeline, just give them time, give us time to settle our land claims."⁵¹ An early article in the *Native Press* on the possibility of a gas pipeline described the potential for jobs, cheap fuel, and new roads as benefits that they had to fight to ensure. "We won't let all this wealth pass by us" declared James Wahshee, president of the Indian Brotherhood in 1971.⁵²

The Métis and northern whites

At the start of Berger's pipeline inquiry, the organized leadership of both the Dene and the Métis jointly opposed the pipeline and demanded that land claims be settled prior to new development in the region. Richard Hardy, the president of the Métis Association of the Northwest Territories, initially declared "We are firmly united in our stand. . . . There will be no pipeline until the land claims issue is settled to our satisfaction."⁵³ In the actual course of the inquiry, however, the Métis expressed more ambivalent attitudes towards the pipeline than Dene leaders such as the Hardistys. Ultimately, during

a dramatic final day of testimony, Hardy softened his organization's earlier position and expressed strong support for the pipeline.

Responding to the preliminary report of the Commission, Hardy criticized the inquiry staff for being "too idealistic and too protective" of native society. He disputed the picture of "native people living in bush camps and small settlements and all having some dependence on the land." Changes had already occurred in the native communities, Hardy argued, and "most of the native people in the north now live in communities year round and at best depend on the land only in a subsidiary way." Hardy went so far as to reject outdated idealism about the native attachment to the land as not only false to reality, but also damaging to native interests:

We object strenuously to the idealistic view taken of native people in its association or attachment to the land. No useful purpose is served by such an idealistic view. We concur that native people have a certain use, attachment, and love of the land, but such feeling is not based on a daily grueling and tough existence from the land. . . .

We submit that life on the land is tough, so tough that the majority of native people have left such a life on the land to live in communities and have taken and accepted such things, services and commodities as government built houses, fuel oil stoves for their heat, electricity and food from the stores.⁵⁴

Hardy distinguished between a continued spiritual attachment to the land and an economic life that was beginning to grow distant from a direct dependence on the land. According to Hardy, northern society meant permanent settlements, wage employment, and modern conveniences, all of which "requires economic development. Otherwise apathy and depression sets in."⁵⁵ Hardy argued that renewable resource development necessitated concurrent exploitation of non-renewable resources.⁵⁶

While Hardy spoke with authority as president of the Métis Association of the Northwest Territories, demonstrating that subgroups within the broad category of native people could take a variety of positions on the issue of the pipeline and northern development, his opinion did not represent unanimity even among the Métis people. Bob Overold, in an open letter to the *Native Press* in February, 1977, sharply disagreed with Hardy's final position.⁵⁷ And while the Fort Simpson Territorial Councilman Bill Lafferty and two Métis, Liberal candidates for Parliament Richard Whitford and Joe Mercredi, all actively supported developments such as the pipeline and the Mackenzie highway, Wally Firth, the Métis member of Parliament

who was actually elected in 1974, opposed both the pipeline and the highway. Those Métis who strongly identified with their Dene heritage and who actively participated in bush life by hunting or trapping were predictably more likely to oppose the pipeline project.

The complex attitude of the Métis towards development projects and their lack of unity reflected important aspects of their identity as a people. In the Métis self-perception, as in their actual racial heritage, there was a mixture of Euro-Canadian and native. Métis people, such as Hardy, Lafferty, and Mercredi, proudly asserted their independent character. They saw themselves as combining the best parts of their dual heritage into a new, resilient breed of people. In their conception, the Métis existed on the border of two cultural worlds, able to succeed equally in both. The Métis Association's book, *Our Métis Heritage*, noted that "The Métis were equipped with survival mechanisms to operate in both worlds: they could hunt, trap, and live off the land like their Indian ancestors, or they could take advantage of their white ancestor's technology through education."⁵⁸ Many of the Métis people throughout the northern communities relied extensively on the resources of the bush. At the same time, the Métis joined white society more readily than the Dene. Two Métis men, Nick Sibbeston and Hardy, were the first two native lawyers in the Northwest Territories. The territorial Métis Association was also quick to set up a development corporation to assist participation in northern economic development.⁵⁹

The easier adaptation of the Métis to changes in the north did not surprise many Métis historians. They reasoned that their mixed heritage facilitated the transition:

The Métis has not experienced the impact of change to the extent that the Indian have in the north although there is much similarity in the kind of changes experienced by both groups with the arrival of modern technology and more generally the influence of southern lifestyles. The cultural association with their forefathers worked to their advantage. For this reason they were able to cope with, accept, and adapt to such rampant changes readily; cushioning to a large degree the social mishaps and often negative aspects that went along with this change.⁶⁰

Many Métis saw themselves as self-made, proud of their accomplishments as well as critical of the Dene who did not make so successful a transition to modern life. Métis spokespeople were often bitter about the special treatment accorded to the Status Indians, or those natives covered by government treaties, and alleged reverse discrimination as a result of affirmative action and Indian-focused

programs.⁶¹ In addition, much Métis pride came from their comparative success; while they presented themselves as self-made entrepreneurial types, they often characterized the Dene in condescending terms, as "shy" or "pacified people."⁶² In a section of an 1982 editorial entitled "Native youths too lazy to work," Joe Mercredi of Fort Simpson illustrated the differences he saw between the Dene and the Métis:

So often we've heard of self-determination from the Dene Nation. How can you instill in these youths of today, independence, when everything is given to them.

You notice the difference between the Dene and the Métis automatically in these small communities. The Métis have achieved this self-determination for generations.

They have built their own homes and take pride in being independent.

