Analysis of the RCMP Sled Dog Report

Qikiqtani Truth Commission

Thematic Reports and Special Studies

Published by the Qikiqtani Inuit Association

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Originally published in *Qikiqtani Truth Commission: Community Histories 1950–1975* by Qikiqtani Inuit Association, April 2013.

Dedication

This project is dedicated to the Inuit of the Qikiqtani Region. May our history never be forgotten and our voices be forever strong.

About This Report (2024 Edition)

This report was originally produced by the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) from reports drafted by the Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC) in 2010 and published by QIA in 2013. In 2024, QIA updated the reports by reinstating footnotes, correcting official place names, making minor corrections to grammar and syntax, correcting maps, and changing some images. The Inuktitut versions also added footnotes.

Foreword and Introduction texts from the 2013 edition are found at the end of the 2024 report to provide context about the work of the QTC.

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Executive Summary

Background

In March 2005, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development heard witnesses describe the killing of sled dogs in Nunavik and the Baffin Region between 1950 and 1970. These incidents, which became known as the "dog slaughter," occurred during the same period as the resettlement of Inuit into a few central communities.

The Standing Committee called for a public inquiry by a superior court judge "to get to the bottom of the matter." The Government of Canada did not set up the requested inquiry. Instead, it asked the RCMP to conduct a comprehensive review of its actions regarding sled dogs in the North between 1950 and 1970. The Force presented a brief report later in 2005, followed by a 26-page final report, titled *The RCMP and the Inuit Sled Dogs (Nunavut and Northern Quebec: 1950–1970)*, to the new government in 2006, and a much longer compilation of evidence and commentary produced later the same year.

Since that time, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) has acted on the need to understand and communicate a balanced account of what happened which includes an Inuit perspective. The QIA established its own inquiry—the Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC)—independent of government and with a broader mandate to study the whole range of government[i]-Inuit relations during this turbulent period. The QTC completed its collection of testimonies and the majority of its research in early 2010.

During a meeting between QTC Commissioner James Igloliorte and RCMP Commissioner William J.S. Elliott held in Ottawa on 4 February 2008, Commissioner Elliott asked the QTC to review and respond to the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*.

i This report uses the term "government" to include all the bodies that existed under Canadian federal legislation to serve and control people, mostly Inuit, in the Qikiqtani Region.

RCMP Sled Dogs Report (2006)

The report and compilation, referenced here as the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, exonerated RCMP members of criminal or administrative wrongdoing in the matter of killing Inuit sled dogs and, by extension, exonerated the federal government. The report addressed RCMP behaviour from a forensic, rather than historical perspective without examining the cultural practices and rules of Inuit society at the time. It focused on whether particular actions by RCMP members were sanctioned by legislation and concluded that the killings were legal. They also looked for but did not find patterns that might show that actions were directed toward forcing Inuit off the land and into settlements.

QTC historical research (2008–10)

Although the QTC mandate addresses a smaller geographic territory (only the Baffin Region[ii]) than is covered in the RCMP report, it calls for the use of a more complete methodology and inclusive social purpose that looks far beyond the issue of dog deaths to thoroughly investigate how other socio-economic trends, ill-formed government polices and practices also impacted Inuit at that time. It integrates Inuit concepts of justice (what is 'right', what is a 'wrong' and how should transgressions be addressed) into its analysis of the responses of Inuit to dog killings and other actions of RCMP officers.

In addition to extensive archival research and listening to approximately 350 individuals (Inuit, retired RCMP and DIAND staff, scholars and politicians), the QTC benefitted from generous access to RCMP records, including documents and administrative correspondence, gathered by the RCMP for its own report.

A SHARED HISTORY: INUIT AND RCMP IN THE BAFFIN REGION

From the 1920s into the late 1950s, the RCMP was the primary face of government in the Baffin Region. Officers had four customary roles: representing Canada for sovereignty purposes; enforcing laws; exercising oversight in relations between traders and Inuit; and patrolling by boat and dog team to provide basic services, keep track of people and report on game conditions. RCMP became knowledgeable about a region that previously only Inuit knew and controlled, thereby developing considerable understanding of Inuit culture and behaviour. They regularly visited many of the hundred or so *ilagiit nunagivaktangit* (camps) where Inuit lived while hunting. A large part of police work focused on making it possible for government to exercise control over the region while simultaneously encouraging Inuit to remain on the land with limited contact with traders and missionaries, and little need for government services.

Beginning in the 1950s, however, Inuit experienced tumultuous change in every aspect of their land use and annual routine. Police were also forced to adjust when new government agencies with radically new policies entered the domains of both Inuit life and police duties. At times these new civilian agencies enlisted the police to implement unpopular new measures, such as restrictions on hunting, removal of children to be educated and rounding people up for annual medical exams with the all-too-frequent consequence of removal to the south for treatment. These agencies competed with the police in settlements for authority and influence. By the 1970s, Inuit were living year-round in 13 government-created settlements instead of dozens of *ilagiit nunagivaktangit*; the Government of the Northwest Territories delivered most social services; and RCMP members spent most of their time providing conventional southern-style policing.

ii This report uses current geographical place names for most places.

One of the duties police accepted in the new state of affairs was to destroy sled dogs, which had become quite numerous in the settlements. Here some Inuit were less able to care for them and control them in traditional ways, because the practice of keeping dogs loose was riskier in the much larger settlements of people (and of dogs). Under pressure from non-Inuit, hundreds—perhaps thousands—of Inuit sled dogs were killed from the mid-1950s onwards, despite a confusing contrary policy of having the police immunize dogs against disease and even import dogs to replace others lost in a canine epidemic.

With no access to decision-making or decision-makers and limited access to local officials, Inuit drew a reasonable and logical connection between the killing of their sled dogs and the detrimental effects of centralization, namely the loss of their ability to move back to the land; increasing reliance on a cash economy; and the exclusive concentration of services in settlements. By 2005, Inuit were speaking openly and forcefully about their belief that the dogs—their main means of transportation—were shot by police under federal government orders to deprive Inuit of their mobility and autonomy and to tie them to settlements.

QTC RESPONSE TO THE RCMP SLED DOGS REPORT

The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* failed to fulfill the expectations of either the Standing Committee Report (March 2005) or the Minister's letter (28 April 2005). The Standing Committee—in a recommendation later endorsed by the Legislature of Nunavut – called for an inquiry to "get to the bottom of the matter." In the QTC's view, this meant more than merely confirming the killings and finding local causes and a legal excuse for them. Getting to "the bottom" would require exploring deeper reasons for the killings and the connections with other socio-economic trends and events, including policies, budgets and extreme weaknesses in the cross-cultural and other job-related training given to federal agents in the North. And if hundreds of Inuit witnesses were somehow mistaken about what they saw and remembered, as RCMP analysis concluded, getting to the bottom of the matter would have to include a thoughtful examination of relations between the community and its police. It would also have required an examination of the appropriateness of the law, its interpretation and implementation, and the customary practices of Inuit with respect to dogs. This would have allowed a fuller understanding of the experience of the Elders, the discomfort of police who were expected to shoot dogs and the consequences of the killings in the present day.

While both the RCMP and the QTC recognize that sled dogs did not pose a problem until non-Inuit began to settle in the Arctic, the RCMP report treated this qallunaat presence and settlement living as a "given" and therefore analyzed the killings as a law enforcement issue rather than as part of a process of accelerated and disruptive social change to the Inuit way of life. Much of its analysis was directed not at understanding how Inuit and Canadian society and governance worked in this era but, rather, toward discrediting Inuit memories and interpretations of how, why and by whom the dogs were killed at that time.

AREAS OF CONCERN

Interpreting the Killings

The RCMP Sled Dogs Report acknowledged that RCMP members and other persons in authority in the 1950s and 1960s killed hundreds and perhaps thousands of dogs, but it ignores Inuit knowledge and perspectives on these killings.

While the report carefully noted periods or episodes in which the RCMP were "dedicated to the cause of preserving the traditional Inuit semi-nomadic culture" including the use of dogs, its analysis sidestepped the impacts of the killings on Inuit at the time and since. It argued effectively that RCMP did not want to kill dogs and that the killings were never part of a "conspiracy" with the explicit motive of forcing Inuit to stop hunting and live in permanent settlements.

The QTC formed different views about the existence or absence of a "conspiracy." In place of a conspiracy, the QTC found a series of inter-connected government policies and laws put into effect and enforced by the RCMP, which quickly undermined traditional Inuit ways of living. When authorities in Ottawa revised the Territory's *Ordinance Respecting Dogs* in 1949–50, they effectively outlawed traditional Inuit ways of handling dogs, wherever this seemed to conflict with the needs or practices of a growing qallunaat population. The Ordinance was inextricably linked to other actions, laws and policies affecting Inuit, most of whom were drawn into settlements. The standard government policy was to assume Inuit must, at their own expense, accommodate newcomers' needs and wants. While the *Ordinance Respecting Dogs* was clear to those who enforced it, hunters understood it as illogical, unnecessary and also harmful; Inuit and dogs had existed together for uncounted generations without such restrictions being necessary.

The authors of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, like most other writers on the subject, appeared to accept that shooting of dogs by newcomers over more than a decade was a rational and justified activity, while the grief and resentment of the dog owners was unwarranted and worthy of criticism or at least anthropological study. In fact the considerations are not merely cultural or emotional, but also legal, to a degree not recognized in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report.* The legal implications stem from a consideration of Aboriginal and human rights. The Government of Canada failed in its obligations to Inuit when it placed restrictions on their use of dogs without involving Inuit directly in finding ways to make restrictions less onerous or in finding mutually acceptable solutions to real or perceived threats posed by dogs in their new surroundings.

RCMP Review Team and Inuit Complaints

Because the RCMP was in no position to conduct an independent inquiry, the Review Team did not receive the full trust and cooperation of most Inuit who lived through the 1950s and 1960s.

The team did receive information from a few Inuit, notably former special constables and their families. The report repeatedly deplored the fact that it received so little evidence from other Inuit. Instead of accepting the core truth in the Inuit reports of dog killings and looking for ways to understand the Inuit perspective, the RCMP Review Team set out to discredit individuals and their political organizations, although without directly accusing them of lying. Particularly negative statements were made in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* about the fact that most Inuit simply would not provide evidence to the police about the events they or their families suffered from a generation earlier. This was treated as *prima facie* evidence of political intimidation by Inuit leaders and organizations motivated by a desire for financial compensation.

Historic Inuit-RCMP Interactions

The interaction between Inuit and RCMP in the history of the Baffin Region is important to the history of both groups.

