

**HOUSING NATIVES IN NORTHERN REGIONS:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF APPROACHES IN
CANADA, THE UNITED STATES, AND THE USSR**

by

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Abstract

Using a cross-national comparative approach, this thesis examines the Native housing crisis in the Northwest Territories, Alaska, and northern USSR from 1980 to 1990. The affordability, adequacy, and suitability of public and private sector housing is analyzed, as well as their structural and cultural limitations in a northern context. This study found that many low and moderate-income Natives in these regions are unable to afford expensive market rental housing, are ineligible for government or company accommodation or sheltered in overcrowded public housing. Premised on non-Native values and market assumptions, public and private sector housing is exclusionary and discriminates against a Native way of life, and has created the conditions in which people are polarized based on income and tenure. Given the failure of public and private sector housing to meet the shelter requirements of Natives, this thesis argues that there is a need for community-based housing alternatives.

Housing co-operatives have the potential to increase security of tenure as well as the stock of decent and affordable housing, and to reduce cultural cleavages and socio-tenorial polarization through meaningful social and income-mixing. By responding to Native housing needs in such a culturally-sensitive manner, co-operatives have the potential to reduce dependencies on housing agencies and the private sector by effectively shifting control of housing to the community as a whole. Given the potential of housing co-operatives, however,

this tenure has made relatively few inroads into the Northwest Territories, Alaska, and northern USSR. This study concludes that problems of implementation and affordability, privatism and inertia in housing policy, and a dependency on public and private sector housing have impeded the wider development of northern co-operatives.

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Chapter I

I. PROBLEM

As the primary source of shelter for low and moderate-income Natives in the Northwest Territories, Alaska, and northern USSR, public and private sector housing is affected in quality and supply by several physical, socio-cultural, and economic constraints.¹ In a physical sense, the permafrost, rugged terrain, and harsh climate of northern areas makes housing construction a difficult and expensive activity. Since most northern communities are isolated and lack a viable housing industry and building materials, skilled labour and materials must be imported. Transportation costs are high and the summer building season is short. With long working hours and tight schedules, delays receiving materials "compound construction problems and ultimately add to housing costs."² Market housing, where available, is approximately two to three times more expensive than comparable housing in southern or more established locations and, therefore, is too expensive for most low and moderate-income Natives. With reduced government subsidies and the impending privatization of assisted dwellings, especially in Alaska, public and private sector housing is unable to address the growing northern housing crisis.

The shortfall in decent and affordable housing is also partly a result of culturally and structurally-inappropriate housing policies and programs. Many public housing officials view northern areas as mere extensions of southern or more established centres, and fully expect national housing policies to work in the northern context. As a result, housing policies and programs are often transposed to northern communities with little regard for important cultural and structural differences. Such insensitivity in technocratic policy-making and program implementation resulted in policy failure, and fuelled a sense of

frustration and despair among a growing number of Natives who rely on public housing for their shelter needs. With few affordable housing options available to Natives attempting to escape dependence on inadequate public housing, many are forced to endure substandard and overcrowded conditions.

Housing authorities have failed to meet the growing demand for decent and affordable Native housing in the Northwest Territories, Alaska, and northern USSR. In addition to ineffective public housing policies and programs and exclusionary housing markets, the rapid growth of Native populations and underdeveloped northern economies combine to create serious housing problems for indigenous peoples. Unable to fulfill their statutory obligations to low and moderate-income Natives in need of shelter, housing authorities have also failed to exhibit much sensitivity to traditional values and the problems of small communities.

II. PURPOSE

Co-operatives provide a potential housing option for low and moderate-income Natives who are unable to obtain decent and affordable shelter in the public or private housing sectors.³ Co-operatives enable Natives to gain control over their lives and escape the dependence on public housing for shelter, and also strengthen community bonds and self-development. Despite the empowering qualities of co-operative housing, few co-ops exist in the NWT, Alaska, and northern USSR. The purpose of this thesis, therefore, is to account for the consistent underperformance of housing co-operatives in these northern regions, and to seek ways of promoting the wider development of this tenure form.

III. OBJECTIVES

This thesis has two objectives:

- (1) to provide a comparative perspective on northern public and private sector housing from 1980 to 1990, a period when significant policy shifts occurred; and
- (2) to acquire a better understanding of the political, social, economic, and cultural factors that limit Native public housing in northern communities.

IV. ASSUMPTIONS

I start from three assumptions:

- (1) housing is a right and should not be based on market assumptions, especially in areas where housing is expensive and in short supply;
- (2) the democratic principles underlying co-operative housing are consistent with Native ways; and
- (3) shifting control of housing to the Native community is the most culturally-appropriate way of providing decent and affordable housing to low and moderate-income indigenous people in northern communities.

V. SCOPE

Using a cross-national comparative approach, I examine public, private, and co-operative housing for low and moderate-income Natives in urban, rural, and remote communities in the NWT, Alaska, and northern USSR from 1980 to 1990. The opportunities for and constraints to public and private sector housing in northern communities are analyzed, with an emphasis on housing affordability, adequacy, and suitability problems.⁴ Arguing that there is a need for community-based housing alternatives, I assess the potential of co-ops in northern regions. In order to establish the context within which to analyze Native housing issues and co-ops, I examine the factors that shaped development from 1867 to 1967, as well as the approaches to modern community planning and regional development. Northern development and

planning issues at the community and regional level are explored, by setting them in the broader context of power relations, political and administrative structures, and the culture and values of northern areas. The historico-comparative approach explains systems which are the product of colonialism, and develops the necessary socio-spatial context in which to analyze contemporary housing issues.

VI. RATIONALE

Public and private sector housing has failed to provide low and moderate-income Natives in northern communities with decent and affordable housing. Existing public and private sector housing is exclusionary and discriminates against Natives, creating the conditions in which northerners are polarized based on income, tenure, and housing conditions. While these problems also exist in southern or more established regions, they are particularly severe in the northern environment and directly affect societies' most disadvantaged social group, the Natives.

Aside from the works of Terence Armstrong, George Rogers, and Graham Rowley (1978), and, more recently, Jorma Manty and Norman Pressman (1988), there are few cross-national comparative studies on northern affairs. While there are several technical and academic studies examining Native and non-Native housing needs, policies, and programs in northern regions, few have employed a comparative perspective. This thesis is intended to make a contribution to the literature on comparative northern affairs, and, more specifically, to draw attention to the lack of decent and affordable Native housing in northern regions.

VII. ORGANIZATION

This thesis is arranged in the following manner. Chapter Two examines the opportunities for and constraints to cross-national comparative research in policy analysis and planning. Chapter Three compares the relationship between frontier and metropolis in Canada, the US, Imperial and Soviet Russia, as well as the historical factors that have shaped contemporary northern settlement and development. Chapter Four compares national approaches to modern community planning and regional development from 1967 to 1990.

Public and private sector housing in urban, rural, and remote areas of the Northwest Territories, Alaska, and northern USSR is examined in Chapter Five, with an emphasis on the problems of housing affordability, adequacy, and suitability for Native peoples. Chapter Six examines the opportunities for and constraints to co-operative housing in northern settings. The final chapter concludes with several policy recommendations that address the lack of decent and affordable shelter for low and moderate-income Natives, and promote the wider development of co-operative housing in northern regions.

Endnotes

1. For brevity, the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the Northwest Territories will hereafter be referred to as the US, USSR, and the NWT. According to Terence Armstrong, George Rogers, and Graham Rowley in *The Circumpolar North* (London, 1978), pps. 21-24, 71-73, and 126, the Northwest Territories is delineated by the Arctic Ocean on the north, the Yukon Territories on the west, the 60 degree latitude on the south, and the Hudson Bay on the east. The five administrative regions in the NWT are: the Inuvik Region; the Fort Smith Region; the Keewatin Region; the Kitikmeot Region; and the Baffin Region. Alaska is bounded by the Arctic Ocean on the north, the Bering Sea on the west, the Gulf of Alaska and the North Pacific Ocean on the south, and the 141st meridian and the crest of the Coast Range on the east. The total land area is 1,520,000 square kilometers stretching out between the latitudes of 51 and 72 degrees North and the meridians 130 and 173 degrees East. The four social and economic regions in Alaska are the Southcentral Economic Region; the Southwest Economic Region; the Interior Economic Region; and the Northwest Economic Region. Siberia, or the lands lying between the Urals and the Pacific Ocean, covers 13 million square kilometers and constitutes by far the largest national unit in the circumpolar north. For economic planning purposes, Siberia is divided into three economic regions: the West

Siberian Economic region (*Sibirskiy Ekonomicheskyy Rayon*); the East Siberian Economic Region (*Vostochno-Sibirskiy Ekonomicheskyy Rayon*); and the Far Eastern Economic Region (*Dal'nevostochnyy Ekonomicheskyy Rayon*).

2. William E. Rees and J. David Hulchanski, *Housing as Northern Community Development: A Case Study of the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP) in Fort Good Hope, NWT* (Vancouver, 1990), p. 11.

3. Johnston Birchall, in *Building Communities the Co-operative Way* (London, 1988), p. 20 defines housing co-operatives as "a voluntary association by means of which dwellers can collectively own their own housing, and control the process of housing." While broadly defined, Birchall identifies three types of housing co-operatives: (1) common; (2) shared; and (3) co-ownership based on the level of capital investment and each member's equity.

4. Stewart Clatworthy and Harvey Stevens, *An Overview of the Housing Conditions of Registered Indians in Canada* (Ottawa, 1987), pp. 6-8. Housing affordability refers to the relationship between the cost of housing services and the household's ability to pay for those services which, for most households, is determined by current household income. In this thesis two indicators of housing affordability are considered. The first indicator is the gross shelter cost ratio, which is constructed by dividing the gross rent or owner's major payments by the household's total income. Households with shelter costs exceeding 30 per cent of income are defined to be experiencing affordability problems. The second indicator of affordability concerns access to homeownership and is measured as the percentage of households which own their dwelling unit. Housing adequacy relates to the physical quality of the dwelling unit including such elements as structural soundness, state of repair and the presence or absence of basic amenities. Three indicators of housing are available for consideration in this thesis. The first is an indicator of dwelling unit condition and is measured in terms of the respondent's perception of repairs required to the dwelling. A second indicator measures the presence and adequacy of bathroom facilities. Dwellings lacking a complete bathroom are defined to be inadequate; in cases where no bathroom facilities are present, this indicator serves as a proxy for dwellings lacking indoor plumbing. A third indicator measures the adequacy of the dwelling's heating system. Dwelling units lacking either a central heating system or electrical heating are defined to be deficient.

Housing suitability involves the relationship between the living space requirements of the household and the nature and amount of space contained in the dwelling unit. Two measures of housing suitability are considered in this thesis. The person per room ratio is employed to provide an indicator of the level of internal crowding. Households are defined to be living in crowded conditions in instances where this ratio exceeds 1.0. The thesis's second measure of housing suitability is the number of families per dwelling unit. The proportion of dwellings with more than one family represents a key measure of housing stock shortages on Native communities and an indicator of the ability of families to maintain a separate dwelling unit off reserve.

Chapter II

I. THE COMPARATIVE APPROACH IN PLANNING RESEARCH

This chapter examines the opportunities for and constraints to cross-national comparative research in policy analysis and planning. The following analysis maintains that the comparative approach can be used to test policy and planning under new or evolving circumstances, and is an effective way of explaining processes, systems, and institutions.¹ By selectively examining other systems, cross-national comparative research broadens perspectives about policy and planning, and determines whether issues are particular to a country.² The approach is used to examine the relationship between policy and various independent variables, and to evaluate the experiences of other countries in trying to find policy solutions to public issues.³ The aim of comparative research is to move beyond mere descriptions of the similarities and differences between units -- or what John Walton (1976) called the 'serial treatment of cases' -- to the establishment of causal relationships explained by a theoretical framework or a set of testable hypotheses.⁴

II. THE POTENTIAL OF THE COMPARATIVE APPROACH IN PLANNING RESEARCH

There has been a recent growth of interest in comparative planning studies, which is reflected in the increasing number of excellent publications with a cross-national focus.⁵ While the quality of comparative literature is generally good, some works are marred by unbounded generalizations and isolated descriptions of planning practices. This unevenness of quality is partly a result of what Elliot Feldman (1978) notes as: (1) ambiguity in the concept of policy [and planning]; (2) disagreement over what and how to compare; and (3)

a problem of competence as there are limits to what one author or multiple authorship can achieve.⁶

If conducted properly, comparative research can explain the ways in which other countries deal with similar issues, and may lead to policy options as a result of analyzing the standards that different jurisdictions apply in policy analysis.⁷ Identifying the differences among various national approaches to a given policy issue can assist in the specification of the structural, institutional, and cultural constraints of the policy. By recognizing these various constraints, focused cross-national inquiry can help locate those variables amenable to planned change by policy-making agencies, as well as those which are beyond the control of the policy-maker. An awareness of options challenges the assumptions on which a nation's policies are based, making it possible to generalize about the selection, content, and consequences of policy and planning.

There is general agreement that in planning, as in public policy, there are no distinct "fields" of comparative planning or comparative public policy.⁸ According to Feldman, comparison is just another way of explaining phenomenon in relation to its context. The subject matter of comparative planning and comparative public policy differ from planning and policy as a whole only in its cross-national component, and can be combined to examine the people, communities, and organizations that make policy.⁹

By combining approaches for the purpose of comparative inquiry, it is possible to examine planning problems and practices in different countries in relation to the institutional context of the respective countries. While much attention has been paid to national differences, "surprisingly little is given to the common issues of organizations or institutions -- striving to develop suitable policies and practices."¹⁰ Despite the obvious importance of the institutional

context in comparative planning studies, few attempts have been made by comparativists to establish classification schemes for comparative purposes. One notable exception, however, is John Friedmann's The Institutional Context, which is regarded as the benchmark for comparative planning studies. In his study, Friedmann hypothesized that "distinctive styles of national planning are associated with different combinations of system variables, including the level of economic development attained, the form of political organizations, and historical traditions."¹¹

II.A THE OBJECTIVES OF COMPARATIVE PLANNING RESEARCH

Ian Masser (1981), Andreas Faludi and Stephen Hamnett (1975) identify three objectives of cross-national comparative research: (1) the improvement of planning practice; (2) the advancement of planning theory; and (3) the unification of the field of planning.¹² Planning is improved by examining the experiences of different countries, and, while transfer is often the goal of most cross-national comparative studies, it indicates an underestimation of the difficulties involved. Since planning is "culturally derived, and developing within political and institutional boundaries," according to Gordon Cherry (1986), the challenge facing comparativists, therefore, is to be able to remove the phenomena from its context and apply it in another setting. Experience supports Masser's view that "the potential for transfer lies in encouraging innovation rather than making carbon copies of foreign models."¹³

While it is difficult to transfer policies from one context to another, there is merit in analyzing policy responses to public issues from a different perspective. One way to guard against contextual problems in comparative research is to employ a historical approach. According to Anthony Sutcliffe (1986), examining policy and planning from a historical view displays the "relativity and transience of contextual factors which condition cross-national

research.”¹⁴ Because it is often difficult to identify context, a historical approach places people, communities, policies, and organizations in a contextual setting sensitive to continuity and change.¹⁵ Analyzing the past assists comparative research by tracking the evolution, success, modification or abandonment of a particular policy and its overall value in another context.

The second objective is the improvement of planning theory. A deeper understanding of planning may be gained by studying the planning process in different social, political and cultural settings. The improvement of planning theory may also be achieved where approaches developed in one national context, such as radical planning in the US, have been put into practice elsewhere, for example, at the municipal level in the USSR.¹⁶ By testing planning paradigms in other national contexts, it is possible to acquire a fuller appreciation of their theoretical dimensions and applications in a domestic setting.

The third objective is based on that of Faludi and Hamnett’s assumption that comparative inquiry develops a common understanding of the nature and variety of planning systems and policies at a level of detail necessary for the formulation of planning politics and procedures by supra-national agencies and government bodies.¹⁷

II.B. THE CASE STUDY IN COMPARATIVE PLANNING RESEARCH

All too often phenomenon and context are entwined to such an extent that the boundaries of what is actually being compared are unclear. Without a method of separating phenomena from context, Robert Yin (1989), Arend Lijphart (1988), and Charles Ragin (1987) argue for the structured case study approach which draws equally on qualitative and quantitative evidence.¹⁸ According to Peter Hall (1989), case studies of cities or regions chosen as representative examples of planning in certain countries provide a useful focus

for the study of policy-making and planning, as well as middle-range theorizing. The case study is normally conceived within a theoretical perspective, and is meant to illustrate constant features of certain broadly significant situations or processes.¹⁸ It employs a historical and interpretive aspect lacking in the experimental research designs, and leads to useful generalizations and typologies.

The strengths of case studies lie in their ability to take into account a large amount of local detail at the same time as generally comparable information, and in their flexibility in practice. In order to carry out case comparisons, it is necessary that the chain of evidence is maintained so that each step in the process from the construction of internally consistent explanations for individual cases to a common explanation for a number of cases is made explicit.²⁰

III. THE LIMITATIONS OF THE COMPARATIVE APPROACH IN PLANNING RESEARCH

While comparing things seems straightforward enough, there are many more obstructions in a comparative approach than a single-system approach, such as the time involved, as well as the challenge of identifying truly comparable phenomenon. Achieving comparability and equivalence in cross-national research becomes increasingly difficult as more countries are added to the study.²¹ According to Donald Warwick and Samuel Osherson (1973), there are four main limitations of the comparative approach: (1) conceptual equivalence or the problem of selecting the units of analysis so that variables are meaningfully applied, as well as the range of time over which such units can be viewed as homogeneous; (2) equivalence of measurement or the task of devising indices through which variables can be compared; (3) the problem of linguistic equivalence, both of the units of comparison and of the indices,

including the extent to which these abstractions are still useful when taken out of their unique historical and cultural settings; and (4) sampling with numerous independent variables (small "N"). Problems in sampling occur when there is too much variety in the social, political, and economic characteristics of countries complicating the isolation of variables responsible for the public policies chosen.²²

III.A CONCEPTUAL EQUIVALENCE

The most basic theoretical question in comparative research is whether the concepts under study have any equivalent meaning in the countries considered. It is possible to improve conceptual equivalence, as well as numerical uniformity by selecting similar units or standards for comparison. Equivalence is maximized by 'segmenting' systems for comparative analysis, allowing the analyst to "forget," to a certain extent, those contextual variables that make comparison so difficult.²³ By segmenting systems -- in this case, public, private, and co-operative housing sectors in northern regions -- the significance of environmental differences between countries is minimized.

Another difficulty with comparison is the use of conceptual definitions that have equivalent, though not necessarily identical meanings across cultures. For instance, while the concept of "cabin fever" is alien to people living in mediterranean areas such as Greece, it is relevant to northerners who stay indoors out of the cold. Any meaningful cross-national comparison should, therefore, take into account conceptual factors as well as measures of equivalence.

III.B EQUIVALENCE OF MEASUREMENT

The comparative approach shares with all the other methods the problem of developing equivalent indicators for analysis. Warwick and Osherson note that equivalence of measurement is hindered by five constraints: (1) researching

concepts or their irrelevance outside a particular context; (2) comparability of stimuli or obtaining different indicators to assess the same concept in different cultures; (3) comparability of context in which a unit is examined with those of another country; (4) comparability of response to interview and questionnaires; and (5) comparability of reliability and validity of data to fit with those of other countries.²⁴

According to Adam Przeworski and Henry Teune (1970), these constraints arise largely because of the need to incorporate contextual characteristics of complex systems into the language of measurement. In essence, whether two or more phenomena are comparable depends on whether their properties have been expressed in a standard language. "A language of measurement defines classes of phenomena by providing specific criteria for deciding whether an observation can be assigned to a particular class, and orders relationships among these classes."²⁵ A certain criteria of comparability should include rules of empirical interpretation, uniformly applicable to all observations and a clear relationship among classes of observation. Przeworski and Teune also argue that measurement can either be direct or inferred.

Direct measurement requires that the language of measurement be common to all observations, reflect relations among phenomena observed, and be consistently applied. The basic problem of inferred measurement is the validity of the inferences from the reports of direct observations to measurement statements."²⁶

In comparative research, the problem arises because it is unlikely that the same bases of inference are equally valid for all countries, leading to what Giovanni Sartori called 'conceptual-stretching.'

In order to avoid these pitfalls, comparative research requires a common language of measurement that is reliable for all systems being considered. It would be difficult if not impossible to achieve such a measure due to three factors: (1) the lack of synchronization between national censuses; (2) the lack

of standardized data among national censuses; and (3) the fact that the available data do not relate to a standardized spatial unit.²⁷

The similarity in structure of Canadian and US data sets, in addition to other factors, have led to many comparisons of these countries. While adding a USSR dimension seemingly complicates an otherwise balanced selection of systems, the publication of more reliable Soviet statistics since the inception of *glasnost* in 1985, makes selective comparisons between socialist and non-socialist systems feasible.²⁸ In the past, comparisons between socialist and non-socialist countries have often resulted in value-laden condemnations of the real or perceived failings of either system.²⁹ The introduction of USSR policy output and impact data, however, would give comparativists a more complete and accurate basis for comparison, and might lead to some altered evaluations of the actual performance of these systems.³⁰

III.C LINGUISTIC EQUIVALENCE

Linguistic equivalence in comparative research is complicated by six constraints: (1) the problem where one society may not have a word for an object existing in another; (2) variations in grammatical meaning; (3) contextual variations; (4) differences between language and response styles; (5) poor translations; and (6) the problem of attaining equivalence of scale points in surveys.³¹

Achieving linguistic equivalence is important when using Russian planning terms and concepts as well as English ones, or in transliteration. When comparing the dimensions of linguistic equivalence, extreme care should be taken to distinguish between context, lexical, and grammatical nuances in order to avoid ethnocentric biases and methodological irregularities. A cautionary approach guards against culture-bound observations and generalizations which may lead to ethnocentricity and parochialism in policy and planning research.

In this thesis, the author's familiarity of the Russian culture provides a counter-bias to the other countries and to the study as a whole.

III.D SAMPLING

Sampling is a procedure in which a fraction of a group is chosen to represent the total population about which generalizations are made. The first stage of sampling is the selection of countries and systems for comparison, and the second is the sampling of population elements. The selection of countries and systems should be done with care using a well-defined sampling frame. Cross-national sampling is hindered by four problems: (1) the use of non-compatible or low-quality sampling frames; (2) differing selection procedures; (3) the over representation or under representation of population elements; and (4) the high or varying non-response rates.³²

The distinctive feature of the comparative approach is that it is used in situations where the number of cases is small (below 30) and the number of variables that need to be considered is relatively large. Lijphart identifies four ways of minimizing the effects of the small "N" problem in comparative research. First, by increasing the number of cases as much as possible and by extending the analysis both geographically and historically.³³ This procedure allows for a shift to the stronger statistical method, improving the chances of instituting some form of control and making the best use of longitudinal data.³⁴ Lijphart suggests that such a shift is possible since there is no dividing line between the two methods.³⁵ As it is rarely feasible in cross-national research to expand the number of cases enough to meet statistical requirements, Lijphart concludes that researchers should adopt the strategy of control through common features.

Second, Lijphart suggests reducing what he calls the "property-space" of the analysis. For example, if the sample of cases cannot be increased it may be

possible to combine two or more variables that express an essentially similar underlying characteristic into a single variable. Third, he suggests focussing the analysis on comparable cases that are similar in a large number of important characteristics, but dissimilar with regard to the variables between which a relationship is hypothesized. A comparison of the same unit at different times generally offers a better solution to the control problem than by comparing two or more units at the same time. It is possible to improve comparability by taking advantage of many corresponding national characteristics (intranational approach) instead of focussing exclusively upon broader international comparisons. With proper data it is also possible to improve the reliability and strength of cross-national analysis by combining intranational and international comparative strategies in the study. This combination improves sampling and accounts for intranational diversity, regional variations, as well as the discrepancy between policy and differential outcomes.

Fourth, Lijphart suggests focusing the analysis on key variables and omitting those of only marginal importance to avoid being overwhelmed by too many variables. All this is not to suggest that cross-national research cannot or should not be conducted on a broader international scale. On the contrary, cross-national research is most rewarding when it is used to examine many countries, however, care should be taken to ensure that the data is available and comparable.

Lijphart's last two suggestions are consistent with L. Sharpe's (1975) two laws of comparison in the formulation of cross-national studies -- the 'law of maximum similarity' and the 'law of maximum discreteness of focus' -- or what Walton termed a 'standardized case comparison.'³⁶ Sharpe's first law is based on the assumption that systems as similar as possible with respect to as many features as possible make up the best samples for comparative inquiry.³⁷

While examining like with like minimizes the number of variables to be compared, focusing on similar countries with "identical" problems should not be taken to extremes as issues cannot be so simply and neatly dichotomized.³⁸

A maximum discreteness of focus in comparison sets out to minimize certain differences in order to permit a better analysis of others. By focussing on a relatively homogeneous field, the comparativist increases control over the variables as well as his or her ability to do in-depth analyses. In contrast to the 'most similar systems strategy,' Przeworski and Teune's 'most different system strategy' implies a deliberate choice of cases to maximize the differences that exist between them. The principal task in this case is to progressively eliminate variables that do not explain the differences in the dependent variables and to identify those with some explanatory power.³⁹ The main advantage of the 'most different systems strategy' is that it is much less demanding in terms of prior theory, in that comparative analysis is used as a heuristic device and not a testing mechanism. This advantage is gained at the expense of a reduction in the ability to put forward general propositions as the findings of studies carried out in this fashion are to a large extent specific to the systems that have been considered.⁴⁰

IV. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS OF THE CROSS-NATIONAL COMPARATIVE APPROACH

The comparative approach is a potentially effective way of explaining the processes, systems, and institutions that shape domestic policy. While caution must be exercised in conducting comparative research, it has the potential to contribute to new approaches in policy-making and planning by holding up a "mirror" to our own society. For that purpose, the following chapter provides historical insight into the relationship between frontier and metropolis in northern Canada, the US, and the USSR.

Endnotes

1. For a description of the comparative approach, see the comments of Alan F.J. Artibise in "Exploring the North-American West: A Comparative Urban Perspective," *American Review of Canadian Studies*, Vol. XIV, No.1 (1984), p. 22. As a broad gauge, general approach, Artibise states that the goal of comparative research is to generate major hypotheses based on first-stage research already completed. Once generated, these hypotheses can be tested through further case studies and be followed by a fourth stage of generalization. The goal in the fourth stage is to operationalize the independent variable and determine what is universal and what is particular.
2. It appears to be generally accepted that the term, cross-national, is restricted to studies that are explicitly comparable, that is, studies that utilize systematically comparable data from two or more countries. See, for instance, Melvin L. Kohn in "Cross-National Research as an Analytic Strategy," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 52, No. 6 (December 1987), pp. 714, and 725; and Ian Masser, "Cross-National Comparative Planning Studies," *Town Planning Review*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (1984), p. 137.
3. There is no generally accepted definition of public policy in the Canadian, US and USSR literatures as each country has developed its own variations. For the purpose of this thesis, however, public policy is defined by Leslie Pal as a "purposive course of action or inaction chosen by public authorities to address a given problem or interrelated set of problems." Leslie A. Pal, *Policy Analysis: An Introduction* (Toronto, 1987), p. 4. See also Ariane Berthoin Antal, Meinolf Dierkes, and Hans N. Weiler, "Cross-National Policy Research: Traditions, Achievements and Challenges," in Antal, *et al.*, eds., *Comparative Policy Research: Learning From Experience* (Hants, 1987), p. 14.
4. For an overview of the comparative method, see Allan Cochrane, Chris Hamnett, and Linda McDowell, eds., *City, Economy and Society: A Comparative Reader* (London, 1981), p. XVI.
5. See, for instance, the works of Alan F.J. Artibise and Gilbert A. Stelter, eds., *Power and Place: Canadian Urban Development in the North American Context* (Vancouver, 1986); and Michael A. Goldberg and John Mercer, *The Myth of the North American City: Continentalism Challenged* (Vancouver, 1986).
6. Elliot J. Feldman, "Comparative Public Policy: Field or Method?" *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (1978), p. 288.
7. Charles W. Anderson, "The Logic of Public Problems: Evaluation in Comparative Policy Research," in Douglas E. Ashford, ed., *Comparing Public Policies: New Concepts and Methods* (Beverly Hills, 1978), p. 30.

