



**The First Annual Report of the
The Inuit Qaujimajatuqanginnut (IQ) Task Force**

August 12, 2002



Inuit Qaujimajatuqanginnut Task Force
P.O. Box 1000, Station 800
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

The Honourable Jack Anawak
Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth
Government of Nunavut
Iqaluit, Nunavut.

Dear Mr. Anawak:

On behalf of the members of the Inuit Qaujimajatuqanginnut Task Force, we are pleased to submit our *First Annual Report*.

As you will see, the Nunavut Government is not succeeding in incorporating IQ into itself. For this reason we are recommending that government adopt a very different strategy. Rather than trying to introduce IQ into itself, we recommend that it follow the advice of the Bathurst Mandate and integrate itself into the Inuit Culture. We have spelled out the implications of this new and different strategy.

The IQ Task Force members were appointed in November 2000 and the current appointments have been allowed to lapse after only one year. This leaves us wondering how serious government is about integrating IQ into their programs and services. We recommend that the Nunavut Government recommit itself to this task. We have provided advice on how government might do this, including the recommendation that Government establish a permanent IQ Council to assist it in its efforts and monitor results.

We pledge our on-going support.

On behalf of IQ Task Force,

Louis Tapardjuk, Co-Chair

Simon Awa, Co-Chair

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the *First Annual Report* of the Inuit Qaujimajatuqanginnut (IQ) Task Force.

The Government of Nunavut appointed the IQ Task Force members in November 2001. Our mandate is to make recommendations to the Government on how to incorporate IQ to meet its Bathurst Mandate.

We met four times in 2001. Our major work was trying to determine the extent to which GN departments were incorporating the principles of IQ into their day-to-day activities. Were they succeeding? Were they failing? If so, why?

We discovered that, although most departments are involved in cultural-related and language-related activities that we applaud, they are generally failing to incorporate IQ in a significant way into their departments. They are not sure what IQ is or how to incorporate it into the day-to-day workings of their departments. They are so busy setting up service systems in a relatively new government that IQ is not high on the priority list. And, they tell us they lack adequate resources.

Are these difficulties simply start-up problems that require more time, more energy, and more resources? Or is there a basic underlying problem?

We think there is a basic underlying problem. It is addressed in the following question.

Should the Nunavut Government try to incorporate the Inuit Culture into itself?

or...

Should the Nunavut Government incorporate itself into the Inuit Culture?

We think the Nunavut Government should incorporate itself into the Inuit Culture.

This requires a radical shift in government's present approach. It means redefining the relationship between the Government of Nunavut and the Inuit Culture and re-thinking the role of IQ in this process.

We begin this report by briefly describing our work with departments over the past fifteen months. Then we define the concept of IQ. From there we provide an analysis of the Nunavut Public Government. As we shall see, it is fashioned after a model "borrowed" from the Government of the Northwest Territories and other public governments. This is an alien model with its own institutional

culture—a culture that impedes the integration of IQ into its service delivery systems. Therefore the government must incorporate itself into the Inuit Culture.

We then describe a cultural chasm that presently exists between the present institutional culture of the Government of Nunavut and the Inuit Culture. We recommend building a “cultural land-bridge” over this chasm. It would be founded on the bedrock of primary relationships within Inuit Culture. The foundation on government side would be the development of a new Inuit Corporate Culture. The land-bridge itself would link government services to the primary relationship needs in the Inuit Culture: the relationship to the land, to the family, to one’s individual spirit, and to one’s organizations. This would require a Service Review to re-align the services.

Next, we recommend the development of a permanent, “senate-like” ***IQ Council*** that would be “arms-length” from government. It would help Cabinet, the Legislative Assembly and government departments integrate themselves into the Inuit Culture—and it would monitor and report on progress

Finally, we provide some specific recommendations on how the changes we are suggesting might be implemented.

1. OUR WORK

During 2001 we met four times: in January, April, October and November. Our major activity during the year was to meet with departments and determine the extent to which they were incorporating IQ into their day-to-day operations.

Departments told us they are making some efforts to become involved in cultural or language-related activities (meetings with elders, participating in community cultural events, providing some orientation for new employees, promoting the use of Inuktitut words in the workplace, and so forth.) But, for the most part, departments are not succeeding in incorporating IQ in a significant way into their internal operations. IQ is not becoming a significant force in directing or influencing the work of departments

There seem to be four reasons for this failure.

1. Departments are not sure what IQ is.
2. They are not sure how to incorporate IQ into their day to day activities
3. They are so busy setting up service systems in a new government that they have little time left over to address the issue of incorporating the principles IQ.
4. There is a lack of resources.

Departments expressed these concerns to us and we think their concerns are valid. All departments are working with limited resources and they are extremely busy trying to set up a new government. Given the pressing problems they are facing on a day-to-day basis, IQ is just not making it to the top of their priority list.