I remember when I was a teenager working as a dockhand on the boats, my father showed me the difference between the Métis and the Dene. He said "always look for the largest wood pile and you will always find a Métis family."⁶³

Mercredi's story exemplified the sentiments of many Métis people, particularly the more integrated ones. The Métis sense of their independent identity developed sufficiently for the Métis Association to publish "The Métis Declaration" in 1981, which asserted that as a "distinct people," they, too, constituted a "national identity."⁶⁴ Although the Métis clearly distinguished themselves from the Dene, they also defined themselves as aboriginal people. And while the Métis were often highly critical of the Dene, they acknowledged in "The Métis Declaration" that they inherited any aboriginal rights from the Dene ancestors who had coupled with Europeans. These connections were not only ancestral. In many communities, the differences between many Dene and Métis were blurred by intermarriage and a shared communal history and way of life.

The distinctions between and within the Dene and the Métis in the inquiry documents revealed a further difficult question for policymakers and northern society as a whole: whose voice counted as that of a "northern native?" Was identification as "native" based purely on blood connections to the aboriginal inhabitants of that sub-Arctic region? If so, then should the Métis people be considered half as native as the Dene? What about a Métis person who primarily trapped and hunted for a living and spoke only a native language in comparison to a bilingual Dene leader working in the capital city of Yellowknife? If identity were to be defined by attitude rather than blood, then

could one lose, or alternately gain, native identity by embracing a certain point of view? To determine whose voice was "legitimate" in the debate over the pipeline, these difficult questions needed to be answered. For in addition to the Métis, many of whose families had lived in the Mackenzie Valley for more than a hundred years, there were also white residents of the north who had been there for half a century. Did the opinion of non-natives matter? And what did they think? Again, the community hearings provide an interesting window on this ambiguous sector of the northern population.

In many ways, the non-native residents of the western Northwest Territories had an agenda very similar to that of native groups. Non-natives also pushed for greater local control over northern resources and political decision-making. They similarly used ideological language to protest imperialist-style rule by the south.⁶⁵ Gordon Erion, of the Northwest Territories Chamber of Commerce, deplored the "token visits of federal officials and experts to the north." He told Berger that the authority responsible for the pipeline needed to be located in the north, rather than in Calgary or Toronto. Like Richard Hardy, the Métis Association president, or Henry Hardisty, the Dene chief of Wrigley, Erion demanded that pipeline development directly benefit northern residents. He asked that "resource royalties be returned to the north" through reduced taxes and lower energy prices, as well as from subsidized municipal services and the creation of secondary industries related to the energy sector such as refineries.⁶⁶

But while Erion's call for northern benefits and control echoed the demands of native leaders, his position, and that of non-natives in general, differed considerably. Erion hoped to increase northern participation in development projects, strengthening the economic and political autonomy of the Northwest Territories within the existing framework of Canadian society. Erion and most other northern non-natives wanted the north to develop a southern pattern of wage employment, higher standards of living, and modern technology. They saw the native renewable resource-based economy as economically impractical and declared that "we just cannot see any potential alternatives to non-renewable resource development." The question "is one of determining a middle course between unrestrained development and no development."⁶⁷ For native peoples they held up the goal of integration through job training and economic assistance. The pipeline, declared Colin Alexander, the editor of *Yellowknife's News of the North*, was one of "the very economic opportunities through which [the native people] might aspire to achieve liberation from their economic and social depression."⁶⁸ Northern non-natives felt

betrayed by the federal government's rejection of the Mackenzie Valley pipeline, and they raised the spectre of a northern society unable to support itself, doomed to dependence upon the south. The native push for economic, political, and cultural self-determination had led only to "more of the handout society."⁶⁹

In the context of the pipeline inquiry, Dene leaders rejected the integrationist ideal of the non-natives. They agitated instead for group rights and increased tribal control, even aspiring for some type of political independence from Ottawa.⁷⁰ Most importantly, Dene leaders questioned the wisdom of building the gas pipeline at that time; they, like the Métis, wanted a settlement of aboriginal claims before any new development occurred. For the most part, non-native residents, having no land claims and generally feeling threatened by the idea of aboriginal claims, saw no need to delay the pipeline in order to settle them.⁷¹

Beyond the valley: "What we are saying is that development. . . should benefit local people."

The transcripts and exhibits of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry allow a fresh view into the diverse interconnected communities of northern Canada. The voices audible in these transcripts and documents are neither uniform nor timeless; some of the radicalism of the Dene leaders waned with the end of the 1970s, as did the custom of taking one's entire family into the bush for winter hunting and trapping.⁷² The essential issues of competing economic aspirations among diverse and already destabilized populations represent, however, far more than a merely local or transitory phenomenon.

The past two decades of oil development in Ecuador have revealed crucial similarities to the central themes of the Mackenzie Valley pipeline controversy.⁷³ In Ecuador's northeastern provinces, the development of oil resources after 1972 brought indigenous groups opportunities such as those sought by native residents in northern Canada, including access to employment, education, and health care. At the same time, new oil company roads into Ecuador's Amazonian region attracted thousands of non-native agricultural colonists who settled and deforested native lands. Because the Amazonian native groups lacked official title to the lands on which they traditionally relied for subsistence, the government declared the region full of "tierras baldias," or empty lands, that were the property of the state and available for both national agrarian reform and petroleum development. This paralleled the Canadian government's claim to

northern lands as Crown lands. In Ecuador's Amazon, settlement and oil development proceeded without consultation with local residents, and indigenous groups received little or no compensation for either massive loss of land or severe industrial pollution. They also received no royalties from oil development. The unsuccessful pipeline proposals in Canada's Mackenzie Valley had promised a comparable distribution of costs and benefits.