8. This argument is supported, in general, by Feldman, "Comparative Public Policy," p. 298; John Walton and Louis H. Masotti, eds., *The City in Comparative Perspective* (Beverly Hills, 1976), p. 3; and Ian Masser, "Some Methodological Considerations," in Ian Masser and Richard Williams, eds., *Learning from Other Countries: The Cross-National Dimension in Urban Policy-Making* (Norwich, 1986), pp. 11-12.
9. For a discussion of the similarities and differences of policy and planning, see Rachelle Alterman and Duncan McRae, Jr., "Planning and Policy Analysis: Converging or Diverging Trends?" *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Vol. 49, No.2 (Spring 1983), pp. 204-205. While the two fields overlap in key areas such as quantitative methods and analytic techniques, they differ in several important respects. While planners typically deal with long-term and complex, multi-sectoral issues affecting the public interest; policy analysts deal with short-term, uni-sectoral issues for a specific client and use rational-synoptic models.
10. See Stephen Cropper, "Do You Know What I Mean? Problems in the Methodology of Cross-Cultural Comparison," in Masser and Williams, *Learning from Other Countries*, p. 67.
11. See John Friedmann, "The Institutional Context," in Bertram M. Gross, ed., *Action Under Planning: The Guidance of Economic Development* (New York, 1967), pp. 40-41.
12. For an explication of the objectives of comparative planning research, see Ian Masser, *Comparative Planning Studies: A Critical Review*, TRP-33 (Sheffield, 1981); and Andreas Faludi and Stephen Hamnett, *The Study of Comparative Planning*, CP-13 (London, 1975).
13. Ian Masser, "Cross-National Research: Some Methodological Considerations," *Environment and Planning B*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (1984), p. 10.
14. See Anthony Sutcliffe, "The Historian's Perspective," in Masser and Williams, *Learning from Other Countries*, p. 4.
15. For an examination of the uses of history in planning, see Carl Abbott and Sy Adler, "Historical Analysis as a Planning Tool," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (Autumn 1989), p. 467, and pp. 470-471.
16. For a discussion of the Soviet version of "bottom-up" planning, see Oleg N. Ianitskii, "The Arguments Underlying Urban Development Decisions Under Glasnost," *Soviet Sociology*, Vol. 28, No. 5 (September-October 1989), pp. 67-72 and *passim*.
17. Richard Williams, "Translating Theory into Practice," in Masser and Williams, *Learning from Other Countries*, pp. 25-26.
18. Support for such an approach can be found in Robert K. Yin, *Research Methods in the Social Sciences* (Beverly Hills, 1989); Arend Lijphart, "The Comparable-Cases Strategy in Comparative Research," in Louis J. Cantori and Andrew H. Ziegler, Jr., eds., *Comparative Politics in the Post-Behavioural Era* (Boulder, 1988); and Charles C. Ragin, *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1987).
19. Mattei Dogan and Dominique Pelassy, *How to Compare Nations: Strategies in Comparative Politics* (Chatham, 1989), p. 109.
20. See Masser, "Some Methodological Considerations," pp. 13-15.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 17. The drawbacks of comparative research are numerous. See, for instance, the comments of Masser and Williams, *Learning from Other Countries*, p. XIII; and Donald P. Warwick and Samuel Osherson, "Comparative Analysis in the Social Sciences," in Warwick and Osherson, eds., *Comparative Research Methods* (Englewood Cliffs, 1973) p. 7.
22. Warwick and Osherson, "Comparative Analysis in the Social Sciences," p. 11.
23. Dogan and Pelassy, *How to Compare Nations*, p. 16.
24. Warwick and Osherson, "Comparative Analysis in the Social Sciences," pp. 14-28.
25. Adam Przeworski and Henry Teune, *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry* (New York, 1970), pp. 92-93.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 96-97.
27. See Leo Van den Berg, S. Leland, and Leo H. Klassen, eds., *Spatial Cycles* (Brookfield, 1987), p. 50.
28. Vladimir G. Trembl, "Perestroika and Soviet Statistics," *Soviet Economy*, No. 4, Vol. 1 (1988), p. 65. There is an ongoing debate about whether or not socialist and non-socialist comparisons are useful. For an overview of this debate, see Michael Harloe, "Notes on Comparative urban research," in M. Dear and A.J. Scott, *Urbanization and Urban Planning in Capitalist Society* (London and New York, 1981), pp. 185-189. Pahl stresses that while there are differences between the two types of society, there are important similarities making such themes as social and spatial inequalities at the urban level worth comparing. In opposition, Castells has argued that comparisons of this type may be misleading or impossible. He has explained that urban inequalities persist as a result of elements of the capitalist mode of development in socialist states. Castells correctly explains the situation existing in Eastern European cities since they have comparatively less exposure to socialist planning than cities in the USSR. While pre-revolutionary cities such as Leningrad still have traces of a capitalist morphology, Castells's argument does not explain why inequalities exist in post-revolutionary or socialist new towns in northern USSR. Szelenyi also disagrees with Pahl's views but in his case, suggests that the crucial distinction is not between the urban effects of capitalism in the West and socialism in the East but that between the former factor in the West and a mode of production in the East based on an authoritarian State and bureaucracy. While Szelenyi's contention has general applicability to these systems as a whole, the capitalist mode of production in the case of housing in the NWT, and, to a lesser extent, in Alaska is circumscribed by state and bureaucratic intervention (e.g., subsidies) making these units more comparable with the Soviet North. The fact that there are similarities, especially in the context of housing in the North, indicates that comparative inquiry should be conducted. Pahl's claim that such work is worthwhile seems justified while Castells's wish to confine comparative work to countries with identical modes of production seems too restrictive. Support for this view can be found in the work of Faludi and Hamnett, "The Study of Comparative Planning," pp. 9-15. They believe that social phenomena do not have a property of 'being comparable' or 'not comparable' and argue that all societies past, present, and future constitute units of potential comparison. Comparability depends on the level of generality of the language that is used to analyze various systems.
29. See Howard Leichter, "Comparative Public Policy: Problems and Prospects," in Cantori and Ziegler, *Comparative Politics in the Post-Behavioral Era*, p. 340.

30. For an example of the problems of equivalence of measurement, see the comments of Toby Terrar and Dean Richards, "Solving the Housing Problem: A Note on the Comparison of U.S. and Soviet Housing Statistics for the Period 1913 to 1980," *International Journal for Housing Science and its Applications*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (1989), pp. 88-93. The authors note that the comparison of US gross figures with Soviet useful or livable figures overstates US housing space.

31. Warwick and Osherson, "Comparative Analysis in the Social Sciences," pp. 28-30.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 33-40.

33. See Arend Lijphart, "The Comparable-Cases Strategy," pp. 54-61.

34. Dane Archer, "Constructing Cross-National Data Sets: Theoretical Issues and Practical Methods," in Richard F. Tomasson, ed., *Comparative Social Research*, Vol. 10 (London, 1987), p. 233. The statistical approach tends to use large numbers of cases or more than 30 in order to take advantage of the 'law of large numbers' which generates the normal distribution of random errors, while the comparative approach deals with fewer cases without the same degree of confidence.

35. Arend Lijphart, "The Comparable-Cases Strategy," p. 55-61. He suggests that it is useful to distinguish between the comparative method and comparative studies when discussing methodological questions. He argues that the comparative method, like the statistical method is part of an overall methodology of social science and that it can be used not just in cross-national studies but in research relating to any part of the field. At the same time, comparative studies are not restricted to the comparative method and draw upon the whole range of methods that are available to social scientists.

36. See L.J. Sharpe, "Comparative Planning Policy: Some Cautionary Comments," in M.J. Breakell, ed., *Problems of Comparative Planning*, WP-21 (Oxford, 1975), pp. 26-30.

37. Chris G. Pickvance, "Comparative Urban Analysis and Assumptions about Causality," in Kenneth Brown, et al, eds., *Middle Eastern Cities in Comparative Perspective* (Ithaca, 1986), p. 33.

38. See, for instance, the comments of Paul M. White, *Towards an Improved Methodology for Cross-National Comparative Planning Research*, WP-62 (Birmingham, 1978). A preoccupation with maximum similarity could reduce the potential for the stimulus of totally new ideas instead of encouraging them with a broader cross-national focus. As a corrective, Williams suggests that maximum similarity should be taken to apply only to a specific planning problem, the approach to which is studied in a comparative way, and not to the national context as there may be a distinct advantage in having contrasting cultural and institutional contexts. This thesis follows Sharpe's second law of comparison -- 'maximum discreteness of focus' -- or a selective comparison of public, private, and co-operative housing in northern regions.

39. Masser, *Comparative Planning Studies*, p. 7.

40. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

Chapter III

I. FRONTIER AND METROPOLIS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE, THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT: 1867-1967

This chapter compares the relationship between frontier and metropolis in Canada, the US, Imperial and Soviet Russia, as well as the factors that shaped northern settlement and development from 1867 to 1967. The objective of this chapter is to explain urban development in systems which are the product of colonialism, and to establish the context within which to subsequently analyze contemporary housing issues. According to urban historian John Dyos, comparing frontier and metropolis from a historical perspective provides measures by which to evaluate the extent of social and economic development among cities. Alan F.J. Artibise and Gilbert Stelter (1986) concur, and maintain that the study of urban history within a regional framework puts phenomenon such as class consciousness, poverty, economic growth, and housing problems in a broader perspective.¹ The mid-nineteenth century is a useful period to begin such a study as it marks a time of extensive city-building coincident with Canada's rise to nationhood, the integration of Alaska into the US, and the reform of Tsarist Russia.

II. FRONTIER AND METROPOLIS IN CANADIAN HISTORY: 1867-1967

II.A THE FRONTIER IN CANADIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

While the frontier has never been used as extensively to explain settlement in Canada, as was the case in the US and the USSR, it has had a profound effect on Canadian historiography. Canadian history was initially shaped by the "Britannic" School which consisted of nineteenth century historians who minimized "American" influences in favour of analyzing the

primacy of British institutions in Canada. Developing in reaction to Britannic dominance was the "Nationalist" School which formed in two stages: the first called for Canada's continued development within a British political framework; the second demanded greater political independence.

Early "Environmentalists" argued in the 1920s that a continuous cultural adaptation to the physical environment gave rise to American content within British and French institutions, making Canada a unique country. While the second stage still had traces of Environmentalism in it, A.R.M. Lower (1946) observed that Canada developed out of a briefer frontier experience, with stronger attachments to Europe and lasting colonial institutions. The third stage gave new emphasis to the "role of eastern rather than western forces in Canada, to urban interests and to the dominating power of the organizing, controlling metropolis."²

In opposition to the Environmentalists, "Laurentian" scholars such as Donald G. Creighton (1956) maintained that the St. Lawrence River water route and its tributaries formed the basis of an extensive communications system around which Canada, as a nation distinct from the US, took shape. Challenging the Environmentalist position and advancing Creighton's "Laurentianism," Harold Innis (1933) and W.L. Morton (1946) observed that regions developed as a result of staples trade controlled by large urban centres and not from frontiers.³

II.B STAGES OF URBAN GROWTH IN CANADA

Artibise and Stelter maintain that Canadian towns and cities have developed in at least four stages. The first was the "Colonial/Mercantile Era, 1608-1820" where settlements developed as garrisons and entrepôts of imperial and mercantile expansion. As entrepôts these towns sent staples from their hinterlands to the metropolitan centre for final processing, and, in turn,

distributed the goods from the metropolis. Towns of the Colonial Era were "planted" using an unimaginative grid-iron layout which was partly responsible for concentrating the elite at the centre while the lower classes occupied the outskirts.⁴

The second stage or "Commercial Era, 1820s-1870s" was marked by interregional trade and manufacturing which gave larger urban centres a measure of autonomy from imperial control.⁵ This era was characterized by a lack of any central direction in planning along with a growing public recognition of the need to plan cities. Instances of good planning were in fact rare and services were delivered by private companies to those who were able to afford them. Consequently, there arose a spatial "separation between work place and residence and sorting out of population by class and ethnicity."⁶

It was during the third stage of urbanization, the "Industrial Era, 1870s-1920s," that Canada's cities underwent dramatic change. A "modern city" emerged supported by a growing industrial base as well as by waves of new immigrants that drove the machines of industry. Those cities that moved beyond exclusive dependence on industry to extend its economic and cultural dominance rose to a position of regional importance.

Cities of the "Corporate Era, 1920s-1980s" experienced explosive growth and extensive development within a technological and post-industrial age.⁷ This era was characterized by a highly specialized economic base, dependent on natural, economic and technological forces, with the urban nodes linked together in hierarchic structure.

II.C THE METROPOLIS IN CANADIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

A dominant theme underlying the stages of urban growth is the increasing importance of the city in contrast with earlier notions of the primacy of the frontier in the process of settlement. Examining the significance of the

city in the 1920s, N.S.B. Gras of the "Metropolitanism" School argued that an urban centre could become a metropolis by advancing into: a marketing centre; a manufacturing complex; a communications network; and a financial centre.⁸ Refining the Grasian model to the Canadian urban experience, George A. Nader (1975) maintained that there are five main stages through which an urban centre passes through before becoming a metropolis: (1) a single economic centre; (2) a service centre; (3) primary manufacturing; (4) secondary manufacturing; and (5) a regional metropolis.⁹ After advancing through the stages outlined by Gras and Nader, a metropolis could control the hinterland for the good of the region as a whole.

On this point, historian J.M.S. Careless argued that dominance in a metropolitan-hinterland relationship was "neither naturally benign nor innately baneful."¹⁰ He maintained that the metropolitan centre obtained the primary resources and staples from the hinterland in return for investment, organization, technology, and expertise.¹¹ Careless also observed that frontier expansion occurred primarily as a result of the metropolis pursuing more resources and trading hinterlands in ways which were not necessarily equitable.¹² The pursuit of riches led to the establishment of settlements which either gained positions of internal headship beneath the external metropolitan dominance or declined in importance. In the Canadian North, for instance, metropolitan exploitation of frontier resources frequently led to over-harvesting, resource depletion and abandonment of mines and supporting settlements.

In their examination of the city, Careless and Artibise questioned whether Canadian metropolitanism was a replication of the British tradition, a reflection of American culture, or something uniquely Canadian. Morris Zaslow (1988)

examined the North with the same questions, and like Careless and Artibise, claims a unique Canadian tradition.

II.D A POST-CONFEDERATION HISTORY OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES: 1867-1967

While Canadian non-Native and Native traditions co-exist in the NWT, historians W.L. Morton (1970), and, more recently, Kenneth Coates and W.R. Morrison (1985) argue that northern historiography is incomplete and outside the mainstream of Canadian scholarship. Although a vast literature exists on the fur trade, it is not all North-centred or scholarly, nor does it examine social, cultural, and urban history. Contributing to northern historiography, Peter J. Usher (1987) presents three major phases of development since the time of discovery. Adapted for the purposes of this chapter, they are: (1) commercial penetration; (2) administrative colonialism and the welfare state; and (3) the transition to an industrial mode of production.¹³

II.D.1 Commercial Penetration

Prior to Confederation the region was primarily inhabited by Natives, and smaller numbers of non-Natives who engaged in prospecting, fur-trading, fishing and whaling, and lived in settlements near posts of the fur trade. With a monopoly on the trade, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) became the spearhead of commercial activity in the North. As the trade grew, Natives were urged by outfitters to abandon their traditional way of life to participate in commercial fur trapping. By encouraging Natives to accept Anglo-European culture, religion, and a market economy, the HBC together with Catholic and Anglican missionaries became the principal agents of change in the North.¹⁴

Attempting to integrate the region into the Dominion, institutions were imposed upon the peoples of the Northwest in crude and unimaginative fashion from Ottawa. While federal officials were out of touch with life in the

North, they sponsored surveys which prepared the way for future advances of Canada's mining and settlement frontiers.

With a decreasing demand for fur during the Great Depression, Natives dependent on the fur trade were forced to return to a self-sufficient lifestyle abandoned long ago.¹⁵ As Coates (1985) argued, however, there was no turning back as the fur trade reinforced the importance of commercial exchange to the Natives. In fact, virtually everything from settlement patterns to daily transactions were designed to provide easy access to trading posts and mineral resources.¹⁶

Metal mining extended Canada's horizons far beyond the limits of farming and forestry into the Arctic, attracting many people from cities and farms into new settlements. While many remoter camps were made up of bunkhouses and messhalls next to the mines and surrounded by bush, other communities such as Yellowknife were larger and more permanent.¹⁷ The opening of various mines led to the creation of communities with municipal governments, stores, hotels, schools, company housing, as well as postal and telephone communications.¹⁸ Throughout this period, however, there remained a lack of concern for the welfare of the Natives and their traditional way of life.

II.D.2 Administrative Colonialism and the Welfare State

The requirements of the Second World War opened up the North with the development of the Alaska Highway, the Canol pipeline, military airfields, as well as numerous weather stations and supporting communities. A continuing post-war military presence provided the additional infrastructure and transportation improvements required for northern economic development. It also took a military presence to bring the deteriorating state of Natives to the attention of the Canadian public.¹⁹

The federal government intervened by delivering social services from permanent northern settlements, inducing many Natives to abandon their nomadic lifestyle on the barrens and resettle in towns. The notion of consulting Native peoples themselves, shaping social programs in accordance with their wishes, and involving them directly in the process, was suggested but never seriously considered by Ottawa. This was hardly surprising, according to Zaslow, since resettlement was intended to lock Natives into the wage economy and speed up the acculturative process.²⁰ With a declining fur industry, Natives were drawn to defence stations and administrative centres by a variety of government services and amenities, as well as by the prospect of wage labour.²¹

The construction of new towns, such as Inuvik and Frobisher Bay (Iqaluit), and the transformation of mining towns, such as Yellowknife, into administrative centres was a result of the second phase of northern development. As modern communities were built, they failed to integrate the Native population. While casual employment, education, medical and social services were provided to Natives, shacktowns appeared beyond the utilidor-serviced centre. Polarization based on income and tenure ensured that Natives lived on traditional campgrounds, in the rundown older sections of the towns, or more often in unorganized areas adjoining the surveyed subdivisions while newcomers, mostly non-Native, occupied the modern townsites or newer subdivisions of older settlements.²²

II.D.3 The Transition to an Industrial Mode of Production

The third phase began in the late 1950s and was characterized by large-scale resource exploitation and development at the Pine Point Mine south of Great Slave Lake and the Eldorado Mine at Port Radium. Since the mid-1950s, the federal government attempted to influence the pace and magnitude of

northern resource development using subsidies for those who were prepared to speculate on frontier expansion. Subsequent prospecting indicated extensive mineralization in many areas, but the distance from markets and the high costs of transportation discouraged many firms from taking advantage of government subsidies.²³

The late-1960s were characterized by increased oil and gas activity and less spectacular development of the mining industry. Prior to this period, only modest efforts such as the Norman Wells Refinery were undertaken to supply the energy needs of settlements along the Mackenzie Valley. More ambitious operations were initiated in 1968 when huge petroleum reserves were discovered at Prudhoe Bay on the Arctic coast of Alaska.²⁴

The industry represented a significant aspect of the northern economy during this third phase. The implications of a transition to an industrial mode of production for some Natives was an increasing attraction to larger urban centres in search of employment. At the same time, however, there was a growing distinction between larger urban centres whose population was largely non-Native and smaller settlements inhabited primarily by Natives. As segments of the Native population moved from traditional settlement camps to permanent communities in search of jobs, social services and shelter, they became increasingly dependent on Euro-Canadian institutions and economies, and, therefore, less able to protect their traditional culture.²⁵ Such dependence illustrates the lingering effect of the major historical patterns -- fur trade, government intervention, and mineral development -- on the region's inhabitants and settlements.

III. FRONTIER AND METROPOLIS IN US HISTORY: 1867-1967

III.A THE FRONTIER IN US HISTORIOGRAPHY

The expansion of the American West and the effect of frontiering on society is a central theme in US historiography. The "frontier thesis" was developed in 1893 by Frederick Jackson Turner who argued that the advancing frontier in the American West had shaped US history, society and institutions in ways which were different from the European tradition. Unlike Europe which was already established, Turner maintained that "a new and superior civilization arose out of the cycle of US frontiering at the meeting point between savagery and civilization."²⁶

As a result of struggling with "truculent" Natives and a hostile land beyond the western edge of settlement, Turner argued that a new civilization of frontiersmen would emerge to break with custom and embody democracy, individualism, pragmatism, and nationalism.²⁷ It was this very struggle that had shaped the American character, which Turner described as consisting of "nervous energy, exuberance and dominant individualism."²⁸ In addition to these traits, Americans had to be innovative and inventive in order to survive and prosper, and produce changes in their social, economic, and political organizations.²⁹

Historians Walter P. Webb (1931, 1964), Ray A. Billington (1949), and, more recently, Martin Ridge (1988) each built on Turnerian postulates in their interpretations of US westward expansion. For his study Webb (1931) viewed the frontier as "an area of unexploited land and natural resources that stimulated a succession of economic booms affecting Europe and the frontier region."³⁰ In Webb's opinion the US frontier was part of contemporary life and the West, particularly the Great Plains, was systematically exploited through

capitalist means as an economic and cultural colonial dependency of Eastern cities.

The neo-Turnerian Billington maintained that westward movement occurred in six stages until the continent was occupied. The stages of settlement began with the fur traders, followed by those of the cattlemen, the miners, the pioneer farmers, the equipped farmers, and ended with urbanization as more people were drawn to the west in search of opportunity. Billington argued that although the frontier had a significant effect on the making of American society, it was also shaped by external influences as well as by capitalist forces.³¹ While accepting Turner's frontier of economic opportunity and democracy, Billington also saw it as the basis of a society that would lead to a co-operative democracy.³² In such a society power would gradually shift from rural to urban centres thereby creating a new relationship between frontier and metropolis.

Supporting Turnerian notions and in partial agreement with Billington and Webb, Ridge (1988) saw the relationship from a slightly different perspective. Ridge argued that the struggle over who would control the development of a region was "not a contest between the honest struggling westerners and the greedy eastern capitalist exploiters but a dispute between local elites and their distant and often more affluent and established urban rivals."³³

III.B STAGES OF URBAN GROWTH IN THE US

Attempting to trace the rise of the American city, E.K. Muller (1987) classified the growth of US urbanization into four eras.³⁴ Towns of the "Commercial Era, pre-1830" functioned as either links between Britain and developing colonial hinterlands or as key points along trade routes to interior frontier settlements. These mercantile cities were located along waterways and

overland routes for ease of transportation and trade. Irregular development occurred within a rectangular grid-iron town plan, and social distinctions occurred at the city's edge where poor and "socially undesirable" people lived.³⁵

The "Transitional Era, 1830s-1870s" was characterized by an expansion of trade and industry, and improved access to regional markets and raw materials. Economic expansion and improved technology resulted in the steady growth of the population of American cities. By the end of this era the city had grown substantially in population and area, but was divided into zones of activity, ethnicity, and class.³⁶

The "Industrial Era, 1880s-1920s" marked the onset of the metropolis, explosive population growth and immigration, as well as rapid industrialization and modernization. The waves of urban migrants, rise of corporate capitalism, poor transportation and unaffordable housing accelerated the segregative tendencies of urban America.³⁷

The "Metropolitan Era, 1930s-1980s" was characterized by extraordinary growth and prosperity following a period of economic depression and stagnation.³⁸ Small towns were transformed into booming cities that had integrated entire regions, only to decline in 1964 when urban America entered a period of crisis, fragmentation, and inner city decay.³⁹

III.C THE METROPOLIS IN US HISTORIOGRAPHY

Another way of interpreting frontiers, sections or regions is to examine their relationship with the city. Pioneering work on cities and regions was done by Gras, Arthur Schlesinger (1933) and sociologist Howard Odom who argued that "cultures evolve and can be understood only through the study of regional areas."⁴⁰ For these "New Regionalists," examining urban phenomenon within a

larger setting promised to "broaden the study of the city to the wider region to which it is linked geographically, economically, and culturally."⁴¹

Recalling the views of Odom, geographer Donald Meinig advanced the primacy of the city in cultural as well as economic affairs. Meinig's model for cultural regions consisted of a core area, a surrounding domain, and a more distant sphere in which regional influence overlaps its neighbours. The core is defined as the centre of political and economic power within the area of most concentrated urban development. Cultural influence is disseminated through patterns of migration, communication and political control that have centred in a leading metropolis.⁴² By analyzing urban-centred regions in an economic as well as a cultural context, Meinig rejected Turnerian postulates and made the Grasian model more sensitive to historical forces.

Historian John Reps also questioned the usefulness of the frontier thesis observing that western towns were planned and in the advance of settlement. Challenging Billington's argument, Reps maintained that towns had shaped the structure of American society rather than passively responding to the needs of the rural frontier.

They [towns] served as the centers of trade and transportation, mining and manufacture, art and architecture, printing and publishing, religion, recreation, education, administration, banking and politics. In virtually every aspect of life, urban residents, not farmers and ranchers, dominated Western culture.⁴³

According to Reps and Meinig, towns and cities acted as the most effective way of reproducing social and cultural conventions throughout the nation. In partial agreement, Lawrence Larsen (1986) observed that settlements in the West generally copied eastern conventions as well as eastern public services, religious, and educational institutions.⁴⁴

Challenging earlier views that the pattern of urban development in the southern US was similar to the national urban experience, David Goldfield

(1982) argued that three distinctive aspects of southern regional history have shaped southern urbanization: (1) the primacy of a staple economy (i.e., cotton); (2) the importance of a biracial society; and (3) a colonial economy.⁴⁵ While based on southern experience, Goldfield's model is a useful way of explaining the history of Alaskan cities and regions since they were shaped by a similar political economy.

III.D A HISTORY OF ALASKA SINCE THE AMERICAN PERIOD: 1867-1967

III.D.1 Commercial Penetration

The commercial phase of Alaska's development began with the Russian fur trade and continued after the US took possession of Alaska in 1867. At the start of the "American" period, the region was inhabited primarily by Native peoples and a smaller number of non-Native whalers, hunters and trappers living in trading posts scattered throughout the North. Natives were encouraged to trap commercially which upset traditional ways and turned a once self-sufficient people into consumers of manufactured goods.⁴⁶ Attempting to acculturate indigenous peoples, the Alaska Commercial Company (ACC) of fur traders provided schools and medical services, and missionaries attempted to persuade Natives to abandon their traditional communities for permanent settlements.

The decline of the fur trade in 1880 corresponded with the growth of fishing, logging, and placer mining which had prompted Alaska's first population boom.⁴⁷ As more people were lured to the region by the Klondike Gold Rush of 1898, mining camps and larger settlements such as Nome and Fairbanks were built. Fairbanks became the dominant centre of interior Alaska, and by 1900 had acquired schools, churches and a hospital.

The effect of the gold rush was that Congress ordered geological surveys and the incorporation of towns to bring Alaska more fully into the Union. The

renewed confidence in Alaska's future led to the construction of the Alaska Railroad in 1923 as well as the growth of several communities, including Anchorage, which rapidly developed into the Territory's dominant city.⁴⁸ While Alaska was becoming urbanized, it was still very much a colony of the US.

She [Alaska] had been given a limited form of home rule, but control of her resources remained in the hands of the Congress. The Alaska economy was colonial; the territory supplied raw material to the mother country, from which she obtained most of her finished goods and the capital needed for investment in her enterprises.⁴⁹

Alaska's colonial economy during the inter-war years followed a consistent cycle of the seasonal harvesting of fish, salmon canning, fur trapping, and gold mining. Gateway cities such as San Francisco and Seattle served as advance bases of supply or staple exports and channels for eastern credit and investment in Alaska.⁵⁰

III.D.2 Administrative Colonialism and the Welfare State

The Second World War brought enormous changes to Alaska as it became part of a defense perimeter against the Japanese. After the war, Alaska, which is the only region of the US directly adjacent to the USSR, became a significant part of the continental defense system. In an attempt to increase continental security, numerous military bases, airfields, weather stations, and radar installations were built and existing military installations near Anchorage and Fairbanks were strengthened. While military construction projects became the primary foundation of the Alaskan economy, the region lacked the economic and social infrastructure to support the defense effort undertaken by the US Government, which was rapidly increasing population levels in many communities.⁵¹

For the purpose of advancing national security, the US Congress in 1950 approved funds to develop Alaska's urban infrastructure for the defence effort, resulting in a construction boom primarily in Anchorage and Fairbanks.

Although new suburbs were developed and private building increased, housing was in short supply even though public accommodation was provided.⁵²

Despite the post-war construction boom, many towns in Alaska suffered from a shortage of public utilities, recreational and cultural amenities, and social services.

The lack of basic amenities and social services was particularly severe for Alaska Natives living in rural or remote areas of the region. Attempting to reach more people in need of social assistance, the federal government based additional health and welfare programs, and schools in larger urban centres, compelling Alaska Natives to abandon their traditional communities for services in the city. With the end of the fur trade, many more Alaska Natives were encouraged to leave their traditional way of life for the prospect of wage labour near military bases and regional centres.

Since there were few jobs and affordable housing, Alaska Natives were forced to live in slums consisting of shacks and quonset huts on the outskirts of newer sub-divisions in Fairbanks and Anchorage. Although more new towns were built during the mid-1950s, Native peoples remained highly segregated in the non-Native communities.⁵³ Increasing urbanization corresponded with the decline of Native communities in the rural and remote areas of Alaska, and a shift toward large scale resource extraction and production.

III.D.3 The Transition to an Industrial Mode of Production

In 1957 the Atlantic Richfield Corporation developed the region's first commercial oil well -- the Swansen River field on the Kenai Peninsula -- marking the beginning of the petroleum industry in Alaska. By 1966, in the short span of nine years since the Swansen River discovery, the petroleum industry had become an important part of the Alaskan economy. For example, natural gas was used to heat local homes in Anchorage; Alaskan crude oil was processed in

refineries on the Kenai Peninsula; while gas and chemical refining was carried out in the South Central region.⁵⁴

In 1968 significant reserves of oil and gas were discovered at Prudhoe Bay on the North Slope, and lead, zinc, and silver deposits were reported in Southwest Alaska. Concurrent with these discoveries was the expansion of the forest and fishing industry near the coastal communities, and the growth of Alaska's economy. The third period signalled the region's transition into an industrial mode of production, with profound implications for Alaskans and patterns of settlement.

As the pace and magnitude of northern economic development increased, numerous new towns were built while older ones were re-vitalized to support the exploitation of renewable and non-renewable resources. One result of this growth was that more and more Alaska Natives were attracted to boomtowns such as Fairbanks in search of work on oil rigs or in the mines. As the denudation of village Alaska continued, new towns supporting extractive industries had become over-crowded with migrant Alaska Native and Euro-American workers.