Nor have departments been receiving a great deal of direction from central government. For the most part departments have been left to themselves to try and figure out what IQ is and how it might be incorporated into the day-to-day workings of their department.

As we have listened to the concerns of departments, we have been asking ourselves some basic questions. Are these failures simply start-up problems requiring more time, energy and resources? Could they be solved by providing more money, or hiring more IQ Resource Coordinators, or providing more training for IQ Committees in departments, or developing a Government IQ Policy to provide clearer direction?

We don't think these failures are start-up problems. Nor are they problems that can be addressed simply by providing more resources, more staff, better training or even by a government policy. We think there is a more fundamental problem--one that has to do with government's basic approach.

The problem can be expressed in the following question.

Should the Nunavut Government try to incorporate the Inuit Culture into itself,

or...

Should the Nunavut Government incorporate itself into the Inuit Culture?

At present, the Nunavut Government is, through IQ, trying to incorporate the Inuit Culture into itself. We think the Nunavut Government should be trying to incorporate itself into the Inuit Culture.

We note that in the section discussing “Simplicity and Unity” the Bathurst Mandate states: “*Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit will provide **the context** in which we develop an open, responsive and accountable government.*” This statement suggests to us that the Inuit Culture is the context within which the Nunavut Government should find its new place.

But what’s happening is just the opposite. Departments seem to be trying to take individual elements of Inuit Culture and incorporate them into their activities. (A question that Inuit staff often hear from non-Inuit staff is, “What is the Inuit way of doing this?” or something like “Is there an Inuit financial or human resource system? ”) This approach—trying to break the culture down into discreet elements—turns the department into “the context” within which one “fits” discreet, cultural activities. In a sense this approach is a bit like trying to make a Nunavut school more “culturally relevant” by introducing an “Inuit Culture Course” into the curriculum along side Math and English. It can’t work and it won’t work.

In what follows we show why it won’t work. We will provide a brief description of IQ, then discuss the cultural aspects of public governments, then show what happens when the Nunavut Culture meets the Nunavut Government institutional culture.

2. THE NATURE OF I.Q.

Though we tend to think of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit almost exclusively as traditional knowledge, it is more properly defined as is “*The Inuit way of doing things: the past, present and future knowledge, experience and values of Inuit Society.*” This definition makes clear that it is the combining of the traditional knowledge, experience and values of Inuit society, along with the present Inuit knowledge, experience and values that prepare the way for future knowledge, experience and values.

IQ, in its traditional context, consists of six basic guiding principles:

- a) ***Pijitsirniq***. The concept of serving (a purpose or community) and providing for (family and/or community)
- b) ***Aajiqatigiingni***. The Inuit way of decision-making. The term refers to comparing views or taking counsel.
- c) ***Pilnimmaksarniq***. The passing on of knowledge and skills through observation, doing and practice.
- d) ***Piliriqatigiingniq***. The concept of collaborative working relationships or working together for a common purpose.
- e) ***Avatittinnik Kamattiarniq***. The concept of environmental stewardship.
- f) ***Qanuqtuurniq***. The concept of being resourceful to solve problems.¹

At first glance these principles would seem to be immediately convertible to similar principles within the existing public governments wherever we may find them. For example, *Pijitsirniq* seems to relate directly to “customer service”; *Piliriqatigiingniq* seems to be almost the same things as “working as a team.” However, when we try and make these direct applications, we do so by extracting the IQ principles from the cultural context that gives them their real meaning. The principles tend not to mean exactly the same thing in the culture we are injecting them into as the culture out of which we have taken them.

If we examine the IQ principles in their cultural context as a whole, we see that they are all concerned with *relationships*—those relationships that are essential to the Inuit culture. It is these relationships that create the context for the culture. They are the “glue” that holds the culture and the IQ principles together.

In the Inuit Culture there seem to be four primary relationships.

- a) The relationship of a people to their land, and by extension to their culture;
- b) The relationship to one’s family;
- c) The relationship of the individual to his or her own inner Spirit;
- d) The relationship to one’s social grouping (to one’s community or organization) or the relationship between social groupings.

Unlike the individual principles, these relationships do not have their counter parts in the narrow boundaries of government departments or even in the

¹ We are indebted to Jaypeetee Arnakak for the description of these terms and for his various articles explaining IQ. They have been very helpful in the preparation of this report.

government as a whole. Once we try and reduce them to their individual components, the relationships cease to exist as relationships.

And so it is that we cannot develop an Inuit government by taking the IQ principles, extracting them from their cultural context (life on the land) and forcing them into a new context (life within the Government of Nunavut). Because the Inuit Culture is much broader than the government, we must incorporate the government into the culture.

This becomes quite clear once we understand that public governments—all public governments—have their own cultural characteristics. When we try to incorporate Inuit IQ into the existing Nunavut Government we create a “culture clash.” And, as is usual in all culture clashes, the dominant culture dominates. The Inuit culture is forced to take on the shape of the dominant culture, rather than the other way round.