Both the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* and the research and testimony gathered by the QTC provided abundant evidence of the RCMP's important role in the Inuit economy in the years before centralization. In their focus on dogs, however, the authors of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* glossed over more central aspects of the relationship between RCMP and Inuit. Inuit constituted almost the whole permanent population of the Baffin Region throughout this period and the RCMP represented government authority. Serving the Inuit gave the RCMP a role that was essential to the Force's self-image as well as to Canada's claims to be effectively occupying the Arctic. On the long sled patrols that are part of RCMP lore, Inuit provided guiding services and hunted food for the police and their dog teams. New police recruits knew little or nothing about the North – Inuit helped them survive and learn. The police in return provided medical assistance and, albeit in paternalistic ways, delivered other social services. Less pleasant was the occasional use of police prestige and authority to direct Inuit behaviour, especially concerning the length of visits to the trading posts. Some police were known to act harshly, discriminately and unwisely in daily interactions in communities.

There were also relations between some RCMP members and Inuit women, which often resulted in offspring. The level of consent varied, depending on particular circumstances. At the end of their northern term, most officers returned south alone.

The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* did not examine the way inequality of power and cultural difference affected the dynamics of RCMP–Inuit interaction in the dispersed ilagiit nunagivaktangit, on the land, sea and ice, or around the trading establishments, either before or after centralized settlement became official policy. The statements of retired members underlined the bitterness many felt over the way other government agents took over many RCMP responsibilities after 1955. RCMP—Inuit interaction, both positive and negative, was relevant to the evolution of the settlements from qallunaat enclaves to present-day communities.

Sled Dogs History as Collective Memory

The RCMP Sled Dogs Report reads as an exercise by the Force to sustain or create a positive collective memory of the RCMP experience in the region, with a nostalgic focus on the specific duties and circumstances of the 1950s and 1960s.

The report focused on the time, energy and hardships required to bring the South into the North. The report ignored the more complicated story about the Force's role in Canadian appropriation of Inuit lands. Inuit, on the other hand, are still weighing—and being weighed down by—their memories of the inequalities, sacrifices, losses, shock and bewilderment at the sudden end in a few years to a way of life that evolved over centuries.

The problems of interpreting these overlapping histories relate not so much to law enforcement as to culture and memory, as well as to individuals' places in what continues to be a divided society. Unfortunately, the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* did nothing to try to reconcile these views and experiences of Nunavut history. The report also glossed over both government records and individuals' published statements before 1975 which expressed concern over the number and manner of the dog killings. The report wrongly interpreted the lengthy public reticence of Inuit on this issue as evidence of dishonesty, when shame, grief and other emotions connected with disempowering changes induced many Inuit to stay silent until quite recently about the loss of their dogs.

The report maintained a consistent scepticism toward the oral history of Inuit while neglecting to comment on inconsistencies and distortions within similar evidence provided by RCMP and other qallunaat witnesses. It relied mainly on the memories of police who were not stationed at the particular places where the most systematic killings are known to have taken place. If the testimony of Inuit whose dogs were killed did not contain specific details concerning time, place and name sufficient to support a possible criminal conviction, then the testimony was dismissed without regard for its inherent truth and value.

Public Records and Research Issues

The report fell below professional standards in its collection and identification of sources.

As an example, there are no supporting audio/visual tapes or signed statements for many interviews. Further, a more complete review of easily accessible published and public archival material would have illustrated the causes and long history of mistrust between Inuit and all government agents, mistrust in which the RCMP were inevitably embroiled even when they were not on the scene or were individually blameless in specific cases.

Prior to 1970, RCMP-generated documentation is sometimes the only written public record remaining about these communities, yet it appears that the great majority of these records are gone, destroyed along with routine paperwork. The *Report* provided an incoherent explanation of how so much potentially relevant documentation was destroyed.

Many kinds and sources of evidence would be needed to generate a more complete and balanced understanding of the role of the RCMP and others in the disruptions Inuit society underwent between 1950 and 1975. The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* shed some light and prompted the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, through the Qikiqtani Truth Commission, to add a great deal more. Nevertheless, the positive contributions of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Repor*t were undermined by a tone and spirit of scepticism and disrespect. This weakness began with the federal government's decision to encourage the Force to investigate its own role, and can be countered by increased efforts to share the task of inquiring into and explaining the Qikiqtani Region's mid–20th century past.

Introduction

This report is the Qikiqtani Truth Commission's review of a study completed in 2006 by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) titled: *The RCMP and the Inuit Sled Dogs (Nunavut and Northern Quebec: 1950–1970)*, hereafter cited as *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*. This review was requested by the Commissioner to help the Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC) meet its mandate to seek the truth surrounding the "dog slaughter," "relocations" and other decision making of governments up until 1980, and to document the effect of these events and decisions on Inuit culture, economy and way of life. The review is also a response to a request made by RCMP Commissioner William J.S. Elliott during a meeting with QTC Commissioner James Igliorte on 4 February 2008 that the QTC conduct a review of the report.

The RCMP prepared its *Sled Dogs Report* in response to serious complaints and disclosures that were made over several years by Inuit whose dogs were shot during the 1950s and 1960s, a volatile period in the history of both Nunavut and Nunavik. The well-documented shooting deaths of hundreds—perhaps thousands—of sled dogs occurred at the same time Inuit were moving from the land into centres where government, religious and commercial services were congregated. In the Baffin Region alone, more than 100 previously autonomous groups of Inuit living on the land gathered into settlements that currently number 13. With no access to decision-making or to decision makers, and limited access to local officials, Inuit drew a logical connection between the killing of dogs and the loss of their ability to move back to the land, an increasing reliance on a cash economy and the exclusive concentration of services in settlements. From the time of the shootings until the vocal complaints heard by Parliament in 2005, Inuit spoke openly and forcefully about their belief that dogs were shot by the police under federal government orders, with the intention of depriving Inuit of their mobility and tying them to the settlements.

Reading the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* itself indicates that the objectives of that study were narrowly focused on refuting the assertions of illegal behaviour by the police and thereby defending the reputation of the Force and its veterans. The QTC was particularly struck by a limitation that was explained by the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*'s principal author to the Qikiqtani Inuit Association's Executive Director in February 2006:

> *The RCMP is interested in obtaining only those statements that relate to possible unlawful killing of Inuit sled dogs by RCMP members. The RCMP review team has no mandate to investigate killing by non-RCMP personnel, nor is the review team interested in reviewing accounts of the killing of loose dogs that posed a potential or real public safety threat to communities and settlements, since that would have constituted destruction in accordance with the Dog Ordinance of the NWT."*[1]

By accepting this limitation, or having this limitation imposed on it, the RCMP Review Team adopted what we have termed a "forensic" approach to the many historical issues that provide a context, if not justification, for the killings. It is "forensic" in the sense of limiting the inquiry to apparent offences that could form the basis of charges against individuals, instead of evaluating the many incidents as examples of failures or misapplication of federal government policies that wronged Inuit.

Despite the limitations of this forensic approach, authors of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* did actually extend their reach to assert a general defence of the quality of services provided by RCMP in the North. Our analysis of their review examines the extent to which the evidence and process used to produce the report and its conclusions achieved the desired goals stated by the authors of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*. Our analysis also assesses how well the report met the goals set out by the Government of Canada. Our review also explains how alternative approaches would have been more successful, and more likely to promote reconciliation between parties who each believe they have been wronged.

Background

THE DOG SLAUGHTER AND ITS INQUIRIES

The intermittent shooting of dogs began at least as early as 1957 and was never a secret in the Baffin Region. Inuit at Iqaluit spoke candidly about their losses to anthropologist Toshio Yatsushiro, who published their words in a national magazine in 1962.[2] Local politician Bryan Pearson was vocal on the issue, sharing his thoughts with the mass-circulation *Star Weekly* in 1966 and again recounting the events from his seat in the Legislative Assembly in 1973.[3] By this time there were very few dog teams left, and the killings were not prominently discussed during the years when major events such as the Nunavut Land Claim and the creation of Nunavut were consuming public attention. Yet individuals guarded their memories.[4] By the 1990s, Canadian society was more tolerant of publicly exposing the past harm done by governments to individuals and groups. Accordingly, public discussion of Inuit grievances became more common. They bubbled to the surface in a public meeting in Iqaluit in February 1999. This meeting was called to build rapport between Inuit and the new RCMP "V" Division headquartered in Iqaluit, but demonstrated to the Force that the behaviour of some members in the past would undermine future relations.[5]

Public discussion of the dog killings resumed. At the annual meeting of Makivik Corporation in March 1999, Nunavimmiut brought memories forward and called for an inquiry, an apology and compensation.[6] The Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), whose president had attended the Makivik meeting, quickly repeated this call. The QIA also considered bringing legal charges against the RCMP and federal government for negligence and general harm done to Inuit by killing dogs, thus limiting people's mobility. However, the Iqaluit meeting on 26 February, 1999 had already stirred opinion among retired RCMP members, who vigorously denied the reports of misbehaviour in the 1950s and 1960s.

Over the next five years, the Inuit organizations in Nunavik and the Qikiqtani Region interviewed Elders, developed their policies, interpreted the evidence surrounding the "dog slaughter," and developed strategies for redress for the harm caused by the failure by government before 1970 to consult Inuit or to respect its own fiduciary obligations to Inuit in the two regions. As described by anthropologist Francis Lévesque, in 2000 the campaign became national: organizations wrote to the relevant federal and Quebec ministers and to their local Members of Parliament. By the end of that year, leaders of Inuit organizations were convinced that the killings had been centrally organized and, Lévesque asserts, "all parties involved took their respective positions." Government admitted that some dogs had been killed, but insisted that all shootings were justified on grounds of public health and safety, while Inuit insisted that healthy dogs were killed, that government had recklessly disregarded the importance of sled dogs to Inuit culture, and that the documentary record had been tampered with to conceal government

wrongdoing. The following years were spent on research, interviews and quiet efforts to gather support for a public inquiry. The Inuit Circumpolar Conference supported this call in 2002, as did the *Nunatsiaq News*.[7] Research, interviews and analysis continued in both the Qikiqtani Region and Nunavik during 2003 and 2004. Increasingly close attention was given to linkages between the dog shootings and the general government policy of moving people into centralized settlements. Lévesque identifies 2005 as the year Makivik Corporation brought the subject back into public prominence, releasing its video treatment of the period, *Echo of the Last Howl.* In short order, this caught the attention of the national press and was aired in Parliament.

In March 2005, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development heard witnesses describe the killing of sled dogs in Nunavik and the Baffin Region between 1950 and 1970. These incidents, which became known as the "dog slaughter," occurred during the same period as the resettlement of Inuit into a few central communities. This led many Inuit to believe that the dogs, their main means of transportation, were killed specifically to force Inuit to abandon their life on the land.

The Standing Committee called for a public inquiry by a superior court judge "to get to the bottom of the matter."[8] The Government of Canada did not set up the requested inquiry. Instead, it asked the RCMP to conduct a comprehensive review of its actions regarding sled dogs in the North between 1950 and 1970. The Force presented a brief report later in 2005, shortly before the defeat of the Liberal government in the House of Commons and subsequently in the general election of 23 January 2006. These political events did not affect the Force's decision, acting on its own initiative, to conduct an intensive research effort, leading to a 26-page final report to the Minister in 2006, and a much longer compilation of evidence and commentary produced later the same year.