Another result of a rapidly expanding resource sector and economy was the emergence of Anchorage and its dominance over the surrounding hinterland. With an improved transport and communication system, growing population, as well as a developing financial and industrial base, Anchorage generated the "critical mass" necessary for achieving an important degree of autonomy from metropolises such as Seattle and San Francisco. The urbanization of Anchorage, therefore, represents one of the central ironies of frontier Alaska, for without it, Alaska would have never captured national attention.⁵⁵

IV. FRONTIER AND METROPOLIS IN RUSSIAN AND SOVIET HISTORY: 1867-1967

IV.A THE FRONTIER IN RUSSIAN AND SOVIET HISTORIOGRAPHY

The frontier is a dominant theme in Russian and Soviet historiography and has been widely used as a theoretical framework for analyzing the settlement of lands beyond the Urals. Inspired by the Siberian populist historian A.P. Shchapov and led by N.M. Yadrintsev, the nineteenth-century Siberian "Regionalist" School argued that Siberia was settled by a spontaneous mass migration of peasants in search of new land and freedom from the Tsar. Developing in opposition to Moscow's dominance over Siberia, Regionalists charged the Imperialists of oppressing the peasants and Natives, as well as exploiting northern land, forests, fur-bearing animals and natural resources. The Regionalists concluded that since Siberia is an exploited colony of metropolitan Russia, it should therefore break away from Imperial Russia in favour of some form of regional autonomy.⁵⁶

Challenging the Regionalist view, members of the Marxist-Leninist "Establishment" School argued that under communism, national antagonisms would wither away in favour of a new socialist society. Fearing that a Regionalist perspective would incite anti-Russian sentiment in Siberia, V.I. Shunkov (1945, 1960) and L.P. Potapov (1964) wrote of the "drawing together" (*sblizhenie*) and even the "fusing" (*sliyanie*) of the peoples of the USSR into a new urban civilization.⁵⁷ Russian expansion, according to Shunkov, did not lead to the conquest of peoples and natural resources which occurred in other colonies. On the contrary, Russians helped Native peoples along the road from primitive communism to socialism and encouraged a mingling of peoples in new Siberian settlements.⁵⁸

In opposition to Regionalist and Establishment historiography, proponents of the "Siberian" School argued that a leading role was played in the colonization process by the fortress towns, the establishment of which preceded the wider settlement of a particular region. Siberianist N.I. Nikitin (1980) maintained that the first Russian settlements were not peaceful peasant homesteads, but fortified posts (*ostrogi*) connected with the fur trade and tribute system and constructed in the course of government-inspired expeditions. Although peasants played an important role in the expansion of Siberia, F.G. Safronov (1978) observed that they followed military and administrative townsmen in support of posts of the fur trade and were in the vanguard of Russian settlement.⁵⁹

IV.B STAGES OF URBAN GROWTH IN RUSSIA AND THE USSR

Russian historian G.I. Shreider and Marxist-Leninist writers from the socialist period have maintained that Russian and Soviet cities (*gorod*) have evolved in at least four stages. Settlements of the "Colonial Era, 1600s-1820s" developed as garrisons or points of Tsarist mercantile expansion. Located at the confluence of waterways and trails, these towns exchanged staples with "European" cities such as Moscow and St. Petersburg for finished goods. Colonial towns were socially segregated, unplanned, and lacked the most basic amenities.

The "Reform Era, 1820s-1860s" marked the gradual rise of the modern Russian city. Although the urban population was small compared to that of the following era, it continued to grow as more modern types of cities appeared. It was during this era that Moscow and St. Petersburg emerged as the cosmopolitan centres of industry, commerce, finance, as well as the administrative core of Imperial Russia. By the 1860s, Russia had a well developed network of local and regional administrative centres and markets.⁶⁰

Despite the limited advancements of the Reform era, however, cities continued to be divided by class and tenure.

The "Post-Reform Era, 1860s-1914" was characterized by a growth in the urban population of unprecedented proportions, heavy industrialization, and the concentration of commerce in larger cities.⁶¹ By the turn of the century, according to Joseph Bradley (1986), Russian cities resembled metropolises with characteristics such as "great occupational diversity, an increasing flow of immigrants from the surrounding region, active economic exchange with large areas of the country as well as intense cultural life."⁶²

Cities in the "Soviet Era, 1917-1980s" were marked by explosive growth and rapid industrialization.⁶³ As cities developed in the USSR, they have fallen into a pattern of interrelationships that link them together in a hierarchical system. Moscow occupies the centre of this system, and all the other republic capitals are subordinated to it, as are all other cities exceeding one million in population. Factors such as population immobility, residential segregation, labour shortages as well as a housing shortage, continue to plague the contemporary Soviet city.⁶⁴

IV.C THE METROPOLIS IN RUSSIAN AND SOVIET HISTORIOGRAPHY

The classification of Russian cities by geographer V.P. Semenov-Tian-Shanskii in 1910, led to the conceptualization of the "economic city."⁶⁵ Analyzing the effect location and access to transportation had on the development of economic or trade and industrial cities, Semenov-Tian-Shanskii observed that the two most prominent types of settlements in late Imperial Russia were mining and agricultural cities. While dominant in the period between 1860 to 1897, trade cities declined coincident with the rise of the industrial city during the early twentieth century.⁶⁶

The rise of the industrial city continued into the early socialist period, where there developed a strong anti-metropolitan syndrome expressed by proponents of the "Deurbanist" School. One Deurbanist, L. Vygodski, writing in 1927, recommended breaking up the largest cities and relocating the population and industry into a number of independent settlements. M. Okhitovich, like Vygodski and the Slavophiles before him, rejected the very idea of the city and advocated a return to nature.⁶⁷ Challenging the ruralist view of the city, the "Urbanist" School led by L. Sabsovich (1929) advocated the development of self-contained settlements that could take advantage of western technology and economic agglomeration in order to build the socialist economy.⁶⁸

Advancing the Urbanist perspective, economist V.G. Davidovich (1960) of the "Agglomeration" School examined the dominance of cities within a broader regional context.⁶⁹ Recalling the views of Davidovich, agglacentrists such as Oleg N. Ianitskii (1986) argued that further improvements in city-wide transportation and communications, moreover, would stimulate the development of regions as a whole.⁷⁰ Ianitskii and others maintained that in addition to increasing economies of scale and building regions, metropolises offered people a greater range of social and cultural advantages.

Another way to conceive of the city, according to B.S. Khorev and D.G. Khodzhayev (1986) of the "Settlements" School, is to view them in the context of a "unified system of settlement." This approach presupposes an intensive degree of inter-urban connectivity and the availability of more or less equal levels of services throughout the system. Khorev argued that one of the main advantages of a unified system, compared to a large urban agglomeration, is that it limits city growth and avoids the breakdown of a region into a privileged core and a backward periphery.⁷¹

IV.D A HISTORY OF RUSSIAN AND SOVIET SIBERIA: 1867-1967

IV.D.1 Commercial Penetration and Socialist Intervention

Prior to Emancipation in 1861, Siberia was peopled by Natives and by lesser numbers of non-Native Cossacks, soldiers, traders, government officials, and peasant farmers, and resided in hamlets or forts.⁷² Controlled entirely by representatives of the Tsar, the quest for fur was the basic factor which, more than any other, explains the rapidity of Russia's eastward advance across Siberia.⁷³ Under a brutal tribute system, Natives were forced by the Tsar's men to leave their subsistence way of life to trap fur-bearing animals. These commercial incursions into Siberia were soon followed by members of the Russian Orthodox church who proselytized the Native population.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the combined effects of population growth and land-hunger, together with the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railroad (1891-1916) led to increased settlement and economic development of the region. To encourage the development of Siberia, Tsarist officials sponsored surveys which prepared the way for the opening of Russia's mining and settlement frontiers.

The commercial frontiers subsided during the revolutionary period when the new regime attempted to dismantle capitalist institutions and reverse the damage done to the peoples of the North.⁷⁴ While Natives were encouraged to follow their traditional ways, nomadism was regarded as an obstacle to building socialism. Attempting to socialize the economy and improve the Natives' standard of living, collectivization villages (*kolkhoz*) were built throughout the Soviet North. The rationale for creating jobs in permanent communities was to induce Natives to "settle down" and participate in the development of the regional economy.⁷⁵

Mining soon became the most important economic activity in northern USSR, attracting many people from "European" cities into new settlements. While many camps were temporary and lacked basic amenities, others evolved into more permanent settlements. The town of Noril'sk, for example, was built in 1935 to support an important mineral refinery and serve as a regional centre. The requirements of industrialization in northern centres, however, took increasing priority over the needs of Native peoples.

IV.D.2 Administrative Colonialism and Socialism

The Second World War had important implications for the settlement and development of Siberia. While the cities of European Russia were destroyed by the conflict, settlements and industries in northern USSR remained relatively unscathed and actually grew in support of the war effort. Soviet military activity during the post-war period supplied the necessary infrastructural improvements for northern economic development. In order to fuel post-war industrialization in the Soviet heartland, northern coal and oil fields were exploited which led to the construction of many permanent and temporary towns.⁷⁶

Attempting to reach more Natives with education and health care, indigenous peoples were urged to abandon their nomadic existence on the barrens and resettle in larger villages or permanent settlements and administrative centres such as Noril'sk and Yakutsk. As the pace and magnitude of urbanization and collectivization increased, more Natives were drawn to new towns by various government services and amenities. In some cases, the transition to permanent settlements was forced, and consideration was not always given to what Natives required. Nevertheless, the transition from nomadism to permanent settlement proceeded, and was linked with a more intensive exploitation of the natural resources and urbanization in the Soviet North.⁷⁷

As more modern communities were built, attempts to integrate Natives into Russian communities were not always successful. Despite increasing Native representation on the local soviets, expanded collectivization, and additional health and social services, residential segregation occurred as many Native peoples were compelled to live in sub-standard housing. In many instances, Natives were "bumped off" waiting lists for state housing by Euro-Russians who were involved in northern economic development. Toward the mid-1950s, the exploitation of non-renewable resources was the basic factor, more than any other, that shaped patterns of settlement in northern USSR

IV.D.3 Transition to an Industrial Mode of Production

The third phase of development began in the late-1950s and was marked by massive resource exploitation in the Zhdanov deposit near Nikel' and the town of Zapolyarnyy, as well as the Noril'sk lignite field near the lower Yenisey.⁷⁸ In an attempt to increase industrial growth and self-sufficiency, resource development occurred in northern USSR despite the harsh physical environment and distance from markets in the major population centres.

The early-1960s were characterized by increased oil and gas activity near Tyumen' Oblast' in Western Siberia, as well as the massive development of the northern mining industry. Despite the rich potential of northern mining, more ambitious operations were planned for Tyumen' Oblast' when huge petroleum reserves were located near Urengoi on the west Siberian lowland.⁷⁹ While actual development was limited during this period, the full-scale exploitation of Tyumen' hydrocarbons occurred in the mid-1970s as new technology became available.⁸⁰

The shift to an industrial mode of production had profound implications for people living in the northern USSR. In Western Siberia, for example, many Natives were allocated state housing and encouraged to abandon their

traditional lifestyle to make way for hydrocarbon development. According to A. Mamedov (1989), local ecological and social problems resulting from hydrocarbon activity were ignored, thereby damaging the subsistence economies of Native peoples. In West Yakutia, for instance, thousands of hectares of arable lands were defiled, the stocks of valuable fishes reduced and traditional trades endangered because of diamond-mining activity.⁸¹ In order to stem the damage, Natives were allowed to return to the "wilds" for a specified period of time to resume nomadic activities such as reindeer-herding.⁸² Even with these concessions, Natives became increasingly dependent on Slavic and Soviet institutions and economies, and less able to protect their traditional culture.

V. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FRONTIER AND METROPOLIS: 1867-1967

A comparison of frontier and metropolis in Canada, the US, Imperial and Soviet Russia, as well as an examination of the patterns of northern settlement and development, illustrate some interesting similarities and differences about remote lands that are the product of colonialism. The fur industry marked the first stage of mercantile activity in the three regions, and signified the start of irreversible change for Native peoples. While the degree of exploitation varied among fur trading companies, Natives were induced or forced to abandon their traditional ways to trap commercially and live in fur trade settlements.

The small towns of the Canadian and Russian fur trade were linear, with settlements being built along rivers and trails, while towns in Alaska were primarily located along the coast. While Siberian settlement was hampered by official restrictions and a lack of trained people, development in Alaska, and, to a lesser extent in the Canadian northern territories, was comparatively swifter and more sophisticated. The more specialized economies of the Canadian

North and Alaska meant that they were dominated by a few major towns, while the more varied economy of Siberia gave rise to several towns of prominent rank.

Around the turn of the century, the situations in Siberia and the Canadian North contrasted with the considerable degree of local autonomy that characterized newly organized communities in Alaska. In the Canadian and Russian experiences, representatives of the central government, rather than a class of independent townspeople, developed northern settlements. These towns all played a leading role in the colonization process, the establishment of which preceded the wider settlement of regions. The fact that towns were in the vanguard of settlement, moreover, dispels the myth that regions, such as the North, develop as a result of frontiers. Far more convincing, at least in the northern context, is that the three regions were opened up by successive waves of urbanization fueled by various stages of northern economic development.

Signalling a second stage of economic activity, the requirements of the Second World War and post-war reconstruction and militarization intensified the process of urbanization and state intervention, and supplied the infrastructure necessary for developing northern regions. With the high costs of northern development, the state intervened in northern USSR, and, to a lesser degree in the NWT and Alaska by subsidizing northern economies. Along with rapid economic development, however, came a much slower realization of the ongoing marginalization of Native peoples, especially in the NWT and Alaska.

In an attempt to assist Natives cope with their changing environment, government agencies based in northern urban centres provided educational programs and medical care to people in need. The prospect of government

services and employment in urban centres encouraged Natives to abandon their traditional ways to live in permanent settlements. With few prospects for gainful employment and decent and affordable housing, Native peoples in the NWT and Alaska, and, to a far lesser extent in the northern USSR, became segregated within the predominantly non-Native urban communities. In essence, Natives became locked into an increasingly dependent relationship with non-Native institutions precisely at a time when the three regions shifted into an industrial mode of production.

While the third stage of northern economic development occurred much more rapidly in northern USSR and Alaska, economic growth became a high priority for all regions and was expressed spatially by the centripetal forces of urbanization. The prominence of northern cities varies across regions: the NWT has a more dispersed settlement pattern consisting of smaller towns; Alaska is dominated by a single metropolis; and northern USSR is made up of a hierarchical structure of many large cities. Despite differences in size, function and interrelatedness, the growing trend toward urbanization in northern areas led to the dominance of cities in shaping political, economic, and cultural affairs, and is examined in the next chapter.

Endnotes

1. See Alan F.J. Artibise and Gilbert A. Stelter, eds., *Power and Place: Canadian Urban Development in the North American Context* (Vancouver, 1986), p. 2; and Gilbert Stelter, "A Regional Framework for Urban History," *Urban History Review*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (February 1985), pp. 193-205. When discussing the urban system, it is useful to speak of it as a urban-centred region. Stelter, for instance, defines urban-centred regions as groups of counties or census divisions aggregated around cities of over 10,000 population.

2. See J.M.S. Careless, "Frontierism, Metropolitanism, and Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (1954), p. 11 and 17. Metropolitanism implies the emergence of a city of outstanding size to dominate not only its surrounding countryside but other cities and their countrysides, the whole area being organized by the metropolis, through control of communications, trade and finance, into one economic and social unit that is focused on the metropolitan centre of dominance and through it trades with the world.
3. Harold A. Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History* (Toronto, 1970), p. 2.
4. See Alan F.J. Artibise, "Building Cities," in Norman R. Ball, ed. *Building Canada: A History of Public Works* (Toronto, 1988), p. 314.
5. Alan F.J. Artibise and Gilbert A. Stelter, eds., *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban and Social History* (Ottawa, 1984), p. 9.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 8
7. Artibise and Stelter, *Power and Place*, pp. 7-10.
8. Gilbert A. Stelter, "A Sense of Time and Place: The Historian's Approach to Canada's Urban Past," in Carl Berger, ed. *Contemporary Approaches to Canadian History* (Toronto, 1987), pp. 173-174.
9. See George A. Nader, *Cities of Canada: Theoretical, Historical and Planning Perspectives*, Vol. 1 (Toronto, 1975), pp. 6-7.
10. J.M.S. Careless, *Frontier and Metropolis: Regions, Cities, and Identities in Canada*, The Donald G. Creighton Lectures (Toronto, 1989), p. 52.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
13. There are several excellent pieces of historical inquiry by Morris Zaslow that examines the evolution of government policy and the process of opening up the Canadian North. While these are useful contributions to northern studies, the Zaslow School have focused exclusively on how southern individuals and groups have shaped the North. Zaslow's work adequately portrays the dominance of southern institutions in the North, however, it lacks a North-centred as well as a Native perspective. To correct this oversight, Kenneth Coates and Native scholars provide a much needed northern perspective for historical inquiry. By examining the effect federal policy and programs have on northerners, and by balancing southern interpretations of the North with a view from the region, northern scholars offer an alternative to mainstream historical analysis. For the three major phases of development, see Peter J. Usher, "The North: One Land, Two Ways of Life," in L.D. McCann, ed., *Heartland and Hinterland: A Geography of Canada*, 2 ed. (Scarborough, 1987), pp. 496-510.
14. See Morris Zaslow, *The Northward Expansion of Canada, 1914-1967* (Toronto, 1988), *passim*.
15. Kenneth Coates and W.R. Morrison, "Northern Visions: Recent Writing in Northern Canadian History," *Manitoba History*, No. 10 (1985), pp. 149-150.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 152.
17. Zaslow, *The Northward Expansion of Canada*, pp. 174-202.
18. Morris Zaslow, *The Northwest Territories: 1905-1980* (Ottawa, 1984), p. 10.
19. Farley Mowat, *People of the Deer* (New York, 1968), *passim*.
20. Zaslow, *The Northward Expansion of Canada*, p. 274.
21. Kenneth Coates and Judith Powell, *The Modern North: People, Politics and the Rejection of Colonialism* (Toronto, 1989), p. 10.
22. Zaslow, *The Northward Expansion of Canada*, p. 319-320.
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36. *Ibid.*, pp. 111-113, and 118-120.

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 113-114, and 120-124.
38. See Carl Abbott, "The Metropolitan Region," in Gerald D. Nash and Richard W. Etulain, eds., *Twentieth Century West: Historical Interpretations* (Albuquerque, 1989), p. 71.
39. *Ibid.*
40. Raymond A. Mohl, "New Perspectives on American Urban History," in Raymond Mohl, ed., *The Making of Urban America* (Wilmington, 1988), p. 300.
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43. See John W. Reys, *The Forgotten Frontier: Urban Planning in the American West Before 1890* (Columbia, 1981), p. 3 for an overview of the primacy of towns in the American West.
44. Lawrence H. Larsen, "Frontier Urbanization," in Roger L. Nichols, ed., *American Frontier and Western Issues: A Historiographical Review* (New York, 1986), pp. 70-80; and Reys, *The Forgotten Frontier*, p. 3.
45. David R. Goldfield, *Cotton Fields and Skyscrapers: Southern City and Region, 1607-1980* (Baton Rouge, 1982), pp. 3-8.
46. Penny Rennick, "North Slope Now," *Alaska Geographic* Vol. 16, No. 2 (1989), pp. 16-20, and 47.
47. Claus Naske and Herman E. Slotnick, *Alaska: A History of the 49th State* (Norman and London, 1987), pp. 69-71. The demand for self-government increased in 1881 along with the arrival of more people in Alaskan settlements. Imported from the Oregon code, the First Organic Act of 1884 provided the first civil government in the district of Alaska. It did not establish rights of self-government for Alaska and acknowledged that it should be governed by federal mining laws, thereby ensuring that the new district would remain dependent on the US. In 1912 the Second Organic Act was signed, which created a new government for Alaska. As a result, new legislation established new standards and some rights of self-government which led the way to Alaskan statehood in 1959.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 98-99.
50. David Kresge, Thomas A. Morehouse, and George W. Rogers, *Issues in Alaska Development* (Seattle and London, 1977), p. 26-23; and Armstrong, Rowley, and Rogers, *The Circumpolar North*, p. 138.
51. Naske and Slotnick, *Alaska*, pp. 132-133.
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53. Kresge, Morehouse, and Rogers, *Issues in Alaska Development*, p. 37.
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55. George Rogers, "The Nature of Rural Economic Development in Alaska," in Peter G. Cornwall and Gerald McBeath, eds., *Alaska's Rural Development* (Boulder, 1982) *passim*; and Lee J. Cuba, *Identity and Community on the Alaskan Frontier* (Philadelphia, 1987), pp. 22-56.
56. See Alan Wood, "From Conquest to Revolution," in Wood, ed., *Siberia: Problems and Prospects for Regional Development* (London, 1987), pp. 44-45; and Violet Conolly, *Siberia Today and Tomorrow: A Study of Economic Resources, Problems and Achievements* (London, 1975), pp. 35-36.
57. David N. Collins, "Russia's Conquest of Siberia," *European Studies Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (1982), pp. 23-24.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
59. Wood, *Siberia*, pp. 42-44.
60. See William L. Blackwell, "Modernization and Urbanization in Russia: A Comparative View," in Michael F. Hamm, *The City in Russian History* (Lexington, 1976), pp. 302-305. See also G.I. Shreider, "Gorod i gorodovoe polozenie 1870 goda" [The City and the Municipal Statute of 1870], in *Istoriia Rossii v XIX veke* [The History of Russia in the 19th Century] (St. Petersburg, 1910), p. 4.
61. *Ibid.*, pp. 303, 305-306. During that era, the two capital cities of Russia began to grow rapidly, a number of new industrial and commercial cities appeared, a railroad network connecting cities and markets was built, and the first comprehensive urban administrative reform was established in 1870.
62. Daniel R. Brower, "Urbanization and Autocracy: Russian Urban Development in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century," *Russian Review*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (1983), p. 377. There is a legacy of political impotence in Russian cities. As the power and the dominion of the Moscow principality expanded from the fifteenth century onward, the cities were simultaneously reduced to servile, voiceless, and powerless instruments of the state. Incapable of asserting or even protecting their interests, the cities were unable to nurture the formation of an enterprising bourgeoisie or to attract enough labour to be able to provide the basis for the establishment and growth of industry.
63. James H. Bater, *The Soviet Scene: A Geographical Perspective* (London, 1989), pp. 94-105.
64. See Henry W. Morton and Robert C. Stewart, eds., *The Contemporary Soviet City* (New York, 1984), pp. 5-15; Bater, *The Soviet Scene*, 1989, pp. 94-102, and Chapter 5; and Blair A. Ruble, "Ethnicity and Soviet Cities," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. XLI, No. 3 (July 1989), *passim*.
65. V.P. Semenov-Tian-Shanskii, "Gorod i derevnia v Evropeiskoi Rossii," [City and Village in European Russia] (St. Petersburg, 1910).
66. Roger L. Thiede, "Industry and Urbanization in New Russia from 1860 to 1910," in Michael F. Hamm, *The City in Russian History* (Lexington, 1976), pp. 129-137.

67. Such decentralization could be realized by country-wide electrification, making it possible to establish a factory anywhere and thereby achieve rapidly what for Engels would have been the culmination of a long, historical process; the elimination of the differences between town and country. On the question of modernization, scholars of the Petrine era divided into two schools: the Westernizers and the Slavophiles. Westernizers wanted to adapt European "know-how" and technical expertise to modernize Imperial Russia. Urbane and cosmopolitan, they were opposed to the Slavophiles. The latter were romantic nationalists who argued that the answer to Russia's problems lay in their Slavic roots. They rejected West European culture and technology in favour of rurality or a return to nature. Interestingly, these themes are still found in contemporary USSR planning literature and represent an excellent way of interpreting Soviet urban and regional theory and policy.

68. Gregory D. Andrusz, *Housing and Urban Development in the USSR* (Albany, 1984), pp. 114-119; and Robert G. Jensen, "The Anti-Metropolitan Syndrome in Soviet Urban Policy," in George J. Demko and Roland J. Fuchs, *Geographical Studies of the Soviet Union* (Chicago, 1984), pp. 74-75.

69. V.G. Davidovich, *Town Planning in Industrial Districts* (Jerusalem, 1968), pp. 16-17.

70. Oleg N. Ianitskii "Urbanization in the USSR: theory, tendencies and policy," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (1986), *passim*.

71. Jensen, "The Anti-Metropolitan Syndrome," pp. 87-89. This tendency received initial expression in the *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), which called for the gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country and for more equal distribution of population. According to D.G. Khodzhayev and B.S. Khorev, a unified system of settlement is a functionally delimited and structurally interrelated network of places over a large territory, forming several subordinated hierarchic levels, developing in a regular way, regulated in a planned manner for the benefit of society, and encompassed by a unified system of regional planning.

72. Conolly, *Siberia Today and Tomorrow*, p. 27.

73. See Mark Bassin, "Expansion and Colonization on the Eastern Frontier," *Journal of Historical Geography*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (January 1988), p. 8; and Wood, *Siberia*, pp. 38-41.

74. Kerstin Kuoljok, *The Revolution in the North: Soviet Ethnography and Nationality Policy* (Uppsala, 1985), pp. 55-56.

75. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

76. Conolly, *Siberia Today and Tomorrow*, *passim*.

77. Kuoljok, *The Revolution in the North*, p. 126.

78. Armstrong, Rowley, and Rogers, *The Circumpolar North*, p. 27.

79. Bater, *The Soviet Scene*, p. 205.

80. See Veniamin Alexeyev, *Siberia in the Twentieth Century* (Moscow, 1989), pp. 58-82.

81. Agamali Mamedov, "Northern Peoples: Problems of Development," *Northern News*, Vol. 3 (January 1989), pp. 1-2.

82. Kuoljok, *The Revolution in the North*, pp. 130-135.

Chapter IV

I. A COMPARISON OF NATIONAL APPROACHES TO NORTHERN COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL PLANNING

This chapter compares the approaches to modern community planning and regional development in the Northwest Territories, Alaska, and northern USSR from 1967 to 1990. Northern development and planning issues at the community and regional level are explored, by setting them in the broader context of power relations, political and administrative structures, and the culture and values of northern areas.¹ The late-1960s is an appropriate period to begin such an analysis as it marks a time of rapid expansion of the welfare state in concert with extensive economic development, and signals the intensification of dependent relationships between core and periphery. The objective of this chapter is to establish the necessary social and spatial context within which to subsequently analyze northern housing issues at the community level. The cross-national context is developed from a comparison of community and regional planning theory and practice, and from an examination of key social and economic factors that shape northern settlements. The comparative analysis focuses in particular on the fundamental conflict between sectoral and community-based approaches to planning, and assesses the implications of these contrasting approaches for northern peoples.²

In the following discussion, emphasis is placed on the role of Native peoples in defining their communities and regions. The challenges of planning within cross-cultural settings are examined in some detail to ascertain why Natives still represent one of the most disadvantaged groups in northern communities. The prospects for empowerment are of particular importance to this study since local initiatives frequently determines the potential of community-based activities such as co-operative housing. This chapter argues

that community-based, integrative and developmental approaches to planning that place the community in control, and incorporate differences in values and ways of thinking are more effective and responsive to the needs of people than sectoral or traditional settlement planning.³

II. COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL PLANNING IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES: 1967-1990

II.A COMMUNITY PLANNING IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

The emergence of modern community planning in the NWT, as in the rest of the country, was based upon a unique blend of British and US traditions. These traditions arose out of the concern over living conditions and the physical appearance of cities, and resulted in two distinct planning concepts.⁴ These concepts were adapted to the northern environment, and, in turn, evolved into more refined ideas such as Garden Suburbs, the Neighbourhood Unit, and Greenbelt Towns.⁵

The planning of settlements in the NWT is carried out by the territorial Department of Local Government, which was established in 1967. In the late 1960s, the emphasis in northern planning was on "those aspects associated with the physical development of a settlement, including primarily its servicing and land uses."⁶ Physical plans and ordinances were project specific and conducted by southern consultants on a sectoral basis and in isolation from other projects.⁷ These consultants generally "lacked knowledge and appreciation of the physical conditions of the Arctic, especially of permafrost, and had an inadequate knowledge of Native needs and sensibilities."⁸ In many instances, plans were imported from the south in modified form to meet northern conditions, were costly because of consultant's travelling expenses, and were rarely translated into the Native language. As a result, decisions based on capital planning and least-cost criteria, while necessary from a sectoral

or engineering point of view, neglected the social, economic, and spiritual needs of individual and community life. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that community understanding of and commitment to the plans was non-existent, and that technocratic planning failed to improve the social and economic situation for Natives.

In the late 1970s, the territorial government's Department of Local Government decided to phase out the practice of using consultants and took upon itself the task of planning northern communities. Consequently, settlement planning was conducted by members of the Town Planning and Lands Division of the GNWT Department of Local Government or through the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. While the "departmental" approach was an improvement over earlier approaches, it too had drawbacks. An ongoing problem was that community plans were still being prepared from above by territorial experts who possessed very little knowledge of Native issues. Like the southern consultants, territorial experts rarely stayed in rural communities long enough to appreciate or understand the needs of Natives, and, in many cases, imposed their attitudes, values, education, and experience on the indigenous population.⁹

Technocratic planning irritated the following problems for most Native communities: high costs of pursuing the traditional economy; low level of interest in the traditional economy; lack of land for expansion of community infrastructure; high cost of infrastructure; lack of decent and affordable housing; high unemployment; few opportunities for wage employment; inadequate job training; poor school attendance; high cost of living; growing population; health problems; and social problems.¹⁰ While physical conditions improved for Natives during the 1980s, they became increasingly dependent on the Department of Indian and Northern Development (DIAND) and regional

community planners for policy, program development, and project delivery.¹¹ These dependencies meant that services would continue to be developed in Yellowknife, and conceived of by territorial experts with Euro-Canadian attitudes and values.

With little control over policy formulation and program delivery and few resources to pursue their interests, Natives found it increasingly difficult to define their communities, let alone predominantly non-Native towns such as Yellowknife.¹² In the opinion of Peter Boothroyd (1984), this form of planning is "autocratic" as it fails to incorporate the interests of the entire community.¹³ The persistence of autocratic planning and resistance to Native self-determination is essentially the result of Euro-Canadian insensitivity to differing value orientations and ways of thinking.¹⁴

For instance, Natives "place a far higher value on the collectivity -- the community -- than they do on the individual," and view humankind as part of a unified whole.¹⁵ There is an absence of the Western notion of private property since land, according to Native belief, is deeply spiritual and part of the total environment and "is not a commodity, to be owned, bounded, divided or sold."¹⁶ These holistic notions clash with the Euro-Canadian tendency to segregate or categorize the world into component parts for analytical purposes. Since decision-making in planning makes use of sequenced logic in ways that are at odds with the intuitive, consensual, and comprehensive ways of Natives, it is not surprising that indigenous peoples are alienated from the planning process.

One way of restoring Native's faith in the planning process is to hire planners (preferably Native) who would live and work in the community for more than a year in order to gain local knowledge and community acceptance. While this approach has the potential to inspire developmental and integrated

community-based planning, it has yet to be implemented in any meaningful way. The approach continues to meet with official resistance as it allegedly gives too much control to Native communities, and challenges the accepted way of planning in northern regions.¹⁷

II.B REGIONAL PLANNING IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Northern development is conducted primarily by the federal Department of Regional Economic (Industrial) Expansion (DREE/DRIE) using an array of programmatic instruments.¹⁸ Administered from above in a technocratic fashion, the "growth-centre" approach of the early 1970s led to the clustering of new enterprises into urban centres of slow-growth regions.¹⁹ Compactness and intensity of use, according to growth-centre proponents, reduced building and operating costs and maximized economies of scale. It was also assumed that economic growth would take place at stronger centres and that general welfare would increase and spread through the territorial economy in a "trickle-down" fashion.