Historical changes occurring in the Ecuadorian Amazon by the early 1970s also matched the Canadian experience in many ways, similarly complicating debates over economic development in that hinterland. As in Canada's Fort Simpson, Fort Good Hope, or Fort Resolution, a bilingual generation of young adults assumed leadership roles in native Ecuadorian communities made permanent only in the previous decade or two. These leaders, like the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories, allied initially with sympathetic non-natives, particularly in the Catholic Church, and manifested a radical sense of indigenous identity in opposition to state domination. As in Canada, residents of the settlements sought new opportunities to supplement ongoing subsistence activities. Consequently, even as natives protested the negative impacts of oil development on fish and wildlife populations, they simultaneously sought employment on seismic crews and construction teams. These concerns matched those of many native Northerners who spoke to the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry. Finally, in Ecuador, as in Canada's Yellowknife and Fort Simpson, the new residents of the hinterland—the non-native settlers—quickly came to identify their interests regionally and to criticize their poor treatment by the national government.⁷⁴

Hinterland communities in Canada's Mackenzie Valley, like their counterparts in Eastern Ecuador as well as in Alaska and Mexico, have become irrevocably linked to the economies of their respective countries, yet they have wielded only limited control over the process of decision-making that has shaped their fate. While they have enjoyed relatively few of the benefits of the industrial development that came to their region in the early 1970s, they have borne most of the costs in the form of loss of land and the disruption of their economic and cultural life.⁷⁵

These hinterland communities have not possessed the military, economic, or political power to force outsiders to heed their demands for inclusion and to recognize the rights that they claim as members of a distinct cultural group and residents of an area. Strikingly, during the past twenty-five years, native peoples have increasingly been able to use their "moral" power to influence the decisions of

outsiders. They have achieved political power by persuading non-natives that their claims to land have a moral as well as legal justification. Berger underscored this idea of moral responsibility in *Northern Frontier, Northern Homeland*, his final report from the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry: "What happens in the North," he declared, "will tell us what kind of a country Canada is; it will tell us what kind of people we are."⁷⁶ The national society in Canada heard this moral claim both because the ideological fervor of the 1960s had prepared the society to hear the voices of its native residents, and also because those voices were more forceful and articulate than ever before.

The Dene, Métis, and non-native Northerners did not speak to Berger in a simple and unitary voice. Rather they sought to resolve on their own terms the cultural and economic dilemmas of life in the far north. Instead of a dogmatic opposition to all change and development, the most widely expressed sentiment of all northern peoples, both native and non-native, was their aspiration to shape their own destiny. Dene leader George Erasmus explained this attitude as clearly as possible in his expression of the Dene idea of development:

Development has to be something that is transferring control to the people. If you look at either pipelines, or sawmills, or dams, or new mines, we are not against any of those kinds of things. What we are saying is that development should be orderly, it should be planned, it should be at the pace of the local people, it should benefit local people.⁷⁷

If, amidst international free trade agreements and escalating multinational development, we seek in these stories some principles of development policy that could incorporate the range of often contradictory viewpoints heard in the pipeline inquiry, we might begin by side-stepping differences in spiritual views or abstract questions of adaptability to change. Such cultural attitudes are a central part of this story, yet discussion of petroleum development that focuses on subjects such as legal rights, compensation, and local control incorporates a broader range of native opinion about economy and culture, encompassing both fear of change and hopes for new opportunities.

In the case of communities in Canada, Dene residents came to believe that control over their land was the key to empowering themselves to act on their own behalf, rather than to simply fight off external greed. Berger came to the same conclusion after listening to northern Canadians talk to his inquiry about northern development. In his final report, Berger argued that no pipeline should be built for

ten years to allow the settlement of land claims and the establishment of new institutions in the valley. He thought delay would allow for greater diversification in the territorial economy. Berger told the government and the Canadian people that "a settlement of native claims is the point of departure from which all other land uses, including major industrial uses, must be determined."⁷⁸

The example of the riverside community of Fort Good Hope illustrates how local control produced innovative answers to difficult socio-economic questions. During the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, Fort Good Hope was a bastion of resistance against the pipeline. Its chief, Frank T'Seleie, denounced the president of one gas company for being a "modern-day General Custer" and threatened an explosion of violent resistance if the companies and the government proceeded with the pipeline project.⁷⁹ In the end, Fort Good Hope and other opponents of the pipeline won their battle. A natural gas pipeline from either Prudhoe Bay or the Mackenzie Delta has yet to be built.

The world of Fort Good Hope kept changing after the rejection of the pipeline. The community continued to move away from a traditional Dene way of life towards a settlement-based existence increasingly oriented around schools, wage labor, English, and television. The town also changed politically. After an extended struggle, the Dene band took over the local government, displacing the earlier settlement council. The community also began to outline its claim to the surrounding area, and through its stridency effectively gained ownership of those lands.⁸⁰ Extra-legal community land claims and unconventional band governance exemplified the compromises of a modern "middle ground," created through native insistence and non-native concession.

With new control over the political process and over surrounding natural resources, Fort Good Hope leaders were prepared to see outside companies in a new light. In the late 1980s several oil companies began to look into the possibility of exploration work around the Fort Good Hope area. The Canadian Government favored the interests of British Petroleum and gave them permission to explore on lands claimed by the federal government. Yet Fort Good Hope, empowered by unofficial recognition of its claim to surrounding lands, protested the British Petroleum proposal and forced the company to withdraw. Community leaders then negotiated with a different company, Chevron, to produce an unusual joint venture project in 1986. In exchange for their agreement to allow the development to proceed, Dene leaders forced the government and Chevron to accede to a

number of conditions, including stringent environmental monitoring by the community, an arrangement for royalty payments if Chevron made a commercial find, and specific guidelines for employing community members and using local contractors for jobs. At its peak, jobs associated with the Chevron venture employed approximately 70 percent of the working community.⁸¹ Town residents viewed the joint venture as a success. When I visited them at the end of exploratory work in 1991, they were disappointed only that Chevron had not found any commercial deposits.