Scope of the RCMP Report

That compilation, which we refer to throughout this review as the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, exonerated RCMP members of criminal or administrative wrongdoing in the matter of killing dogs[9] and, by extension, it exonerated the federal government. In particular, the report addressed RCMP behaviour from a forensic rather than a historical perspective or a perspective guided by the cultural practices and rules of Inuit society at the time. The report did not explain what happened to the dogs over time or in context, but rather focussed on whether particular actions by RCMP members were sanctioned by legislation. It concluded that the killings were legal. The conclusions of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* may be grouped into five main claims:[10]

1. That there was no "mass culling of Inuit sled dogs in Nunavik and Nunavut between 1950 and 1970, at the behest of government, with the intent to destroy Inuit culture by forcing the Inuit into settlements."
2. That numerous dogs were shot, but always for humane or public safety reasons, under the sanction of a law of general application, namely, the Ordinance Respecting Dogs.[11]
3. That RCMP members in the North used dogs themselves, vaccinated and inoculated Inuit dogs at risk from contagious diseases, and generally did much good for Inuit who wished to live on the land by continuing to hunt and trap.
4. That some of the blame falls not on the RCMP, but on the programs and policies of the federal departments responsible for northern administration which removed hunters from the land and into a handful of permanent settlements, and that the RCMP may have been mistakenly blamed for harm done by officers of that department, or by the Sureté Québec in Nunavik.
5. Finally, the RCMP Sled Dogs Report denied the truth of the current disclosures and complaints and blamed them on Inuit elected leaders, arguing that those leaders had silenced Elders and other Inuit who could have given a different version of events. The Report suggested that Elders were manipulated or motivated to fabricate or exaggerate these events in order to obtain compensation.

Reaction of Inuit organizations

The strongly negative tone of the *RCMP Sled Dogs* Report prompted a response from Inuit organizations, notably the Makivik Corporation and the QIA. They disagreed with the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* in substance and tenor. They did not believe that it resolved any questions or concerns. They regretted that the police had been encouraged and permitted to investigate themselves because this was likely to influence the way evidence was interpreted. In particular, Inuit leaders firmly rejected the notion that the dog slaughter was a fabrication designed by leaders and imposed on manipulated and muzzled Elders. It remains a fact that hundreds of Inuit who were alive in the 1950s and 1960s in these two regions have recounted experiences—first-hand or learned directly from their families— of dogs being killed, usually by RCMP members, without warning or consideration of the results.

Since 1999, media attention has helped keep both the public and the federal and Quebec governments aware that killing dogs in the 1950s and 1960s is an important public policy issue today. Northern media outlets have reported on the evolving claims, counterclaims, hearings and inquiries from the outset. Major daily newspapers in southern Canada have also noted the story and, in general, have accepted that there is a case that the government has to answer. The *Nunatsiaq News* was calling for an independent inquiry as early as 30 August 2002, and on 17 June, 2005 reported much of the unfavourable reaction to the internal inquiry. The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* presented a selection from the 26 media reports and commentaries that the RCMP Review Team located up to July 2005.[12]

Scope of QTC historical research

The QIA has acted on the need to understand and communicate an Inuit perspective and a much broader historical context by establishing its own inquiry, independent of government and with a wide mandate to study the whole range of government–Inuit relations in this turbulent period.[13] The QTC's mandate addressed a smaller geographical territory than is covered in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, but it called for a more complete methodology, and demanded a broad-based social purpose – far beyond the issue of dog deaths and assessing whether there were any substantiated grounds for laying criminal charges. The mandate called for a Truth Commission, to be known as the "Qikiqtani Truth Commission", [to] be created to conduct an inquiry to investigate facts, interview witnesses, hold public hearings and to report to the members of QIA and to the public, the truth surrounding the "Dog Slaughter", "Relocations" and other decision-making of the Government up until 1980, and its effect on Inuit culture, economy and way of life.

The Qikiqtani Truth Commission's main objective is to ensure an accurate history of the events referred to above. The truth and reconciliation process seeks to promote healing for those who suffered wrongdoings, as well as to heal relations between Inuit and the Government by providing an opportunity for uncovering all pertinent facts and allowing for acknowledgement and forgiveness. The Qikiqtani Truth Commission cannot provide compensation but will provide recommendations that will promote reconciliation.[14]

Review of the RCMP Sled Dogs Report

This review of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* is integral to the QTC's effort to understand the events that flowed from government policies in the Qikiqtani Region between 1950 and 1975. There is merit in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, but equally there are matters that the QIA and its members find troubling.[15] One persistent problem is a narrowness of purpose: the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* used historical data and the historical memories of individuals in a forensic way, seeking elusive evidence of offences on which charges against individuals could be grounded. The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* showed a regrettable lack of interest in understanding why individual Inuit accounts of the shooting of dogs are so numerous and geographically widespread. Its authors characterized these accounts as evidence of a deceitful and emotionally charged conspiracy, instead of trying to follow the Standing Committee's desire to "get to the bottom" of Inuit reports of how their dogs—and their rights – were handled during a period of profound social and economic dislocation.

While both the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* and the QTC recognized that sled dogs did not pose a problem until a qallunaat (non-Inuit) population began to congregate at a few places in the Arctic, their two approaches are set apart by the concern of the QIA and QTC to view the dog issue as part of the social and economic currents of the times, a concern that was largely absent from the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*. That report treated the qallunaat presence as a "given" and therefore analysed the killings as a law enforcement issue, rather than as part of a process of disruptive social change.

Through a process of hearing statements from witnesses, reading published works about the period and examining archival documents, the QTC and its research team concluded that much wrongdoing did occur, though perhaps for different reasons than many Inuit believed into the 1990s. The team also concluded that the literature on public memory and on truth and reconciliation commissions, which was disregarded by the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, is pertinent to this inquiry. The authors of this present review were struck by the particular relevance of what a leading Canadian theorist in the field calls "the comparative imperative." Dr. Peter Seixas of the University of British Columbia has written that "Theories of historical consciousness need to be capacious enough to account for radically different ways of understanding and using the past, from different cultures and subcultures around the world, without using a Western lens to lock them into a developmental hierarchy."[16]

Clearly, the historical perspectives of the RCMP Review Team and of the QTC would be different even if the two bodies fully agreed in identifying the relevant historical facts. The RCMP Review Team proceeded through a formal interpretation of the actions of the Canadian authorities, without applying the standards of an administrative review or considering the standard of evidence in civil cases, which is to evaluate on the balance of probabilities.[17] The details of the various amendments to the *Ordinance Respecting Dogs* (hereafter cited as *Dog Ordinance*), for example, were never explained, neither were inconsistencies in its application.[18] The question of whether the *Dog Ordinance* was a reasonable law in the circumstances was not explored. At multiple points in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, contentious actions were justified by giving precedence to the urgent needs of a new transient non-Aboriginal population over established indigenous ways of life. The QTC's point of departure was the needs and practices of an Inuit society that existed in the Arctic from time immemorial, many of whose laws, beliefs, practices and values were undermined by the behaviour and demands of newcomers. Killing dogs both with and without the sanction of the *Dog Ordinance*, along with the education policy, the game laws, forced relocations, the painful evacuation of sick Inuit to the South, and a host of other changes, though often beneficial in a material sense, overturned a way of life with little warning and no consultation.

This transformation not only disrupted relations among individuals and within kin groups, but it also challenged the relations that already existed between Inuit and the few qallunaat living as transients among them. On this matter, perhaps surprisingly, both Inuit testimony and the RCMP review were in agreement: the transformation was extremely difficult and unnecessarily painful. The coming of large numbers of qallunaat and of a wage economy in which few Inuit could take part created radical shifts in the previous relations between Inuit and the police.[19] In a very real sense, Canada's national police force and the country's northernmost permanent inhabitants have a shared history overlooked in the report. In a spirit of critical inquiry and reconciliation, the QTC has examined the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* and presents this review of what that *Report* accomplished and how it might have done better.

A SHARED HISTORY: INUIT AND RCMP IN THE BAFFIN REGION

The relationship between Inuit and the RCMP grew out of the gradual encroachment of Canadian authority into what Canadians call the Eastern Arctic, early in the 20th century. For many generations, Inuit managed their own affairs, including external relations with adjoining Inuit groups and—for a few groups—with First Nations.[20] Over time, the challenge of external relations shifted to be dominated by intermittent encounters with parties of explorers, and then enlarged to include relations with visits from and even year-round sojourning by British and American whalers. When whale stocks crashed around 1900, fur traders stepped in where the whalers had departed. They did not formally challenge Inuit autonomy except in matters affecting external trade, but most of these traders

assumed they were working under the umbrella of British Crown sovereignty. That is because in 1577 the English explorer Martin Frobisher, and in 1818 the British naval captain John Ross, made formal acts of possession on behalf of the English and later the British Crown.[21] These acts were probably recognized only by the country that made them, but in 1880 Canada took over whatever Britain's claims amounted to and began actively to assert them through a flag raising (1897), regulatory and exploratory patrols by the Department of Marine and Fisheries (1903–1911) and after 1920 by establishing isolated Arctic RCMP detachments.

The RCMP detachments were a formal challenge to Inuit law, custom and practice. They were designed in part to avenge or protect qallunaat who were punished by Inuit for transgressions against Inuit law. Between 1912 and 1917, the RCMP arrested and punished Inuit in the central Arctic who had put to death a pair of explorers and two missionaries who had become a danger to their hosts. When a similar clash brought about the death of a trader near Pond Inlet in 1920, the federal government established the RCMP in the Baffin Region. These detachments received supplies from the south by an annual ship, but they depended on Inuit for local travel, country food and translation. The police in this era after 1920 had four roles, which continued until the 1960s. First, they represented Canadian authority in a formal way. Second, they checked up promptly on reported violations of the criminal code. Third, they were – with rare exceptions—stationed at the sites of existing trading posts, and were supposed to ensure that Inuit were not being exploited. Fourth, the RCMP spent a good deal of time and effort patrolling by dog team and by boat, visiting people where they lived and hunted, and checking and reporting on social, economic and game conditions. The RCMP also provided basic medical attention to Inuit and distributed ammunition or supplies wherever these seemed to be needed. As a result, the Baffin Region ceased to be a vast tract that only Inuit knew and controlled, and became a region where the police visited many habitable areas annually. In the process, many of them developed a considerable understanding of Inuit culture and behaviour. Relative to other contact agents, the police had abundant resources and few onerous responsibilities, but they gained a great deal of prestige and authority by the services they delivered, as well as by enforcement of the criminal law, the game laws and other regulations.[22] The RCMP would not have considered that Inuit possessed a legal framework for governing themselves, but many legal anthropologists and lawyers assert otherwise. [23]

In the two decades before 1970, Inuit experienced tumultuous change in every aspect of their land use and annual routine. The police also had to adjust to change when new government agencies with radically new policies broke in on the traditional domains of both Inuit life and police duties. At times, these new civilian agencies enlisted the police to implement unpopular new measures such as restrictions on hunting, removal of children to be educated, forced relocations, and rounding people up for annual medical exams with the all-too frequent consequence of removal to the South. At other times, the new agencies competed with the police in the communities, especially after 1962 when the pressure on people to move into settlements intensified. The police initially opposed resettlement. One of the duties they accepted in the new state of affairs was to destroy loose sled dogs, which had become quite numerous in the settlements. Here some Inuit were less able to care for and control them in traditional ways, because the practice of keeping dogs loose was riskier in the much larger settlements of people (and of dogs) that became common after 1955. Under pressure from qallunaat, numerous sled dogs were killed from the mid-1950s onwards, despite a confusing contrary policy of having the police immunize dogs against disease and even import dogs to replace others lost in a canine epidemic.