The approach was of little actual use in spurring economically depressed regions, as few social and developmental tools were made available to ensure general community welfare, and polarization increased at a finer level of aggregation.²⁰ While the growth-centre approach provided a practical framework for planning northern towns and cities, it potentially diminished the importance of surrounding hamlets and villages by concentrating services and amenities in dominant urban centres.²¹ Other approaches designed to maximize the comparative advantage of regions were attempted, but were replaced in the early 1980s by policies emphasizing socially and environmentally expensive "mega-project" development in the energy sector.²²

The public sector and the mining industry as a whole comprise a major part of the territorial economy with smaller sectors such as tourism, renewable

resource development, services, and secondary processing making an additional contribution. Despite the sectoral prominence of mining in a region rich in exploitable resources, mega-project developments are of questionable value given the under-developed and poorly integrated nature of the territorial economy.²³ Economic diversification remains a central, if elusive, goal for northerners attempting to free their region from chronic dependencies and disastrous boom and bust economic cycles. These cycles are largely the result of dependent development or exclusive dependence on federal transfer payments and corporate investment decisions for northern economic development.

At the federal level the formulation, implementation, and funding of northern development programs continue to be influenced by the following objectives: (1) quality of life; (2) northern environment; (3) economic development; (4) social and cultural development; (5) evolution of government; (6) sovereignty and security; and (7) leisure and recreation. Quality of life, administration and support, and economic growth objectives receive the greatest funding while social and cultural development receives the lowest level of combined funding.²⁴

The apparent ineffectiveness of northern development stems largely from the analytical and theoretical ambiguity surrounding regional issues.²⁵ Without a guiding theoretical framework, regional questions have become grounded in neo-classical orthodoxy and the optimism of economic growth.²⁶ The lack of specific goals and objectives regarding northern development, moreover, creates additional confusion as to the extent to which regional policy has developmental (efficiency) goals as opposed to compensatory (equity) goals.²⁷ The recent shift in the public policy agenda from a commitment to equitable redistribution of benefits toward a rather narrow emphasis on economic

efficiency led to what Peter Boothroyd (1989) observed as "technocratic arrogance and insensitivity in regional development planning."²⁸

At another level, the apparent confusion in northern development policy arises, in part, from the simplistic perceptions most southern Canadians entertain of life in the North. According to Sally Bremer (1988), these perceptions "vacillate between a romantic view of untamed wilderness, exotic fauna and hardy peoples on the one hand, and an inexhaustible supply of exploitable resources on the other."²⁹ These views are mutually exclusive as the first implies the preservation of a unique and fragile natural environment, and the second view implies the full-scale exploitation of natural resources. The fundamental conflict between the environment and economy is of special significance to northerners since they must live with the consequences of socially and environmentally expensive development. The needs of all northerners, Native and non-Native, should be served by a judicious balance of social and economic strategies based on sustainable development rather than on a southern-driven, non-renewable resource market.

III. COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL PLANNING IN ALASKA: 1967-1990

III.A COMMUNITY PLANNING IN ALASKA

Numerous intellectual currents have contributed to the rise of modern community planning in the US.³⁰ Most of these were concerned with improving the built environment and increasing overall livability, and evolved into such ideals as Radburn and Greenbelt Towns.³¹ These ideals formed the basis of contemporary American planning, which is practiced widely throughout the country, including Alaska.

The shaping of communities and villages in Alaska is conducted by the Department of Community and Regional Affairs (DCRA), and by Alaska Native

village and regional corporations.³² In the mid-1960s, state planning officials were primarily concerned with those factors associated with the built environment of villages and communities. For the most part, physical plans were sectorally-based, project specific, and carried out by engineering consultants from the "Lower 48." Most consultants had a limited knowledge of the requirements of planning for remote settlements, and rarely consulted Alaska Natives. In many instances, plans were simply imported from the contiguous states and tailored to meet conditions in rural Alaska. While planning based on technocratic and least-cost criteria is important from a sectoral or engineering perspective, it omits the social, economic, and spiritual needs of Natives. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that community support for the plans were lacking, and that technocratic planning failed to resolve social and economic problems for Alaska Natives.

In the early 1970s, the DCRA abandoned the practice of using consultants and undertook for itself the task of planning settlements and villages. As a result, planning was carried out by DCRA officials through inappropriate Borough or Native village corporation government.³³ Both forms of government overlaid new authority structures on the pre-existing authority structure of traditional society, and accelerated the fragmentation of indigenous institutions. While village corporations exist ostensibly to assist Native communities, they are essentially profit seeking enterprises which are intended to "move Alaska Natives into the mainstream of US society."³⁴ Based on a corporate model, they have failed to exhibit much sensitivity to traditional values and the problems of small communities.³⁵ Their existence continues to undermine traditional ways, and casts doubt on the security of Native land tenure and management.³⁶

The state government's in-house approach to planning was a marked improvement over earlier practice, yet it too had limitations. A recurring drawback was that plans were still being developed in a paternalistic fashion by bureaucrats who possessed limited understanding of Native requirements. In a manner similar to earlier methods, state bureaucrats rarely stayed in villages long enough to comprehend the needs of Natives, and, in the process of planning, inculcated Alaska Natives with mainstream Euro-American attitudes and values. Such top down planning intensified an already troubled social environment, which includes: the prohibitive costs of pursuing a subsistence economy; fragmented ownership of land; high cost of infrastructure; expensive housing; increasing levels of unemployment and underemployment; uneven opportunities for job training; health problems; poor school attendance; and high rates of individual pathologies such as alcoholism and suicide.³⁷

While conditions improved in rural Alaska during the 1980s, Natives became increasingly dependent on incompetent village and regional corporations and state agencies for social programs and services. These dependencies ensured that services were developed in Juneau or corporate headquarters, and conceived of by state officials or experts with little understanding of Alaska Native needs and sensibilities. With limited control over the formulation of policies, Alaska Natives found it difficult to shape their communities and villages in accordance with their own preferences. Such technocratic planning and resistance to Native self-determination in Alaska is largely the result of Euro-American insensitivity to minority value orientations and different ways of thinking.

Alaska Natives see land as the essence of their culture, and "endowed with spirits that transcends nature."³⁸ As such, it confers special responsibilities such as the sharing of its resources with others. Consequently,

land should never be subdivided or commoditized as it is a gift to be held in trust for future generations. These traditional notions clash with the Euro-American tendency to divide the world into segments for analytical purposes. Such Cartesian logic in mainstream American planning conflicts with the Native world view, supplants the traditional Native forum for decision making with inappropriate public meetings, and fails to account for the differences in communication styles.³⁹ It is hardly surprising, therefore, that Alaska Natives are excluded from the process of defining their communities.

An effective way of involving Alaska Natives in the planning process is to have planners work in villages to gain local knowledge and broad acceptance. This approach has the potential to inspire developmental and integrated community-based planning in rural Alaska, and strengthen tribal self-sufficiency. So far, developmental approaches have not been implemented as they do not fit neatly into the legal and administrative structure of state government, and more importantly, challenge the dominance of village and regional corporations.

III.B REGIONAL PLANNING IN ALASKA

Although Alaska does not have a discernable regional development policy, many public and private sector agencies are involved in the process of shaping regions. The process is conducted, in part, by various federal, state, and municipal government agencies such as the US Department of Commerce (USDC), the Alaska Department of Commerce and Economic Development (DCED), and the Department of Community and Regional Affairs. More recently, and with possibly greater consequence, the passage of ANCSA placed land and capital in the hands of Alaska Natives, to be administered through village and regional corporations. With the ongoing competition for control over Alaska's land and resources, however, there exists an irrational "patchwork of ownerships, each managed with different, and often competing goals."⁴⁰

The fragmentation of regional planning in Alaska is in many ways symptomatic of the same structural factors that have hindered the pursuit of explicit regional policies in the US.⁴¹ Examining American regions in transition, John Friedmann and Robin Bloch (1990) list six factors or "macro-conditions" which account for the weaknesses of US regional development policy.⁴² Of importance to this study are: (1) the prominence of market economy forces over government regulation; (2) the emphasis on efficiency over equity considerations; and (3) a federal system of government.⁴³ These factors were shaped over time by cyclical forces such as economic depression and a steadily expanding economy, and culminated with the post-Nixon erosion of the "Great Society Programs."⁴⁴

Faced with the uncertain role of the state in regional development, regional planners embraced a technocratic focus with a bias toward central resource application.⁴⁵ This scientific approach in regional planning prescribed the growth-centre model as a way of stimulating rapid economic growth, and was applied to economically depressed regions of rural Alaska. An underlying assumption of the growth-centre approach was the 'doctrine of unequal development' which essentially "argued for inequality on the grounds of economic motivation."⁴⁶ It was widely held that distributional matters would remain unpoliticized so long as the economy grew at a rapid pace, and benefits trickled down to the general population. This has not occurred in rural Alaska, where dependent development continues to polarize northern regions into areas of development and underdevelopment.

Alaska's economy is limited and shaped by the state's unique geographical factors, and by high costs associated with remoteness and climate. Operating under these physical constraints, the Alaska economy is influenced and responds to three major sets of forces:

First, Alaska is part of the national economy and is affected by national economic trends and federal government policies. Second, it is a resource-based economy and a significant portion of its economic activity is determined by the prices and quantities of the resources it sells, primarily oil and secondarily fish. And third, partly because of the large revenues state government receives (relative to total state personal income), it is a regional economy in which the state government's use of its resource revenues significantly affects the pattern and pace of economic activity in the state.⁴⁷

The petroleum industry is by far the largest sector in the regional economy, followed by the public and military sectors.⁴⁸ Although the petroleum industry has dominated Alaska's economy since 1975, other natural resource industries have historically been important to the state's economy. For example, Alaska's commercial fishing and tourism industries grew steadily over the past decade, while mining and timber harvesting have limited effects on the Alaska economy. With the exception of fish processing and some timber and petroleum-related processing, however, Alaska manufactures very little for export.⁴⁹ From the point of view of manufacturing, Alaska shares all the disadvantages of Third World countries regarding remoteness from markets and dependence on the export of a limited amount of commodities, but none of the offsetting advantages of lower labour costs. So even when a large demand for manufactured goods arises (i.e., the construction of the trans-Alaska pipeline), the small size of the support sector makes it much more feasible to import goods from the "Lower 48."

It is the absence of any sustainable comparative advantage that accounts for the absence of balanced economic development in Alaska. What has occurred instead has been episodic periods of natural resource-based extraction and exploitation. While other sectors of the Alaska economy are expected to grow, the state's dependence on oil reserves will likely persist into the late-1990s. While such activity has led to some capital accumulation and temporary economic growth, the effects have generally been short-lived and certainly have not resulted in a sustained process of diversified economic

growth and balanced regional development. It is feared that continued large energy developments will perpetuate extreme forms of economic dependence and social disruption.⁵⁰ Some of the problems arising from economic dependence have been addressed by the expansion of the welfare state in Alaska. While this development has been beneficial, "both welfare and public assistance have become a contributing factor the dependence of many communities."⁵¹

The recent reductions in state revenues and state spending translate into a reduction in the state's work force, which will likely trigger increased out-migration from Alaska. Many view out-migration and lower *per capita* incomes during a period of economic decline as an efficient way of reducing transfer dependencies and assisting laggard regions.⁵² Analyzing coastal western Alaska, Gunnar Knapp and Lee Huskey (1988) maintain that transfers may lead to inefficient settlement patterns, increasing dependence on transfers, and a higher cost of eventual adjustment.⁵³ They also suggest that transfers may compete with and distort the non-transfer (market) economy of a region, and "keep the poor in non-viable areas, reducing their opportunities to escape poverty."⁵⁴

Without transfer payments, however, the economies of remote regions would be dependent on an unstable non-renewable resource base and controlled by outsiders "with little sensitivity to the concerns of local residents."⁵⁵ Assuming perfect mobility is possible or even desirable, neo-classical arguments undermine the cultural integrity of Alaska Natives as well as their subsistence way of life. The erosion of Native culture is, in fact, already underway and represents "the beginning of a transformational shift of one mode of life to another -- as yet undefined -- mode."⁵⁶

Development connotes many things.⁵⁷ For some it is synonymous with economic growth and, in the case of Alaska, means the exploitation of natural resources. Opponents of this view argue that this pattern, so evident in the past, would mean the repetition of boom and bust cycles, and would perpetuate the dependent nature of the Alaska economy. For others, development is seen as progress expressed in an improved standard of living in the material sense.⁵⁸ Given an absence of consensus over the goals of development, it is not surprising to find little agreement about the ways in which development, however defined, should proceed. This ambiguity is reflected in the state government's objectives for regional economic development: (1) regional production; (2) regional efficiency; (3) regional self-sufficiency; (3) regional consumption; (4) national production; (5) national efficiency; (6) national self-sufficiency; (7) national consumption; (8) resource production; (9) equity; (10) freedom; and (11) future welfare.⁵⁹ Over the years, there has been a strong emphasis on "production" and "efficiency" considerations in Alaska regional development, while "equity" and "future welfare" objectives receive less consideration by state decision-makers.

The ambiguity in regional economic development stems in part from the perceptions most outsiders have of Alaska. Idyllic perceptions of the Alaska frontier are woven into the American cultural fabric, and range from images of pioneers conquering resource-rich regions to a mysterious and exotic environment in need of preservation.⁶⁰ Rather than being perceived in a romantic and contradictory fashion, state policy-makers should dispel such images and establish a diversified economy that is community-based and not dependent on the exploitation of non-renewable resources. The state economy should also be compatible with the carrying capacity of the natural environment, and the goals of sustainable development.⁶¹

IV. TOWN AND TERRITORIAL PLANNING IN NORTHERN USSR: 1967-1990

IV.A TOWN PLANNING IN NORTHERN USSR

The development of contemporary town planning in the Soviet North, as in the rest of the USSR, was built upon Marxist-Leninist aims and principles, as well as from a combination of French and British planning traditions. These traditions emerged out of the concern over social conditions and the built environment, and resulted in two unique planning concepts.⁶² Soviet town planning incorporated these concepts, and evolved using more sophisticated ideas such as Microdistricts (*Mikrorayons*) and Residential Districts (*Zhiloi Rayon*).⁶³

Town planning in the Soviet North is carried out by the State Committee for Civil Construction and Architecture (*Gosgrazhdanstroi*) under the USSR State Committee on Construction (*Gosstroï*).⁶⁴ Since the late-1960s, northern town planning emphasized the physical development of a permanent settlement, particularly its supporting role of local industry. Consequently ministries, departments, and enterprises exercise a principal role in town planning, and possess "sectoral aims and targets at odds with perceived local priorities."⁶⁵ While specific problems of a technical nature are formulated locally, the influence of the local soviet and planners are constrained by the sectoral ambitions of powerful ministries and departments. As a result, higher-level economic planning agencies in Moscow and Leningrad exercise a great deal of control over municipal plans and budgets, and subordinate local needs to the national interest.⁶⁶

In a procedural and technical sense, most planners simply did not understand the requirements of planning for settlements in remote regions, and, consequently, adopted a "trial-and-error" and "management by crisis"

approach to town planning.⁶⁷ Nominally guided by these haphazard approaches, master plans and building techniques were imported from European Russia and modified to meet northern conditions without taking into consideration the constraints of planning in severe climatic conditions.⁶⁸ These plans and techniques were inadequate in the northern context, and involved little if any public participation.

Northern town planning was essentially a mechanical exercise, where planners were preoccupied with fulfilling quantitative targets rather than ensuring effective services delivery. Decisions were based largely on efficiency requirements and normative design-based criteria, neglecting the social and economic needs of northerners.⁶⁹ Consequently, understanding and support of the plans were minimal, and technocratic and overly-centralized state planning failed to improve the social and economic situation for northerners, especially Natives.⁷⁰

In the mid-1970s, northern cities such as Noril'sk were planned with new social and economic criteria, and a commitment to improving the quality of life for all residents. A continued reliance on top down planning, however, ensured that town plans would be prepared in bureaucratic fashion by specialists who had very little knowledge of Native ways. These specialists seldom stayed in settlements long enough to understand the needs of Natives, and frequently imposed their Euro-Russian attitudes and values on the Native peoples. As a consequence, there developed "a clash of two cultures: one old, unique, and even fragile, the other modern, forceful, overbearingly self-confident and technocratic."⁷¹

Such insensitive technocratic planning failed to stem the following problems in Native communities: village relocation; loss of national and cultural distinctiveness; difficulty in pursuing a traditional way of life; breakdown of the

traditional economy; lack of land for expansion of physical infrastructure; high cost of infrastructure; lack of suitable housing and basic amenities; low-paying work; a boarding school educational system; and severe health and social problems such as alcoholism and suicide.⁷²

While conditions improved in larger urban centres during the late-1980s, Native peoples became increasingly dependent on state planners for the delivery of social programs such as housing.⁷³ With little control over policy formulation and few resources to limit growth and change, Natives found it increasingly difficult to protect their way of life from the effects of russification and the intrusion of modern technology. In fact, top down Soviet planning was insensitive to differing value orientations and ways of thinking, and accelerated the overall pace of Native assimilation.

Challenging this view, some argue that because Natives emphasize community welfare over individual interest, they exemplify a world view which is more consistent with socialism. With the onset of socialism, however, the resources of the Arctic long ago ceased to be the collective property of Native peoples. Arctic resources then became the collective property of the state, to be managed by various ministries and departments "for narrow and short-lived interests unrelated to the vital requirements of Northern peoples or prospects for their development."⁷⁴ It is clear that the pace and magnitude of northern economic development under Marxism-Leninism and extant inter-sectoral factionalism, actually threatens the Native way of life and the natural environment.⁷⁵ It is equally clear, moreover, that the holistic notions of Natives conflict with the Russian tendency to categorize phenomenon for analytical and technical purposes. Decision-making in Soviet town planning is linear and clashes with the intuitive and comprehensive ways of Natives. Given

differences in value orientations and communication styles, it is not surprising that Natives are left out of the planning process.

There are repeated calls under the rubric of *glasnost* to encourage wider public participation or "self-organization" at the community level.⁷⁶ This can be accomplished by empowering local soviets, grass-roots organizations and clan government, and by stimulating more self-sufficient development and community activism. According to Alexander Pika and Boris Prokhorov (1988), technocratic planning should be replaced with a mechanism allowing "indigenous northerners to participate in regional and local development programs at all levels: conception, discussion, and implementation."⁷⁷ A wide-ranging program of Nativization in concert with increased power to the local soviets has the potential to inspire developmental and integrated rural and town planning. Social and political innovation at the local level, however, continue to encounter strong resistance from powerful sectoral interests and conservative party bureaucrats, and are hindered by an under-developed democratic political culture and an abiding sense of "servile patience" (*priterpelost*).⁷⁸

IV.B TERRITORIAL PLANNING IN NORTHERN USSR

The shaping of territories in the Soviet North is conducted by various ministries and departments under the authority of the USSR State Planning Committee (*Gosplan*) and Gosstroï.⁷⁹ The goal of Soviet territorial planning is to "facilitate the planned development of the regions in order to reduce and eventually to eradicate inter-regional disparities."⁸⁰ Specifically, these include inter-regional inequalities in living conditions, the labour supply, the availability of energy and raw material resources, and the level of development of the physical and social infrastructure.⁸¹ Within the economic sphere, however, territorial development has been influenced far more by exogenous factors and

by institutional forces associated with the planning process than by considerations of regional equalization.

According to Khorev (1981), territorial planning can be defined as the "territorial aspect of national economic planning."⁸² Territorial planning in this sense exists in a number of different forms, and serves primarily the interests of Gosplan and other central ministries. Gosplan itself is largely organized along economic sectoral lines and lacks any meaningful territorial perspective. The tendency of Gosplan ministries to put their own interests before those of particular territories contributes to narrow departmentalism, and erodes the overall effectiveness of territorial planning. As a result, territorial planning continues to have an uncertain role in regional matters.⁸³

The principal tool used in defining regions and stimulating economic growth in northern USSR is the Territorial Production Complex (TPC).⁸⁴ As a highly selective policy of regional development, TPCs link sectoral planning with territorial planning in order to facilitate the development of economic regions.⁸⁵ According to T. Alekseeva and I. Beskin (1988), TPCs create:

...conditions for the rational utilization of natural and labour resources, for reducing capital investment and carrying costs, for curtailing the volume of transport operations, for speeding up the turnaround of circulating capital, and for savings effected through the creation and functioning of an infrastructure.⁸⁶

It was assumed that TPCs would concentrate new development spatially, circumvent the "empire-building" tendencies of ministries, and provide for more balanced and planned development between productive and infrastructural activities.⁸⁷

While TPCs are an economically efficient way of guiding northern development, they actually erode the significance of peripheral areas by concentrating new investment in select regions. As a consequence, TPC development has created two Siberias': "one which will form the cornerstone of

the region's future, and the other which will remain underpopulated, underfinanced and, in many respects, largely unaltered by the development process."⁸⁸ While other approaches were tried, large-scale TPC development represents the mainstay of Soviet territorial planning, and is socially and environmentally expensive.⁸⁹

The state and energy sectors make up a significant part of the northern USSR economy. Smaller sectors such as renewable resource development, services, secondary processing, and subsistence activities also play a significant role.⁹⁰ Despite the prominence of oil and gas developments in a region rich in hydrocarbons, the exploitation of non-renewable resources has limited potential to strengthen an under-developed and unbalanced northern economy.⁹¹

Economic diversification remains a major goal for territorial planners endeavoring to free their region from economic dependencies. This is a difficult task to achieve, according to Ted Shabad (1989), since the Soviet North "can be regarded as a virtual raw-material appendage of the economically developed European USSR."⁹² In fact, recent attempts at economic restructuring, with its emphasis on intensification and modernization of existing industrial potential, will undoubtedly lead to further economic development in the more mature regions of the European USSR at the expense of diversifying the Soviet North.⁹³

The apparent ineffectiveness of northern territorial development stems, in part, from the theoretical confusion surrounding regional matters.⁹⁴ Without a commonly-accepted paradigm, regional issues have been analyzed using efficiency criteria and economic models with the intent of integrating territorial economies into national economic plans. The absence of clear goals and objectives regarding northern development, generates additional confusion as

to the extent to which territorial policy has efficiency goals as opposed to equity goals.

At the state level the formulation, implementation, and funding of northern development programs continue to be nominally guided by the following goals: (1) regional production; (2) regional efficiency; (3) regional self-sufficiency; (4) regional consumption; (5) national production; (6) national efficiency; (7) national self-sufficiency; (8) national consumption; (9) resource production; and (10) social equity.⁹⁵ Resource production and regional and national efficiency goals traditionally receive the greatest funding while social equity considerations are consistently underfunded.

The apparent confusion in northern development policy arises, from the simplistic perceptions most European Russians have of life in Siberia. These perceptions range from a romantic view of a frozen wilderness and a unique peoples on the one hand, and vast reserves of exploitable resources on the other.⁹⁶ These views are contradictory as the first view suggests the preservation of a fragile environment, and the second view implies the full-scale exploitation of natural resources. The conflict between the environment and economy is of special significance to Siberians since they must live with the consequences of ill-considered development. The needs of all people, Native and non-Native, should be served by a sensible balance of social and economic strategies based on sustainable development, rather than solely on the dictates of Moscow-based ministries and industries.⁹⁷

V. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL APPROACHES TO NORTHERN COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL PLANNING

There are several similarities and differences between community planning and regional development in the NWT, Alaska, and northern USSR. In community planning, for example, all three systems borrowed extensively from

common intellectual traditions, adapting mainstream planning approaches to the northern environment. In most cases, however, mainstream approaches proved to be inadequate, and provided little guidance for planners endeavoring to shape northern communities. Given the high cost of building communities in far northern regions, planners resorted to efficiency criteria as a guide to planning and emphasized the physical development of settlements. Such a narrow emphasis neglected the social and cultural needs of Natives, resulting in autocratic forms of planning.

During the late-1960s in Alaska and the NWT, for instance, southern consultants were hired to plan for communities and few if any consulted Native peoples about their requirements. While the situation differed in northern USSR, Soviet ministry officials functioned much like private consultants or developers, conducting projects on a sectoral basis with inadequate public participation. The situation improved very little as state and territorial government took over most of the planning functions in Alaska and the NWT. A recurring problem in the Soviet North was that town plans were still being prepared from above by experts who possessed limited knowledge of Native issues. Given such insensitive technocratic planning, it is not surprising that the social and economic problems facing circumpolar Natives are strikingly similar and equally intractable.

The failure of community planning in the three regions is largely attributable to the fundamental clash between Native and non-Native world views regarding development and progress. While the views of indigenous peoples vary from one setting to the next, a deeply spiritual attachment to the land sets Natives as a group apart from non-Natives. Dichotomies of this type are caused in part by the influence of the market in Alaska, and, to a lesser extent in the NWT, and by an emphasis on economic development in northern

USSR. Such a narrow emphasis on economic growth subordinated social and cultural development at the local level to national and corporate interests.

Regional planning is conducted by various government agencies in the NWT and northern USSR, and, to a lesser extent, in Alaska where the ownership and management of land is much more fragmented. While regional planning is more centralized in the NWT and northern USSR, it is influenced by market or economic interests and is riven by sharp inter-sectoral factionalism and departmentalism. Shaped by these forces and the typical struggle for power between central and regional governments in federal states, it is not surprising that regional planning in the three northern areas lacks a sufficiently territorial perspective.

In the mid-1960s, the growth-centre approach was used as a way of reducing inter-regional disparities and developing laggard regions of the NWT, Alaska, and northern USSR. Administered from above in a highly technocratic manner, the approach was of little actual use in spurring economically depressed areas, as few benefits remained in the immediate region. Other approaches designed to maximize the comparative advantage of regions in the NWT and Alaska were attempted, but were replaced by policies that emphasized socially and environmentally expensive mega-project development. Similar forms of large-scale development were pursued in the Soviet North, and were organized principally around massive Territorial Production Complexes.

An emphasis on mega-project development in the energy sector, however, provided very few prospects for economic diversification. While the economies of northern USSR, and, to a lesser extent, Alaska are more diversified than the NWT, these regions are essentially energy colonies of their respective industrial heartlands. As a result, Alaska and the NWT in particular, are highly vulnerable to boom and bust cycles in the non-renewable resource

market. While the Soviet North is still insulated from the vagaries of European resource markets, it must nonetheless contend with growing demands placed on its resources by powerful economic ministries. Regional planning in remote northern regions is essentially characterized by critical dependencies on various levels of governments, ministries or corporate interests.

The apparent ineffectiveness of northern development stems largely from theoretical ambiguity, and the subsequent lack of a commonly-accepted paradigm by which to inform regional matters. Without a guiding theoretical framework, regional issues in the NWT, Alaska, and northern USSR have become grounded in the drive for efficiency and economic growth. A shift from a commitment to equitable distribution of benefits toward a narrow emphasis on economic efficiency has increased dependent development in these northern regions. These dependencies underscore the inherent fragility of circumpolar Natives and northern regions, and are particularly severe in the area of housing.

Endnotes

1. Development is a difficult word to define. It has so many meanings and takes on so many different forms. For the purposes of this thesis, however, development is defined as: "Those activities which sustain and enhance the well-being of human beings and the quality of the environment." See Jackie Wolfe, "Indigenous Peoples and Development in the Canadian Arctic," in K. Atkinson and A.T. McDonald, eds., *Arctic Canada: Development in a Hostile Environment* (Leeds, 1987), p. 72. Using dependency theory, Michael Pretes in "Underdevelopment in the Two Norths: The Brazilian Amazon and the Canadian Arctic," *Arctic*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (June 1988), p. 109 makes a useful distinction between developed and underdeveloped regions:

Developed regions are able to retain the surplus value or economic rents derived from their own resources, and the key decisions regarding the disposition of the resources and the revenues from them are made within the region. Underdeveloped regions are those unable to control their own resources and the revenues obtained from them. Regions that find themselves in this colonial position tend to exhibit lower standards of living and unbalanced export-dependent economies.

2. Community-based planning, according to Jackie Wolfe, "The Native Canadian Experience with Integrated Community Planning: Promise and Problems," in Floyd W. Dykeman, ed., *Integrated Rural Planning and Development* (Sackville, 1988), p. 214 is a holistic activity which incorporates social, political, economic, and spiritual factors. It requires that the community participate fully in the process of planning for and carrying out its own development, and that it exert control over priority setting and decision-making. Integrated Community-Based Planning (ICBP) incorporates the best features of integrated planning and community-based planning.
3. According to Peter Boothroyd, *To Set their own Course: Indian Band Planning and Indian Affairs* (Victoria, 1984), integrated planning is defined as an approach which allows consideration of all aspects of life and livelihood and their interrelationships in a way which is formal and systematic: that is, it makes use of rational steps, and is understood by all parties and involves documentation.
4. The Garden City Movement and the City Beautiful Movement.
5. For an overview, see Gerald Hodge, *Planning Canadian Communities* (Toronto, 1986), pp. 54-68.
6. H.J.F. Gerein, *Community Planning and Development in Canada's Northwest Territories* (Yellowknife, 1980), p. 89.
7. See Wolfe, "The Native Canadian Experience with Integrated Community Planning," p. 216.
8. Jackie Wolfe and A. Margaret Strachan, "Structures and Values: Constraints on Effective Development and Planning in the Keewatin, Northwest Territories, Canada," *Nordia*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (1987), p. 113.
9. See Shahan Deirmenjian and Maggie Jones, *Planning for Communities in the North: A Preliminary Evaluation of an Innovative Approach in the Northwest Territories* (Toronto, 1983), p. 9.
10. For an example of the problems in Native communities, see Maggie Jones, *The Community is Quite Capable: An Assessment of the State of Community Planning and Development in the Keewatin District of the NWT* (Guelph, 1985), *passim*.
11. See Jackie Wolfe, "Approaches to Planning in Native Canadian Communities: A Review and Commentary on Settlement Problems and the Effectiveness of Planning Practice," *Plan Canada*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (March 1989), pp. 63-79.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 69-67. Presently, communities have been given the responsibility to plan, but not the right to plan nor the decision-making authority to set their own course of action.
13. Peter Boothroyd, *To Set their own Course*, *passim*.
14. See Wolfe, "The Native Canadian Experience with Integrated Community Planning," pp. 22-223; and Wolfe, "Approaches to Planning in Native Canadian Communities," pp. 73-74.
15. Michael S. Whittington, ed., *The North* (Toronto, 1985), p. 65.