3. The Nunavut Government and the Public Government Culture

Dealing with Necessity

Nunavut was created because the Inuit wanted their own government—a truly *Inuit government*. They wanted a government that would: 1) meet their needs and, 2) do it in a way that reflected their culture, traditions and spirituality. But as their leaders set out to create such a government, they had to make a difficult choice.

On the one hand residents of Nunavut were facing major issues and had a number of immediate needs: for better housing and health care; for better education and training for their young people, for a better justice system, for the protection of their lands and wildlife, for the development of local economies.

On the other hand, starting from scratch to develop a truly representative and unique Inuit form of public government could be a very long process.

So, being quite practical, they did what they had to do. They “borrowed” a model of public government from the Northwest Territories. This model, originally designed by the federal government, is similar in many respects to the model of government used in Yukon and even in the provinces.

The Nunavut Legislature was modeled on the GNWT legislature. Some of the newly elected MLAs, including a number of those holding Ministerial portfolios, had previously served with the government of the Northwest Territories. The legislation for Nunavut was adopted—almost intact—from the GNWT.

Former GNWT civil servants designed the organizational structure for the new government. Almost all of the financial and management information systems have been transferred over from the GNWT. And some services were contracted back to the GNWT until the Government of Nunavut has time to develop its own service systems.

Finally, A significant number of the employees—especially those in the most senior management positions—transferred over from the GNWT or came from a background of work with the federal and provincial governments.

The decision to borrow a pre-existing model of public government allowed Nunavut leaders to begin addressing needs immediately and it also “bought them some time” to transform the borrowed model into an Inuit model of government. (Part of this transforming process is what this IQ Task Force is all about.) But, the transforming process is quite difficult—because, as we shall now see, the existing model has its own cultural values that are part of a dominant culture.

Public Government as a Culture.

Strictly speaking, a public government is not a culture.

A culture is the total body of traditions borne by a society and transmitted from generation to generation. It includes norms, values, and standards by which people act, view the world and give it meaning.

However, a public government contains many elements of a culture. So much so, that we use the term “institutional culture” to mean the values, systems, traditions, customs, expectations, and symbols that give an institution its unique meaning. Just as the Inuit Culture has a set of principles that reflect the values of the culture, so the borrowed public government has a set of principles that reflect the values of a democratic and capitalist society, many of them built into the *Canadian Constitution and Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. These become the “IQ” of the public government systems and, on an institutional level reflect the values of effectiveness, efficiency, economy, value for money, accountability, transparency, and so forth.

Though many of us tend to think of public governments as “culturally neutral” they are not neutral. Imbedded within them are the values of the dominant culture that developed the model of public government. To succeed within this government, one must understand, and be able to adapt to, the institutional culture and the rules that guide it.

Consider this. The Nunavut Government can hire a southern uni-lingual English-speaking civil servant, who has never seen the North, to fill a deputy minister position in a department, and that person will be fully functioning within a couple

of weeks. Why? Because that person is quite familiar with the institutional culture of a public government. He or she knows the institutional culture and rules—and has the required skills to work within this culture. But, the Nunavut Government cannot hire an intelligent, literate, uni-lingual Inuktitut speaking Inuit leader, who has lived in Nunavut all his or her life, to fill a deputy minister position and expect that person to function in their own government. Why? Because he or she doesn't know the rules and doesn't have the skills or training required within the institutional culture. There is a culture clash between the Inuit leader's culture and the Nunavut Government's institutional culture. Though some may see this example as an oversimplification, it does illustrate that, while the Inuit person may have significant skills and training, they are not the right kinds of skills and training required to survive and work effectively within the dominant institutional culture.

4. CULTURE CLASH

Comparing Cultures

We can appreciate why there is a culture clash of values by comparing the essential elements of the Inuit culture—especially before people moved in off the land—with the essential elements of the public government culture. The following chart illustrates some of these differences.

The Inuit Culture and the Institutional Culture of Public Government A Comparison

Essential Elements	Inuit Culture	Institutional Culture of Public Government
Language	Inuktitut	English
Organizational Structure	Simple--Flat	Hierarchical
Values:	Pijitsirnjiq; Aajiiqatigiingniq; Pilnimmaksarniq; Piliriqatigiiniq; Avatimik Kamattiarniq; Qanuqtuurunnarniq	Effective, efficient, economical, value for money, accountability customer service, etc.
Decision-Making	Guided by traditional leaders: consensus-based	Guided by elected representatives or senior public servants; "command and control"
Authority	Based on experience and respect of the community	Based on position in the hierarchy and credentials
Services	Provided in the context of the family and social structure: relationship-based	Provided by professional caregivers: client-based
Basic Approach	Holistic: things seen as inter-related.	Reductionist: divides things into individual parts
Learning	Experiential and Land-based	Learning in the school and classroom
Instructors	Elders, parents, community leaders	Classroom Teachers Professional Instructors
Healing	Provided by family members, peers and community specialists	Provided by doctors, nurses and professional care-givers
Economy	Domestic economy: land-based	Job Economy: Information-based
Spirituality	Land-based with indigenous spiritual leaders & more recently Christian denominations	No religious or spiritual affiliation; Separation of Church and State
Independence-Dependence	Relatively independent	Relatively dependent on government; "Wards of the State"