Empowered to negotiate on their own behalf, the leaders of Fort Good Hope acted in an innovative way to reconcile the disparate viewpoints represented in the testimony of the pipeline inquiry. By accepting the development, they acknowledged the economic malaise of a region badly hurt by the decline in fur prices, and consequently in large part dependent on government assistance. But by arranging for community monitoring of Chevron's exploration work, Fort Good Hope asserted the continuing importance of the surrounding lands to the community. Every time the group of community elders inspected Chevron's work sites, Fort Good Hope reaffirmed and safeguarded the world of hunting, trapping, and fishing that continued to be important to many residents and that they had so jealously defended during the pipeline inquiry. Through this participation, the community assured that Chevron kept to its agreements and respected the local environment. The Fort Good Hope solution, a blend of development with strict environmental monitoring and with increased economic and political benefits to the local population, would likely disappoint both southern environmentalists striving to stop oil and gas development in the north and companies wishing to avoid new financial and environmental obligations. Yet it was a truly indigenous response, a compromise that sought to resolve the social and economic dilemmas expressed so eloquently in the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry.

Fort Good Hope's decision to compromise and negotiate with outside oil companies is not the only possible indigenous response to proposed resource development.⁸² The Canadian controversy provides not so much a model for public policy as an example to help understand similar situations. In Canada, some local economic and cultural activities such as trapping and hunting conflicted with the proposed pipeline, as they did with the Snare River Dam and the Mackenzie Highway, so people resisted a project that they thought threatened them more than it promised opportunity. In the tension between the interests of the native minority and the nation as a whole

—between the local community of Fort Good Hope and the federal government and the oil companies—potential compromise replaced polarization when local peoples gained control. They participated in deciding where and how development would proceed, and in what way the benefits would be distributed.

Local control remained distinct from local consensus. As the testimony of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry revealed, northern peoples had divided and at times contradictory impulses when it came to northern development. As individuals and communities, they expressed a variety of points of view about a situation that was in flux. They sought to minimize threats to the cherished aspects of "bush" life while also incorporating new technologies and benefits from the larger society. Within the same communities, people differed in how they valued the various factors influencing their lives, such as populations of wildlife, degrees of isolation, amounts of cash for televisions, videos, outboard motors, and snowmobiles, or availability of state-funded health care and education.

In the 1970s as today, rather than being timeless communities, the indigenous peoples of the north existed *in* history. Previous to the pipeline inquiry, communities had already incorporated changes to their aboriginal way of life, some initiated locally and others caused by outsiders. Often what people described as their traditional world was not a preserved specimen from an ancient past, but rather a way of life that had evolved in concert with the fur trade, missions, mines and transportation infrastructure. Just because these people lived in history, however, did not condemn them to be victims of it. The pipeline inquiry shows the Dene, Métis, non-native Northerners, Berger and his staff, pipeline company workers and lawyers, all as active participants making history together, if not always in accord. For these diverse people interacting in late-twentieth century Canada, the structure of their political and economic relationship—rather than a decision about whether to have such a connection at all—was the central issue in the Mackenzie Valley pipeline controversy.

¹ I would like to thank William Cronon, George Miles, Hal Rothman, Margery and Jim Sabin, and Richard White for their encouragement and criticisms of earlier versions of this study. I am also grateful to Emily Bazelon, Robin Einhorn, David Engerman, David Igler, Dara O'Rourke, and two anonymous reviewers for their comments. A Robert C. Bates Fellowship from Yale University provided much appreciated funding for research in Ottawa and the Northwest Territories in the summer of 1991.

² María Guadalupe and Velazquez Guzman "Afectaciones petroleras en Tabasco: El movimiento del Pacto Ribereño," *Revista Mexicana de Sociología* 44:1 (1982): 167-188. The farmers rose up twice more to demand compensation for damages related to oil development, only to be suppressed by the military. Finally, in 1980, the Mexican state oil company agreed to increase its contribution to local infrastructure and new construction. The company also agreed to pay a special tax to the state government to fund urban improvements and to provide some compensation to farmers.

³ Canada. *Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry: Proceedings at the Community Hearings*, 77 volumes. Ottawa: Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, 1977.

Canada. *Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry: Proceedings at the Hearings*, 204 volumes. Ottawa: Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, 1977.

Canada. *Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry: Exhibits*. Ottawa: Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, 1977.

The inquiry record is available in print and on microfilm (Toronto: Micromedia, 1977), at many libraries in Canada. Harvard's Widener Library, which has the microfilm, is, as far as I know, the only library in the United States that has a copy of the material. One useful guide to the proceedings is Rosemary Wallbank, ed. *Index to the Transcripts of the hearings of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry*, (Final Edition. Ottawa: Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, 1977) which indexes the 204 volumes of formal hearings as well as the 77 volumes of community hearings. The Index provides a list of the participants in the inquiry, and although the descriptions of the testimony are abbreviated, the many cross-listings are very helpful. Another reference guide for the inquiry record is *North of 60°: Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry: Summaries of Proceedings* (volumes 1-6) prepared and edited by the staff of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (Ottawa: Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, 1976-1977.) For the community hearings the fourth volume of *North of 60°* is handier than the Index, since it breaks down the descriptions by town and provides more extensive summaries of people's testimony. Other volumes address socio-economic aspects of the pipeline, the physical and living environments, and the formal hearings.

The experience of Alaskan Natives with the Trans-Alaskan Pipeline and with land claims has obvious parallels to the story told here about Canada, but will not be elaborated in this article. For more on the Alaska pipeline and native claims, see, among other works: Robert Arnold, et al. *Alaska Native Land Claims*. (Anchorage: The Alaska Native Foundation, 1976.); Thomas R. Berger, *Village Journey: The Report of the Alaska Native Review Commission*. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1984.); Mary Clay Berry, *The Alaska Pipeline: The Politics of Oil and Native Land Claims*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975.); Joseph G. Jorgensen, *Oil Age Eskimos*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.); Lael Morgan, *And the Land Provides: Alaskan Natives in a Year of Transition*. (Garden City, New York: Anchor Press, Doubleday & Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1974.) For a recent interpretation emphasizing the environmental aspects of the Alaskan pipeline controversy, see Peter Coates, *The Trans-Alaska Pipeline Controversy* (London: Associated University Press, 1993).