16. Wolfe and Strachan, "Structures and Values," p. 114.
17. Jim Lotz, "Community Development: A Short History," *Journal of Community Development*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (May/June 1987), p. 45; and Wolfe, "The Native Canadian Experience with Integrated Community Planning," p. 215. There have been only a few pilot projects to date. See, for example, the works of Maggie Strachan, *Make Haste Slowly: The Report of the Economic Planner for the Hamlet of Arctic Bay, NWT*. (Montreal, 1987); and Deirmenjian and Jones, *Planning for Communities in the North*, *passim*.
18. See, for instance, the works of Alan F.J. Artibise and Matthew J. Kiernan, *Canadian Regional Development: the Urban Dimension*, Local Development Paper, No. 12 (Ottawa, 1988), p. 1; Peter Boothroyd, "Looking up at the Region: Regional Issues from a Community Development Perspective," (Quebec City, 1989), pp. 5-6; and Donald J. Savoie, *Regional Economic Development: Canada's Search for Solutions* (Toronto, 1986), pp. 76-103.
19. Donald J. Savoie, "Politicians and Approaches to Regional Development: The Canadian Experience," *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (Summer 1987), p. 218. There exist many definitions of a region in the regional development and planning literatures. According to Donald J. Savoie in *The Canadian Economy: A Regional Perspective* (Toronto, 1986), pp. 165-167 regions may correspond to subprovincial, provincial boundaries or may include a grouping of provinces to form major natural regions. While there exists many conceptual and technical problems involved with examining regions based strictly on jurisdictional boundaries, it nonetheless represents a useful starting point for more in-depth analysis of regions based on Native land claims and the carrying capacity of the natural environment.
20. See Artibise and Kiernan, *Canadian Regional Development*, p. 19; and William J. Coffey and Mario Polese, "Local Development: Conceptual Bases and Policy Implications," *Regional Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (1985), p. 86.
21. Gerein, *Community Planning and Development*, p. 96.
22. See Boothroyd, "Looking up at the Region," p. 22; and Wolfe, "Indigenous Peoples and Development in the Canadian Arctic," p. 74. For instance, the Pine Point mine shut down in 1987 creating innumerable hardships for local residents. The Nanisivik lead-zinc mine near Arctic Bay has an estimated 12 year productive life and is scheduled to close in 1992.
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 84-86.
24. Michael Joseph Bradshaw, "A Comparative Study of Remote Area Development in the Northlands of Canada and the Soviet Union" M.A. Thesis (University of Calgary, 1982), p. 20.
25. N. Harvey Lithwick, "Canadian Regional Policy: Undisciplined Experimentation," *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (1982), p. 275. See Savoie, *The Canadian Economy*, pp. 9-24 for a synthesis of the different approaches to regional development and theories that have made up Canada's efforts in the area over the past thirty years.

26. See, for instance, the arguments of Thomas J. Courchene and James R. Melvin, "A Neoclassical Approach to Regional Economics," in Benjamin Higgins and Donald J. Savoie, eds., *Regional Economic Development* (Boston, 1988), *passim*. Applying standard methods of economic analysis to regional problems, neo-classical economists such as Courchene believe that market forces should be free to set the necessary equilibrium between supply and demand. In Courchene's neo-classical regional adjustment model, population is essentially regarded as a set of labour inputs to be efficiently allocated or re-allocated according to changing demand conditions. His model assumes that by reducing labour, inter-regional migration will cause inter-regional differences in unemployment and/or wage rates to be minimized. The model assumes, moreover, that government intervention in the regional economy ensures that slow-growth regions become dependent on federal transfer payments. Disputing Courchene's neo-classical analysis, Donald J. Savoie in "Courchene and Regional Development: Beyond the Neoclassical Approach," *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, Vol. IX, No. 1 (Spring 1986), pp. 69-77 maintains that the approach is conceptually flawed, and, more to the point, has failed to resolve long-standing inter-regional disparities in Canada. This unsatisfactory result is largely due to the narrow emphasis standard economic analysis places on efficiency criteria and unrealistic assumptions of perfect competition rather than equity in public policy. Benjamin Higgins agrees, arguing in "Regional Development and Efficiency of the National Economy," in Higgins and Savoie, *Regional Economic Development*, pp. 201-202 that there are a number of social costs that the market leaves out. A more socially enlightened approach, according to Savoie and others, such as William J. Coffey and Mario Polese, in "Local Development," pp. 88-90, is to encourage locally-planned and implemented initiatives and a greater reliance on local entrepreneurs.

27. According to James B. Cannon in "Directions in Canadian Regional Policy," *The Canadian Geographer*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (1989), pp. 232-233 this discussion has centred around an elaborate system of regional and personal income transfers. Inter-regional income redistribution represents an attempt to compensate for the unequal fiscal capacities of Canadian provinces. The rationale for this practice is that people, regardless of where they live, should be entitled to similar levels of public services while shouldering comparable levels of taxation.

28. See Boothroyd, "Looking up at the Region," p. 6.

29. Sally Bremer, Review: "Northern Development and the Canadian Dilemma." by Robert Page. *Northern Review*, Vol. 1 (1988), p. 111-113.

30. See Peter Hall, "The Turbulent Eighth Decade," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Vol. 55, No. 3 (Summer 1989), pp. 277-282 for an overview of the various currents that have contributed to community planning in the US.

31. K.C. Parsons, "Clarence Stein and the Greenbelt Towns: Settling for Less," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (Spring 1990), pp. 167-173. Radburn, New Jersey represents the influence of the Garden City movement and was so well conceived, planned, and implemented that it has become an ideal for US planners. Built in 1929, the distinctive innovations of Radburn were the integrating superblocks, specialized and separate means of circulation, the park backbone, and the house with two fronts. It was at Radburn that Clarence Perry's neighbourhood unit concept was applied for the first time in the US. The neighbourhood unit, consisting of the school, open space, commercial facilities and the deflection of traffic around rather than through the community was a novel design feature for the time.

32. Thomas A. Morehouse, Gerald A. McBeath, and Linda Leask, *Alaska's Urban and Rural Governments* (New York, 1984), *passim*.

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 51-67. Boroughs in Alaska are regional municipal governments and are roughly equivalent to counties in the other 49 states. They must be organized by the local population and approved by the Alaska legislature.

34. See, for instance, Nicholas E. Flanders, "The ANCSA Amendments of 1987 and land management in Alaska," *Polar Record*, Vol. 25, No. 155 (1989), p. 315-317. In 1971 the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act gave 18 million hectares of land and (US) \$962.5 million to Alaska Natives. The land and money were not, however, given to individual Natives. The Act divided the state into twelve regions and required that a state-chartered Native corporation be formed for each region. Villages with over 25 people could form "village corporations." Each eligible Native received 100 shares from each of the two corporations, regional and village, to which he or she belonged.

35. Thomas R. Berger, *Village Journey: The Report of the Alaska Native Review Commission* (New York, 1985), *passim*; and John Dryzek and Oran Young, "Internal Colonialism in the Circumpolar North: The Case of Alaska," *Development and Change*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (January 1985), *passim*. As Berger noted, vulnerability was built into the original scheme. Without the ANCSA Amendments of 1987 (PL 100-241), land could have been forced out of Native hands in a number of ways. This could have occurred after 1991 through taxation, the selling of corporate stock, squatter's rights, eminent domain, and court judgments requiring the payment of debt.

36. Flanders, "The ANCSA Amendments of 1987," pp. 318-319. The Amendments of 1987 protects Native corporation land by placing all undeveloped land into a land bank and allowing for the formation of "Settlement Trusts." The ANCSA Amendments, however, fall short of "re-tribalizing" land or returning it to tribal government.

37. See Berger, *Village Journey*, *passim*; and Dryzek and Young, "Internal Colonialism in the Circumpolar North," *passim*.

38. Norman A. Chance, "Subsistence Research in Alaska: Premises, Practices and Prospects," *Human Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Spring 1987), p. 88.

39. For an overview of the differences between Native and non-Native world-views, see Thomas J. Gallagher, "Native Participation in Land Management Planning in Alaska," *Arctic*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (June 1988), pp. 95-97.

40. *Ibid.*, pp. 92-93; and Thomas J. Gallagher and Anthony F. Gasbarro, "The Battles for Alaska: Planning in America's Last Wilderness," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Vol. 55, No. 1 (1989), pp. 433 and 443.

41. Roger Bolton, "Regional Policy in the United States," *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Autumn 1982), pp. 238-239.

42. See John Friedmann and Robin Bloch, *American Exceptionalism in Regional Planning, 1933-2000* (Los Angeles, 1990), p. 1.

43. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-9.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

45. John Friedmann and Clyde Weaver, *Territory and Function: The Evolution of Regional Planning* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1979), p. 4.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 93 and 147-150. Neo-classical analysis on US regional issues was first propounded by E.A.G. Robinson who argued that: "(1) combating regional economic backwardness is an inefficient practice undertaken in the name of equity; (2) regional poverty is not an imposed condition but a consequence of deficiencies inherent in the area itself; (3) regional backwardness is to be functionally interpreted; and (4) areal dislocations will continue to occur, requiring an accompanying process of adjustment and adaptation."
47. Lee Gorsuch, *Alaska's Economic Outlook: Implications for Anchorage* (Anchorage, 1987), p. 5.
48. See Arlon R. Tussing "Alaska's Petroleum-Based Economy," in Thomas A. Morehouse, ed. *Alaska Resources Development: Issues of the 1980s* (Boulder, 1984), p. 53.
49. Gorsuch, *Alaska's Economic Outlook*, pp. 1-7.
50. For an overview of the social and economic impacts of large energy developments, see J. Lynn England and Stan L. Albrecht, "Boomtowns and Social Disruptions," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 49, No. 2 (1984), pp. 230-243.
51. Dryzek and Young, "Internal Colonialism in the Circumpolar North," p. 131.
52. See, for instance, the comments of William A. Darity, Jr., and Samuel L. Meyers, Jr., "Do Transfer Payments Keep the Poor in Poverty?" *American Economic Review*, Vol. 77, No. 2 (May 1987), pp. 216-222.
53. Gunnar Knapp and Lee Huskey, "Effects of Transfers on Remote Regional Economies: The Transfer Economy in Rural Alaska," *Growth and Change*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Spring 1988), pp. 26-27 and 30-35.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
55. Dryzek and Young, "Internal Colonialism in the Circumpolar North," p. 130.
56. Chance, "Subsistence Research in Alaska," p. 85.
57. See, for instance, Gerald McBeath, "Government-Assisted Development in Rural Alaska: Borough and Regional Quasi-Governments," in Peter Cornwall and Gerald McBeath, eds., *Alaska's Rural Development* (Boulder, 1982), p. 113.
58. Cornwall and McBeath, *Alaska's Rural Development*, p. 2.
59. Gunnar Knapp, *Soviet Northern Development: Lessons for Alaska* (Anchorage, 1987), p. 12.
60. See Lee J. Cuba, *Identity and Community on the Alaskan Frontier* (Philadelphia, 1987), pp. 120-127.
61. Robert B. Weeden, "Northern People, Northern Resources, and the Dynamics of Carrying Capacity," *Arctic*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (June 1985), pp. 17-119.

62. The Garden City Movement and Le Corbusier ideals

63. James H. Bater, *The Soviet Scene: A Geographical Perspective* (London, 1989), pp. 111-129; and Alexei Gutnov et al., *The Ideal Communist City* (New York, 1968), pp. 74-82 and 117-128. A mikrorayon serves as the basic structural element in Soviet neighbourhoods. The mikrorayon is a pedestrian precinct with only access roads, and whose boundaries are normally drawn by main traffic thoroughfares. It combines schools, shops, and housing to form a much larger residential district. The residential district includes several mikrorayons and contains a community and commercial centre with higher order services, including a movie theatre, public health establishments, and a variety of open space for public use.

64. Judith Pallot and Denis J.B. Shaw, *Planning in the Soviet Union* (London, 1981), pp. 246-274; and Northwest Territories Department of Information, *An Introduction to Town Planning and Related Matters in the Soviet North* (Yellowknife, 1977), pp. 28-34.

65. See Chris Gossop, "Soviet Planning in the Age of Perestroika," *The Planner*, Vol. 75, No. 24 (October 1989), p. 22. A good relationship between local authorities and ministries is unusual in the USSR, where ministerial control of economic development obstructs effective local planning. Local planners have little if any funding of their own and are generally at the mercy of the ministries which have factories or other interests in the city.

66. Gary Hausladen, "Planning the Development of the Socialist City: the Case of Dubna New Town," *Geoforum*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (1987), p. 107.

67. See, for example, Andrew R. Bond, "Urban Planning and Design in the Soviet North: The Norilsk Experience," in Jorma Mänty and Norman Pressman, eds., *Cities Designed for Winter*, (Helsinki, 1988), pp. 304-305. Both approaches are reactive rather than anticipatory in nature. Trial and error planning was based upon seeing what would work and what would not work in actual practice. The management by crisis approach tackled problems one at a time, beginning with the most pressing, and then proceeding to others of lower priority. For a recent example of the disastrous consequences of reactive planning, see O. Borodin, "How Should the Referendum be Conducted in Yakutsk?" *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XL, No. 1 (1988), pp. 20-21.

68. Yuri S. Asafiev, "Design and Construction in Northern Regions of the Soviet Union," *Habitat International*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (1989), p. 118; and Sveshnikov, "Development Problems in the Soviet Far North," p. 279.

69. See Bond, "Urban Planning and Design in the Soviet Far North," *passim*.

70. Leslie Dienes, *Soviet Asia: Economic Development and National Policy Choices* (Boulder, 1987), pp. 185-189.

71. See Alexander Pika and Boris Prokhorov, "Big Problems for Small Peoples," *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XL, No. 47 (1988), p. 22.

72. Dienes, *Soviet Asia*, p. 181; I. Mongo, "The Congress of the People's Deputies," *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XLI, No. 29 (1989), pp. 19-20; Pika and Prokhorov, "Big Problems for Small Peoples," pp. 22-23; and A. Shishov, "More Autonomy for the North's Native Peoples?" *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XLI, No. 14 (1989), pp. 8-9. The problems of small peoples have not gone unnoticed. In a major speech to

the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in September 1989, President Mikhail Gorbachev, *Izvestiya*, 24 September 1989, p. 2, spoke of:

...the situation of the small peoples of the North Siberia and Far East. The industrial development of the territory in which they live is being carried out without due consideration for their way of life or for the social and ecological consequences. These peoples need special protection and help from the state. It is essential to assign to the Councils of the People's Deputies of these territories the exclusive right to their economic utilization, that is, to hunting grounds, pastures, inland waters, inshore waters, forests, to the establishment of reserved zones with the aim of restoring and preserving the homelands of these people.

73. Asafiev, "Design and Construction in Northern Regions," 1989, p. 118; and Pika and Prokhorov, "Big Problems for Small Peoples," p. 23.

74. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

75. Piers Vitebsky, "Gas, environmentalism and native anxieties in the Soviet Arctic: the case of Yamal peninsula," *Polar Record*, Vol. 26, No. 156 (1990), pp. 19-23; and Fyodr Sizy, "The Price of Yamal," *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XL, No. 47 (1989), pp. 23-24.

76. See Oleg N. Ianitskii in "The Arguments Underlying Urban Development Decisions under Glasnost," *Soviet Sociology*, Vol. 28, No. 5 (September/October 1989), pp. 68-83 for a detailed discussion of how glasnost' could be carried out at the local level. His paradigm of self-organization is designed to get people involved in defining their own communities.

77. Pika and Prokhorov, "Big Problems for Small Peoples," p. 23. According to Piers Vitebsky, "Reindeer Herders of northern Yakutia: a report from the field," *Polar Record*, Vol. 25, No. 154 (1989), pp. 216-217 the application of economic re-structuring in traditional economies is not without drawbacks. The requirement for economic self-sufficiency at the level of the farm through the principle of cost-accounting, and the change of the worker's status from an employee of the collective into a free agent could pose hardships for others who are less skilled or lucky.

78. See, for instance, the works of Jeffrey W. Hahn, *Soviet Grassroots: Citizen Participation in Local Soviet Government* (Princeton, 1988), Chapter 7; Jeffrey W. Hahn, "Power to the Soviets?" *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 38 (January/February 1989), pp. 44-46; and Yevgeny Yevtushenko, "We Humiliate Ourselves," *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, (May 6 1988), p. 2.

79. Jonathan R. Schiffer, *Soviet Regional Economic Policy: The East-West Debate over Pacific Siberian Development* (New York, 1989), Chapter 2. See also Pallot and Shaw, *Planning in the Soviet Union*, p. 187. Territorial planning in the USSR is divided into two distinct spheres. Economic planning (*planirovanie*) is concerned with the control and development of the various branches of the economy. This activity is the primary responsibility of Gosplan USSR. Physical planning (*planirovka*) is conducted under Gosstroï, and is concerned with such matters as the control of construction, land-use, and the location of facilities. The two frequently compete for larger budgets and increased property rights.

80. See Graham Smith, *Planned Development in the Socialist World* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 49.

81. Burkhavov, V.F. et al., "Problems in Comprehensive Development of Productive Forces in the Northern Zone," *Problems of the North: Regional-Industrial Complexes of the North*, Vol. 21, (1988), pp. 15-16; and Schiffer, *Soviet Regional Economic Policy*, pp. 2-3.

82. *Ibid.*

83. See Denis J.B. Shaw, "Regional Planning in the USSR," *Soviet Geography, Review and Translation*, Vol. 27, No. 7 (September 1986), pp. 450-452; and Schiffer, *Soviet Regional Economic Policy*, pp. 61-62. As a branch of Gosstro, territorial social planning is concerned primarily with the provision of health, education, and welfare services at the regional level. While the provision of social and physical services is an important goal for territorially-based governments and planners, it must be expressed in such a way as to enhance the national economy. Consequently, territorial planning has a low level of official support in the USSR.

84. Abel G. Aganbegyan and M.K. Bandman, "Territorial Production Complexes as Integrated Systems: Theory and Practice," *Geoforum*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (1984), *passim*. A TPC is a group of industries in various sectors within a geographical area, united for the purpose of comprehensive development and joint use of the area and its natural and labour resources in the interests of the nation's economy, and of the joint efficient use of the economic and social infrastructure.

85. See Burkhavov, "Problems in Comprehensive Development," pp. 6-9.

86. T.I. Alekseeva and I.A. Beskin, "Problems in Formation of Regional Industrial Complexes in Near North Regions of Siberia," *Problems of the North: Regional-Industrial Complexes of the North*, Vol. 21, (1988), p. 81.

87. See, for instance, Leslie Dienes "National Policy and the Development of Soviet Asia," in Lutz Holzner and Jeane M. Knapp, eds., *Soviet Geography Studies in Our Time* (Wisconsin, 1987), pp. 64-65.

88. Smith, *Planned Development in the Socialist World*, p. 52-54, and 65. There is an ongoing debate on whether development in northern USSR should be complex or limited. Arguing in favour of more complex and balanced development, the pro-Siberian lobby advocates increased investment in the Soviet North. More commitment to northern development, according to Siberianists, would utilize the region's full potential and attract and retain a labour force which in the past has acted as a brake on regional economic growth. Arguing in favour of limited development, the pro-European lobby questions the merits of scarce investment resources being channelled into a region where there is little short-term return. A more cost-effective approach, according to Europeanists, would be to re-vitalize older industrialized areas of the European USSR.

89. See Agamali Mamedov, "Northern Peoples: Problems of Development," *Northern News*, Vol. 3 (January 1989), pp. 1-2.

90. B.F. Shapalin, "Territorial Organization of the Northern Economy," *Problems of the North: Regional-Industrial Complexes of the North*, Vol. 21, (1988), p. 25.

91. See Dienes, "National Policy and the Development of Soviet Asia," p. 54.

92. Theodore Shabad, "Siberian Development under Gorbachev," *International Regional Science Review*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (1989), p. 285.

93. *Ibid.*, pp. 283-285.

94. See Dienes, "National Policy and the Development of Soviet Asia," p. 233; and Shaw, "Regional Planning in the USSR," p. 451.

95. Knapp, *Soviet Northern Development*, p. 12.

96. For popular Soviet views of northern USSR, see Genrich Gurkov and Valery Yevseyev, *Tapping Siberian Wealth: The Urengoi Experience* (Moscow, 1984), *passim*.

97. Shapalin, "Territorial Organization of the Northern Economy," p. 27.

Chapter V

I. PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR HOUSING IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, ALASKA, AND NORTHERN USSR: 1980-1990

Private and public sector housing in urban, rural, and remote areas of the NWT, Alaska, and northern USSR are examined in this chapter with an emphasis on housing affordability, adequacy, and suitability problems. The primary objective of this chapter is to assess the effectiveness of northern public housing, as well as its appropriateness in a Native environment. The period from 1980 to 1990 is analyzed as it provides a necessary context in which to assess the successes and failures of public housing policy and program implementation.¹ It also marks a time of extensive population growth and increased housing need in concert with fiscal restraint in the provision of public rental housing. As a secondary objective, the nature of housing markets in the North will be examined in this chapter, and the implications for decent and affordable housing.

As the primary source of decent and affordable housing for low and moderate-income Natives, the public housing sector has failed to meet the increased demand for shelter in northern communities. This failure is largely the result of ineffective government housing policies and programs, which has led to a deteriorating housing stock and conditions of severe overcrowding. Underlying the northern housing crises is the tendency of senior government officials to disregard local housing solutions and transpose national housing policies to structurally and culturally diverse northern environments. Such insensitivity in technocratic policy-making and program implementation have irritated problems of housing affordability, adequacy, and suitability. It also fuels a sense of frustration and despair among the growing number of Natives who rely on public housing for their shelter needs. This chapter concludes with

an examination of Native housing needs in the NWT, Alaska, and northern USSR, as well as a comparative analysis of public sector housing policies and programs.

II. THE NORTHERN HOUSING CRISIS

II.A THE POPULATION, DEMOGRAPHIC, AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF NATIVES IN THE NWT

When developing public housing policies and programs for the NWT, several unique features of the northern setting must be considered. Too often senior housing officials regard northern areas as mere appendages of mainstream Canada, and expect national housing policies to make equal sense in the northern environment. Such mistaken assumptions have led to the transposition of national housing policies and programs to the NWT with little regard for important structural and cultural differences.² While the actions of senior housing officials are well-intentioned, their reluctance to consider local factors when developing policy has resulted in poorly implemented public housing policies and programs.

Population and demographic characteristics, the nature of the territorial economy and its implication for household income, as well as the poor condition of the stock itself combine to create a set of circumstances in which many Native households have serious housing problems. While the NWT is sparsely populated, the total population grew over 12.4 per cent between 1981 and 1986, with Natives accounting for approximately 60 per cent of the increase.³

Combined with a growth in household formation has been a geographic shift of a segment of Natives from smaller, scattered remote communities to larger urban centres. Not all those who have moved from smaller communities associated with a more subsistence type of economy are participating in the

formal economy of urban centres, but they have taken up residence to obtain social services such as health and education. As the Native population of the NWT continues to grow at a rate almost triple the national average, "the need for new social housing units is increasing by 150 units each year."⁴

These historic trends coupled with the very young demographic profile of the territorial population have disturbing implications for those experiencing core housing need. In 1986, for instance, 51 per cent of all residents were under 25 years of age, compared with 38 per cent of the Canadian population.⁵ Statistics also indicate that Native peoples are somewhat younger, on average, than the Euro-Canadian population. In 1986, for example, 62 per cent of indigenous peoples, compared with 44 per cent of non-Natives, were under 25 years of age.⁶

Some areas of the North, particularly those communities where the population is primarily Native in origin, have an even younger profile. According to Tom Carter (1987), it is not unusual for these areas to have over 50 per cent of their populations under 19 years of age.⁷ In these areas the population is increasing rapidly as birth rates for Natives are far higher than for the Euro-Canadian population. Current demographic trends and recent household projections show that the Native population of much of the NWT is just entering a period of pronounced growth that will result in greater housing demand in the 1990s.⁸

The ability of Natives to obtain decent and affordable housing is also constrained by an underdeveloped territorial economy which ensures fewer long-term jobs and much higher seasonal employment, as well as higher unemployment (up to 50 per cent in smaller communities) and crushing social welfare dependency.⁹ With little or no economic base except for government services, "unemployment for Inuit between the ages of 15 and 24 hovers at

about 30 per cent in most regions, but has reached a staggering 49 per cent in the High Arctic."¹⁰

II.B HOUSING AFFORDABILITY PROBLEMS AND THE NWT HOUSING MARKET

An unstable economic base reduces overall income as well as monthly income stability, and, in turn, diminishes the ability of most Native households to pay for shelter costs, which are higher on average in the North. Hal Logsdon's (1987) study of social housing in the Eastern Arctic describes the affordability problem in some detail.

The operating costs of an energy efficient unit, not including any debt service average \$432/month. If a 30 per cent of gross income guideline for housing costs is utilized to measure affordability, almost two-thirds of the population cannot afford to pay for the basic operating costs of fuel, power, water and sewer, insurance and maintenance, which would require an income of \$1,439/month. When the costs of debt servicing are added to the basic operating costs of maintaining a residence, the costs increase to \$1,562 per month. Again, using the 30 per cent of income guideline, the monthly gross income required to both service the debt and maintain the operating expenses of a home would require a monthly income of \$5,206...¹¹

With many Native households depending almost entirely on social assistance or on a limited income from seasonal employment, the operating costs of housing alone are more than most families can afford.¹² The costs of housing will be even more prohibitive in the early 1990s, a time when Native unemployment rates are expected to increase.¹³

In rural and remote northern areas, the gap between incomes and expenses do not allow lower income households to pay either a portion of market rent for accommodation or maintain their housing. From a market perspective, "this situation does not provide much hope for either rental housing investment or homeownership."¹⁴ Lower or unstable incomes in an environment of high housing costs means that there will be very little investment in market rental housing by the private sector as rents would exceed the ability of everyone to pay. There will also be little if any investment

in private homes as few could afford to pay down the debt while maintaining the high operating costs of the dwelling.¹⁵ In general, when the costs of supplying housing far exceed the affordability in a particular area, a non-market situation arises, characterized by a structural change in the supply and demand of housing. As a result, "housing is no longer demanded in the economic sense, since no one has the income to afford it. It is not a sluggish market, it is a non-market."¹⁶

While housing markets exist in northern urban centres, private homes or rental accommodations are generally beyond the ability of most low and moderate-income Natives to afford. Since the development costs of market rental housing in urban centres are high, developers are under pressure to realize immediate profits and tend to set rent scales in excess of the income of the average individual.¹⁷ The few affordable rental units that exist are generally substandard and vulnerable to demolition or conversion to condominiums for speculative purposes. Accessible primarily to wealthier non-Natives, market rental housing is exclusionary and offers little if any security of tenure to low and moderate-income Natives in need of decent and affordable shelter.

Although private market housing is a viable tenure form in many northern urban centres, it is virtually impossible for Natives with lower incomes to afford it given their low incomes. In addition to meeting prohibitively high mortgage payments, Natives must be able to cover a variety of operating costs.¹⁸ Lacking permanent jobs or other steady sources of income, many Native households find it difficult to meet their basic needs, let alone monthly mortgage payments and operating costs. As a result of a fundamental mismatch between housing costs and Native income, indigenous peoples are generally considered to be a high mortgage risk by public and private lending institutions and are, in effect, precluded from homeownership.

II.C HOUSING ADEQUACY AND SUITABILITY PROBLEMS

Affordability problems are common but adequacy problems are increasing given the poor condition of the housing stock and the fact that average household size is much larger in the North. The following comments by an unidentified man from Cape Dorset, translated from *Inuktituk*, are typical of the housing conditions in smaller Arctic communities.

In the winter, when you are an older person, it [housing] is not very satisfying because the toilet tank is always freezing and the interior of the house is falling apart. The pipes are almost starting to break and the furnace is starting to sink down. I am sure the pipe for the fuel will crack at some time.¹⁹

In addition to adequacy problems, overcrowding in public and private sector housing is a major issue in the NWT. While the average number of Native persons per room in 1986 was 0.97, down from 1.10 in 1981, approximately one-third of all Native peoples lived in dwellings with 1.1 to 2.0 persons per room (see Table 1).²⁰ Using CMHC standards, overcrowding occurs primarily among Native households, as only 2.8 per cent of Euro-Canadians in the NWT experienced similar suitability problems, compared with 1.6 per cent for non-Native Canadians as a whole.²¹

TABLE 1. AVERAGE NUMBER OF PERSONS PER ROOM AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE DWELLINGS BY PERSONS PER ROOM, CANADA AND THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, 1981 AND 1986

	Percentage of dwellings with							
	Average number of persons per room		1 or less person per room		1.1-2.0 persons per room		2 persons and over per room	
	1986	1981	1986	1981	1986	1981	1986	1981
CANADA								
-Total	0.47		98.2		1.7		0.1	
-Natives	0.79		77.6		19.0		3.4	
-Non-Natives	0.47		98.3		1.6		0.1	
NWT								
-Total	0.74	0.78	79.9	77.5	16.8	18.1	3.2	4.4
-Natives	0.97	1.10	64.0	56.0	29.9	35.2	6.1	9.1
-Non-Natives	0.52	0.53	97.1	97.9	2.8	2.0	0.2	0.0

Adapted from: Allan M. Maslove and David C. Hawkes, *Canada's North, A Profile* (Ottawa, 1990), p. 35.