The Dominance of the Dominant Culture

When Inuit moved off the land into settlements in the 50s and 60s, we began to experience a culture clash between our own values and the values of the dominant culture and its institutions—schools, health care systems, justice systems, economic systems and so forth. So, we had to adapt our culture to the dominant culture, sometimes willingly, sometimes unwillingly. There is very little evidence that the dominant culture significantly adapted itself to the requirements of our Inuit Culture. On the contrary, it resisted what it saw as incursions from the Inuit Culture. (All indigenous cultures throughout the world have had to deal with this same problem.)

We can see the way in which dominant cultures tend to overwhelm less dominant cultures by looking at the chart on the preceding page. When cultures clash, the value systems, structures, and systems of the dominant Qallunaat culture tend to overwhelm the less dominant culture. In all cases the essential elements in the column “Institutional Culture of Public Government” tended to overwhelm the elements listed in the column “Inuit Culture.” Often this kind of domination brings with it a range of physical, psychological and social problems with which we are all familiar.

How can we guard against this problem of domination? Nunavummiut were concerned about this problem even before the creation of Nunavut. The following story illustrates these concerns as well as the response of the government.

At a meeting in Igloodik in 1998, elders and other delegates recommended establishing some kind of permanent “senate-like function” that would monitor the actions of the new government and ensure that it worked to reflect and promote Inuit culture and values.

Sixteen months later, the elders and other delegates at an IQ workshop in Niaqunnqnut were even more specific. They recommended establishing an IQ Monitoring Committee that would monitor departmental initiatives and “*would also monitor the work conducted by the Government of Nunavut Cabinet, Legislative Assembly, the RCMP and the Department of Justice Committees to ensure that all programs respect Inuit beliefs, values and traditions.*” (*Report from the September Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit Workshop, September 29-30, 1999*)

These recommendations represented a strong cultural expression of concern about the problem of dominance. The participants in both workshops recommended a monitoring group with a very broad mandate that had an “arms length” relationship with government. It is interesting to note government’s response.

The Nunavut Government set up the IQ Task Force. But it severely limited the scope of our mandate and then absorbed us into itself. We became a small working group within a single department—The Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth (CLEY). Our mandate is not clearly defined. But what is clear is that we will “Receive and Implement directions from the minister of CLEY.” In a word, rather than advising the government, we have no direct access to government. We are taking instructions from the Minister of a single department and seeking his approval for any work we might decide to do. Our existence as a group is quite tenuous. As the Terms of Reference notes, “The duration of the IQ task force is contingent upon CLEY’s annual Budget.” (See the Terms of Reference at the end of this report).

The Response of the government is a far cry from what the elders and participants of the workshops requested: a “senate-like group” that would monitor the actions of Cabinet and the Legislative Assembly.” But the response from government illustrates the point we have been making about culture clash and the influence of the dominating institutional culture.

By sighting this example we are not implying that government deliberately set out to subvert the intent of the elders and participants at the two workshops. We believe that the government, faced with limited resources, operated in good faith (influenced no doubt by the recommendation of the NSDC’s *Discussion Paper: Towards an Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) Policy for Nunavut* that a Task Force be set up under CLEY). But the fact that government responded in such a typical manner illustrates the point we have been making through this report: that we can’t fit the culture into the government; we must fit the government into the culture.

Government needs a new strategy. So how does it go about developing one?

5. BUILDING A CULTURAL LAND-BRIDGE BETWEEN CULTURES

At present there is a chasm—a cultural divide—separating the Inuit Culture on the one side from the Nunavut Government’s institutional culture on the other side. To get across this divide, we have to build a cultural land-bridge.

(For the purposes of this report, the analogy or image of building a land bridge is helpful. Among other things, it reinforces our fundamental belief that we as people, and our culture, are inseparable from the land.)

To create this land-bridge we must find the bedrock or foundation on the Inuit Culture side—the fundamental relationships in our culture. Then we must create a foundation on Nunavut Government side—a new Inuit Corporate Culture. Then we create the bridge itself by linking the fundamental relationships on the Inuit Culture side to the service systems on the Nunavut Governments side. Finally,

we put in place a new organizational structure with resources to help people find their way back and forth across the bridge.

In time, perhaps, as people move back and forth, the cultural chasm will disappear, the Nunavut Government will merge into the Inuit Culture, and the bridge will no longer be necessary.

A. The Bedrock Foundation in the Inuit Culture.

As we have seen above, the Inuit Culture rests upon four basic relationships. These are the bedrock foundation of the culture.