⁴ Although the arctic Mackenzie Delta was also a crucial part of the pipeline inquiry, the Delta and the Valley have historically tended to be separate regions and this article will narrow its focus to the Mackenzie Valley. A parallel debate over northern development occurred in the Inuit communities at the same time, although concern for the fragile Delta environment dominated the inquiry in the Delta region more than in the Valley.

The "Dene" of the western Northwest Territories consist of people from a number of different tribes, including the Hare, Slavey, Chippewa, Dogrib, Loucheux, Nahanni, and Yellowknife. The word "Dene," meaning "the people," like the Navajo "Dine," has been used to refer to these sub-arctic Athapaskan groups as a unit since the 1960s and 1970s, when the idea of a "Dene Nation" began to be first discussed. The Métis, or "mixed bloods," of the Mackenzie Valley split into two general groups: the partly-French Métis of the southern valley mostly migrated north from Saskatchewan after the defeat of the Métis Nation in 1885, while the Métis of the northern valley (some also in the southern region) were products of unions occurring since 1850 between local native women and northern European men. (Richard Slobodin, "Subarctic Métis" in June Helm, ed. *Handbook of North American Indians: Volume 6: Subarctic*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1981, 361-362.) For more on the Métis generally, see Joe Sawchuck, *The Métis of Manitoba: Reformulation of an Ethnic Identity*. Toronto: Peter Martin Associates, 1978; Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S. H. Brown, eds., *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985; Marcel Giraud, *The Métis in the Canadian West*, translated by George Woodcock, 2 vols. 1945; English translation, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986; John Mack Faragher, "Americans, Mexicans, Métis: A

Community Approach to the Comparative Study of North American Frontiers," in William Cronon, George Miles, and Jay Gitlin, eds., *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1992, 90-109.

⁵ Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

⁶ *New York Times*, 22 March 1974, 55.

⁷ Berger, *Northern Frontier, Northern Homeland: Report of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry*. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1977 (rev. ed. of volume 1, Douglas & McIntyre, 1988), 1:47-8, xiv. For a thorough examination of how frost heaves and thaw settlement pose serious ecological problems peculiar to northern pipelines, see Peter J. Williams, *Pipelines and Permafrost: Science in a Cold Climate*, (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1986).

Berger advocated a ban on industrial development in the northern Yukon and a ten year moratorium on pipeline construction in the Mackenzie Valley to allow for the settlement of native land claims. The National Energy Board (NEB), the entity actually responsible for approving or rejecting the proposals, released its own report, *Reasons for Decision: Northern Pipelines*, two months after Berger, with whom the Board had been in close competition to finish first. Apparently accepting many of Berger's conclusions, the NEB also rejected the Mackenzie Valley proposals. In its criticism of the projects, the Board invoked some of Berger's arguments, citing the sensitive habitats of the caribou, snow geese, and whales, and the need to settle native land claims. The conditions established by the NEB regarding hiring, work stoppages, payment of indirect costs, and a governmental monitoring system also illustrated Berger's influence (National Energy Board, *Reasons for Decision, Northern Pipelines*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1977), 187-188).

The NEB's decision against the Mackenzie Valley had as much to do with the size of proven reserves on the Delta as with regional considerations. The Board noted in its report that the estimate of reserves had changed since the discussion of a northern pipeline began: "five years later," the NEB report observed, "the expectation (sic) of large finds of oil and gas in the Delta and Beaufort Sea are much reduced." The prospect of an energy corridor had come to appear "somewhat remote." (National Energy Board, *Reasons for Decision*, chapter 5: 187) As the economic consequences of switching to the Alcan route and perhaps losing the reserves at the Mackenzie Delta seemed slight, the NEB could concede a political victory to Berger and the forces he represented.

Although approved by both the United States and Canada, the Alcan pipeline was never built. The inability of Foothills to muster the resources necessary for the natural gas pipeline revealed that financial incentives for a northern natural gas pipeline had been weaker than originally imagined. In 1983, the *New York Times* reported that the pipeline would be delayed until 1989 at the earliest, and probably not built until later. "The reasons," according to the *New York Times*, "include the persistent abundance of oil worldwide, a similar abundance of far cheaper gas in the United States, the steep rise in estimated costs, and severe financing problems." See *New York Times*, 18 March 1983, D1. In Canada, for example, estimated proved reserves of natural gas actually rose dramatically during this time period, from 50.7 trillion cubic feet (tcf) in 1970 to 99.7 tcf in 1986. Worldwide, natural gas reserves more than doubled, from 1,491.3 tcf in 1970 to 3,480.5 tcf in 1986. see "Estimated Proved World Reserves of Natural Gas Annually as of January 1," Section XIII, Table 1, from the *Basic Petroleum Data Book*, Petroleum Industry Statistics, Volume XI, #1. Washington D.C.; American Petroleum Institute, January, 1991. This growth in reserves reduced the demand for the estimated 7 tcf found on the Delta; thus the need for Arctic gas anticipated in the 1970's did not materialize in the 1980s.

⁸ Robert Page, *Northern Development: A Canadian Dilemma*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 23. For a more extreme expression of this division, see Hugh McCullum and Karmel McCullum, *This Land is Not for Sale: Canada's Original People and Their Land A Saga of Neglect, Exploitation, and Conflict*, (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1975). The McCullums describe Dene leader James Washee as "visionary, almost prophetic" and portray Berger as a crusading knight [McCullum, *This Land is Not for Sale*, 164].

⁹ James R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 254.

¹⁰ Thomas R. Berger, *Fragile Freedoms: Human Rights and Dissent in Canada*, (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited, 1981), xii.