III. PUBLIC SECTOR HOUSING IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, NEEDS, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS: 1980-1990

III.A NATIVE HOUSING NEEDS AND POLICY FAILURE

As the region's primary housing suppliers, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (NWT HC) are mandated to "assist residents of the NWT to secure and maintain adequate, suitable and affordable shelter at a reasonable cost."²² Following the direction established by the GNWT's 10th Assembly's Special Committee on Housing, the Housing Corporation is continuing to seek ways of

devolving decision-making capabilities (delivery and management of housing) to the community level. The report stated:

Overall, it is the view of the Committee that solutions rest not only with making governments work. It is also believed that government works best when it allows decision-making to be based in communities as much as possible.²³

As an expression of this emphasis, the Housing Corporation's Community Development Strategy seeks to strengthen community self-reliance and self-government. Reaffirming the 10th Assembly's position on devolution, the strategy is also consistent with one of the guiding principles of the Special Committee on the Northern Economy (1989) which concluded that, "economic development must flow from, and reflect the spiritual and cultural values of, the people who live in the communities."²⁴

The following analysis maintains that the Housing Corporation has failed to fulfill its most basic objective, and that territorial housing policy is exclusionary and discriminates against Natives. Recent surveys indicate, for instance, that more than 3,000 housing units are currently needed to relieve overcrowding and replace inadequate housing.²⁵ With the prohibitively high costs of northern housing and a five per cent reduction in real spending power, the Housing Corporation is only able to deliver 300 new units each year, less than 10 per cent of the current shortage.²⁶ With new households being formed at a rate of 150 a year, "it would take 25 years to eliminate the backlog of NWT housing needs."²⁷

As bleak as these figures are, they do not adequately convey the full extent of the northern housing crisis. Out of 300 units delivered in 1989, for instance, 173 were funded under the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP) and are, therefore, generally beyond the ability of most low-income people (especially Natives) to afford. By subtracting the number of HAP-funded houses from a total of 300 subsidized units allocated in 1989, only 127 public

rental units were made available to low-income people. It is shocking to learn that the housing needs of Iqaluit alone equal the entire non-HAP public housing allocated for that year.²⁸

While public housing policies and programs are available to assist low and moderate-income Natives obtain shelter, all are implicitly premised on flawed market assumptions. Rendered ineffective, especially in non-market communities, public housing is "imposed on lower income people who have fewer choices and suffer more directly from mis-matches of the supply and their priorities"²⁹ It is not surprising that territorial public rental housing programs are driven by market assumptions since they are a part of an overall Canadian housing policy which, according to J. David Hulchanski (1988), "is designed to stimulate private residential construction as an instrument of macro-economic policy."³⁰

III.B NATIVE PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMS

III.B.1 Public Housing

Most Public Housing or Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) dwelling units are owned by the Housing Corporation, with subsidies cost-shared equally by the federal and territorial governments. Rents charged to the occupants are based on a rent-geared-to-income scale and generally equal 30 per cent or less of the household's income. Authorized under Section 40 and Sections 43/44 of the National Housing Act (NHA), the specific objectives of this program are:

- a. to provide decent, safe and sanitary housing for individuals and families of low-income, suitable to their identified needs and at rents they can afford;
- b. to increase the housing stock available to low-income people; and
- c. to provide accommodation which most effectively integrates public housing occupants into the community.³¹

A key management objective is "to achieve the production of public housing in the most efficient and effective manner, and at reasonable cost to the governments involved."³²

In essence, RGI or Public Housing is "designed to foster an economic choice in favour of market housing when the rental rate paid by the household draws close to the market rental rate."³³ A critical failing of RGI programs is that the incomes of most non-market households (especially Native) are well below this level. While RGI housing assists those who cannot afford to pay the cost of utilities and maintenance, clients must pay an ever increasing rent until they can afford to build private housing, something almost no household can ever hope to afford.³⁴

Given the staggering costs of public rental housing maintenance and administration, RGI programs are neither efficient or effective. While poverty is a pervasive problem in northern communities, many subsidized units are rented by households with substantial incomes as there are few housing options. The occupation of public rental housing by higher income tenants, however, reduces the already dwindling stock of decent and affordable housing for low and moderate-income people. While the new "Access Program" is aimed at removing higher income people out of public rental housing units so more units will be freed up for the homeless, program critics charge that these efforts will do very little to alleviate the housing crisis.³⁵

There are also several drawbacks with the allocation of RGI housing. While housing associations are empowered to assess local need and manage and maintain public dwellings, association staff must apply rules mandated by the Housing Corporation, rules developed for southern or national public housing based on two underlying principles: allocation according to need and rent-geared-to-income.³⁶ Premised on mainstream Euro-Canadian perceptions of the nuclear family, these rules lack the flexibility necessary to assess Native housing eligibility. As Peter Dahl (1990) indicates, the determination of Native family needs is a complicated process.

Household size tends to get fuzzy in a land of extended relationships, customary adoption and seasonal movements. A "family" may double or decrease by half at the spring thaw. Determining "family" income can be baffling where extended households overcrowded with working relatives may have casual, seasonal and sometimes untraceable sources.³⁷

As the local delivery agent, housing associations have the potential to play an important role in reducing program costs and promoting community development. Lacking any real power, however, most housing associations are "under-funded, under-staffed, badly informed about policies and confused about how to apply them."³⁸ As an artificial organization superimposed upon an indigenous society, many housing associations are often unaware of the problems inside the Native community and develop policies without informing the residents.

There are other problems with the allocation process. In order to qualify for public rental housing, the applicant must have been a permanent resident of the community in question for a continual 12 month period prior to the date of application. A stringent residency requirement and long waiting lists intensifies the northern housing crisis and contribute to the Native sense of despair and frustration. Southern-based housing allocation criteria and rigid NWT HC residency requirements, moreover, discriminate against a Native way of life and undermine attempts at devolving decision-making to the community level. As a result, very few community-based housing options are available to Natives seeking an escape from overwhelming dependence on public rental housing. While small private housing enclaves exist in urban areas, they are generally accessible to wealthier Euro-Canadian professionals and government employees.³⁹ Lacking any community-based housing options, many Natives are compelled to reside in overcrowded public housing. Without meaningful social and income-mixing, exclusionary territorial housing policies and programs have

created the conditions in which people are polarized based on income and tenure.

III.B.2 The Rural and Native Housing Program

The authority for the Rural and Native Housing Program (RNH) resides in Sections 34.15, 55 or 40 of the NHA. Under Section 40, program costs are shared on a 75 per cent federal and 25 per cent territorial basis, with either government taking responsibility for housing delivery and maintenance. Section 40 is essentially a home ownership program with some rental for clients who do not meet home ownership eligibility requirements. In both instances, clients pay 30 per cent of their incomes towards the monthly mortgage amount, with the remainder being subsidized by the Housing Corporation. For home ownership units, "clients are responsible for payment of their own utility and maintenance costs, while in rental units these are included in the subsidized rent."⁴⁰

Section 55 subsidies to clients are provided on the same basis as for Section 40, except that funding for these is 100 per cent federal. While Section 34.15 functions in much the same manner, federal loans are made directly to an "agent, a builder or a homeowner to construct new units or acquire good quality existing units for sale to qualified RNH clients."⁴¹ The objective of the RNH program "is to assist disadvantaged clients by providing adequate housing for Native and non-Native persons living in rural areas and small communities."⁴²

The RNH program is intended to assist families and individuals in obtaining affordable, adequate, and suitable housing. It is the result of pressure on the federal government by Natives in the early 1970s to respond to the deplorable housing condition of indigenous peoples living in rural and remote areas of the country. Another key element of the program was to

involve Natives directly in the planning, implementation, and administration of RNH housing.⁴³ The following analysis maintains, however, that the program failed to increase the supply of decent and affordable housing, and did not provide for effective Native participation in program planning, implementation, and management.

Like RGI housing, RNH is based on market assumptions which serve to make it inefficient in a non-market context. With mortgages subsidized, RNH clients must pay the cost of utilities and maintenance and a 30 per cent of income mortgage payment. Consequently, the total monthly cost is higher than RGI, and results in a "property that has no more value to the family than a rental unit, since there is no reasonable resale potential."⁴⁴ In a non-market environment, there is little if any resale potential because there is no effective demand for the unit.

In addition to the non-market environment, there is a cultural dimension to the problem. Since there is little Native in-migration, indigenous peoples view their housing as permanent shelter, not as a commodity to be bought and sold. In essence, the investment in housing is purely social and the value is simply that of shelter. This cultural dimension in concert with the non-market environment renders the concept of investment in northern housing almost meaningless. In effect, monthly payments become rent rather than investment because there is no realizable return, making the program just another expensive rental option.⁴⁵

Consequently, the program fails to reach the lowest-income population because, unlike RGI housing, clients are required to pay their own utility costs. Another problem is that RNH homeownership is reserved for those households who are able to contribute equity, while those without equity can only obtain

ineffective public rental housing, further polarizing people based on income and tenure. Other problems with the program include:

- a. the inability of some clients to take on the financial responsibilities and on-going repairs and maintenance associated with homeownership;
- b. community resistance to low-income households being "given" a new home; and
- c. difficulties in administering long-term subsidy agreements, particularly in northern, remote communities.⁴⁶

Of concern to territorial government is the high rate of RNH arrears, particularly in remote areas where other living costs such as food and fuel are high and household income is irregular.⁴⁷ This is partly due to the affordability problems created through payments of utility costs, but is also the result of other responsibilities, including maintenance, imposed through the provision of homeownership to very low-income households. While the new "Maintenance Management System" is intended to improve the quality of housing and reduce maintenance costs, significant implementation problems are unresolved.⁴⁸

IV. THE ALASKA HOUSING CRISIS

IV.A THE POPULATION, DEMOGRAPHIC, AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF ALASKA NATIVES

There are several unique aspects of the northern environment that should be considered when developing rental public housing policies and programs for Alaska's urban, rural, and remote communities. In many instances, however, state and federal housing officials view Alaska as an extension of the southern states, and expect national housing policies to apply equally in the northern setting. Alaska is not an appendage of mainstream America, and policies that do not take this into account would ignore significant aspects of housing delivery. Despite the uniqueness of Alaska, US housing policies and programs have been applied to the state with little regard for critical social, economic, and cultural differences. Without fully considering

local factors in policy-making, it is not surprising that housing policies and programs have failed to meet their intended objectives.

The rapid growth of the Alaska Native population, an underdeveloped state economy and its implications for family income, as well as inadequate rental public housing combine to create a situation in which many indigenous peoples have severe housing problems. As America's most sparsely inhabited region, Alaska developed into the fastest growing state in the first half of the 1980s.⁴⁹ Statistics indicate, for instance, that the total population of Alaska grew over 32.9 per cent between 1980 and 1986 with Alaska Natives making up 45 per cent of the increase.⁵⁰ Although the absolute number of Alaska Natives has increased, the Native percentage of the total population has steadily declined because of high levels of non-Native in-migration.⁵¹ Despite this decline, it is projected by the Alaska Department of Labour that as in-migration slows due to the current statewide recession, "the proportion of Alaska's population which is Alaska Native should again increase."⁵²

The steady growth in household formation since the early 1980s occurred approximately at the same time indigenous peoples migrated from rural villages to urban centres in search of employment and government services. The increase in the number of Alaska Natives living in urban areas has not come at the expense of villages. For example, while the urban Native population is currently the fastest-growing segment of the statewide Native population, still over 60 per cent of Alaska Natives live in settlements with populations of less than 1,000 persons.⁵³ As the Alaska Native population continues to grow at a rate almost double the US average, additional strain will be placed on the limited resources available to shelter urban and rural Natives.⁵⁴

These historic trends have profound implications for people in need of shelter, especially when combined with the young demographic profile of

Alaska's population. In 1988, for example, 43.7 per cent of all Alaskans were under 25 years of age, compared with 36.8 per cent of the US population.⁵⁵ Available data also suggest that Alaska Natives are somewhat younger, on average, than the Euro-American population. As Table 2 indicates, 54.8 per cent of Alaska Natives, compared with 40.3 per cent of non-Natives, were under 25 years of age in 1987.⁵⁶

TABLE 2. ALASKA POPULATION ESTIMATES BY AGE, RACE AND SEX, 1987

Age	Total Estimate July 1, 1987			Non-Native Estimate July 1, 1987			% of Age Group	Alaska Native Estimate July 1, 1987			% of Age Group
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female		Total	Male	Female	
0-4	56,288	29,037	27,251	40,672	21,033	19,639	72.3	12,085	6,183	5,902	21.5
5-9	47,807	24,890	22,917	35,061	18,259	16,802	73.3	8,899	4,622	4,277	18.6
10-14	38,674	19,849	18,825	28,382	14,625	13,757	73.4	6,884	3,519	3,365	17.8
15-19	38,204	20,163	18,041	28,547	15,221	13,326	74.7	6,881	3,488	3,393	18.0
20-24	47,928	25,723	22,205	36,141	19,533	16,608	75.4	8,309	4,264	4,045	17.3
25-29	60,839	31,647	29,192	47,621	24,758	22,863	78.3	7,329	3,495	3,834	12.0
30-34	62,595	31,748	30,847	50,441	25,595	24,846	80.6	6,462	3,087	3,375	10.3
35-39	54,032	28,275	25,757	44,726	23,553	21,173	82.8	5,003	2,472	2,531	9.3
40-44	37,473	20,098	17,375	31,494	17,071	14,423	84.0	3,547	1,771	1,776	9.5
45-49	26,640	14,451	12,189	22,019	12,065	9,954	82.7	2,921	1,504	1,417	11.0
50-54	19,562	10,399	9,163	15,802	8,544	7,258	80.8	2,646	1,317	1,329	13.5
55-59	16,054	8,524	7,530	12,974	7,017	5,957	80.8	2,263	1,131	1,132	14.1
60-64	12,511	6,379	6,132	10,084	5,163	4,921	80.6	1,801	919	882	14.4
65-69	8,302	3,956	4,346	6,686	3,178	3,508	80.5	1,277	640	637	15.4
70-74	5,032	2,294	2,738	3,879	1,762	2,117	77.1	961	460	501	19.1
75-79	3,201	1,538	1,663	2,278	1,082	1,196	71.2	716	329	387	22.4
80-84	1,553	672	881	1,076	446	630	69.3	401	179	222	25.8
85+	1,105	264	841	817	152	665	73.9	215	95	120	19.5
Total	537,800	279,907	257,893	418,700	219,057	199,643	77.9	78,600	39,475	39,125	14.6
Median Age	28.3	28.2	28.4	29.3	29.2	29.3		22.8	22.3	23.3	
US Median Age	32.1	30.9	33.3	33.0	31.8	34.2	N/A	N/A	N/A		

Adapted from: Greg Williams, "Alaska's Native Population: An Updated Profile," *Alaska Economic Trends*, Vol. 8 (December 1988), p. 13

Some areas of village Alaska, especially those settlements where the population is largely indigenous in composition, have an even younger profile. In 1980, for instance, 23 per cent of all Alaska Natives were under 10 years of age. Based on observed and projected birth rates, between 1980 and 1990 the number of Native children between 0 and 9 years of age living in rural Alaska will increase by approximately 40 per cent.⁵⁷ Assuming present trends continue, there will be a sharp increase in demand for decent and affordable rural Native housing in the early-1990s.

Many Alaska Natives have difficulties obtaining housing because of an underdeveloped state economy which results in fewer long-term jobs and much higher seasonal employment. In the economically disadvantaged Calista Region, for example, unemployment in villages reaches as high as 80 to 90 per cent.⁵⁸ These statistics are significant because approximately 25 per cent of the state's Native population live in the Calista Region alone.⁵⁹ Without a strong economic base, statewide unemployment for Alaska Natives between the ages of 15 and 24 reached 42 per cent in 1989.⁶⁰

IV.B HOUSING AFFORDABILITY PROBLEMS AND THE ALASKA HOUSING MARKET

Alaska's unstable resource-based economy limits household income and monthly income stability, and makes it difficult for most Alaska Natives to pay for basic shelter costs. The reality for many low and moderate-income Alaska Natives in rural and remote communities is that they cannot afford to pay either a portion of market rent for shelter or to maintain their housing. Low or irregular incomes in a context of high housing costs means that there will be little investment in rental market housing by the private sector as rents would exceed the ability of most people to pay. Not surprisingly, there will also be

little if any investment in private homes as few could afford to service the debt and maintain the high operating costs of the unit. In essence, when the costs of supplying housing far outstrip the affordability in a rural or remote area, a non-market situation occurs, marked by a structural change in the supply and demand of housing.

Although housing markets exist in urban Alaska, most low and moderate-income Natives are unable to afford the prohibitively high costs of private homes and rental market accommodation.⁶¹ In rental market housing, for instance, high development costs combined with an unregulated housing market and a tendency on the part of most developers to make quick profits conspire to push rent levels well beyond the income of most Natives. With few housing alternatives and little if any security of tenure, a reduction in the stock of decent and affordable rental market housing is causing serious hardships for low and moderate-income Alaska Natives.

As an alternative tenure form, the prospect of private homeownership for Alaska Natives is not very promising. While there is a current surplus of single-family housing, especially in Anchorage, most Alaska Natives are unable to service high mortgage payments and operating costs.⁶² Without steady employment, low and moderate-income Alaska Natives would find it difficult, if not impossible, to meet the financial responsibilities associated with homeownership. Considered a high mortgage risk by banks and savings and loans institutions, Alaska Natives are, therefore, unable to obtain financing and to access the private housing market.

IV.C HOUSING ADEQUACY AND SUITABILITY PROBLEMS

In addition to experiencing housing affordability problems, many Alaska Natives in rural areas suffer from severe adequacy problems. In his opening remarks as chairperson of the US Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs

(1989), Senator Daniel K. Inouye lamented the deplorable condition of Alaska Native housing.

I will never forget the standard Government designed houses that have only one door... I shall always remember the leaking roofs and the walls that were pulling away from these roofs, the inadequate insulation that must make survival during the cold waves, such as the one that passed through the State of Alaska last month, a challenge, to say the least.⁶³

Senator Inouye's observations of the inadequate physical condition of rural Alaska Native housing are quantitatively supported by the findings of a 1988 state-sponsored housing needs assessment study. One sobering conclusion of this study was that 47 per cent of all houses in rural areas required major repair. The highest percentage of houses rated in need of replacement by region was "Ahtna with 21%, followed by Doyon region, 17%, Aleut region, 10% and NANA region, 10%"⁶⁴ During routine inspection, researchers detected "several inches of glaciation on walls and windows, snow-filled attics, badly damaged roofs and siding from high winds, and seriously heaved foundations."⁶⁵

The study also found severe problems of housing suitability. For instance, the average number of Natives per room in rural Alaska was 3.70, well above the accepted ratio of 1.0. The average household size ranged from a low of 2.6 in Ahtna Region to a high of 5.3 in NANA Region. In contrast, Anchorage households have an average size of 2.72.⁶⁶ The Arctic Slope Region had the highest percentage, (18.7 per cent), of households with three or more generations per house. The Calista Region was second with 16.4 per cent and the NANA Region had 15.4 per cent.⁶⁷ Overcrowding conditions appeared to be the worst in the Calista and NANA areas, as "29% of households in these regions had 100 or less square feet per resident."⁶⁸ The study concluded that housing need was greatest in the Doyon, Calista, and Ahtna Regions of rural Alaska.

V. PUBLIC SECTOR HOUSING IN ALASKA, NEEDS, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS: 1980-1990

V.A RECAPTURING THE AMERICAN DREAM IN ALASKA?

Given severe housing affordability, adequacy, and suitability problems, the supply of Indian housing in Alaska requires an on-going level of federal and state involvement. As the region's primary housing suppliers, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Alaska State Housing Authority (ASHA) are mandated to provide "decent, safe, and sanitary housing for low and moderate-income families."⁶⁹

Following the direction established by HUD's Recapture the American Dream Initiative, Alaska housing authorities are continuing to seek ways of empowering their clients toward greater self-determination.⁷⁰ The HUD initiative is consistent with the Governor of Alaska's Native Policy Statement (1988), as both ostensibly promote Native self-determination and local control in rural Alaska. The Governor's policy document stated:

Strong local governments must begin with a community's vision of a future it wants to build, the values it wants to promote, and the way of life it wants to protect. State government will support initiatives to strengthen local governments and empower people at the local level. The state believes that this can be done under the Alaska State Constitution and by adapting existing state institutions to meet these objectives.⁷¹

Since the practice of using Indian Housing Authorities (IHA's) to deliver public housing seeks to strengthen Native self-determination using "existing state institutions," it is, therefore, consistent with both the Governor's policy document and HUD's 'recapture' initiative.

The following analysis maintains that HUD and the Housing Authority have failed to meet their statutory obligations to low-income people, and that Alaska housing policy is exclusionary and discriminates against Natives. While no figures on statewide housing need are available, a 1988 study conducted by the Department of Community and Regional Affairs (DCRA) estimated that

6,740 new housing units are needed to relieve overcrowding and replace inadequate housing in rural areas.⁷² With the high costs of rental public housing and a 21.5 per cent reduction in Alaska Native housing entitlements in FY 1988, the Housing Authority is only able to deliver 1450 new units each year.⁷³ Even if 6,740 houses were built to provide new housing for homes needing immediate replacement as well as shelter for the displaced third or fourth generations, "overcrowded conditions in rural Alaska would still be a problem."⁷⁴

Although public housing policies and programs are available to assist low and moderate-income Natives obtain shelter, all are explicitly premised on flawed market assumptions and, therefore, rendered ineffective in the northern context. It is not surprising that rental public housing programs in Alaska are premised on market assumptions since they are a part of an overall US housing policy which, according to Peter Marcuse (1990), is based on maximizing profits for private industry.⁷⁵

V.B ALASKA NATIVE PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMS

V.B.1 Indian Housing

In its basic structure, this program is similar to public housing in general, but with some token differences reflecting the special needs and conditions of Native- American communities. In Alaska, as in other states, local IHAs are empowered by tribal or state law to develop and operate Indian Housing Programs in accordance with HUD regulations.⁷⁶ As the state's primary contractor, the Housing Authority develops, owns, and operates the projects jointly with IHAs, financing them in part through the sale of tax-exempt obligations.⁷⁷ The Department, in co-operation with ASHA, "furnishes technical assistance in planning, developing, and managing the projects, and also gives financial assistance for development, operating subsidy, and modernization."⁷⁸

Under the Indian Housing Program, HUD pays debt service on capital costs of the project and provides operating subsidies to make up the difference between the rental income and the expenses of operating the housing project. All Indian Housing projects are owned by ASHA, with subsidies cost-shared on a 75 per cent federal and 25 per cent state basis. Although state and local housing authorities own, operate, and maintain their projects, they must follow the requirements established by HUD regarding tenant eligibility and rent payments. To be eligible for occupancy, low-income Alaska Natives must generally qualify under the following HUD guidelines: "(1) be at least 62 years of age; or (2) be disabled or handicapped; or (3) otherwise qualify as a family under HUD guidelines."⁷⁹

Applicants are eligible for entry into the program if their family income is 50 per cent or less of the area's median income, as adjusted for family size.⁸⁰ Tenants must cover all utility and maintenance costs, while rents are based on a rent-geared-to income scale and generally equal 30 per cent or less of the household's income. Authorized under Section 42 (USC 1437 *et seq*) of the US Housing Act, the objective of this program is "to provide affordable housing and related facilities for eligible lower-income Indians and Alaska Natives."⁸¹

According to HUD, this objective can be met through: "(1) preserving and improving the existing stock; (2) containing costs; (3) decentralizing decision-making and control; and (4) promoting long-term management improvements within the IHAs."⁸² An important element of the program is to involve Indians and Alaska Natives directly in the planning and management of Indian Housing. Despite the community-building potential of IHAs, the following analysis maintains that the program failed to increase the supply of "decent, safe, and sanitary" housing for Alaska Natives. The program also failed

to provide for effective Native participation in program planning and management.

Essentially, the Indian Housing Program is intended to promote an economic choice in favour of market housing when the rental rate paid by the tenant approaches the market rental rate. A major failing of the program is that the incomes of most non-market households (especially Alaska Natives) are far below this level. Although Indian Housing satisfies the basic shelter needs of many Alaska Natives, tenants have to pay an ever increasing rent until they can obtain private housing, something very few indigenous peoples can ever hope to afford.

There also exists several problems with the allocation of Indian Housing. While local IHAs possess discretionary powers, housing authorities must apply regulations set out by the Department, regulations developed for US public housing premised on two key principles: allocation according to need and rent-g geared-to income.⁸³ Based on prevailing Euro-American notions of the nuclear family, these regulations lack the flexibility necessary to determine Alaska Native housing eligibility. Determining Native family needs is a difficult process in an environment where household size is based on extended relationships and seasonal movements. The determination of "family" income is particularly difficult in cases where multi-generational households have a variety of income sources.⁸⁴

As the local delivery agent, IHAs have the potential to play a central role in all aspects of community development. With close ties to Native corporations, many IHAs are removed from tribal interests and, therefore, are often unaware of problems inside the Native community. The failure of IHAs to consult tenant opinion has led to poor housing management practices, and, consequently, the continuation of community problems. The poor

management of Indian Housing projects in Alaska also reflect larger national trends in public housing. The effectiveness of Alaskan IHAs, like Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) in the rest of the country, are constrained by restrictive HUD oversight and cutbacks to federal funding.⁸⁵ Because of steadily declining resources and their ties with Native corporations, it is not surprising that many IHAs are unable meet their objective of providing low-income Alaska Natives with decent, safe, and sanitary housing.

Inappropriate housing allocation criteria and ineffective IHAs discriminate against a Native way of life and undermine attempts at devolving decision-making to the local level. As a result, there are very few community-based housing options available to Alaska Natives in need of decent and affordable shelter. While private accommodation exists in larger urban centres, they are generally accessible to wealthier non-Natives since most Alaska Natives are unable to afford the high costs of market housing.⁸⁶ Lacking any viable housing options, most Alaska Natives are forced to live in public housing projects. Devoid of meaningful provisions for social and income-mixing, exclusionary state housing policies and programs have led to the conditions in which people are polarized based on income and tenure.

V.B.2 Mutual Help Homeownership Opportunity Program

Authorized under Section 42 (USC 1437) of the US Housing Act, Mutual Help program costs are shared on a 75 per cent federal and 25 per cent state basis, with IHAs taking responsibility for housing delivery. Available only to Indians and Alaska Natives, participants initially lease homes owned by the local housing authority and gradually build equity in the homes they occupy. Under a lease-purchase arrangement, participants have the opportunity to accumulate equity credits and to eventually acquire ownership of their homes.⁸⁷

Under the 'self-help' component of the program, participating households must contribute either the site, building materials, labour and/or cash to offset program construction costs. Organized in small groups of six to ten households, participants undertake to build a substantial portion of the houses for all the families in the group, with technical assistance and supervision provided by the IHA.⁸⁸ Upon completion, a participating household is required to pay utilities and maintenance costs, and to make a monthly payment to the IHA. The payment "includes an administration charge that covers IHA program administration, house insurance, and payment in lieu of property taxes, as well as a contribution to the family's equity account."⁸⁹

The total monthly payment is equal to the IHA administrative charge or 30 per cent of the household income, whichever is greater. Therefore, the amount contributed to the equity account is the difference between 30 per cent of household income and the administrative charge.⁹⁰ While many low-income Natives cannot contribute to their equity account, ownership is nonetheless transferred to the household after 25 years if it has paid utility costs and the administrative service charge during the period. If the participant fails to cover these costs, the IHA may convert the Mutual Help homebuyer agreement into the rental program.⁹¹

The objective of the program is "to provide affordable housing and related facilities for eligible lower-income Indians and Alaska Natives."⁹² The following analysis maintains, however, that the program failed to increase the supply of affordable housing for low-income Natives. While the Mutual Help program provides an homeownership option, it excludes those who are unable to invest in or maintain their housing. Therefore, the program is really not an option for low and moderate-income Alaska Native households, which in most regions represents a large proportion of the statewide population. By

promoting the 'virtues' of homeownership to a wealthier class of the population, the program excludes many others in need of shelter and polarizes people based on income and tenure.

The problems of housing accessibility are compounded by the fact that Mutual Help is based on market assumptions which serve to make it inefficient in a non-market context. With mortgages subsidized, participants must pay the cost of utilities and maintenance as well as a 30 per cent of income mortgage payment. Mutual Housing in non-market communities has no more value to the household than a rental unit, as there is little resale potential because there is no demand for the unit. In addition, there exists a cultural aspect to the problem. Since there is little if any Native out-migration, Alaska Natives view their housing as basic shelter, not as a commodity to be bought and sold on the market place. Alaska Natives maintain that investment in housing is social and the value is simply that of shelter. This cultural aspect coupled with the non-market environment makes the concept of investment in northern housing almost meaningless.

Despite the inherent limitations of Mutual Help housing, it is currently the predominant program operated by Alaskan IHAs. In order to qualify for the program, applicants must not be in rental arrears and must satisfy local housing authorities that they have a suitable site, the skills to build a house or the cash to hire someone else who does. Many Indian Housing clients are effectively excluded from Mutual Help as inequities built into rental public housing automatically places lower-income people in high risk of arrears. In addition, those that lack the skills or ability to construct a house or the cash to hire a building contractor are also ineligible for Mutual Help assistance. Of concern to housing authorities is the high rate of housing arrears, especially in remote or rural communities where other living costs are high and family income is low.

This is partly due to the affordability problems created through payments of utility costs, but is also the result of other responsibilities, including maintenance, imposed through the provision of homeownership to very low-income households.

The emphasis on homeownership in Alaskan public housing reflects an irreversible trend in overall US housing policy. A major factor shaping this trend, according to Michael Stegman (1990), is the goal of self-sufficiency through homeownership.⁹³ Given expression by recent HUD initiatives, the Homeownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere (HOPE) bill, if enacted, would "give occupants of HUD-assisted housing, especially those in public housing, the opportunity to buy their units."⁹⁴ A possible consequence of the HOPE Act is that housing authorities could bypass low-income households (primarily Alaska Natives) on their waiting lists who cannot qualify for homeownership in favour of higher-income households further down on the list who can qualify to buy. In converting all rental Mutual Housing to private tenure, the HOPE Act would increase socio-tenurial polarization by reducing the stock of decent, safe, and sanitary housing for low and moderate-income Natives in Alaska.