The Relationship with the Land.

In many respects this is the *primordial* relationship (the first relationship and the one from which the others flow). It is the thousands of years of living and surviving on the land that is the foundation of the Inuit culture.

In part, the principle of ***Avatittinnik Kamattiarniq*** refers to “environmental stewardship.” But, the concept goes well beyond the modern concept of environmental protection or land and wildlife management. Inuit Cosmology (our traditional stories of how the Earth and we as a people began and continue to develop) stresses an intimate relationship between people and animals. The human community is part of the greater earth or land community.

It is the Inuit experience with the land that is the source of Inuit learning, healing, nourishment, propagation and child rearing. It is the respectful relationship with the land and its species that is the core of traditional Inuit spirituality. It is the ability to survive on the land through an ability to improvise with what is at hand (***Qanuqtuurniq***) that is the source of all fulfillment and self-realization. It is what makes an Inuk and Inuk.

As we examine and recognize the importance of this relationship in Inuit Culture, we realize that the context for public government must go beyond the human community. It must find a way of recognizing the human community within the earth community. The Inuit understanding of this relationship seems to reflect what many aboriginal peoples in North America have adopted as their definition of community: “*An intimate relationship with all living things, both animate and inanimate.*”

The Relationship with One’s Family.

The family kinship model is fundamental to Inuit Culture. The family provides the environment within which children grow and develop, families prosper, marriages take place, elders are cared for, communities and coalitions are formed so the

group can survive. *Pijitsirniq* (or the concept of service) expresses the obligation and responsibility to the family and its survival—and by extension to other members of the community. It is one of the fundamental characteristics of the leader in Inuit society.

The Relationship with One's Own Inner Spirit

As the child grows into an adult in the family context, he or she must develop a strong sense of inner worth and personal identity. This sense of identity and inner spirit is fostered through *Pilnimmaksarniq*--the concept of skill and knowledge acquisition through learning, doing and practice. (What we would call today "capacity building.") Because of the lifestyle on the land in harsh conditions, the child must be able to adapt to continually changing situations, learn the art of discipline, and become prepared to take his or her rightful role in the family and community.

The Relationship with One's Own Social Grouping (the community or organization) and Between Social Groupings.

One of the traditional teachings of many aboriginal elders is that the community and its organizations will only be as strong as the culture; and the culture will only be as strong as the community and its organizations. In Inuit Culture this belief is articulated through the principles of *Piliriqatigiingiq* (collaborative relationships--working together for a common goal) and *Aajiqatigiingniq* (or the concept of consensus decision-making). Though these values are essential to many aspects of the culture, they seem to have a special significance to leadership.

In relating these principles of IQ to essential relationships, we wish to note that our divisions may be somewhat arbitrary. Both the relationships and the principles are integral to the culture as a whole. Together they form the bedrock foundation and the context for Inuit Culture.

B. The Foundation in the Government of Nunavut: An Inuit Corporate Culture

A corporate culture is the spirit, values and motivating forces that guide an organization and reflect its understanding of its role in society. It is usually formulated by those in charge of the organization—those at the top of the hierarchical structure.

At the present time the Nunavut Government has a corporate culture. It is guided by the values and principles that are part of the model and institutional culture it has inherited. But, as we have noted, it does not reflect the Inuit Culture that it is

serving. The challenge in building a cultural bridge is to create a new foundation for the cultural bridge by creating a new Inuit Corporate Culture.

The task of creating a new corporate culture rests first of all with Cabinet and the Legislative Assembly. They must define the corporate culture by determining how the Government of Nunavut can integrate itself into the Inuit Culture and reflect the relationships and values of that culture.

The first step is to reclaim the responsibility for defining the corporate culture from individual departments and making it a “*corporate task*.” The second step is to consult broadly with elders and other knowledgeable Nunavummiut outside government as well as with public servants inside government.

The responsibility for creating the new corporate culture rests also with senior management, particularly with deputy ministers. The traditional role of deputy ministers within public government is threefold: 1) to provide policy advice to the Minister, 2) to manage the department, and 3) to work cooperatively with Cabinet and with other deputy ministers to participate in and help government achieve its overall priorities. It is this latter role—a trans-departmental role—that has particular relevance to developing an Inuit Corporate Culture.

The task is a difficult one given the values, policies and systems inherent in the “borrowed model.” It is especially difficult for non-Inuit deputy ministers who have not grown up in the Inuit Culture. Their task is to become as familiar with the Inuit Culture as possible and to develop Inuit managers within their departments who will eventually replace them.

A particular useful development in creating a new, more reflective corporate culture are the current changes taking place in our understanding of organizations and what it requires to manage them.

For almost a century Western managers have been wed to the “machine model” of organizations. Organizations were thought to function like inanimate machines, with individual parts, many of them interchangeable. Following this perception, the primary function of management was to *control* organizations.