¹¹ For a more detailed discussion of the inquiry process as a model for future impact assessment, see a post-inquiry article by technical adviser D. J. Gamble in Gamble, "The Berger Inquiry," *Science*, 199 (3 March 1978):946-952.

¹² Frank T'Seleie, Fort Good Hope, 5 August 1975. Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, Exhibit C-109-1. Hereafter, materials from the inquiry record will be referred to as MVPI (with V indicating the formal transcript volume; C the community transcripts; and Exhibit C- the community exhibits).

¹³ *Native Press*, 12 April 1976, 16.

¹⁴ Alena Baton, Willow Lake, 26 June 1975. MVPI, C-10, 851-852. The records of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry are entirely in English. Those who did not speak English, such as Alena Baton, had their testimony translated at the time by a member of the community or by a staff translator. In addition to the spoken record, Berger also collected written statements and letters, as well as other evidence pertaining to land conflicts, treaty rights, and the Mackenzie Highway construction.

¹⁵ The Northwest Company established a trading post on Great Slave Lake in 1786, and Alexander Mackenzie explored the Mackenzie River in 1789. For dates, see Beryl Gillespie, "Yellowknife," in Helm, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians: Volume 6: Subarctic*, 287.

¹⁶ Beryl Gillespie, "Major Fauna in the Traditional Economy," in Helm, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians: Volume 6: Subarctic*, 15-18.

¹⁷ René Fumoleau, *As Long As This Land Shall Last: A History of Treaty 8 and Treaty 11 1870-1939*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1973, 30, 47, 328, 331.

¹⁸ The 1931 census estimated 9,723 northerners, with 4,670 Inuit, 4,046 Dene, and 1,007 white and Métis. (Fumoleau, *As Long As This Land Shall Last*, 263)

¹⁹ Fumoleau, *As Long As This Land Shall Last*, 133, 248, 243, 287, 300.

²⁰ Ken Coates, *Canada's Colonies: A History of the Yukon and Northwest Territories* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1985), 176-180. Although Alaska never used the oil, the Canol pipeline was completed in 1944. During pipeline construction, Americans substantially developed the transportation system of the western Northwest Territories. They built a winter road to Norman Wells and a network of permanent air strips, and they expanded barge traffic on the Mackenzie River. See Patricia S. Barry, *The Canol Project: An Adventure of the U.S. War Department in Canada's Northwest*, (Edmonton: P.S. Barry), 1985.

²¹ Ray Price, *Yellowknife*. (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates), 1967, 150.

²² Government of the Northwest Territories, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories*, (Yellowknife: Department of Information, 1971), 130, 125.

²³ Two well-known anthropological works about subarctic native peoples, Adrian Tanner's *Bringing Home Animals* (London: C. Hurst & Company, 1979), and Richard Nelson's *Make Prayers to the Raven: A Koyukon View of the Northern Forest* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), raise important questions about this period of economic and cultural change in the north.

Although neither Tanner's study of the Mistassini Cree in Quebec nor Nelson's portrait of the Koyukon in Alaska are directly about the native people of the Mackenzie Valley, both works document sub-arctic Athapascans at the same critical moment in the 1970s. Both anthropologists characterize the people they study as precariously poised between traditional and modern societies. Both studies take an anthropologist's cross-section of native society at that moment in time, rather than a historian's longitudinal slice of how the society was changing. Tanner acknowledges, for example, that "I have chosen merely to note the forecast of the imminent disappearance of the fur trade and subsistence hunting as an economic base at Mistassini, and to describe and analyse the society as a functioning economic and social system" (Tanner, 2). For historians, the anomalies set aside by Tanner and Nelson—children speaking only English or the fur trade entering decline—are among the critical places to begin an analysis of the controversies over northern development.

²⁴ Territorial Council resolution quoted in Michael Asch, "The Dene Economy," in Mel Watkins, *The Dene Nation: The Colony Within*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 47-61, 53. See also Peter Clancy, "State Policy and the Native Trapper: Post-War Policy toward Fur in the Northwest Territories," in Kerry Abel and Friesen, eds., *Aboriginal Resource Use in Canada: Historical and Legal Aspects*, (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1991), 191-217.

²⁵ Ministry of Northern Affairs and National Resources, *The Northwest Territories Today: A Reference Paper for the Advisory Commission on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories*, (Ottawa: Ministry of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1965), 55. The numbers should be taken as a rough estimate. Apparently, the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, who carried out the economic survey, may not have included the value of wild food products as income and may not have included the entire registered native population.

²⁶ Page, *Northern Development*, 221.

27 Berger, *Northern Frontier, Northern Homeland: Volume 1*, 90-91. The first Catholic residential school was established in Fort Providence in 1867 by the Grey Nuns, but orphans made up the majority of the students. School attendance became standard for all school-age children when the government's New Education Programme made it compulsory in 1955 and new schools began to be constructed throughout the Northwest Territories.

28 *Native Press*, 26 April 1974, 12.

29 Space precludes a full examination of these extensive south-north and native-non-native alliances during the 1970s and the pipeline inquiry in particular. For more on the relationship between Canadian churches and northern native people, see Roger Hutchinson's *Prophets, Pastors and Public Choices: Canadian Churches and the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Debate*. (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1992). Hutchinson examines the advocacy work of "Project North," a joint effort on behalf of northern natives begun in 1975 and supported by the Anglican, Roman Catholic, and United Churches of Canada. Project North was particularly active during the pipeline controversy. See also the Canadian Catholic Conference's "Northern Development: At What Cost? The Labour Day Message of the Catholic Bishops of Canada," 1975, MVPI, Exhibit C-190; and McCullum and McCullum, *This Land is Not For Sale*.

30 Page, *Northern Development*, 71.

31 Dene Nation, *Denendeh: A Dene Celebration* (Yellowknife: The Dene Nation, 1984), 136-142.

32 Dene Nation, *Denendeh*, 138.

33 Father René Fumoleau, interview with the author, (Yellowknife, NWT, 27 June 1991); Dene Nation, *Denendeh*, 136.

34 Dene Nation, *Denendeh*, 136.

35 *Native Press*, 6 August 1976, 1.