Inuit memories of this period tell of a serious loss and disruption of their lives. Members of the Force also tell of a change of role and direction due to their involvement in unpopular programs and competition with new government agents whose policies they disliked. By the 1970s, most Inuit lived year-round in 13 towns or hamlets instead of in the former hundred or so *ilagiit nunagivaktangit* (camps); snowmobiles had replaced dog teams; the Government of the Northwest Territories delivered most social services; and RCMP members spent most of their time providing conventional southern-style policing in the communities.

Although many of these developments and trends are still too controversial for this summary to be called a "consensus" history, it itemizes important, relevant historical events over seven decades in the transition from Inuit law to Canadian public law. These steps, which were very disempowering to Inuit at the time, constitute some of the background to the angry discussions that have strained Inuit–RCMP relations in the decade leading up to appointment of the QTC. A serious effort to "get to the bottom of" the dog slaughter issue must consider those tragic incidents within the context of this longer history.

WHAT THE RCMP SLED DOGS REPORT ACCOMPLISHED

The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* determined that RCMP members and others did indeed kill large numbers of sled dogs in the 1950s and 1960s. It reported that these killings were not launched by a systematic policy or conspiracy and were not part of a concerted campaign to drive all Inuit into permanent settlements. Responsibility for the killings was unassigned or was assigned by implication to neglect or "passive resistance"[24] on the part of the dogs' owners.

The important accomplishment and lasting benefit of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* will likely turn out to be gathering new information from elderly informants and assembling archival information. Retired RCMP, particularly the most senior ones, provided a revealing and sometimes critical view of their own careers among Inuit and of relations between the Force and the Canadian government, which should not surprise historians, but will help many others understand this period.[25] The RCMP Review Team's archival research, though incomplete and scarcely analysed in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, occupied nearly one-third of the report and pointed to the rich potential of available archival records of the RCMP, the Northern Administration Branch, and other departments.[26]

To apply this approach to the dog killings, neither truth nor reconciliation can be achieved to a tight schedule. The RCMP showed clearer thinking than either the Standing Committee or the Minister when it scheduled a full year for research and analysis of historical evidence. There are different precedents and models for using historical evidence to expose maladministration and right wrongs. In the case of the dog killings, it is noteworthy that the RCMP and the Inuit have researched and told their stories separately.

Despite the report's great length, its authors failed to fulfill the expectations of either the Standing Committee Report of 10 March 2005, or the letter of 28 April 2005 from Anne McLellan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. The Standing Committee—in a recommendation later endorsed by the Legislature of Nunavut—called for an inquiry to "get to the bottom of the matter." In the QTC's view, this meant more than merely confirming the killings and finding local causes and a legal excuse for them. Getting to "the bottom" would require exploring deeper reasons for the killings and the connections with other socio-economic trends and public events, including policies, budgets and extreme weaknesses in the cross-cultural and other job-related training given to federal agents in the North. And if hundreds of Inuit witnesses were—as RCMP analysis concluded—somehow mistaken about what they saw and remembered from the period before 1970, getting to the bottom of the matter would have to include a thoughtful examination of relations between the community and its police, in order to understand the assumptions and experience of the Elders and their consequences in the present day.

The Minister's letter to RCMP Commissioner Giuliano Zaccardelli requested "a chronology of events, a history of the issue, and an examination of all relevant RCMP records as well as current and previous RCMP reviews on this issue."[27] The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* used a wide range of RCMP records, but fell short on other parts of the mandate. There was really no chronology[28] either in the short "final" report or in the full report that backed it up. Instead, analysis appeared at the beginning and the end, bracketing numerous topical sections which were then internally organized by provenance. These sections included interpretation along with evidence from documents and interviews. Three big sections that *were* organized by date—45 pages of transcripts of RCMP headquarters records, 127 pages of RCMP "G" Division records and 45 pages of transcripts of "Indian and Northern Affairs Canada" correspondence – were so massive and so disparate in the information they contained that they did not give a clear impression of significant events in the order in which they occurred. Larger than any of these was the 147-page section of information from "Persons Contacted," sorted into eight occupational categories and arranged alphabetically, not chronologically, within those categories. The Minister had also asked for "a history of the issue," which required a broader contextual treatment of the subject matter; this was not produced or delivered.[29]

The authors of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* candidly admitted that in the time (one year) they were given, their relatively inexperienced team knew there "may well be limitations in this report that would not be present in an academic tome."[30] This missed the point. What is needed to advance both understanding and reconciliation is not a "tome," but a *treatise*, "a written work dealing formally and systematically with a subject."[31] Analysis of historical wrongs and grievances in a cross-cultural and inter-generational framework is not easily achieved.[32] The work that is still needed will deal with multiple perspectives—not only with "what happened," but with why it happened, and how to identify the long-term effects that are worthy of being understood. Five of the key historical questions are addressed in the next section of this review.[33]

Areas of Concern

INTERPRETING THE KILLINGS

The RCMP View

The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* acknowledged that RCMP members and other persons in authority in the 1950s and 1960s killed hundreds and perhaps thousands of dogs. It confirmed that most of these dogs were killed during the same period when Inuit were in transition from ilagiit nunagivaktangit to permanent settlements. In its Executive Summary, the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* explained the decline:

> *There was a startling drop in Inuit sled dog populations, particularly during the 1960s, but the dog population decline was the result of a number of factors, including the collapse of the fur trade, the introduction of the snowmobile, the migration of the Inuit into settlements, and their participation in the wage economy rather than living on the land. In brief, dog numbers declined because the dogs were no longer essential to the new circumstances in which the Inuit found themselves.*

This analysis sidestepped the impacts of the killings on Inuit at the time and since, while noting periods or episodes in which the RCMP "were dedicated to the cause of preserving the traditional Inuit semi-nomadic culture" including the use of dogs.[34] It argued effectively that the killings were never directed by a central government plan or carried out with the explicit motive of forcing Inuit to stop hunting and live in permanent settlements.

The QTC View

The QTC formed different views about the absence of a "conspiracy," not all of them in full agreement with earlier RCMP or QIA positions. Granted, the killings went on far too long to be the result of a secret plan or conspiracy,[35] and they also began—in the mid-1950s at Iqaluit—several years before the federal government adopted a formal "centralizing policy" and before government was prepared to install even the rough beginnings of the housing and other infrastructure a centralized population needs. And for many individual Inuit and for all at Iqaluit whose dogs were shot in the 1950s, the mass shootings of dogs occurred long before an owner could hope to replace them with a snowmobile. While there was no secret conspiracy or policy in the 1950s of the kind that the RCMP Review Team looked for and did not find, there was a series of inter-connected policies and actions, closely linked in time, by which government undermined traditional Inuit ways of living. Government resistance to traditional Inuit ways of handling dogs was one such policy and was intimately linked to other government policies.

The government and its agents presented health care and housing to Inuit in ways that exerted enormous pressure against staying on the land or returning to it. Families with school-aged children were threatened with a loss of family allowances if they did not part with their children or move into the settlements themselves. Families with Elders had to move to be near the nursing stations. Although some passages in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* appeared sensitive to the Inuit who submitted to those pressures very reluctantly, the RCMP did enforce the government's dog control policies, which were hostile to Inuit who wanted to alternate wage work in settlements with periods of hunting.

As Elder Naki Ekho told anthropologist Ann McElroy in 1999: "I came here by dog team from upland with the whole family [in 1957] … The reason we came here was when someone finds plentiful amounts of something, like work or food, they come to get it. They planned to stay only a year." However, police killed their dogs and they never returned to their Cumberland Sound ilagiit nunagivaktangat.[36] The new settlements were inhospitable locations for sled dogs and became places where Inuit methods of caring for dogs (and, seasonally, leaving them to care for themselves) were not accommodated by government. In the settlements, there were more people as well as more dog teams than in ilagiit nunagivaktangit. Dogs did not adapt well to being around strangers; they were more wary and potentially more dangerous. In addition the people in settlements included qallunaat who were either fearful or careless around sled dogs.

Under these pressures, there was no need for a conspiracy, secret or otherwise, because the authorities in Ottawa changed the law. In 1949–1950, they revised the Northwest Territories' *An Ordinance Respecting Dogs* to outlaw traditional Inuit ways of handling dogs wherever this seemed to conflict with the needs or practices of qallunaat settlers. While the *Dog Ordinance* did not apply in ilagiit nunagivaktangit, in a growing list of places across the Northwest Territories (NWT) designated dog officers – including all RCMP members *ex officio*—had the discretion to destroy any dogs that they considered to be "running at large contrary to the provisions of this Ordinance."[37] When Inuit, such as Naki Ekho's husband, chose to take seasonal employment with the armed forces, they entered a world where their traditions and practices—in managing dogs as in many other matters—were in jeopardy.