Recently, however, a new concept of organizations and management has been emerging. Based upon the New Cosmology and the New Science (quantum physics, complexity and chaos theory, the new insights of the earth sciences) and inspired by a new understanding of the nature of information, our concept of the nature of organizations is changing. We are coming to see them not as machines but as living organisms, with inherent forms of consciousness and a self-organizing capacity. They are guided by the same principles that guide the development of the universe, cultures, and the human-earth community.

This new awareness of the nature of organizations is having a significant impact on management science. It is leading to an awareness that what organizations really need is *order* and that much of this order (but not all) arises out of the self-organizing capability of the organization itself. The organization is more than the sum of inanimate, interchangeable parts. Like all organisms, it is concerned with its survival and is continually reading its environment to determine how it will develop.

This switch from the machine model to the living organism model seems particularly helpful in creating a new, more responsive corporate culture. This new consciousness explores the linkages and relationships between itself and the Inuit Culture. It tries to determine how government and the culture can develop together. It offers help in developing a foundation within government—and Inuit Corporate Culture—for the creation of a cultural land-bridge.

Once we have the foundations for the cultural land-bridge in place—the primary relationships on the Inuit Culture side and the Inuit Corporate Culture on the Nunavut government side-- we need to construct the bridge itself so people can move back and forth.

C. Building The Bridge: A Service Review

When engineers build a bridge, they start on both sides and work towards the middle. That's how we must construct our cultural land-bridge.

From the Inuit Culture Side must come an increased cultural awareness of independence and self-reliance. To quote the Bathurst Mandate... “As individuals we are each responsible for our own lives and responsible through our efforts and activities to provide for the needs of our families and communities.”

From the Nunavut Government side must come a revitalized service system that meets self-reliance half way. This requires a *Service Review*.

At the time of division from the Northwest Territories, most of our present services and service systems were already in place. We partially decentralized the delivery system to communities, but we didn't really change the services or the way we delivered them. Things are pretty much the same as they were before division.

But it was never our intention in creating the Nunavut Government to simply take over services. One of the key reasons for division was to allow us to design our own services, set our service priorities and provide services in a manner that reflects our culture and traditions. We haven't done this yet and, given the

dominating influence in the institutional culture of the “borrowed model,” the longer we delay, the more difficult the task will become.

Our efforts to create a specifically Inuit Public Government now require that we re-examine our services and our service systems. ***We must ensure that they not only meet the needs of people but they do it in a way that reflects and is responsive to our culture and traditions.***

The review must examine the services themselves, our service priorities and the ways we provide services. And in doing this we must always examine services from the focal point of Inuit Culture, its primary relationships and the principles of IQ.

In terms of the services themselves, there may be some services that we are quite happy with because they respond to residents needs in a culturally appropriate manner. Others may not. In this case we are either going to have to re-design the services or do away with them altogether.

In terms of service priorities, we suggest that a strong emphasis should be placed on services that support and sustain the primary relationships of our Culture:

- Language, culture and the land
- Strengthening the family
- Healing and community wellness
- Education and personal development
- Economic development

It is not by accident that these are also the services emphasized in the Bathurst Mandate—for it is the focal point of our mandate as a Task Force.

In terms of the way we provide services, the principles of IQ provide some guidance for service delivery. But, along with the primary relationships, they also provide a context for service delivery and for the management of service systems.

In addition to the review it is important for government to try and address the questions that came up during our work. What does an Inuit Public Government look like? Is there a specifically Inuit way of providing services? Specifically, in addition to language, how can we provide services in a culturally responsive manner? These questions are being raised by Inuit and non-Inuit staff alike. It is not enough to give staff the reports from IQ conferences and tell them to try and figure out how to make services culturally relevant. We must work with them, promote discussion and provide training.

We do not expect government to have ready-made answers to these questions. We do expect that government, through a Service Review, will promote the discussions that might lead to answers.

D. Helping Government and People Move Between Cultures: An IQ Council

The IQ Workshop in Igloolik recommended an IQ “Senate-like” organization to help integrate the Nunavut Government into the Nunavut Culture, and the Niaqunngnut IQ workshop recommended the establishment of a permanent IQ Monitoring Group. It would examine the activities of Cabinet, the Legislative Assembly, and government departments and agencies serving Nunavummiut. We now think it is time to combine these functions in a new ***IQ Council*** .

The mandate of the Committee would be to help integrate the Government of Nunavut into the Inuit Culture and to “Inuitize” the development and delivery of services. It would conduct or participate in reviews, monitor services, and provide advice to Cabinet and the Legislative Assembly.

Since it monitors the activities of the Cabinet, the Legislative Assembly, and government departments, it must be established at “arms-length” from government. We suggest that the group report to the Legislative Assembly.