36 *Native Press*, 15 March 1976, 10.

37 George Erasmus at the preliminary hearings of the MVPI, as reported in the *Native Press*, 26 April 1974, 6.

38 Gerald Meneko, (Willow Lake, June 26, 1975), MVPI, C-10, 856.

39 Shirley Baton, (Fort Franklin, 28 June 1975), MVPI, Exhibit C-20. Spelling as in original.

40 Elizabeth Yakaleya, (Willow Lake, 26 June 1975), MVPI, C-10, 849.

41 Chief Henry Hardisty, (Wrigley, 10 September 1975), MVPI, C28: 2788.

42 Gabe Hardisty, (Wrigley, 10 September 1975), MVPI, C-28, 2798.

43 *Native Press*, 19 January 1974, 1.

44 *Native Press*, 22 February 1974, 1.

45 Chief Alexis Arrowmaker at the territorial Water Board public hearing, as reported in the *Native Press*, 22 February 1974, 5.

46 David Horesay to Wally Gryba, MVPI, Exhibit C-205 from the *Native Press*.

47 David Horesay, MVPI, Exhibit C-205 from the *Native Press*.

48 *Native Press*, 2 February 1974, 12.

49 *Native Press*, 8 February 1972, 1.

49 As well as raise the hopes of the native peoples of the Northwest Territories, the Alaskan and James Bay settlements shaped their fears. In a 1974 article entitled "What happened in Alaska?" the *Native Press* described the way that the Alaskan claims settlement organized native holdings into corporations, and criticized how the need to manage these new institutions forced Alaskan villagers "to change from their traditional ways of running their community, and to understand the new method of corporations." (*Native Press*, 10 April 1974, 5). The exchange of land for a large cash settlement, however, disturbed the Dene more than the corporate structure, revealing the tension within the community between desire for control of land and interest in cash. The Dene hoped that since whites had made fewer inroads into the Northwest Territories than in Alaska, they could avoid the pitfalls of the earlier land settlements, thereby retaining control of land and receiving money at the same time. The Dene criticized the James Bay settlement for its extinguishment of aboriginal rights, and bemoaned the fact that the Cree and the Inuit had been pressured to make a poor deal. ("\$150,000,000 James Bay Sellout," *Native Press*, 18 November 1974, 6). While the "get it while you can" mentality had some appeal to northern natives, at least some leaders aspired to a more principled and more successful settlement. (Interview with Barney Masazumi, resident of Fort Good Hope and organizer of the Indian Brotherhood, Fort Good Hope, NWT 14 July 1991.) The stronger position taken by the Dene resulted in no settlement at all. Whether their toughness be criticized for undermining negotiations or praised for preventing disastrous deals with a government that negotiated in poor faith, the Dene strategy (and the government's ultimate decision not to build the gas pipeline) had the effect of delaying a settlement of land claims for at least 15 years. While the Inuit on the Mackenzie Delta came to a

final agreement with the Government in 1984, the Dene and the Métis claims haven't fallen apart numerous times. By the 1990s, the Dene claims were being renegotiated at a regional level, with the first of these claims—that of the Gwich'in—initialled during the summer of 1991. The Métis Association withdrew its claim.

50 Henry Hardisty, (Wrigley, 10 September 1975), MVPI, C-28, 2793-4.

51 James Washee in "the pipeline: NOW IT'S GAS," *Native Press*, 22 May 1971, 1. Washee also called for more study of the potential impact of the pipeline.

52 *Edmonton Journal*, 8 March 1975, 1.

53 Richard Hardy, (Yellowknife, 19 November 1976), MVPI, V204, 32254-55.

54 Hardy, 19 November 1976. MVPI, V204, 32249.

55 Hardy, 19 November 1976. MVPI, V204, 32258.

56 Bob Overold, open letter, *Native Press*, 3 February 1977.

57 Joanne Overold Burger, ed. *Our Métis Heritage...a portrayal*, The Métis Association of the NWT, 1976, 95.

58 Hardy mentioned the forming of a development corporation in his final testimony although the organization actually came into being several years later.

59 Burger, *Our Métis Heritage*, 125.

60 Joe Mercredi, in one small example, accused the Fort Simpson hospital of discrimination

towards Métis and Non-Status Indians in an article in the *Métis Newsletter*, Vol. 1, #22, 15 July 1982, 3.

61 "Shy" from Bill Lafferty, testimony at Jean Marie River, 12 September 1975, MVPI, C-29, 2874;

"pacified people" from anonymous interview with the author, 30 June 1991.

62 Joe Mercredi editorial, *Métis Newsletter*, Vol. 1, #24, 15 September 1982, 5.

63 "The Métis Declaration," Special Edition *Métis Newsletter*, 21 August 1981, 11.

64 Coates' *Canada's Colonies* is an important critique by a non-native northerner of the "inequitable constitutional, political and economic base" that has "institutionalized the unstable development of the Yukon and Northwest Territories." (Coates, *Canada's Colonies*, 14).

65 Gordon Erion, (Fort Simpson, 8 September 1975), MVPI, C-25, 2496.

66 Gordon Erion, MVPI, V204: 32295-32296.

67 Alexander, Colin, *Angry Society* (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Yellowknife Publishing Company, 1976), 34.

68 David Searle, as quoted in *Edmonton Journal*, 5 July 1977, 12.

69 See, for example, the "Dene Declaration" released during the pipeline inquiry in which Dene leaders demanded the recognition of the "Dene Nation" and some form of self-determination, MVPI, Exhibit C-190.