Contemporary Thoughts on the Dog Slaughter

Some Inuit and RCMP understood this in the 1950s. In November 1956, the senior policeman in Iqaluit explained to his superiors in Ottawa, in this extract from a long memorandum, what he saw as the Inuit perspective:

1. There are a number of dogs running loose about Frobisher Bay ... Most of these stray animals are owned by Eskimos who are employed by the United States Air Force at this point. The owners work full time and are unable to hunt seal to feed the dogs, yet they are reluctant to part with any of them. From time to time this detachment has urged them to get rid of these dogs, however, there is some deep-rooted desire to own dogs which has thus far excluded results. Probably it is prestige.[38]
2. In dealing with social problems of the Eskimo, until members of this detachment understand fully the role of custom, it's [sic] laws and varieties, they can not really effectively deal with the complicated issue which this becomes. This dog problem does indirectly affect, for instance, the economy of the Eskimo. Destruction of an Eskimo's dogs after remaining unclaimed in the pound for five days may result in him quitting his job on the air base and returning to a life on the land. This would be just one of many reactions. Other Eskimos might show their dislike by offering active opposition in varied forms.
3. The Frobisher Bay Eskimos do not understand the dog problem which has developed here since the inception of the air base. Nor do they appreciate that this detachment must deal with it as outlined in the Dog Ordinance. Many of these Eskimos let their dogs run loose so they can feed in the disposal area while the owner is at work on the base. This is a perfectly reasonable explanation, and to these individuals no answer except one which will offer an alternative food supply, will have any semblance of being reasonable.[39]

The "perfectly reasonable" decision to let dogs forage was also articulated by employed Inuit to McGill University anthropologist Toshio Yatsushiro in 1959:

> *Eskimos like to have dogs to use in the winter for hunting. They don't like it when the R.C.M.P. kills them. Some dogs are left untied for a week or so because they get cross when they are tied. The Eskimos understand, if they are free they will be shot, but if they are tied they cannot get food, so maybe they will die anyhow. Eskimos bring food and water to the dogs when they have it, but often they don't have it. So when the dogs go free they eat garbage—when the R.C.M.P. saw it they shot them it is not good.*[40]

Another informant asked whether "the govt. didn't want Eskimos to have dogs any more. Eskimos sometimes have dogs untied, they get hungry and run around looking for food ... The Eskimos can't feed them regularly because the hunting around Frobisher Bay is no longer good. Every one is working so no dog meat can be hunted for. But they need the dogs for hunting in the winter."[41]

Governance Issues

These quotations underline the fact, not sufficiently emphasized in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, that the standard government policy was to assume Inuit must, at their own expense, accommodate newcomers' needs and wants. While the law was clear to those who enforced it, to hunters it was illogical, unnecessary and also harmful; in addition, it was not consistently or predictably applied. Inuit and dogs had existed together for uncounted generations without such restrictions being necessary. The authors of the *RCMP Sled*

Dogs Report, like most other writers on the subject, appeared to accept that shooting hundreds, perhaps thousands of dogs by newcomers over more than a decade was a rational and justified activity, while the grief and resentment of the dog owners was unwarranted and worthy of criticism or at least anthropological study.[42]

In fact the considerations are not merely cultural or emotional, but also legal, to a degree not recognized in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report.* The legal implications stem from a consideration of Aboriginal and human rights and the disregard of these expressed by the initiative to import qallunaat transient workers and military men and officials. The *Dog Ordinance* was designed primarily to protect qallunaat from Inuit dogs. (Later a need was shown to protect Inuit children as well.) The Government of Canada failed in its obligations to Inuit when it placed restrictions on their use of dogs without providing the means to make those restrictions less onerous or involving Inuit directly in finding solutions. There was also a practical element: tying, chaining or confinement in pounds was not good for the dogs themselves. Chained dogs could not exercise, socialize or forage, and employed Inuit could not hunt for them. The burden of complying with the *Dog Ordinance* was placed on Inuit. Exceptional officers, such as Cpl. Van Norman, understood that family economies would be severely disrupted unless the government provided a means for feeding dogs while their movement was restricted and their owners were occupied on what was, in most cases, government business. While some of Yatsushiro's informants sounded laconic and fatalistic in their comments about the loss of their dogs, others were not. One admitted that "First I thought of killing the policemen. But I don't mind now. Maybe afterwards there won't be so many dogs, since the police are shooting them. In five years there may be none at all. Maybe the police will kill Eskimos then, just like the dogs."[43]

In the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, a great deal of attention was also paid to public health motives for killing dogs that were known to be ill or at risk of transmitting contagious diseases to other animals. This became almost a routine practice for the police and other dog officers, and was frequently carried out without ensuring that the dogs' owners understood and agreed to the destruction, and in disregard of the Inuit practice of giving sick dogs time to recover. The question of faulty translations is dealt with at a number of points in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* and contributes to the report's message that the police always acted within the law, but may have been misunderstood by Inuit who were harmed by their actions.[44]

Gaps in the Analysis

QTC researchers found a number of problems in the way information about dog maulings and dog slaughter were reported and explained in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report.* There was a lack of clarity about why dogs were suddenly viewed as an uncontrolled danger in regions of Nunavut where this had not previously been a problem. Certain anecdotes were repeated twice or more, including at least half a dozen references to a single fatal mauling, that of Maggie Clay in 1924.[45] Toshio Yatsushiro commented that dogs were chiefly a danger to qallunaat, not to Inuit, but the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*—which listed Yatsushiro's work in the bibliography, but did not quote it—ignored this rather obvious line of inquiry.

There was also no attempt at gender analysis: it might be expected that the migration of non-Inuit women and children into the Arctic would raise consciousness of the potential dangers from dogs, especially if these incomers were unprepared. Even employees received little or no orientation to Inuit culture or Arctic living conditions. The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* documented examples of qallunaat

families trying to make pets of sled dogs. One of these cases almost ended fatally when a small boy had to be medi-vaced from Arviat to Churchill in 1960. He was sleeping outdoors in a playpen while his mother, a missionary's wife, was socializing with a policeman's wife indoors. The missionary's own pet husky broke loose and inflicted life-threatening injuries on his child. Although this reflected a high level of maladaptation to actual conditions in the region, and no Inuit or Inuit-owned sled dogs were involved, the Superintendent commanding "G" Division advised all detachments to be extra vigilant and "where husky dogs are loose … take action at once." He added a warning against making pets of these animals.[46]

A more serious gap was the lack of chronological treatment of extended episodes of dog killings. The provisions of the *Dog Ordinance* were extended to DEW Line sites and to all settlements in August 1955[47] and shortly afterwards efforts were made to crack down on loose dogs around Iqaluit. The killings there were numerous and quite widely commented on. A decade later in Pangnirtung, according to an RCMP source, that region experienced comparable killings. Smaller instances of shooting dogs were recorded in Igloolik, around 1960 when a Northern Service Officer took action in the absence of a police detachment. How these episodes fit into the long-term trend of reducing teams almost to zero might affect how specific incidents are interpreted.

While the *Dog Ordinance* made it unnecessary for government to hatch a conspiracy, and many or most of the killings can be explained under that law enacted by an external, unelected legislature, the social context of the killings and the resulting damage to the prestige of the RCMP in the North, were not thoroughly examined in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report.* Its authors seemed to take it for granted that every bulge in the statistics of dog killings was carried out in accordance with the law and was therefore, apparently, not worthy of detailed investigation or contextual analysis by the Force's researchers. As a result, the reader—and the Inuit whose dogs were killed—received little explanation of local and particular circumstances, either of the necessity of the killing or the communication, if any, with the dog's owners.[48] Also unexamined is the possibility that there were distinct patterns of dog killings across time: for example, in Iqaluit in the 1950s it was primarily employed Inuit whose dogs were killed, but elsewhere in the late 1960s, some of the victims were people who had just relocated to settlements without jobs.

THE RCMP REVIEW TEAM AND INUIT COMPLAINTS

Because it was in no position to conduct an independent inquiry, the RCMP Review Team did not receive the full trust and cooperation of most Inuit who lived through the 1950s and 1960s. The RCMP Review Team did solicit information from Inuit, notably former special constables and their families. The report repeatedly deplored the fact that it received so little evidence from other Inuit. This kind of evidence existed in the testimony that Inuit would have been prepared to give to a judicial inquiry or had already given in confidential statements to Inuit beneficiary organizations.[49] A certain amount was already on the public record,[50] yet this was dismissed by the RCMP Review Team because of minor inconsistencies or because information lacked particulars about names and dates at a level of detail that would warrant laying charges against individual perpetrators. The report also pointed out that Inuit could not have known the detailed inner workings of government and therefore did not have first-hand evidence to link the policy of centralization with the policy of dog control.

Instead of accepting the core truth in the Inuit reports of dog killings, and looking for ways to understand the Inuit perspective and its related cultural and situational differences, the RCMP Review Team set out to discredit the witnesses and their political organizations, although without directly accusing them of exaggerating or lying. A tense situation developed that Inuit had anticipated when asking for an independent inquiry; the statements of witnesses who came forward were attacked. Particularly negative statements were made in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* about the fact that most Inuit simply would not provide evidence to the police about the events they or their families suffered from a generation earlier. In its "Review Findings," the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* treated this as *prima facie* evidence of intimidation, motivated by desire for financial compensation, as the RCMP Review Team asserted:

> *The QIA had instructed Inuit not to cooperate with the RCMP review of the allegations; refer to page 145. This placed the review team in a difficult situation. Inuit could be presumed to be reluctant to contradict the allegations being made by their leaders and be equally reluctant to disregard the direction of non-collaboration. The review team had to be cognizant that, in the small Arctic communities, it could be anticipated that there could be serious repercussions for any Inuk who spoke out and in any way undermined the allegations that had been made. The RCMP therefore refrained from aggressively soliciting the direct collaboration of Inuit, preferring to respect the position in which they found themselves; refer to page 492.* [51]

That passage exhibited a serious misunderstanding of Inuit cultural relations by failing to examine patterns of Inuit deference to qallunaat authority. Instead of examining the serious issues around an inquiry conducted by the RCMP into its own members' behaviour, the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* alleged that the real rift was between Inuit and their elected leaders:

> *At this juncture, it is essential to make a distinction between "the Inuit" as a people, and "Inuit leaders/ organizations." There are only a few Inuit making these allegations. Those most vocal are the Inuit leadership and two of the four Inuit organizations; the Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami have not been vocal on this issue in the public forum. It may be that significant numbers of Inuit do not believe the allegations are true, but are unwilling to contradict their leadership or fellow Inuit.*[52]

Not only were these comments disrespectful toward the possible reasons for the reticence of Elders and other witnesses, but they were also uninformed by any consideration of how groups that are affected differently by events will view the causes and character of those events differently. While the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* successfully demonstrated that there was no central conspiracy to kill dogs to force people into settlements, it overlooked the very high probability that the control of loose and sick dogs was done in a way that was unintelligible to Inuit, was hostile to their customs and beliefs, and was carried out without their consent. The way different parties remember these events is significant.[53]

HISTORIC INUIT—RCMP INTERACTIONS

Sled Dogs and the Reputation of the Force

The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* was primarily about dogs, but also exhibited an underlying preoccupation with the RCMP's reputation in the communities where they still serve. In particular, the RCMP Review Team adopted from RCMP veterans a strong desire for respect and acknowledgement of their service and sacrifice in the North during the transitions of 1950–1970. While accusations about the dog slaughter in 1999 were felt to be particularly hurtful, memories of bureaucratic defeats and a change of role in the 1960s also emerged in the editorial content and supporting documentation of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*. Those feelings of resentment against both the federal government in the 1960s and the Inuit in the 1990s were defining characteristics in pages 514 to 615, where the memories of more than 130 veterans were asserted against those of protesting Inuit.[54] The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* also devoted a remarkable amount of space to proving that senior officers *did not* apologize to Inuit in 1999, despite two separate oral statements that seemed to suggest that the Force regretted its roles in the hardships Inuit endured.