Together the IQ Monitoring Committee members would have a knowledge of IQ on a traditional level as well as current expertise in the development of modern organizations and service delivery systems. The group should consist of a small group of elders and a few organizational/government specialists. Just as we need language people to serve as interpreters and translators at meetings, so we need organizational specialists who can translate the wisdom of the elders into the realities of day-to-day government operations.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

In this report we have described the various difficulties government is having incorporating IQ into its operations and we have outlined the need for a different approach. In discussing the problems, we are not unaware of the difficult challenge facing both the Nunavut Government and the people of Nunavut. Together we are trying to do something that no one has succeeded in doing before us. This becomes obvious to those of us who travel outside of Nunavut to other parts of Canada and to other countries. As we meet representatives of other indigenous groups around the world and of the public governments that are working with them, we are continually asked, “What’s happening in Nunavut?” Given where we started from many years ago when a few of our leaders first went down to Ottawa to begin negotiating with the federal government, we have

already accomplished a great deal. Our purpose in this report, then, is not to over-emphasize the problems—which are normal at this stage of our development—but to move on to the next stage.

We have suggested that the challenge for government is to integrate itself into the Inuit Culture. This undoubtedly raises the question, “How do we go about doing this.”

It is not our role to give definitive answers, for at this point there are no definitive answers. But we can make some recommendations that might serve as a starting point. These recommendations build upon the framework we developed in the last section.

BUILDING UPON THE PRIMARY RELATIONSHIPS THAT ARE THE FOUNDATION OF OUR CULTURE

1. ***Develop an oral history program, similar to the one in Igloolik, in all of our communities.*** We are quickly losing our elders—the last generation of elders that grew up on the land. This is the last generation that can teach us the values and principles of IQ that have guided our people for centuries. It is essential that we capture this knowledge for future generations. The best possible way to do this is develop oral history programs in all communities.
2. ***Formalize the teaching of the Inuktitut Language*** Our language is the vehicle that expresses our culture and allows us to share it with one another and with non-Inuit. If Inuktitut is truly to become the language of the workplace, we need to formalize the language program. We need to train more Inuktitut instructors. We need to develop a program that is based upon successful past teaching experiences—proved pedagogical techniques, relevant learning materials, and evaluations that enable us to monitor progress. We have in mind the formalized type of programs that the federal government has developed to teach French to Anglophones. While such a program may not have been completely successful, it will give us a better idea of how we might go about improving our own language program.
3. ***Develop a workplace literacy program in every workplace in both Inuktitut and English.*** Many of our employees have a limited education and do not have the skills they need to be successful in the workplace. Given the limited literacy and education levels, we believe that every workplace can become a learning centre for those who wish to, and need to, improve their skills.
4. ***Link job requirements to educational levels and skill requirements.*** While it is acceptable to bring under-qualified individuals into the workplace, it is only acceptable to do this if we ensure that employees have the opportunity for the training and skill development they need to be successful.

Requiring employees to perform at level beyond their competence only leads to frustration and staff turnover. Linking education and skill level to job requirements makes our expectations clear at the very beginning of employment—both to the employees and to their supervisors who must ensure the training.

CREATING A CORPORATE CULTURE

5. ***Complete the de-centralization of authority and resources to the community level.*** Though the Nunavut Government has taken the first steps towards decentralization, our government is still top-heavy. We must complete the process. Decentralization is not only necessary for the improving services, it is essential for the culturalization” of government and its services. Though a central bureaucracy can and must create the framework and environment, a living culture never flows down from the top of a centralized bureaucracy. It can only flow up from the bottom—from the community level. This is why full decentralization is so necessary.
6. ***Simplify the organizational structures at the community level.*** The Bathurst Mandate calls for “Simplicity and Unity.” But though some progress has been made at the community level by expanding the role of Hamlets, for the most part government has simply transferred the divisive, departmental service structure from the central level to the community level. In turn this structure seems to unnecessarily increase the number of community committees. Government must work with communities and with hamlets to make hamlets the focal point for service delivery. It must help them reduce the number of individual departmental structures and committees—and improve their coordinating capacity.
7. ***Provide cross-cultural training for all employees.*** Up to the present, cross-cultural training has meant providing non-Inuit staff with an increased awareness of the Inuit Culture. It has not meant helping all staff to become more aware of the institutional culture they are encountering when they begin work with the Nunavut Government. New staff who enter the public service for the first time are simply taught that “this is the way things work here.” Senior managers, especially non-Inuit managers are often completely unaware of the institutional culture within which they have learned to operate. Nor have they been sensitized as to how the institutional culture impacts upon the Inuit Culture—usually adversely. As a result they don’t know how to solve “culture problems” or find common ground between the two cultures. We need to provide cross-cultural training that will improve the cultural awareness of all employees.
8. ***Develop a formal mentoring program for all managers and supervisors.*** We have gathered the impression that the development of managers is a somewhat “hit and miss” affair. It depends more than anything else on the

interests and capabilities of individual supervisors and the availability of time. Often staff development seems to lose out to other priorities. Given the great importance of developing Inuit managers, we believe that there is need for a much more formal mentoring process. It should provide training for supervisors, be based upon realistic training plans and objectives, be time limited, and have built-in evaluation mechanisms. Supervisors should be held accountable for “bringing employees along,” and staff should be made aware that they are primarily accountable for their own development. A formal mentoring program, with appropriate support from the Department of Human Resources, seems to be the best way of developing Inuit managers.