VI. HOUSING PROBLEMS IN NORTHERN USSR

VI.A THE POPULATION, DEMOGRAPHIC, AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF NATIVES IN NORTHERN USSR

There are many special features of the northern setting that should be taken into account when formulating public housing policies and programs for urban, rural, and remote Siberian settlements. In many cases, however, senior housing officials perceive the Soviet North as just another part of the Russian heartland, and expect national housing policies to apply equally in the northern context. The northern USSR is not a mere extension of the rest of the country,

and policies that fail to consider this would ignore critical aspects of housing delivery. Despite the uniqueness of the Soviet North, USSR housing policies and programs are transposed to Siberian settlements without consideration of important social, economic, and cultural differences. The following analysis maintains that the reluctance of senior housing officials to consider local factors when developing policy has led to the failure of housing policies and programs in northern USSR.

Population and demographic characteristics and inadequate public housing combine to create a situation in which many Natives experience housing problems. As the USSR's most sparsely populated republic, the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) contains several of the fastest growing administrative areas in the country.⁹⁵ While the republic's population increased by a mere seven per cent in 1989, census data indicate that the most notable growth occurred in West Siberia and the Far East.⁹⁶ From 1979 to 1989, for instance, the populations of Tyumen' Oblast' and Yakutskaya ASSR increased by 63 and 29 per cent respectively, combined with a 58 per cent increase in the Native population (See Table 3).⁹⁷

TABLE 3. RATE OF POPULATION CHANGE FOR SELECTED NATIVES IN NORTHERN USSR FROM 1979 TO JANUARY 1989

People	Population January 1989 census ('000)	% increase/ decrease since 1979
Komi	345.0	+5.5
Yakuty	382.3	+16.5
Karely (Karelians)	131.4	-4.6
Nentsy (Samoyeds)	34.7	+15.7
Evenki (Tungus)	30.2	+7.9
Khanty (Ostyaks)	22.5	+7.1
Chukchi	15.2	+8.6
Eveny (Lamuts)	17.2	+43.0
Nanaytsy (Golds)	12.1	+15.2
Mansi (Voguls)	8.6	+13.2
Koryaki	9.2	+16.5
Dolgany	6.9	+35.0
Nivkhi (Gilyaks)	4.7	+6.8
Sel'kupy (Ostyak Samoyeds)	3.6	0
Ul'chi (Ol'chi)	3.2	+23.0
Saamy (Lapps)	1.9	0
Udegeytsy	2	+21.0
Eskimosy (Inuit)	1.7	+13.0
Chuvantsy	1.5	
Itel'meny (Kamchadals)	2.5	+79.0
Orochi	0.9	-25.0
Kety (Yenisey Ostyaks)	1.1	0
Yukagiry	1.1	+37.0
Nganasany (Tavgi Samoyeds)	1.3	+44.0
Tofalary (Karagas)	0.7	
Aleuty	0.7	+40.0
Negidal'tsy	0.6	+17.0
Entsy	0.2	
Oroki	0.2	
TOTAL	1042.9	+9.6
Whole of USSR	286700	+9.3

Adapted from: Terence E. Armstrong, "Northern peoples of the USSR, 1989," *Polar Record*, Vol. 26, No. 159 (October 1990), p. 316.

In the past, the Native percentage of the total population in these two areas have steadily declined because of high levels of Slavic in-migration, especially in the industrialized and petroleum-rich Tyumen' Oblast.⁹⁸ With a projected down-turn in the Siberian economy, non-Native in-migration should decrease and the proportion of the Native population should again increase.

The constant growth in household formation occurred at approximately the same time that remaining Native peoples moved from smaller settlements and villages to large urban centres such as Novi Urengoi and Yakutsk. Not all Natives who have migrated from rural and remote settlements are involved in the socialist economy of urban centres, but they have taken up residence to access important social services such as health and education. As the Siberian Native population continues to grow at a steady rate, greater strain will be put on the resources available to shelter urban and rural Natives.

These historic trends have important implications for people experiencing acute housing need, particularly when combined with the young demographic profile of Siberia's population. In 1987, for example, 58 per cent of all Siberians were under 25 years of age, compared with 40.6 per cent of the USSR population.⁹⁹ Statistics also show that Native peoples are somewhat younger, on average, than the Slavic population. In 1986, for example, 59 per cent of Natives, compared with 47 per cent of non-Natives, were under 25 years of age.¹⁰⁰

Remote areas of northern USSR, especially those settlements where the population is largely Native in origin, have an even younger profile. According to Soviet statistics, it is not unusual for these areas to have over 45 per cent of their population under 19 years of age.¹⁰¹ Recent census data indicate that the Native population of Tyumen' Oblast' and Yakutskaya ASSR are entering a

period of intensive growth. Assuming present trends continue, there will be additional demand for northern housing in the early-1990s.

VI.B HOUSING AFFORDABILITY PROBLEMS AND THE NORTHERN USSR HOUSING MARKET

While recent efforts at privatizing and marketizing socialism have strengthened private homeownership (*lichnaya sobstvennost'*) and rental market housing in the USSR, this tenure form is generally accessible to the Russian elite.¹⁰² In rural and remote northern USSR, for instance, a mismatch between incomes and expenses makes it difficult for many lower income Natives to obtain market rental housing or private housing. Lower or irregular incomes in a setting of high housing costs would likely discourage investment in rental market housing as rents would exceed the maximum level allowable under socialist law. At the same time, there will be little if any individual investment in private housing because of the high costs associated with construction in rural and remote northern areas.¹⁰³

Despite locational guidelines and limits on the number of private dwellings an individual may own, there is a growing housing market in northern USSR.¹⁰⁴ As a marketable commodity, rental market housing, especially in northern urban centres, is expensive and typically beyond the ability of most lower income Natives to afford. The high costs of northern construction and a nascent black market in rental housing puts rent levels well beyond the income of the average individual. Accessible primarily to wealthier non-Natives, rental market housing is exclusionary, and polarizes people based on income, tenure, and housing conditions.

While private market housing is an increasingly viable tenure form in many northern urban centres, it is virtually impossible for Natives with lower incomes to cover the costs associated with homeownership. Without

permanent employment or other sources of income, lower income Natives find it difficult to meet their basic needs, let alone the prohibitively high costs of housing construction and dwelling maintenance. As a consequence of a mismatch between housing costs and Native income, as well as inappropriate levels of state financing, indigenous peoples are effectively precluded from private homeownership.

VI.C HOUSING ADEQUACY AND SUITABILITY PROBLEMS

While there are few housing affordability problems in the Soviet North, relative to the NWT and Alaska, many Natives in rural and remote settlements, and, to a lesser extent in urban centres, suffer from severe adequacy problems. For Abel Aganbegyan and many other Siberianists, inadequate housing constitutes the worst social problem facing Native peoples in northern USSR.¹⁰⁵ Available literature supports Aganbegyan's contention. Throughout the entire Soviet North, living standards are much lower for Natives than for the Slavic population; in fact, their living conditions compare unfavourably with all other nationalities and ethnic groups in the USSR. In late 1988 the highly respectable journal Kommunist carried a powerful article by two northern specialists which criticized the entire government approach to northern Native populations. Included in Alexander Pika and Boris Prokhorov's critique were some shocking statistics on the housing adequacy problem in northern Native settlements.

Most rural settlements are without services: Only 3% of the housing is hooked up to gas, 0.4% has indoor plumbing, and 0.1% has central heating. There are no sewerage or public water-supply systems that meet sanitation and environmental requirements.¹⁰⁶

In addition to adequacy problems, housing is extremely limited in Native settlements, with an average living space of three to four square meters per capita.¹⁰⁷ This amount is well below the Leninist sanitary norm of nine square meters of living space *per capita*; 13.5 for the Tyumen' Oblast' and 54.6 for the

RSFSR as a whole.¹⁰⁸ The average number of Natives per room in rural and remote settlements was 4.80, far above the accepted norm of 1.0.¹⁰⁹

Overcrowding is particularly severe in the Yamalo-Nenets and Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrugs of Western Siberia, and outlying areas of Yakutskaya ASSR.

VII. PUBLIC SECTOR HOUSING IN NORTHERN USSR, NEEDS, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS: 1980-1990

VII.A MORE POWER TO THE LOCAL SOVIETS?

Serious housing adequacy and suitability problems in the Soviet North require substantial levels of state intervention. As northern USSR's key housing suppliers, *Gosgrazhdanstroi* and its regional agencies, as well as the local soviets are mandated to provide housing under Article 44 of the Soviet Constitution. Article 44 recognizes that its citizens have a right to housing.

This right is ensured by the development and upkeep of state and socially-owned housing; by assistance for cooperative and individual home building; by fair distribution, under public control, of the housing that becomes available through fulfillment of the program of building well-appointed dwellings, and by low rents and low charges for utility services.¹¹⁰

In keeping with Article 44 and democratic reforms now occurring under glasnost, Gosgrazhdanstroi authorities are continuing to seek ways of empowering their clients toward greater self-determination and local control. The Housing in the Year 2000 Program adopted by the party during the XXVIIth CPSU conference is potentially a major step in that direction. In addition to providing each family with housing in ten years, Gosgrazhdanstroi will undertake to devolve greater decision-making (delivery and management of housing) to the community level.¹¹¹

The aims of the national housing program are consistent with the North 2005 Program, which seeks to develop high quality northern housing and social infrastructure, and improve living and working conditions in co-operation with the northern nationalities.¹¹² As with other major socio-economic programs in

the Soviet Union, these initiatives are norm-driven, over-ambitious, and lack an effective vehicle for implementation and evaluation. According to Boris Yeltsin (1989), president of the RSFSR and Chairman of the USSR Soviet Socialist Committee for Construction and Architecture, these programs are "more of a slogan and appeal than a program based on precise calculation."¹¹³

The following analysis maintains that Gosgrazhdanstroi and its agencies have failed to meet their constitutional obligations to people in need of shelter, and that Soviet housing policy is exclusionary and discriminates against northern Natives. Although no statistics on total northern housing need are available, RSFSR data indicate that 25,000 new dwellings are needed to reduce overcrowding and replace inadequate shelter in rural and remote areas.¹¹⁴ With the high costs of northern housing and the harsh social effects of *perestroika* or economic restructuring, it is doubtful whether any conventional program can meet the growing demand for decent Native housing.

The state of housing in northern USSR, as in the rest of the country, is largely the result of historical factors which led to the distinction between local soviet and departmental public housing. This distinction is regarded as no longer operative by housing officials, who argue that all state housing stock should be transferred to the local soviets. In reality, however, a smooth transfer of tenure is hindered by a conflict between the two state sectors for possession of a set of property rights.¹¹⁵

Such narrow departmentalism has important implications for the production and delivery of northern housing, especially when sectoral interests are at stake. Economic organizations, aside from those servicing the local economy, are part of a production network contributing to the national economy, and, therefore, their interests are not always compatible with local interests.¹¹⁶ As a result, housing and social amenities were frequently built

according to the 'residual principle,' where "plants and combines were put up, but they were not provided with the appropriate social infrastructure."¹¹⁷

Since few resources are devoted to the production and delivery of departmental housing, additional demands for housing are made upon the local soviets. With few resources and bounded authority, the local soviets are powerless to increase the supply of housing.¹¹⁸ The general shortage and low-quality of Native housing undermines the aims of Soviet housing policy, which advocates the equalization of social and regional disparities in housing conditions.¹¹⁹ The presence of inequalities in northern housing, moreover, challenges a citizen's constitutional right of equal access to housing and social amenities in a socialist society.

VII.B NATIVE PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMS

VII.B.1 Municipal Public Housing

This program represents the primary form of housing for Natives in the Soviet North. In northern RSFSR, as in other republics, Gosgrazhdanstroi and the local soviets are empowered by all-union and/or republican decrees as well as Article 44 of the Soviet Constitution, to develop and operate municipal public housing. As northern USSR's primary contractor, Gosgrazhdanstroi and the local soviets are responsible for the delivery, allocation, and management and maintenance of municipal public housing, financing dwelling units through direct state subsidies.¹²⁰ Gosgrazhdanstroi, through its regional agencies, provide the local soviets with technical assistance and housing construction expertise in project development, as well as financial assistance for modernization.

While the local soviets own, operate, and maintain their housing projects, they must follow the rules set down by Gosgrazhdanstroi regarding housing allocation and tenant eligibility. In accordance with state and republican

decrees and Gosgrazhdanstroi's rules, municipal public housing is administered by the executive of the local soviet (*gorispolkom*) whose mandate is to improve the quality of life for people living within their jurisdiction. The jurisdiction of soviets is municipally and regionally-defined, and includes unemployed people, senior citizens, war veterans, the handicapped, and Native peoples.¹²¹

Local authorities allocate housing according to need, which is determined by various criteria "including adequacy of existing accommodation, length of time on the [waiting] list, size of family, the existence of handicap or disability."¹²² Tenants are required to cover all utility and maintenance costs, while rents are based on a rent-geared-to income scale and generally equal three to four per cent of the household's income.¹²³ Another key element of the program is to involve tenants directly in the planning and management of municipal public housing. Despite low public housing rents, the following analysis argues that the program failed to increase the stock of housing for Natives, and also failed to provide for effective Native participation in housing issues at the local soviet level.

There are several drawbacks with the allocation of municipal public housing in northern Native communities. While the "administrative allocation [of housing] is open to corruption through the bribery of housing officials," much deeper structural and cross-cultural problems exist in the northern context.¹²⁴ Although the local soviets possess some discretionary powers, they must apply rules mandated from above, rules developed for nationwide public housing based on two key principles: allocation according to need and rent-geared-to-income. Premised on a dominant Slavic conception of the nuclear family, these rules lack the requisite flexibility to adequately assess Native housing eligibility. Assessing Native family need is a complicated process, especially in a setting where household size is based on extended families and

seasonal or nomadic movements. The assessment of family income is particularly difficult in instances where multi-member households have a range of formal and informal income sources.¹²⁵

As the local government and primary delivery agent, soviets have the potential to play an important role in all aspects of northern community development. The reality is that indigenous peoples are consistently underrepresented at the soviet level, and their representatives are co-opted by an elitist political-administrative structure alien to the Native way of life. Removed from tribal interests, the local or village soviets are often unaware of the housing problems inside the Native community and develop policies without informing the residents. The failure of the local soviets to consult resident opinion has led to unacceptable housing management practices, and, therefore, the persistence of chronic social and economic problems.

Although several aspects of the housing problem are unique to a northern setting, the poor management of municipal public housing tends to mirror nationwide trends. The effectiveness of northern local soviets, like their counterparts throughout the country, are hindered by restrictive state rules and massive economic restructuring at the local level. Because of dwindling resources, institutionalized powerlessness, and ineffectiveness in the Native setting, it is not surprising that the local soviets are unable to meet their statutory obligation of providing Natives with decent housing.

Inappropriate housing allocation criteria and ineffective local soviets discriminate against a Native way of life, and hinder any genuine attempts at devolving decision-making to the community level. With few locally-based housing options, many Natives are compelled to live in inadequate, overcrowded, neglected, and underfinanced municipal public housing. Lacking effective solutions to remedy the situation, exclusionary state housing policies

have led to the circumstances in which people are polarized based on tenure and housing conditions.

VIII. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC SECTOR HOUSING IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, ALASKA, AND NORTHERN USSR: 1980-1990

The comparison of Native housing needs in the NWT, Alaska, and northern USSR communities, and a critical examination of the public housing sector illustrate several interesting similarities and differences between northern regions. A common theme in the literatures is that most senior government officials view northern regions as mere appendages of a much larger whole. These mistaken assumptions often shape housing policies and programs which are, in turn, expected to make equal sense in the northern context. Despite the uniqueness of northern regions, housing policies and programs are often transposed to northern communities with little regard for important structural and cultural differences. Without taking local conditions into account in policy-making, it is not surprising that housing policies and programs have failed to meet their intended objectives.

While these regions are sparsely populated, their respective populations are among the fastest growing nationwide, with Natives accounting for a significant share of the increase. Although the absolute number of indigenous peoples increased in Alaska and northern USSR, the Native percentage of the total population has steadily declined because of high levels of non-Native immigration. With a down-turn in the Alaskan and Siberian economies, overall immigration should decrease and the proportion of the Native population should again increase. The steady growth in household formation has occurred at approximately the same time that many Natives in the NWT and northern USSR are migrating from rural villages to urban centres. While a similar geographic

shift has occurred in Alaska, it did not come at the expense of villages. A primary reason for this is the consistently high Native birthrates in village Alaska, which, combined with steady migration to urban centres, will result in greater statewide housing demand in the 1990s.

Available data indicates that a majority of Natives who have migrated from rural and remote settlements are not participating in the formal economy of urban centres and, therefore, are experiencing severe housing affordability problems. Affordability problems are particularly severe for urban Natives in the NWT, and, to a comparatively greater degree in urban Alaska, where rent levels in the private sector are prohibitively high. Native housing demand in all three regions will increase rapidly given the young demographic profile of the Native population relative to the non-Native population. The sharp increases in rural Native birthrates means that future demand for housing will come primarily from outlying areas, except in northern USSR where the Native population is comparatively more urbanized.

Many Natives in the NWT and Alaska, and, to a much lesser extent in northern USSR, have difficulties obtaining decent and affordable housing because of an underdeveloped regional economy which results in fewer long-term jobs and much higher seasonal employment. These factors reduce overall income as well as monthly income stability, and, in turn, diminishes the ability of Natives to pay for the costs of housing. The gap between incomes and expenses do not allow Native families to pay a portion of market rent for accommodation or maintain their housing. Lower or unstable incomes in an environment of high housing costs means that there will be very little investment in market rental housing or private accommodation by the private sector as few can afford the high costs of market housing.

In addition to housing affordability problems, Natives in all three regions face serious adequacy and suitability problems. These problems are particularly severe for Native peoples living in rural areas where housing adequacy and suitability levels consistently fall below accepted national standards. Many dwellings in rural and remote communities are dilapidated and require major repair, and also lack basic services such as sewer, water, and heating. Overcrowding conditions appear to be the worst in rural Alaska and northern USSR, where the average number of Natives per room have reached highs of 5.3 and 4.8 respectively.

There have been numerous attempts by the three northern housing agencies to reduce Native housing affordability, adequacy, and suitability problems. The most promising approach to date involves the concept of devolution of decision-making capabilities to the local level, or shifting control of housing to the community as a whole. While such an approach has the potential to strengthen Native self-determination and ultimately address housing problems, little if any power has actually been transferred to the local level. In the face of growing Native housing demand, all three housing agencies have failed to meet their statutory obligations to low and moderate-income people, and have developed exclusionary housing policies that discriminate against Natives.

Premised on market assumptions, the Public and Indian Housing programs are intended to promote an economic choice in favour of market housing when the rental rate paid by the tenant approaches the market rental rate. Given that Native incomes are far below this level, many must find a way to pay an ever increasing rent until they can obtain private housing, something which few Natives can ever afford. Other problems with northern public housing include the transposition of non-Native rules and regulations to

traditional Native lifestyles; the general ineffectiveness of local housing agencies; and the commoditization of subsidized dwellings.

These factors discriminate against a Native way of life and undermine attempts at devolving decision-making to the local level. Consequently, there are very few community-based housing options available to Natives in need of decent and affordable shelter. While private accommodation exists in larger urban centres in the NWT and Alaska, and, to a lesser extent in northern USSR, they are generally accessible to wealthier non-Natives since most indigenous peoples are unable to afford the high costs of market housing. Lacking any viable housing options, most Natives must live in inadequate public housing. Without effective provisions for social and income-mixing, exclusionary housing policies and programs have led to the conditions in which people are polarized based on income, tenure, and housing conditions. Given widespread problems of housing affordability, adequacy, and suitability in the public sector, the following chapter examines the potential of co-operative housing in northern environments.

Endnotes

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26. See Peter Dahl, "High Demand, Low Supply," *Arctic Circle* Vol. 1, No. 1 (July/August 1990), p. 31.
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Chapter VI

I. CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING AS AN ALTERNATIVE TENURE IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, ALASKA, AND NORTHERN USSR: 1980-1990

This chapter maintains that co-operative housing is a socially-equitable and efficient way of providing low and moderate-income Natives in the NWT, Alaska, and northern USSR with decent and affordable housing.¹ The period from 1980 to 1990 is analyzed as it provides a necessary context in which to assess the operation of co-operative housing, and to draw comparisons with an ineffective public and private sector. Northern housing co-ops are examined for their ability to supply low and moderate-income Natives with decent and affordable housing, as well as for their ability to reduce problems associated with management and maintenance. The management and maintenance of co-operative housing is emphasized in this chapter since these factors usually determine the successful operation of all housing in northern regions. This chapter maintains that co-operative housing is well-suited to northern communities as it addresses cultural and structural problems commonly associated with other tenure forms.

Given the failure of major tenures to meet the shelter needs of low and moderate-income Natives, co-operatives offer an alternative to those who are unable to afford market rental housing, ineligible for company or government accommodation or sheltered in overcrowded public or local soviet housing. At the same time, co-operatives have the potential to increase security of tenure as well as the stock of decent and affordable housing, and to minimize cultural cleavages and socio-tenurial polarization through social and income-mixing. Co-operatives also has the potential to address Native housing needs in such a

way as to reduce dependencies on housing agencies by shifting control of housing to the community as a whole.

Despite the empowering qualities of co-operative housing, this tenure has made relatively few inroads into northern communities still dependent on traditional housing policies and programs. The objective of this chapter, therefore, is to account for the consistent underperformance of co-operative housing, and to assess its potential in a northern setting. In addition to problems of implementation and affordability, the following analysis maintains that privatism and inertia in northern housing policy, as well as dependency on public and private sector housing have impeded the wider development of co-operatives. This chapter concludes with a comparative analysis of co-operative housing, and identifies several common constraints to its development in northern regions.

II. CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

II.A AN INTRODUCTION

A non-profit, continuing housing co-operative is an alternative tenure form developed for the purpose of providing its members with decent and affordable housing. Co-operative housing in the NWT, as in the rest of Canada, is based on a "non-profit and non-equity form of ownership combined with democratic self-management."² Assisted by community-based resource groups, the co-operative, as a legal entity, owns the project and is represented by a board of directors democratically elected from the membership. Each member has a vote and may occupy their unit as long as they observe certain rules, which they have an equal voice in setting. While members of a co-op do not own the units they reside in, they pay a monthly housing charge set by the

membership and, in some cases, contribute share capital which is returned when they move out of their dwelling units.

Federal assistance in the form of capital or operating subsidies enable co-operatives to charge their low-income members a fixed proportion (approximately 30 per cent) of their income. With geared-to-income housing charges, co-operatives accommodate a range of people from "those living on public welfare and the working poor, to moderate-income households who need only shallow subsidies."³ When co-op members leave, they receive no financial compensation, other than their original share purchase, and they are unable to influence the selection of replacement members.⁴ Control of the co-operative resides exclusively with the members of the project. Consequently, all members are expected to volunteer some time to the day-to-day management and maintenance of the co-op. To that end, the board of directors appoints members to serve on various committees or, in the case of larger co-operatives, hires a property management firm to maintain the building. The board of directors, through the membership committee, is also responsible for interviewing co-op applicants and maintaining a waiting list.

In addition to member participation, great emphasis is placed on member participation, as well as strict adherence to the Rochdale Principles: (1) open and voluntary membership; (2) democratic control; (3) limited rate of return on capital; (4) earnings or profits from business belong to the members; (5) the necessity of education; and (6) co-operatives must co-operate with one another.⁵ Based on these principles, co-operative housing represents a unique tenure option.

It is neither individually owned housing nor is it government owned and managed housing. Co-ops are within the public domain, like public housing, yet in practical and legal terms, they are owned by the people that live in them.⁶

Largely because of its non-profit and democratic nature, co-operative housing is able to avoid or minimize problems associated with private and public sector housing in northern communities. Despite the promise of co-operative housing, "the third sector has been very slow to develop in the north."⁷ Only four housing co-operatives exist in the NWT: the Borealis and Inukshuk Housing Co-operatives in Yellowknife; as well as the Hillside Housing Co-operative in Iqaluit and the Garden City Housing Co-operative in Fort Smith.⁸ In 1990, these co-ops accounted for less than 0.1 per cent of all housing in the NWT, far below the national average of 0.6 per cent.⁹

What factors contribute to the underperformance of co-operative housing in the NWT? Based on a review of the literature, three key factors are found to have impeded the wider development of co-operatives. First, the delivery of a co-op housing project requires the co-operation and co-ordination of many implementors; the co-op, their consultants, the contractor, housing officials, and planning authorities, to name but a few. Such collaboration is far more difficult to achieve when a co-op is located in a northern community.

For example, with the project in Frobisher Bay [Iqaluit], the consultants were located in Edmonton and Yellowknife, the Contractor was from Ottawa with a branch office in Frobisher Bay [Iqaluit], CMHC's office was in Yellowknife, and the mortgage company was in Edmonton. In addition, the materials and supplies had to be shipped from Montreal.¹⁰

The second constraint, which is related to the first, is the problem of affordability. With high transportation and labour costs, co-ops in the NWT are approximately 40 per cent more expensive than co-op housing in southern Canada. Without additional subsidies and housing allowance, most co-op members could not afford the housing charges.¹¹ While problems of implementation and affordability also affect the delivery of private and public sector housing, these difficulties are minimized in co-ops because of a commitment to self-management and non-profit principles.

Third, there exists a tendency by senior housing officials, despite a commitment to devolving control of housing to the community level, to dismiss community-based housing options in favour of 'tried and trusted' public rental housing programs or market accommodation. Community-based housing programs such as co-operatives are considered, for the most part, either too expensive to operate or too cumbersome to administer.¹² By relying exclusively on the supply of public and private sector housing to shelter lower income Natives, the Housing Corporation has overlooked the wider social and economic benefits of co-operative housing.

II.B DECENT AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR LOW AND MODERATE-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

Despite limitations in the northern environment, co-operative housing has the potential to address the NWT's housing affordability, adequacy, and suitability problems in a variety of ways. Since co-operative housing operates on a non-profit basis, co-ops in larger urban centres such as Yellowknife tend to be more affordable over time than comparable housing in the private sector. Affordability was enhanced under the previous co-operative housing program, when "initial housing charges were set to equal rents in the lower range of the uncontrolled private market, making co-operatives more affordable than other newly constructed buildings."¹³ While housing charges for older co-ops such as Borealis rose afterwards only to meet growing operating costs as well as a planned reduction in federal assistance, charges generally lagged behind rent levels in the private market after several years. Since most co-ops were developed under the old program, they are still guided by its terms and will continue to provide low and moderate-income people with decent and affordable housing on a long-term basis.¹⁴

Under the new co-operative program, however, housing charges are determined at the beginning of the project based on current market rates and are, consequently, higher than under the previous program. Despite higher costs, members of newer projects such as the Inukshuk housing co-op will continue to be protected from increases due to the profit motive. Members will also benefit from lower than market housing charges which tend to decline even further over time. Affordable housing is critical for Natives in tight urban rental markets such as Yellowknife and Iqaluit who are either on a long waiting list for public rental housing or unable to afford private rental accommodation.

As an alternative tenure, co-operative housing also has enormous potential in smaller communities where market housing is non-existent and public rental housing has failed to meet the shelter needs of low and moderate-income Natives. Unlike public rental housing, co-operatives have an incentive to control project operating costs which is critical in remote northern communities where housing costs are very high. With reduced operating costs, savings may be passed on to members in the form of lower monthly housing charges.

The operational flexibility and security of tenure inherent in co-operative housing is well suited to an environment where Native income varies on a monthly basis. While co-operatives also administer a rent-geared-to income scale, it is applied democratically by the members themselves in accordance with co-operative principles and local conditions. Unlike the tight restrictions and market assumptions that characterize public rental housing, the allocation of co-operative housing in the NWT is guided by social and developmental criteria. Given its focus on personal and community development, co-operative housing responds with greater sensitivity to the cultural, social, and economic needs of its Native members.

II.C THE MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING IN NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

Most low and moderate-income people are attracted to housing co-operatives by their relative affordability, influence over management decisions, and a sense of empowerment they offer. Direct or self-management strengthens community bonds and encourages self-development because members must interact frequently with each other in the course of running the co-operative. In addition, direct management enables members to shape their environment and through the process of collective problem-solving, "gain a greater awareness and tolerance for the views, needs and lifestyles of others."¹⁵ Such awareness is essential in a setting where relations between Natives and non-Natives are sharply divided.

There are various limitations to self-management in housing co-operatives. For instance, in co-operatives that are volunteer-operated, the participation requirement can be very demanding. While most volunteers are enthusiastic, their energy soon runs out after performing routine tasks over and over again. Because members do not always contribute equal amounts of time, "work burdens are often distributed unequally, leading to resentment on the part of the more active members and an endless preoccupation with trying to get others to do more."¹⁶

Since co-operatives managed by volunteers are dependent on the skills of their members, the loss of several skilled or active members could adversely affect the operation of an entire project. Even larger co-operatives that are able to hire full time staff find it difficult to obtain property managers with the requisite mix of business and community development skills. This situation is particularly severe for Native co-operators in the NWT, as most skilled or active members are already overcommitted to other community projects.¹⁷

The undermaintenance of housing is a serious and pervasive problem in northern communities. Co-operatives are not exempt from maintenance problems; "in fact, because co-operative members benefit directly and immediately from reduced operating costs, they are sometimes unwilling to budget the necessary funds to maintain the property..."¹⁸ As a result, members may put up with low levels of maintenance, especially in common areas, to reduce their housing charges. While undermaintenance is partly an outcome of poor management, it should be noted that "the members' sense of ownership results in a lower incidence of vandalism and a greater readiness to improve unit interiors and private outdoor areas than is typically seen in either private or public rental developments."¹⁹

III. LIMITED-EQUITY CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING IN ALASKA

III.A AN INTRODUCTION

Housing co-operatives are intended to provide low and moderate-income people with decent and affordable housing, and as such, can be considered an option to public housing. Few co-operatives exist in Alaska, but the basic premise is similar to the Canadian model. Co-operative housing in Alaska, as in the rest of the US, is premised on a limited-equity form of ownership together with democratic self-management.²⁰ Aided by local resource groups, the co-operative corporation, as a legal entity, owns the project and is represented by a board of directors drawn from the membership. Each resident has an equal vote in electing the board which is responsible for managing the co-op and making all policy decisions.²¹ While members of a co-op are required to purchase shares in the project, the price is set quite low and the amount for which it can be sold when the household leaves the co-operative is limited to a

modest increase.²² In addition to purchasing shares, residents must also pay a monthly co-op charge set by the membership.