Although the evidence of repeated non-apologizing is fairly convincing, the whole issue seemed important to the RCMP Review Team for three reasons:

- It provoked a storm of protest from retired RCMP members, which infuses the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*.
- It brought into the open the fact that many Inuit, most of whom lived through the events complained of, believed the RCMP to be capable of extremely prejudicial acts.
- It shaped the RCMP reaction to the fact that Inuit, by and large, would not tell their side of the story to a self-investigating body that they believed to be biased.

A trigger for many of the indignant outbursts from retired members was the report in the *Nunatsiaq News* of a meeting where Commissioner Philip Murray tried to get off on the right foot during the creation of Nunavut. The *Nunatsiaq News* reported:

> *These words confirm what the head of Canada's police force already knows—that RCMP [sic] have a sordid past with the Inuit of Nunavut and that past is still a vivid memory for some. "I think it's very important from our point of view, as the new territory is created, that we have a very real sense of the history of the relationship between the RCMP and the community," Murray said.*[55]

The QTC research team was also influenced by recognition that the RCMP and Inuit have lived together in the North for many decades and that a good relationship between a police force and the communities it serves is very important. This was recognized in the Force's official report to Parliament on the sled dogs, although difficulties were glossed over:

> *It is important to note that the relationship between Inuit people and the RCMP in "V" Division today is positive and cordial [sic]. However, there would be great value to Canada and the RCMP to explore the possibility of some form of dialogue with the Inuit community aimed at reconciling any differences the alleged sled dog issue*[56] *may have highlighted and strengthening the relationship with a community whom the RCMP is proud to serve.*[57]

Enforcing the Dog Ordinance—Iqaluit 1956–1959

The Northwest Territories *Dog Ordinance* developed in the 1920s to deal with conditions in the Mackenzie Valley, where there were both dog teams and privately owned pets. As late as 1954 this ordinance was not applied to the Baffin Region, except around the United States Air Force base at Iqaluit and a weather station at Kimmirut.[58] On 19 August 1955, it was applied to all places within one-quarter mile from any "building" of a DEW Line station or within the same distance of "any dwelling in any settlement in the Keewatin and Franklin Districts." This included the whole Baffin Region. With inadequate consultation with Inuit and some misgivings from officials on the spot, the police and administration were drawn into a rigorous enforcement of the *Dog Ordinance* at Iqaluit. This now included a 1950 amendment that allowed, "Where an officer is unable to seize a dog that is running at large contrary to the provisions of this Ordinance" he could "destroy" that dog and the owner would be entitled to no compensation.

Official anxiety over loose dogs in the Eastern Arctic surfaced as early as 1954 at Coral Harbour, where a new Welfare Teacher asked for authority under the *Dog Ordinance* to seize or destroy dogs that the Inuit did not keep chained. The Chief of the Arctic Division in Ottawa ordered the teacher to get the consent of Inuit before Ottawa would change the law. "It is almost axiomatic that laws that do not have general public support are difficult to administer" and made it clear he did not expect Inuit to agree:

> *I have mentioned that the views of the Eskimos should be obtained but I fully realize that this is not a simple matter to carry out. It has been noted by people who have studied primitive cultures and the impact of civilization that when one thread in the fabric of the culture is disturbed the whole weave is affected. This is true whether the thread in question is an economic matter or whether it concerns clothing, marriage, handicraft, health or religious aspects. We cannot lightly issue orders in such a matter as the restraining of dogs. We must remember that these animals are important to the Eskimo in many ways, that they have always run at large and that keeping them tied up will bring up several new considerations. One interesting and possibly significant point of view that has been put forward on occasion by people experienced in the north is that chaining dogs makes them much more dangerous.*[59]

Coral Harbour (where there was no RCMP detachment) remained a flashpoint. Late in 1956, when a new teacher ordered ammunition to shoot loose dogs, he was sternly warned not to act without specific permission from Ottawa. But he also received permission to shoot any dog actually attacking a person, and to requisition five boxes of .22 long ammunition. A surprising marginal note reveals that the letter had been "Read to and approved by" four of the most senior officials in the Northern Administration and Lands Branch—an indication of how seriously the matter was being taken.[60]

The situation in Iqaluit came to a head after senior officials visited the town in autumn 1956, and the medical staff of the DEW Line project office complained about treating bites inflicted by "ownerless strays"[61]—although these were, in fact, dogs belonging to Inuit employees of the military. The Chief of the Arctic Division advised his Director:

> *Mr. Nicol recommends that our Northern Service Officers be given authority to dispose of dogs. We prefer that such enforcement jobs be done by police. Our officers cannot be successful in their efforts at community organization if they have to act as policemen. If we want to instruct the police at Frobisher in this matter we must do it through "G" Division, and that puts fat into several fires. We would much prefer to adjust the matter locally …* [62]

Whatever the qualms about bringing "G" Division in Ottawa into the discussion, NSO Archie Flucke and Cst. R. Van Norman quickly put together a plan, which they shared with their superiors in Ottawa. It included an information poster in Inuktitut on the law requiring dogs to be tied up, a public meeting on 24 November at which all adult Inuit would be lectured on dog control, and the purchase by Flucke of materials for a dog pound to hold and feed up to 12 dogs at a time. Enforcement proceeded through the next two months and was duly reported to Ottawa as a success: 20 dogs were impounded, two men were fined for letting their dogs run loose and "three or four dogs" were shot after five days. Inuit were critical of the chains, which were too short. Flucke believed that feeding the dogs was "an acute problem" because commercial dog feed lacked essential nutrients, especially fat. Inuit who were chaining their dogs were losing them to cold and malnutrition while other dogs, which ran free, grew fat on waste food from the Air Force dump. Flucke concluded that the only solution to the problem would be a costly one—two large compounds near the air base, where dogs could be easily fed and watered.[63] Just a month later, the detachment reported that impoundments and prosecutions were continuing and loose dogs were no longer a problem in Iqaluit.[64]

This was a temporary solution, backed up by the threat of force. The Director of the Northern Administration and Lands Branch confided to Superintendent Henry Larsen his determination to introduce "a new regimen with respect to these large and dangerous dogs." This was qualified by an admission that "Eskimos have a long history of association with dogs, and they have strong feelings on the subject of shooting dogs without cause that is sufficient in their view." The director's concluding emphasis on the "importance of carrying the Eskimos with us in these new ways" was an unmistakeable warning that Inuit preferences had less weight than southern precautions.[65]

It is not clear what happened in 1958 because files are incomplete, but a policeman told a visitor in May 1959 that 286 dogs were shot the preceding year.[66] Certainly in 1959 the arrangements carefully worked out by Flucke and Van Norman were no longer effective. Inuit were letting their dogs roam free and forage for food in the traditional way, even though dogs were being shot in large numbers. In September, Archie Flucke's successor wrote from Iqaluit that there was no need to appoint a new dog officer because "The Eskimos here are by now quite familiar with the rough outlines of the Dog Ordinance, if not the details. Most of them conscientiously keep their dogs tied, and are unhappily resigned to the fact that loose dogs will be destroyed. Approximately two hundred dogs or more have been destroyed in the past year and those that are left are valued by the owners."[67] Two hundred dogs represents between 14 and 25 teams, or the destruction of essential tools needed

by hunters to support between 70 and 100 people. With the 286 reported shot the previous year, those numbers approach 40 teams and 200 people. Inuit found it impractical to chain their dogs. Many ignored a law that was in conflict with their own laws and practices, which developed not only for their own welfare but also for that of their dogs. In the face of this resistance, the authorities overcame their reluctance to engage in large-scale shooting. Arctic veterans such as A.J. "Moose" Kerr might argue the case for respecting Aboriginal customs, but in a losing cause:

> *The Eskimos or Indians, even if agreeable to having their dogs in an enclosure, would expect the White residents to feed them. From experience in the North I personally do not think that "Wandering" dogs create any greater hazard than does the normal automobile traffic of southern Canada. In the south we warn our children of the necessary safe-guards and there is no reason why we can't do the same in the North. It is also my experience that a tied up dog, if approached by children, is more dangerous than a "Wandering" one. However, the law, poorly worded as it is in the case of the Quebec Dog Ordinance, and ignoring the Eskimos [sic] and Indians [sic] right to an accepted (By them) traditional custom in their own land, should be enforced on the grounds that it is the law.*[68]

Although the argument concerning traffic accidents had some supporters, fatalities such as the fatal mauling of an Inuit translator's son at Apex in 1960 ensured that the advocates of shooting loose dogs would keep the upper hand.[69]

Gaps and Omissions in Describing the Relationship, 1950–1975

Both the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* and the research and testimony gathered by the QTC provided abundant evidence of how valuable the RCMP was to the Inuit economy in the years before centralization. Authors of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* especially emphasized the programs of vaccination and inoculation of Inuit sled dogs, evidence in their view that the police were not part of a conspiracy against the survival of the breed and that they made considerable individual efforts, in settlements and in ilagiit nunagivaktangit, to keep teams healthy.[70] This focus on dogs arguably led the RCMP Review Team at times to gloss over more central aspects of the relationship.

Other aspects were, admittedly, scattered through the report. The following is a candid, if extremely one-sided acknowledgement of this:

> *It is also essential to remember that particularly in the 1950s and earlier, the RCMP officer was often the only qallunaat [sic] in a settlement employed by the federal government and, as such, had the full authority of the government to manage the delivery of all government services, a situation far different from the reality today. Therefore, the Inuit in the settlement were, in fact, the member's responsibility: they were "his Eskimos" to look after. The Inuit themselves, without modern media access and being otherwise exposed to qallunaat culture, relied on the RCMP officer to look after their needs. There were elements of authority, respect, fear, and dependence in the relationship.*[71]

Inuit constituted almost the whole permanent population of the Baffin Region throughout this period and the RCMP represented government authority. Serving the Inuit gave the RCMP a role that was essential to the Force's self-image as well as to Canada's claims to be effectively occupying the Arctic. On the long sled patrols, which are part of RCMP lore, Inuit provided guiding services and hunted food for the police dog teams. Many new recruits had received equestrian training at Regina, but knew little or nothing about the North—Inuit regarded them at first as similar to children and performed an essential service to Canada by helping them learn the ways of the North. The police in return provided medical assistance and, albeit in paternalistic ways, delivered other social services.

Less pleasant was the occasional use of police prestige and authority to direct Inuit behaviour, especially concerning the length of visits to the trading posts. Perhaps it is significant that the Review Team chose to omit from its selection of annual reports the following statement concerning families considered by the constable in charge to be "bums and scroungers." "They were informed during their visit to the settlement that unless they moved from this location they would receive no further Family Allowance, they were further advised that relief and assistance to all members of that camp had been discontinued. All the natives of this camp agreeed [sic] to move."[72] Also missing from the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, although very familiar to northerners (including witnesses who spoke to the QTC), were the daily interactions in communities, including relations between individual police and Inuit women.