9. **Conduct a review of all government legislation and policies.** As we have noted above, most of the present legislation and many of the policies have been inherited from the Government of the Northwest Territories. There is a need to review and change this legislation to make it more culturally relevant. We are aware that steps are presently being taken to review the Education Act and the Wildlife Act and that this review involves consultation with communities and stakeholder groups. While we see these reviews as a step in the right direction, we wish to provide a word of caution. Based upon our experience with similar reviews under the GNWT, we note that consultations often begin at the wrong stage. For example, we often ask communities questions like, “How can we improve the Education Act?” rather than taking a step backwards and asking, “What kind of learning do you want for your children and how can this learning best be developed—in the home, on the land, from elders, in the classroom?” Our consultations and our reviews of legislation and policies should proceed from the primary relationships that are central to our culture, not from the legislation and services themselves.
10. **Encourage and support the development of community-based informal systems of services.** When people are not satisfied with the services that are provided, or when they see a service need that government can’t or won’t meet, they develop their own services and service systems. Such services and systems have been developing for many years within our communities. We are thinking of such things as using elders as counselors and providing land food for elders; developing healing circles, AA-type programs, youth programs such as scouts and cadets or trips on the land with elders; the development of community committees to deal with specific issues—such as Community Justice Committees or food programs or toy exchanges. In some cases these informal services reflect traditional practices, in other cases they are new developments to deal with the realities of settlement life. Typically these programs and services rely upon volunteers or those who are paid small honorariums. Many such programs are run by local churches. Government should encourage and support such programs, but with a great deal of sensitivity. The strength and benefit of these programs is that they are informal and relationship-based, not “professional” in nature.

11. ***Develop a cultural strategy to help integrate the Nunavut Government into the Nunavut Culture.*** We seem to develop strategies for everything else—education, economic development, and health care—but not for the Inuit Culture. When we do focus our strategic interests on culture, it seems to be limited to a dimension of a tourism strategy. The suggestions and recommendation we have made in this report require a solid, long-term cultural strategy to “Inuitize” the Government of Nunavut. The development of such a strategy is fundamental to the development of an Inuit Corporate Culture.

AN IQ COUNCIL

12. ***Conduct research into best practices.*** As government works to integrate itself into the Inuit culture, some departments and agencies will be more successful than others. It is important that these successes—these “best practices”—be brought to the attention of other departments and agencies. In like manner, indigenous people around the world are struggling with dominant cultures to help their cultures and languages survive. Their successes can teach us valuable lessons and encourage us. Information about their struggles and successes are now available to us through the Internet. We must take advantage of the new opportunities that modern information technology provides us with.
13. ***Develop an evaluation system to help us monitor our progress.*** It is essential that we develop a system to help us monitor and evaluate our progress. At present we have no such system—so we have no way of knowing whether we are succeeding. And example: many public servants have been taking Inuktitut Language courses. But we don’t know whether these courses are achieving their goals. We cannot tell, in any objective way, whether we are succeeding in our efforts to make Inuktitut the language of the workplace—or even whether we are making small gains. Without evaluative tools, any efforts we do make will be treated with skepticism. This is especially true of the recommendations we have made in this report—developing community-based oral history projects, decentralizing authority and resources to communities, creating an Inuit Corporate Culture, simplifying organizational structures at the community level, and so forth. We need a formal evaluation system with standards, criteria, and reporting requirements.

CONCLUSION

In the early days of the Apollo Space Program—the American effort to put a man on the moon—a dispute arose among the engineers who designed the space ships and charted the flight path to the moon and the Astronauts who had to fly the space ships. The engineers wanted to control the flight path and insisted that the astronauts simply sit in the space ships, check the instruments from time to time, but take their directions from the experts on the ground in the Houston Control Centre. The astronauts disagreed. They insisted on having the ability to take over the controls and make mid-course corrections. The astronauts won the argument. On the way to the moon, the Apollo astronauts made many tiny 'mid-course corrections' that enabled them to land at an exact, predetermined spot. The corrections were small but because the moon was far away they made a big difference.

We are indebted to the organizational experts who helped design the Government of Nunavut. Unlike the Apollo engineers, it was never their intention to deprive us of the ability to control the future direction of our government. Nevertheless, as we have noted in this report, they provided us with a model of government that does not presently meet the cultural needs and aspirations of our people.

We need to regain control of our own destiny. We need to introduce a series of small but significant changes that will set our government on a new course and, in time, lead to the creation of a truly Inuit Public Government.

We pledge our on-going support and assistance.