Non-profit, community-based financing combined with some federal and state assistance enable co-operatives to charge their low-income members approximately 30 per cent of their income.²³ Income groups are mixed so that higher cost units help balance the budget with lower cost units, making it possible to assist people who need deeper subsidies. When residents leave the co-op, they receive no financial compensation, other than their share purchase, and they are unable to effect the selection of new members. Since co-op members control the project, they are expected to "participate in the decision-making process regarding such issues as design, maintenance, operations, rules and regulations, and fees."²⁴

Relying on Rochdale principles, co-operatives have the potential to reduce problems commonly associated with private and public sector housing. Given the promise of this tenure form, there are at present only two co-operatives in Alaska, and both are located in Anchorage.²⁵ The low number of co-ops in Alaska reflects a lack of awareness of co-operative housing in the US as a whole, as well as deep ideological resistance among state housing officials, developers, and real estate agencies to using this tenure in the North. Several factors have hindered the wider development of northern housing co-operatives. First, the delivery of co-operative housing requires the coordination of numerous actors, ranging from the co-operative to various housing authorities. Such collaboration is difficult to achieve when a co-op is located in a northern community and the actors are located in distant southern centres. The second constraint to the wider development of Alaskan co-operatives is the problem of affordability. With high transportation and labour costs, co-operative housing in Alaska is significantly more expensive than

southern co-ops. Without community-based financing, the high cost of northern housing combined with declining federal subsidies and a reduction in housing vouchers could put co-operative housing beyond the reach of most lower-income people.

Finally, there exists a tendency by federal and state housing authorities to reject community-based housing options in favour of public and market rental housing. Lacking an understanding of co-operative concepts, housing authorities, developers, and private lending institutions view the delivery of co-operative housing as a risky undertaking, especially in northern communities.²⁶ Its emphasis on community empowerment combined with charges that co-operatives as such distort the housing market have intensified biases against co-operatives. Despite the ineffectiveness of public and private sector housing in Alaska, officials continue to rely on conventional programs to shelter low and moderate-income people. By promoting ineffective tenures instead of viable community-based alternatives such as co-ops, housing authorities are contributing to the housing crisis in Alaska.

III.B LIMITED-EQUITY HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES FOR LOW AND MODERATE-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS IN ALASKA

Despite the drawbacks of co-operatives in northern communities, co-operative housing has the potential to reduce Alaska's housing affordability, adequacy, and suitability problems in a number of ways. Premised on a limited-equity concept, co-ops in larger centres such as Anchorage tend to be more affordable over time than comparable housing in the private sector. Prior to federal cutbacks in 1980, housing charges were set to match rents in the lower range of the private market, making co-operative housing more affordable than other newly constructed projects. While housing charges for co-ops rose afterwards only to meet increasing operating costs and further

reductions in federal assistance, charges were lower than rent levels in the private market after several years.

Access to decent and affordable housing is critical for Natives in urban rental markets such as Anchorage and Fairbanks who are either on a long waiting list for rental public housing or unable to afford the high cost of market accommodation. While co-operative housing in Alaska, as in the rest of the country, is largely an urban phenomenon, "there appear to be no factors which would prevent it from implementation among lower income, lower-density rural areas of the United States."²⁷ Co-operative housing has great potential in rural and remote communities where market accommodation is non-existent and rental public housing has failed to meet the shelter needs of low and moderate-income Natives. In contrast to rental public housing, co-operatives have an incentive to contain project operating costs which is essential in communities where housing costs are high.²⁸

The security of tenure and operational flexibility of co-operative housing is ideally suited to a setting where Native income varies on a monthly basis. Although co-operatives apply a rent-geared-to-income formula, housing charges are set democratically by the residents in accordance with Rochdale principles and community standards. In contrast to the restrictions and market assumptions that underlie rental public housing, the allocation of co-operative housing in Alaska is guided by social rather than market criteria. With a focus on personal and community development, co-operative housing is more sensitive to the cultural, social, and economic needs of its Native residents.

III.C THE MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF LIMITED-EQUITY HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES IN ALASKA

In addition to decent and affordable housing, many low and moderate-income Natives are attracted to co-ops because of the sense of empowerment

they offer.²⁹ The self-management aspect of co-operative housing enables people to gain control over their lives and escape the dependence on housing authorities for accommodation. Self-management also consolidates community ties and facilitates self-development as residents must relate often with each other in the course of running the co-operative. Direct management allows residents to shape their environment and through the process of decision-making, acquire an awareness and greater tolerance for the lifestyles, attitudes, and values of others.

The successful self-management of co-operatives is limited by several constraints. In co-operatives that are run by volunteers, for example, the demand for participation can be very taxing. While most volunteers start out full of enthusiasm, people quickly tire after carrying out numerous routine tasks. Some residents contribute less time than others, leading to resentment on the part of the more active residents. It is vital, therefore, to make sure that residents thoroughly understand the co-operative concept and their own individual responsibilities.³⁰

Since co-operatives managed by volunteers are dependent on the skills of their residents, they are vulnerable to the loss of management expertise as their membership turns over.³¹ In smaller co-operatives, for example, the loss of a few skilled or active residents could impair the operation of a co-op. Even larger co-operatives that are able to retain staff find it difficult to obtain property managers with the mix of business and community development skills. A shortage of skilled volunteers has important implications for Alaskan co-ops since most Natives are already involved with many other community-related duties. As a result, resource groups and co-operative corporations are providing their volunteers and employees with management courses and training materials.³²

While co-operative housing has the potential to reduce maintenance costs, Alaskan co-ops are not immune from maintenance problems. Because residents benefit directly from reduced operating costs, they occasionally put up with low levels of maintenance to reduce their monthly housing charges. While poor management contributes to undermaintenance, especially in a northern context, most northern co-operatives have taken measures to reduce these problems, which include educating residents and staff in the importance of proper building maintenance.

IV. HOUSE-BUILDING CO-OPERATIVES IN NORTHERN USSR

IV.A AN INTRODUCTION

Co-operative housing in the Soviet Arctic, as in the rest of the USSR, is based on a collective form of ownership combined with socialist self-management. As such, "members of the co-operative do not acquire a 'right of personal property' to the co-operative, but a right, corresponding to their share, to the ownership and use of specific parts of the property."³³ Organized in part with the assistance of local soviets or enterprises, the co-operative, as a juridical person, owns the entire project and is represented by a general assembly elected from the membership. Every member has a vote in selecting the general assembly which is responsible for managing the project and developing regulations. Members of a co-op are required to buy shares in the project, and to pay a monthly charge set by the membership.

The state grants a loan to the co-op member, which amounts to 70 per cent of the dwelling cost. This loan is to be repaid to the state over a period of 25 years at a 0.5 per cent rate of yearly interest.³⁴ In addition, the state does not charge for the parcel of land made available for the construction of a co-operative, and shoulders the entire cost of providing infrastructure and

services.³⁵ Such favourable terms enable co-operatives to charge their low-income members about 3 to 4 per cent of their total income. The main criterion for offering a place in a co-operative is based on housing need, and preference is given to society's more disadvantaged members.³⁶

Members are prohibited from selling their units when they leave the co-operative, and receive no financial compensation, other than their original share purchase. Since co-op members control the project, they are expected to participate in all aspects of its day-to-day operation. To encourage member participation, the general assembly selects tenants to serve on various committees or, in some cases, hires a building contractor to maintain the project.³⁷

Since co-operatives emphasize member participation and follow Rochdale principles, they have the potential to minimize problems associated with local soviet housing. Despite the various benefits of co-operative housing, few co-ops exist in northern USSR.³⁸ There are three key factors responsible for the underperformance of this sector. First, the delivery of co-operative housing requires the collaboration of many state agencies and organizations, ranging from the co-operative to the local soviet. Such collaboration is difficult to achieve when a project is located in a northern community and state housing agencies are located west of the Urals. The second constraint, which is related to the first, is the problem of affordability. With the high cost of construction in the Soviet Arctic, northern co-ops are far more expensive to build and maintain than comparable housing in western USSR. The high cost of northern housing combined with declining state subsidies and the impending privatization of all housing in the USSR could put co-operatives beyond the reach of most lower-income people.³⁹

Third, there exists a tendency by Gosgrazhdanstroi, despite measures to accelerate the development of co-operatives and devolve control of housing to the local level, to dismiss community-based housing alternatives in favour of market and local soviet housing.⁴⁰ Lacking an understanding of co-operative housing, Gosgrazhdanstroi and the local soviets see the delivery of northern co-operatives as a risky and expensive proposition. Its Proudhonist overtones and the fact that co-operatives as such had been subjected to criticism by Marx means that a more conservative section of the party membership regard their growth with some suspicion. The legacy of suspicion continues, as the local soviets act obstructively towards co-operatives, especially in the transfer of property rights. Despite the ineffectiveness of local soviet and private sector housing in northern USSR, officials continue to depend on a failing state and exclusionary market housing sector to shelter people. By promoting ineffective tenures instead of community-based alternatives such as co-ops, state housing agencies and the local soviets are contributing to the housing problem in northern USSR.

IV.B HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES FOR LOW AND MODERATE-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS IN NORTHERN USSR

Given these constraints, co-operative housing has the potential to address northern USSR's housing adequacy and suitability problems in several ways. Available housing is essential for Natives in urban centres such as Yakutsk who are either on a long waiting list for soviet accommodation or sheltered in inadequate or crowded dwellings. In soviet housing, for instance, the state provides apartments on the basis of the number of members in the family minus one. Co-operatives, in contrast, grant their members flats on the principle of one room per member of the household, addressing the overcrowding problem in northern communities.⁴¹

Although co-operative housing in the Soviet North, as in the rest of the USSR, is essentially an urban occurrence, this sector also has potential in rural and remote communities. Unlike soviet housing, co-operatives have a built-in incentive to control project operating costs which is vital in remote communities where housing costs are high. In addition, co-operative housing is well suited to an environment where Native income varies on a monthly basis. While co-operatives also apply a rent-geared-to-income scale, housing charges are set by members according to Rochdale principles. Unlike the restrictions that govern soviet housing, the allocation of co-operative housing in northern USSR is guided by social and developmental criteria. By focussing on community development, co-operative housing is able to accommodate the special needs of its Native members.

IV.C THE MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES IN NORTHERN USSR

The self-management aspect of housing co-operatives enable people to gain control over their lives and escape the dependence on state agencies for shelter. Direct or self-management also strengthens community bonds and encourages self-development. Self-management allows members to develop their environment and through the process of group decision-making, develop an awareness and tolerance for the ways of others.⁴² Such awareness is particularly important in a setting where relations between Natives and Slavs are deeply strained.

There are several limitations to the self-management of co-operatives in northern communities. In projects that are operated by members, for instance, the participation requirement can be very demanding. Since members do not always contribute equal amounts of time, an unequal division of labour results, leading to resentment on the part of the more active members. This problem

is addressed by ensuring that members understand the co-operative concept and their own personal responsibilities.

Co-operatives managed by members are dependent on the skills of their residents and are, therefore, vulnerable to the loss of management expertise. In smaller co-operatives, for instance, the loss of several skilled or active residents could hinder the operation of a co-op. A shortage of skilled members has profound implications for northern co-ops since most Native leaders are involved with other community-related responsibilities. Given the lack of skilled volunteers, co-operatives are currently providing their members with training in housing management.

Another drawback with northern co-operatives is the problem of undermaintenance. Since members benefit from reduced operating costs, they are occasionally unwilling to allocate the funds necessary to properly maintain the building. As a result, members may put up with substandard levels of maintenance to reduce their housing charges. While poor management leads to undermaintenance, particularly in a northern setting, the members' commitment to the Rochdale principles results in a greater readiness to maintain the property. Most northern co-operatives have taken measures to address these problems, which include greater education and training for members and staff.

V. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, ALASKA, AND NORTHERN USSR: 1980-1990

A comparison of co-operative housing in the NWT, Alaska, and northern USSR illustrates several interesting facts about this tenure form. In all three regions, for instance, a housing co-operative is an alternative tenure form developed for the purpose of providing its members with decent and

affordable shelter. Co-operative housing is a unique tenure form because it provides shelter within a democratic and non-hierarchical environment. Such an environment is possible since the co-operative, as a legal entity, owns the project and is represented by a body democratically elected from the membership. Each member has a vote and is expected to participate in the decision-making process and contribute to the day-to-day operation of the co-operative. While members of a co-op do not own the units they live in, they pay a monthly housing charge set by the membership, and, with the exception of several NWT co-ops, contribute share capital which is returned when they move out of their dwelling units.

While housing co-operatives charge their low-income members a fixed proportion of their income, fees are set democratically by the membership in accordance with Rochdale principles. In addition, income groups are mixed so that higher cost units help balance the budget with lower cost units, enabling co-operatives to assist people who need deeper subsidies. As a result, co-operatives offer an alternative to those who are unable to afford market rental housing, ineligible for company or government accommodation or sheltered in overcrowded public or local soviet housing.

Despite the promise of co-operative housing, this sector has made relatively few inroads into northern communities. Three common factors are responsible for the consistent underperformance of this sector. First, the delivery of co-operative housing requires the collaboration of many implementors, ranging from the co-operative to housing agencies and organizations. Such collaboration is far more difficult to achieve when a co-op is located in a northern community.

The second constraint, which is related to the first, is the problem of affordability. Given the high cost of construction in the NWT, Alaska, and

northern USSR, northern co-ops are far more expensive to build and maintain than co-ops in southern or established locations. The affordability problem is not as severe in northern USSR since the state covers the cost of providing infrastructure and services to co-ops. Nevertheless, the high cost of northern housing combined with declining government subsidies and the impending privatization of public housing stock in Alaska and northern USSR, could put co-operatives beyond the reach of most lower income people.

Third, there exists a tendency by senior housing officials to reject community-based housing solutions in favour of public and private housing. Lacking an understanding of co-operative concepts, housing officials view the delivery of co-operative housing as a risky and expensive undertaking, especially in northern communities. These reservations are based, for different reasons, on an aversion to the co-operative concept in Alaska and northern USSR. Since Alaskan co-ops are not individually owned housing or government owned housing in the case of northern USSR, it is not surprising that this tenure form is inconsistent with capitalist and socialist housing systems. Despite the ineffectiveness of public and private housing in the NWT, Alaska, and northern USSR, housing officials continue to rely on conventional sectors to shelter low and moderate-income people.

Since co-operative housing operates on non-profit principles in the NWT, and on a limited-equity basis in Alaska, they tend to be more affordable over time than comparable housing in the private sector. Decent and affordable housing is vital for Natives in tight urban rental markets such as Anchorage and Yellowknife who are either on a long waiting list for public housing or unable to afford the high cost of market accommodation. While co-operatives are essentially an urban phenomenon, they also have great potential in rural and remote northern communities where market housing is non-existent and public

housing has failed to meet the shelter needs of low and moderate-income Natives. Unlike public or soviet housing, co-operatives have an incentive to control project operating costs which is essential in remote northern communities where housing costs are very high. With reduced operating costs, savings may be passed on to members in the form of lower monthly housing charges.

Co-operative housing is ideally suited to an environment where Native income varies on a monthly basis. While co-operatives administer a rent-geared-to-income formula, it is applied democratically by the members themselves in accordance with co-operative principles. Unlike the tight restrictions and market assumptions that characterize public housing in the NWT and Alaska, and, to a lesser extent in northern USSR, the allocation of co-operative housing is guided by social and developmental criteria. By focussing on personal and community development, co-operative housing responds with greater sensitivity to the cultural, social, and economic needs of its Native members.

The self-management aspect of co-operative housing enables members to shape their environment and through the process of collective problem-solving, develop and awareness and tolerance for the ways of others. Such an awareness is particularly important in a setting where relations between Natives and non-Natives are sharply divided. There are several limitations to the self-management of co-operatives in northern communities. For instance, in co-operatives that are run by volunteers, the participation requirement can be very high. Since co-operatives managed by volunteers are dependent on the skills of their residents, they are vulnerable to the loss of management expertise. A shortage of skilled or active co-op volunteers is compounded in the northern

context, where most Natives are involved with other community-related projects.

Another drawback with northern co-operatives is the problem of undermaintenance. Since members benefit from reduced operating costs, they are sometimes unwilling to allocate the funds required to maintain the property. Problems of poor management and undermaintenance are addressed by providing greater education and training opportunities for co-op members, and by ensuring that members understand the co-operative concept and their own personal responsibilities.

Endnotes

1. Alexander Laidlaw, in *Housing You Can Afford* (Toronto, 1977), notes that there are some forms of housing such as condominiums and equity co-operatives that share characteristics of non-profit co-operative housing. For a discussion of the differences between co-operatives and condominiums, see J. David Hulchanski, "The Evolution of Property Rights and Housing Tenure in PostWar Canada: Implications for Housing Policy," *Urban Law and Policy*, Vol. 9 (1988), p. 143. Many equity co-ops in the US have controlled the tendency to make a speculative profit, and to the extent that they have, may also be considered co-operative housing for the purposes of this thesis.
2. See Hulchanski, "Evolution of Property Rights," p. 143.
3. Joan Selby and Alexandra Wilson, *Canada's Housing Co-operatives: An Alternative Approach to Resolving Community Problems*, Research Paper #3 (Vancouver, 1988), pp. 15-16.
4. Hulchanski, "Evolution of Property Rights," pp. 143-144.
5. For a discussion of the Rochdale Principles, see Laidlaw, *Housing You Can Afford*, pp. 108-110.
6. Hulchanski, "Evolution of Property Rights," p. 144.
7. Lynn Hannley, "Housing Delivery in the North," in Tom Carter, ed., *Northern Housing: Needs, Policies and Programs*, Winter Communities Series #3 (Winnipeg: Institute of Urban Studies, 1987), pp. 108-110.
8. Debbie Seto, Personal letter to the author, 17 October 1990.
9. Mary Anne Burke, "Cooperative Housing: A Third Tenure Form," *Canadian Social Trends*, Vol. 16 (Spring 1990), p. 11.

10. See Hannley, "Housing Delivery in the North," p. 63.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66.
12. A.W. Kuhn, "PHA Management: Are the Critics Right," *Journal of Housing*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (March/April 1988), *passim*.
13. Selby and Wilson, *Canada's Housing Co-operatives*, p. 19.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
17. Jackie Wolfe, "Approaches to Planning in Native Canadian Communities: A Review and Commentary on Settlement Problems and the Effectiveness of Planning Practice," *Plan Canada*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (March 1989), pp. 70-71.
18. Selby and Wilson, *Canada's Housing Co-operatives*, p. 30.
19. *Ibid.*
20. See William Peterman, "Options to Conventional Public Housing Management," *Journal of Urban Affairs*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (1989), p. 58.
21. Scott B. Franklin, "Housing Co-operatives: a viable means of home ownership for low-income families," *Journal of Housing*, Vol. 38, No. 7 (July 1981), p. 392.
22. Peterman, "Options to Conventional Public Housing Management," p. 58.
23. See Susan Hobart, "The Reservoir: Developing One American Co-op," *Women and Environments*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Spring 1988), p. 16.
24. Thomas Martineau and Marc T. Smith, "Cooperative Housing as an Approach to Rural Housing Problems," *Policy Studies Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (December 1986), p. 340.
25. Sherrie Simmonds, Personal letter to the author, 24 September 1990.
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Chapter VII

I. PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, ALASKA, AND NORTHERN USSR: CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

This conclusion reviews the comparative analysis, and generates policy recommendations for promoting the wider development of co-operative housing. I have examined public, private, and co-operative housing for lower income Natives in the NWT, Alaska, and northern USSR, and assessed the effectiveness of public and private sector housing with an emphasis on housing affordability, adequacy, and suitability. Arguing that the public and private housing sector failed to meet the shelter needs of low and moderate-income Natives, I examined the potential of co-operative housing in northern environments. Despite the empowering qualities of co-operative housing, however, I found that this tenure has made relatively few inroads into northern communities still dependent on traditional housing policies and programs.

I also found that the comparative approach can be used to test policy and planning under new or evolving circumstances, and is an effective way of explaining processes, systems, and institutions. While the comparative approach has its limitations, it also has the potential to identify the opportunities for and constraints to housing policies and programs. By selectively examining other systems, comparative cross-national research broadens perspectives about policy and planning, and determines what is universal and what is particular. The fact that policy generalizations pertaining to other contexts were made and substantive conclusions drawn about housing issues, validates the comparative approach in planning research.

The historico-comparative approach explained systems which are the product of colonialization, and established the necessary context in which to

analyze contemporary housing issues. A comparison of factors that have shaped development in Canada's northern territories, Alaska, and Siberia from 1867 to 1967, indicated three stages of mercantile activity. At each stage, Natives were induced or forced to abandon their traditional ways to participate in the formal economy and live in northern urban centres. The more specialized economies of the Canadian North and Alaska meant that they were dominated by a few major towns, while the more varied economy of Siberia gave rise to several towns of prominent rank. In the Canadian and Russian experiences, representatives of the central government, rather than a class of independent townspeople, developed northern settlements. These towns all played a leading role in the colonization process, the establishment of which preceded the wider settlement of northern regions. The fact that towns were in the vanguard of settlement, dispels the myth that regions, such as the North, develop as a result of frontiering. A far more convincing argument is that northern regions were opened up by successive waves of urbanization and economic development.

Along with urbanization and rapid economic development, came a much slower realization of the marginalization of Native peoples, especially in the NWT and Alaska. Attempting to assist Natives, governments based in northern urban centres provided medical, educational and social services to people in need. The prospect of government services and wage employment in urban centres encouraged Natives to abandon their traditional ways to live in permanent settlements. With few prospects for employment and housing, Natives in Alaska, and, to a lesser degree in the NWT and northern USSR, became segregated in non-Native northern communities. Increasingly, indigenous peoples became locked into a dependent and exploitative relationship with non-Natives and their institutions.

Northern development and planning issues at the community and regional level were also explored, by setting them in the broader context of power relations, political and administrative structures, and the culture and values of northern areas. In the case of planned communities, all three systems borrowed extensively from common intellectual traditions, and transposed mainstream planning approaches to the northern environment. These approaches proved to be inadequate and offered very little guidance for planners endeavoring to shape northern communities. By focussing on the physical development of settlements, planners neglected the social and cultural needs of Natives. A recurring problem was that community plans were developed from above without consulting Native opinion. The failure of northern community planning is attributed to insensitive technocratic planning, and differences between Native and non-Natives regarding development and progress. Dichotomies of this type are caused in part by the pervasiveness of the market in Alaska and the NWT, and by an emphasis on rapid economic development in northern USSR.

In the mid-1960s the growth-centre approach was used as a way of reducing inter-regional disparities and developing laggard regions. Administered from above in a highly technocratic manner, the approach was of little use in spurring economically depressed areas, as few benefits remained in the region. Other approaches were attempted, but were replaced by policies that emphasized socially and environmentally expensive mega-project development. With few prospects for economic diversification, northern mega-projects contributed to dependent development. The subsequent polarization of northern regions into areas of development and underdevelopment, perpetuated extreme forms of poverty for northern societies most disadvantaged group, the Natives.

These dependencies underscore the inherent fragility of circumpolar Natives and northern regions, and are notable in the area of housing. The rapid growth of indigenous populations, underdeveloped northern economies and their implications for household income, as well as inadequate public and private sector housing combine to create a set of circumstances in which many Natives have serious housing problems. These range from affordability problems to inadequate housing and overcrowding, and are severe for Natives in rural and remote northern communities.

As the primary source of decent and affordable housing for low and moderate-income Natives in northern communities, public housing has failed to meet the increased demand for shelter. Underlying the northern housing crises is the tendency of senior officials to disregard local housing solutions and transpose national housing policies to structurally and culturally diverse northern communities. Such insensitivity in technocratic policy-making and program implementation have irritated problems of housing affordability, adequacy, and suitability. It also fuelled a sense of frustration and despair among the growing number of Natives who rely on public housing for their shelter needs.

Affordability problems are severe for urban Natives in the NWT, and even worse in urban Alaska, where rent levels in the private sector are prohibitively high. Many Natives in the NWT and Alaska, and, to a much lesser extent in northern USSR, have difficulties obtaining decent and affordable housing because of an underdeveloped regional economy which results in fewer long-term jobs and much higher seasonal employment. These factors reduce income as well as monthly income stability, and, in turn, diminishes the ability of Natives to pay for housing.

In addition to housing affordability problems, Natives in all three regions face serious adequacy and suitability problems. These problems are serious for Native peoples living in rural areas where housing adequacy and suitability levels consistently fall below accepted national standards. Many dwellings in rural and remote communities are dilapidated and require major repair, and also lack basic services such as sewer, water, and heating. Statistics indicate that overcrowding conditions appear to be the worst in rural Alaska and northern USSR, where the average number of Natives per room have reached highs of 5.3 and 4.8 respectively.

There have been numerous attempts to reduce Native housing problems in northern regions. The most promising approach to date involves the concept of devolution of decision-making capabilities to the local level, shifting control of housing to the community as a whole. While such an approach is praiseworthy, little if any power has actually been transferred to the local level. While the mechanisms of housing associations, IHAs, and the local soviets are different, they have all failed to contribute to the stock of decent and affordable housing. In the face of growing Native housing demand, housing agencies have failed to meet their statutory obligations to low and moderate-income people, and have developed exclusionary housing policies that discriminate against Natives.

Premised on market assumptions, for instance, public and Indian Housing programs are intended to promote an economic choice in favour of market housing when the rental rate paid by the tenant approaches the market rental rate. Given that Native incomes are far below this level, many must find a way to pay an ever increasing rent until they can obtain private housing, something which few Natives can ever afford. The housing problem is complicated by the fact that Natives view their housing as permanent shelter, not as a commodity

to be bought and sold. For Natives, the investment in housing is purely social and the value is simply that of shelter. Other problems with northern public housing include the transposition of non-Native standards to traditional Native lifestyles; the ineffectiveness of local housing agencies; and the impending privatization of subsidized housing.

These factors discriminate against a Native way of life and undermine attempts at devolving decision-making to the local level. As a result, there are few community-based housing options available to Natives in need of decent and affordable shelter. While private accommodation exists in larger urban centres in the NWT and Alaska, and, to a lesser extent in northern USSR, they are generally accessible to wealthier non-Natives since most indigenous peoples are unable to afford the high costs of market housing.

Housing co-operatives provide an alternative to those who are unable to afford expensive market rental housing, are ineligible for government or company accommodation or sheltered in overcrowded public or soviet housing. At the same time, co-operatives have the potential to increase security of tenure as well as the stock of decent and affordable housing, and to minimize cultural cleavages and socio-tenurial polarization through social and income-mixing. Co-operatives have the potential to address Native housing needs in such a way as to reduce dependencies on housing agencies and the housing market by shifting control of housing to the community as a whole.

Given the potential of housing co-operatives, however, very few co-ops exist in the NWT, Alaska, and northern USSR. Three principal factors are responsible for the consistent underperformance of northern co-operatives: (1) problems of implementation; (2) problems of affordability; and (3) dependency on conventional housing tenures and a poor understanding of co-operative concepts. In Alaska and northern USSR, there is an aversion to the co-operative

concept. Since Alaskan co-ops are not individually owned housing, or in northern USSR government owned housing, co-operatives are inconsistent with both capitalist and socialist housing systems. Despite the limitations of public and private sector housing in the NWT, Alaska, and northern USSR, housing officials continue to rely on conventional sectors to shelter low and moderate-income Natives. By promoting ineffective tenures instead of community-based alternatives such as co-ops, housing officials are contributing to the housing problem in northern regions.

Since co-operative housing operates on non-profit principles in the NWT, and on a limited-equity basis in Alaska, it tends to be more affordable over time than comparable housing in the private sector. Access to decent and affordable housing is critical for Natives in tight urban rental markets who are either on a long waiting list for public housing or unable to afford the high cost of market accommodation. While co-operatives are essentially an urban phenomenon, they also have great potential in rural and remote northern communities where market housing is non-existent and public housing has failed to meet the shelter needs of low and moderate-income Natives.

In addition, co-operatives are ideally suited to an environment where Native income varies on a monthly basis. While co-operatives administer a rent-geared-to-income scale, it is applied democratically by the members themselves in accordance with co-operative principles and local conditions. Unlike the tight restrictions and market assumptions that characterize public housing in the NWT and Alaska, and, to a lesser extent in northern USSR, the allocation of co-operative housing is guided by social and developmental criteria. By focussing on community and personal development, co-operative housing responds with greater sensitivity to the cultural, social, and economic needs of its Native members.

The self-management aspect of co-operative housing enables members to shape their environment and through the process of collective problem-solving, develop an awareness and tolerance for the ways of others. Such an awareness is particularly important in an environment where relations between Natives and non-Natives are deeply strained. While co-operatives are well suited to northern environments, they are also subject to problems of poor management and undermaintenance. Since co-operatives managed by volunteers are dependent on the skills of their residents, they are vulnerable to the loss of management expertise as their membership turns over. Another drawback with northern co-operatives is the problem of undermaintenance. While poor management contributes to undermaintenance, especially in a northern setting, a member's sense of ownership results in a greater willingness to improve the building. Problems of poor management and undermaintenance are addressed by providing greater education and training opportunities for co-op members, and by ensuring that members understand the co-operative concept and their own personal responsibilities.

I recommend eight policy options for addressing the NWT housing crisis, and increasing the stock of northern co-operatives for low and moderate-income Natives:

- (1) abolish housing associations and shift control of housing to traditional Native institutions;
- (2) promote building on previous successful experiences with co-ops based on Rochdale principles and other self-help community-based structures;
- (3) create a Native association of housing co-operators to facilitate the delivery of co-ops, and to educate the public about the benefits of this tenure in a northern environment;
- (4) address the poor management and undermaintenance of those housing co-operatives that require assistance by providing greater education and training for co-op members;

- (5) market assumptions underlying public housing policies and programs should be replaced with broader social and developmental goals;
- (6) the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation should resist all attempts at privatizing the stock of northern public housing;
- (7) there should be an emphasis on community-based, integrative and developmental approaches to planning that place the community in control, and incorporates differences in values and ways of thinking; and
- (8) hire planners (preferably Native) who would live and work in the community for more than a year in order to gain local knowledge and community acceptance.

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