The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* did not examine the way inequality of power and cultural difference affected the dynamics of RCMP–Inuit interaction in the dispersed ilagiit nunagivaktangit, on the trail or around the trading establishments, either before or after centralized settlement became official policy. It also left it mainly to the statements of retired members to underline the bitterness many felt over the way other government agents, especially Northern Service Officers, took over many of the RCMP's responsibilities after 1955. This loss was also explored in a slim book by an anthropologist who went North specifically to study the role of policing in the Baffin Region.[73] This interaction, whether positive or negative, was relevant to the evolution of the settlements from qallunaat enclaves to present-day communities. The report also did not explain how the RCMP used its increased funding to benefit Inuit. The RCMP budget north of 60° grew from $881,000 in 1953–1954 to $2,291,721 in 1968–1969.[74] No doubt much of the increase was spent outside the Baffin Region and some on services that chiefly benefited qallunaat. Additional funds were certainly required for conventional law enforcement as crime increased in the settlements. Unfortunately, the Report missed this opportunity to explore the way the Force took on new roles and deployed new resources in Inuit communities.

The QTC research team deals with some of these issues in more detail in a background paper on Intercultural Communications. They make it clear in ways that should have been important to the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* that relations were not just marked by "authority, respect, fear, and dependence" as that report acknowledged, but were tainted by systematically maintained colonial inequality whose intimidating impact is often summed up in the Inuit language as *illira*[75]—a word which does not appear in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report.* (Pond Inlet Elder Anaviapik explained to Hugh Brody that *illira* is the characteristic of "people or things that have power over you and can be neither controlled nor predicted. People or things that make you feel vulnerable, and to which you *are* vulnerable.") This extreme diffidence, and the impairment of ordinary human interactions that flowed from it, are essential to explaining a number of factors which the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* dealt with, including the reluctance of Inuit to resist the killing of their dogs in the first place and their reticence in avoiding the self-investigation launched by the Force in 2005.

SLED DOGS HISTORY AS COLLECTIVE MEMORY

Promoting RCMP History

The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* was more than a report on investigating possible wrongdoing. It was an exercise by the police to sustain or create a positive collective memory of the RCMP experience in Nunavut, with a nostalgic focus on the specific duties and circumstances of the 1950s and 1960s. The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* used documentary sources and personal reminiscences to elaborate a view of the RCMP's services to Inuit around the middle of the last century as a kind of golden age.

> *The review team became aware of the magnitude of the work done by RCMP members in the north, including their key role in the Inuit sled dog vaccination program, much of which was virtually unknown to history. It was considered to be essential that the work done by the members to promote and preserve the Inuit culture be told, and accordingly, the scope of this report was expanded to this limited degree.*[76]

This version of a collective memory for Northern Canada emphasized the RCMP as benefactors who made great sacrifices to protect Inuit against both the harsh environment and unwise government policies.[77] While the collective memory is consistent on important points, it is not monolithic: the rifts mostly concern relocation and centralization. In particular, retired A/Commissioner Robert Currie's repeated denunciation of the "abhorrent policy" of High Arctic relocation stands out as an example of divergent opinion without, however, challenging the emphasis on the RCMP's benevolence.

Unfortunately, the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* did nothing to try to reconcile this view of Nunavut history with another view commonly held by Inuit—a history in which the existence of inequality was taken for granted, and benevolence was sometimes negated by unexplained behaviour that might cause distress or hardship.

Understanding Inuit History

What is missing from this exercise was the needed appreciation of Inuit as actors in their own history. They appeared intermittently as special constables or as more or less passive—and by implication now ungrateful—recipients of the RCMP's skill and compassion. The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* valued the contributions of only one group of participants in a complex social and cultural exchange. This treatment raises serious questions about whether, as a matter of either historical understanding or public policy, there is merit in fostering a collective memory that elevates the retired policemen as a group by marginalizing the memories of a much larger number of Inuit.

Past patterns of inequality—as well as present ones—encourage development of different group identities and rival forms of historical consciousness. It would be tempting for the QTC to delineate a rival Inuit collective memory in opposition to that of the RCMP Review Team. However, the QTC's mandate requires it to look for both truth *and* reconciliation and therefore to look for elements of a common history that do not exclusively emphasize division and disagreement. Because the RCMP did, as the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* argued, provide services to Inuit as individuals and as groups, some grounds do exist for writing a shared history.

A major flaw in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* was its lack of curiosity or respect toward very complex and sensitive issues surrounding historical memory. The RCMP Review Team, on finding no evidence of an illegal conspiracy, seemed to jump immediately to the conclusion that Inuit were lying about the dog slaughter. Alternative explanations were left virtually unexplored.[78] The discussion in this section

of our review accepts that the RCMP had a legal rationale for killing most of the dogs its members disposed of from 1950 to 1970 and it accepts that the police doubted the wisdom of the government's centralization policy. However, our analysis also asserts that hundreds of Inuit suffered severe losses at the hands of government agents, including the police, because administrative policies were carried out in ways that were sometimes cruel and generally insensitive. Some cases probably constituted wrongdoing, such as the actions of a settlement manager in Igloolik who without warning killed the dogs of a man who had just arrived to trade. The killings were so extensive in Pangnirtung in 1966 that RCMP headquarters authorities themselves cautioned the constable against a repetition.[79] (In addition, the likelihood that some or all of the dog slaughter constituted a breach of the government's fiduciary obligations towards Inuit[80] is examined by the QTC in another paper.) In other words, while technically the police generally acted within the law, Inuit do have legitimate grounds to claim that there was wrongdoing, possibly including illegal acts by individuals.[81]

The two parties in this debate were so obviously focussed on different aspects of their shared past that there is no need to assume that either side is lying. The RCMP look at their investment of time and energy and the hardships they endured to bring the South into the North—that is, to be the vanguard of official Canadian appropriation of Inuit lands while delivering services to Inuit, including those who were not ready to follow the modernist program. Indeed, until about the mid-1960s, many RCMP had a particular soft spot for Inuit who were not ready to join the "modern world." Inuit, on the other hand, are still weighing—and being weighed down by—their memories of the sacrifices, losses, shock and bewilderment at the sudden end in a few years to a way of life that evolved over centuries. The problems of interpreting these overlapping histories relate not so much to law enforcement as to culture and memory, as well as to individuals' places in what continues to be a divided society.

In a section of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* dealing with the reliability of witnesses, the RCMP Review Team's attacks on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, the Inuit who testified before it and the commissioners, went well beyond the boundaries of respectful disagreement. The implication of that passage[82] was that Inuit witnesses were clever enough to deceive a retired Chief Justice of Canada, but not clever enough to fool the RCMP Review Team. At no point did the RCMP Review Team deal with the fact that since 1997 the oral history of Aboriginal peoples has a privileged place in Canadian jurisprudence where it can be admitted as proof whether or not it is corroborated by written records.[83]

In a brief and puzzling digression,[84] the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* dealt with the difficulty of using eyewitness evidence, citing only a very brief article in an RCMP house organ, the *Gazette.* "The article was intended to caution police officers to exercise considerable care in accepting eye-witness testimony, even in relation to recent events." This two-page article summarized the expertise of two American psychologists and denounced "instituting legal [i.e. criminal] proceedings solely on the basis of eyewitness testimony."

Although the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* said little in an organized way about the strengths or even the weaknesses of individual and collective memories of historical events, it did include and base its conclusions on written and oral interviews with retired RCMP and other non-Inuit northerners. Some of this material showed evidence of distortion, suppression and exaggeration. Later in this section, three examples will illustrate this point.

Collective Memory and Public Policy

Collective memory is one of the terms social scientists use to describe and analyse how the past is understood and explained by groups of people, either through their formal state institutions or as families, religious communities, local and regional units, and social and political movements.

(Public memory, historical consciousness and memory studies are related phrases.) In the case of the sled dogs, two affected communities—a) the RCMP and its veterans, and b) Inuit whose dogs were shot and the children and advocates of those Inuit—are using forms of collective memory to explain the past and solidify support in the present. In doing so, their historical statements and inquiries have defined separate and rather hostile ways of dealing with rival histories of the same events. The QTC's mandate, which involves reconciliation as well as truth, encourages a different perspective, one that may allow all parties to see the complexity of the mid-century centralization of people into the present 13 settlements.

Studies of collective memory draw on history, psychology and other academic disciplines, but they are largely concerned not with what academic researchers do, but with "the beliefs of everyone else."[85] Not only do different communities have their own ways of understanding the past, but also those understandings can change, especially if they were based on inadequate or misleading information. As new evidence emerges or new developments take place, people come to believe that they must change their former views of trends, causes and effects. Memory studies may also deal with aspects of "forgetting" or delayed disclosure.[86] For example, shame, grief and other emotions connected with the disempowering changes in their way of life induced many Inuit to stay silent about the loss of their dogs until quite recently. Although memory studies originate in post-1918 reflections on the Great War, and much of the theoretical groundwork was laid by research on the Shoah, studies of collective memory have taken root in Canada in recent decades and have begun to be used to analyse many dimensions of how Canadians use their pasts. As Roger Simon of Toronto pointed out in a volume of essays edited by Peter Seixas,

> *Aboriginal communities across North America have been producing written and oral testimony as part of an attempt to contribute to a historical awareness and understanding of the history of Aboriginal-settler relations and the its [sic] impact on the lives lived in its wake. A central aspect of this history has been government initiated removal of native peoples from lands they had been living on for centuries.*[87]

Another contributor to the Seixas volume proposed a hierarchy of four types of historical consciousness, "each representing a different stance towards the past as a means of moral orientation in the present." Seixas summarized these:[88]

- The 'traditional' type: historical consciousness that supports the continuity of fixed and unchanging moral obligations, without acknowledging any significant change over time.
- The 'exemplary' type: it can draw on particular events and people from the past as a source of cultural universals, which apply across temporal change, as in the celebratory history of heroes to inspire strong character in the present.
- The 'critical" type: it turns towards the past in order to break from it, as in women's history that helps to undo the past's oppressive gender relations.
- The 'genetic' type: it can acknowledge the ongoing legacy of the past, at the same time that it comprehends radically changed present circumstances and mores.
- The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* was mainly concerned with the 'traditional' type of history, while the complaints of Inuit elders represented a step towards 'critical' history. The QTC's mandate favours a 'genetic' approach. This generally conforms to the encouragement Peter Seixas gave to people to make a commitment to certain values, including openness to change and acceptance of others, when using history, as they should in other public behaviour:
-

> *These requirements are particularly difficult to reconcile with practices of collective memory that seek to draw immutable boundaries round groups by establishing fixed identities based on biological differences or on moral codes rooted in the revelations of canonical texts. Some forms of historical consciousness that may have been acceptable for relatively homogenous cultures pose obstacles to the negotiation of inter-group relations and adaptation to rapid change that characterize postmodern global culture.*[89]

This does not imply that Canadians should be served an inoffensive, blurred consensus history. It is foreseeable that two different narratives of northern Canadian history will endure, one which remains optimistic about the future while still fully conscious of loss and injustice, the other preferring to praise past governments for whatever benefits they conferred. Yet Roger Simon has warned that study of difficult questions should reopen the way individuals and groups acknowledge the past. When people in the majority culture hear traumatic narratives, they need to "incorporate them into an intelligible past, while recognizing that there is an insistence in their stories that calls for reopening the present to reconsideration."[90] This may call for "a change in the way non-Aboriginals view their shared history with native peoples. For this change to happen, we will have to learn to listen differently, take the measure of our ignorance, and reassess the terms on which we are prepared to hear stories that might trouble the social arrangements on which we presume a collective future."[91] This kind of approach by all concerned, rather than a hardening of lines around legalistic interpretations of past behaviour, offers a better future for Nunavut.