70 In *Sunrise on Mackenzie*, for example, longtime Fort Simpson resident Dick Turner rejected the aboriginal claims of the Indian Brotherhood: "They speak often of something they call 'aboriginal rights' as if this were a Divine right from Heaven. I declare just as vehemently that there is no such thing in Canada as 'aboriginal rights' for anyone." (Dick Turner, *Sunrise on Mackenzie* Seattle, Washington: Hancock House, 1977), 39. For a similar viewpoint, although not from the Northwest Territories, see Rod Sykes, Mayor of Calgary, MVPI, Exhibit C-286. While most whites were unsympathetic to native claims, Alternatives North, a Yellowknife based group with a non-native membership of between 30-100 people, did organize during the pipeline controversy to support aboriginal claims. (Letter to the editor, *News of the North*, 6 July 1977), 4.

71 One sign of changing times in the community of Fort Good Hope, for example, is the small number of families that currently participate in the trapping economy. In 1991, only ten of seventy-nine trappers took their families out with them on the land. (Barney Masazumi, "Renewable Resources: Building on Tradition. Implications for the traditional economy from a Dene Perspective," unpublished paper, February 1991).

72 The following remarks on the Ecuadorian case are drawn from the author's year of research in Ecuador (1992-93). I am grateful to the Charles P. Howland Fellowship for financial support. The native groups discussed in the text are the Quichua, Siona-Secoya, Cofán, and Huaorani.

73 In 1984, for example, non-native protesters in the Amazon blocked access to production sites—and one person even dynamited the Trans-Ecuadorian pipeline—to demand that a greater portion of oil rents be returned to the region in the form of improved schools, roads, water systems, and electrical supplies. See Jon McLin, *Social and economic effects of petroleum development in non-OPEC developing countries: Synthesis Report*, (Geneva: International Labour Organisation, 1986), 23-24. For more on the Ecuadorian case, see Judith Kimerling, "Disregarding Environmental Law: Petroleum Development in Protected Natural Areas and Indigenous Homelands in the Ecuadorian Amazon," *The Hastings International and Comparative Law Review* 14:4, (1991) 849-903; Jorge E. Uquillas and

Shelton Davis, "La Question Territoriale y Ecológica entre los Pueblos Indígenas de la Selva Baja del Ecuador," in *Derechos Territoriales Indígenas y Ecología*, (Bogotá: Fundación Gaia-Cerec, 1992). and Uquillas, "Social impacts of modernization and public policies and prospects for indigenous development in the Ecuadorian Amazon," in Debra Schuman and William Patridge, eds. *The Human Ecology of Tropical Land Settlement in Latin America*, (Boulder: Westview, 1989).

⁷⁴ Numerous studies in American legal and economic history, particularly with regard to internal improvements in the early nineteenth century United States, are suggestive for analysis of how redefinitions of northern rights subsidized government and industry in these petroleum hinterlands in the late twentieth century. See, among others, Morton J. Horwitz, *The Transformation of American Law, 1780-1860*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977); Harry N. Scheiber, "Property Law, Expropriation, and Resource Allocation by Government: The United States, 1789-1910," *Journal of Economic History* 33, no. 1-2 (1973): 232-295, and Scheiber, "The Road to Munn: Eminent Domain and the Concept of Public Purpose in the State Courts," *Perspectives in American History* 5 (1971): 329-402; and Gary Kulik, "Dams, Fish, and Farmers: Defense of Public Rights in Eighteenth-Century Rhode Island," in Steven Hahn and Jonathan Prude, *The Countryside in the Age of Capitalist Transformation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985): 25-50.

⁷⁵ Berger, *Northern Frontier, Northern Homeland: Volume I*, 1.

⁷⁶ George Erasmus, from Dene Nation, *Denendeh*, 62.

⁷⁷ Berger, *Northern Frontier, Northern Homeland: Volume I*, 83. The Dene response to the Norman Wells oil pipeline (completed in 1985) further illustrated how the Dene leadership sought to shape the process of extraction according to their own values and needs. When the national government approved the pipeline before settling Dene land claims, Dene leaders denounced the approval as "a complete ripoff and a planned theft of staggering proportions." When subsequent demands for royalties from the oil, for proof of the pipeline's minimal environmental impact, and for the establishment of a monitoring agency went unmet, Dene leaders expressed bitter disappointment, noting that "As the oil leaves Denendeh so do some hopes of a land where the Dene have control and benefit from the exploitation of their resources." The Dene did ultimately negotiate a successful joint drilling venture with Esso Resources Canada.

[For quotes, see Dene Nation Newsletter v1 (June, 1980): 4, and "Down the Pipeline flow Dene hopes of control," Dene Nation Newsletter (January 25, 1985): 2. See also the Dene Nation's "Short-term Evaluation of the Dene Experience with the Norman Wells Project and Recommendations for Future Projects" Yellowknife, N. W. T.: Dene Nation, May, 1986, 1; and Robert Page's "Norman Wells: the Past and Future Boom," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 16:2 (Summer, 1981): 16-33.]

⁷⁸ Frank T'Seleie, Fort Good Hope, 5 August 1975. MVPI, Exhibit C-109-1.

⁷⁹ This "ownership" was not based on a legal settlement of Fort Good Hope land claims. The community gained tacit recognition of their rights before they had legal recognition, thus exemplifying the extent to which native political power depended on changes in non-native morality, or attitudes towards native rights. It had become politically dangerous for either the national government or the oil companies to ignore native claims entirely.

⁸⁰ This description of the joint venture project is based on interviews with band councillors in Fort Good Hope in July, 1991.

⁸¹ "Local control" cannot simply mean forced compromise with multinationals. The Siona-Secoya who live in Ecuador's Cuyabeno National Park oppose any extension of oil industry activity both because of negative past experiences with colonization and pollution and also because they have a fairly secure, and growing, alternative source of income—employment in ecotourism. The tourist business has provided the Siona-Secoya with opportunities for wage employment while causing far less damage to the local environment and allowing continued engagement in traditional subsistence activities.