Cst. Jack Grabowski and the Dogs of Pangnirtung, 1966

Memories of dog slaughter are strong in Pangnirtung. Many people from this district travelled to nearby Frobisher Bay to work in the 1950s and some of their dogs were shot during their stay. Later, a cyclical episode of canine distemper in 1961–1962 south of Pangnirtung evoked a much stronger reaction from the authorities than the same disease had done in Kimmirut a few years earlier. Many Inuit believed that some dogs had a good chance of surviving the distemper, but that police shot them unnecessarily while trying to stop the spread of the disease. Later, a well-documented culling of sled dogs in the settlement occurred in 1966. Reporting to "G" Division headquarters, Cst. Jack Grabowski stated, as quoted in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* and the RCMP Report to Parliament in 2005, that:

> *The dog population decreased rapidly over the past year. Some Eskimos disposed of their own dogs when they were able to purchase ski-doos, while a good number were destroyed in contravention to [sic] the Dog Ordinance. Referring to the latter, numerous requests were made by myself and members of this Detachment to the Eskimos to keep their dogs adequately tied, or penned. When these requests went unheeded I gave instructions that all dogs at large were to be shot, and in the period of slightly over one year, I would estimate that some 250 dogs have been shot. This too, does not seem to have the desired effect, as almost daily, dogs are still seen at large. A new approach to the apparent passive resistance of the Eskimo has been taken, whereby the owner will be sought out, and he will be prosecuted.*[92]

Grabowski had a keen interest in problem dogs. Jim Cumming, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) manager at the time, shared this observation with the RCMP Review Team in July 2005: "Cpl. Jack Grabowski on a Sunday shot probably five dogs. He stated that Cpl. Grabowski couldn't get out of his house at one point because of the dogs." But a woman who cooked for two decades at Pangnirtung's St. Luke's Hospital told the RCMP Review Team by telephone on October 25, 2005, that "She does not recall any RCMP members shooting dogs or even hearing that they shot dogs in the settlement."[93]

In these three first-hand accounts, a coherent view of a campaign to control loose dogs by shooting emerges only in the one contemporary document, which was written by the man responsible for it. By contrast, Mr. Cummings did not mention the campaign and gave a severely limited account of Cst. Grabowski's personal involvement in the actual shooting. He suggested that nothing out of the ordinary happened. The cook's statement may be technically true – she might have been oblivious to many things that happened in the settlement—but the three statements taken together suggest that memories—perhaps unintentionally—were adjusted after the fact to align the witness's statement with others who shared their place in society, and to avoid acknowledging the occurrence of things that were hurtful to Inuit.

Dust, Dogs and the Dump

One vocal participant who smoothed nothing over, but told his community's story from different points of view over time, was long-time Iqaluit resident and former mayor Bryan Pearson. In 1966 Mr. Pearson voiced his concern over the way dogs were being controlled to a reporter from the Star Weekly and in 1973 in the legislature he recalled his time on the community council as a time when, as he expressed it later, elected local authority dealt mainly with the three D's, "dust, dogs and the dump."[94]

> *Now, in just going over the history, when I first came North which was not very long ago, 1956, in a community like Frobisher a conflict had started, the conflict of the dogs, and Frobisher like many other communities was just one seething mass of dogs. They were everywhere, and of course shortly round about 1958 or 1959 regulations that existed were then enforced, and that was that nobody may leave his dog loose otherwise it would be shot. In 1959 I recall vividly seeing squads of cars going out on Sunday afternoon in particular with shotguns shooting dogs and in October of 1959 the RCMP in that month alone shot 280 dogs.*

> *These are facts, okay. And then this conflict went on for many, many years, because the hunters who were then the Eskimo people were coming into the community and bringing their families in from the camps. They were coming in with their dogs and dog teams and these regulations were being enforced in all of these communities. Regulations said, "tie up your dogs or we will shoot them," to which they would reply, "well we cannot tie them up, they have nothing to eat, they have got to scavenge around to get food." That is where one of the greatest conflicts that ever happened in the North began when the Eskimo people, I do not know if the same applies here, but the Eskimo people in the Eastern Arctic then began to wonder about the wonderful white man and his wonderful system. And gradually we eliminated the dogs, eliminated them completely. There are no dog teams in any community on Baffin Island, the nearest dog team that I know of is at Igloolik.*

In his communications with the RCMP Review Team in 2005, Mr. Pearson was critical of Inuit complaints against the dog slaughter and sceptical of individual complaints. His communications were especially critical of the interpretation that dogs were slaughtered to force people into settlements. He does not seem to have repeated his comments about "one of the greatest conflicts that ever happened in the North" or his earlier indication that the way the authorities handled dogs discredited white people in the view of Inuit. The different views, expressed three or four decades apart, underline how in speaking of past events, a person may choose different facts and present a different point of view, in response to a changed context.

While the later statements do not directly contradict the earlier, they have a very different tone. Closer to the events, Mr. Pearson spoke of the dog killings as bungled and likely to discredit the qallunaat in the eyes of Inuit generally. More recently, he has emphasized the dangerous nature of sled dogs and has singled out individual complaints as unjustified. While his statement to the RCMP Review Team did not repudiate any of the facts in his earlier discourse on the dog issue, the tone of these recent statements is very different.

The Most Famous White Woman in Eastern Arctic History

Pond Inlet resident Rosie Katsak told the QTC of an experience her father Ishmael related to her. Before his recent death, he explained to his daughter how his dog team was destroyed by a Mounted Policeman when Ishmael moved his family into the settlement, probably in the late 1960s.

> *[A]ll of his dogs were killed by RCMP. He told me that one of the RCMP's wife was attacked by a dog team and then that the police was shocked, so he asked the police to shoot all the dog teams—that is what he told me.*
>
> *All of his dogs were killed by police. Somewhere in Nunavut police's wife was killed by the dog team …*
>
> *I think it was when they starting [sic] to move people to a larger community when that lady was killed.*[95]

The policeman's wife did not die in the 1960s. In fact, Maggie Agnes Clay[96] died of her wounds more than 30 years before and more than 1200 kilometres away from where Ishmael's dog team was sacrificed in her memory. But Ishmael was not the only person to learn a version of her story. It spread across the Arctic, a vital part of both the oral and written culture of the qallunaat in the North. The incident appeared repeatedly in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, almost always recounted by qallunaat and always employed as sensationalist evidence that sled dogs can be lethal. Maggie Clay was possibly the only adult killed in Nunavut by sled dogs in the past century, but her story lives on. She is the most famous white woman in the history of the Eastern Arctic, where she lived for less than a month.

The story is brief, and tragic. During her first month in the Arctic, while her husband was away on a long patrol by boat, Maggie Clay walked out to feed or play with the dogs on the beach near the detachment house. For unknown reasons, the dogs knocked her down and stripped the flesh from one leg before people intervened. With no medical personnel within a thousand miles, two of the half-dozen white people on hand amputated the victim's leg with her own consent, but she died shortly afterwards. After the mauling, as the report to RCMP headquarters stated, "of course all dogs connected in the matter were at once shot."[97]

The RCMP Review Team used the story of Maggie Clay's demise as a basis for one of their many criticisms of Inuit oral tradition.[98] The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* commented that one Inuk living as far away as Gjoa Haven, Cst. Mark Toiak, had heard the story in outline. In October 2005, Cst. Toiak told the RCMP Review Team that

> *His father, a local Shaman, always advised his son to tie up his dogs in settlements where the white men lived or they would shoot his dogs if they were loose. His father also told him that many years ago loose dogs attacked and killed the wife of a Mountie in Chesterfield Inlet and that the RCMP then shot all dogs in the settlement … He does not know the year, or in fact if this actually happened.*

Based on a seven-page internal report on Arctic history in 2005, the RCMP Review Team concluded that not all the dogs in the settlement had been killed, but only a few teams that were on the beach at the time of the attack. The review continued,

> *This confirms that oral history is not immutable. In fact, on the following page, the facts [sic] of the killing of the sled dogs involved in the mauling of the wife of S/Sgt. Clay in Chesterfield Inlet in 1924 are presented. Compare that with the oral history account given by a former Inuit RCMP member, which he heard from his father, a shaman, that all of the dogs in Chesterfield Inlet were killed as a result of this attack.*

The disparagement of oral history continued in a footnote: "According to the internal report, only the 19 dogs on the beach were destroyed, and they were owned by the RCMP, the HBC, and the Special Constables. The story could have become embellished over time, becoming a well-recited and universally accepted 'tundra tale.'"[99]

The RCMP Review Team's concern with "facts" did not extend to consulting all the available documentation. It would have raised concerns about how few dogs there were in the Chesterfield Inlet "settlement" in late September 1924, as well as raising other doubts about the superiority of written reports to "tundra tales."

Undoubtedly sled dogs can be dangerous to humans, especially to vulnerable people such as small children, but the official RCMP report on the death of Maggie Clay contained this significant phrase: "A catastrophe of this nature was anticipated by no one, as there is no record of a grown person ever being attacked before, in this District."[100] Nor was the incident repeated: in 1961 a senior officer wrote that there had been no subsequent attack on a member's wife or child in the North.[101] It is therefore important to understand how this horrific but isolated incident became a landmark of collective memory for 80 years.

First, it is not surprising how quickly the story spread. It received newspaper coverage as soon as news reached Prince Albert and Ottawa, the headquarters going so far as to issue a press release. Maggie Clay was soon memorialized by a stone cross at Chesterfield Inlet and by a plaque in the chapel at the RCMP Depot in Regina. A prolific American writer of non-fiction gained access to the official file to include the story of her death in a book called *The Silent Force*, published in 1927.[102] In 1930, the woman who preceded Maggie in the married quarters at Chesterfield Inlet retold the story in a published memoir. There must have been many unofficial channels of communication as well. A 1936 article in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* stated—somewhat inaccurately—that "a woman … in 1924, was eaten alive at Chesterfield when she fell and hurt herself."[103] A senior departmental

official assured a salivating journalist that this was indeed "based on actual facts."[104] The story continued to be told and retold over the years. It was cited repeatedly in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, rarely with much detail and seldom with any indication by the report's authors that only a single incident was being referred to, over and over again.[105]

It is instructive to identify questions that are generally not asked, either in the literature or elsewhere. First of all, unlike the official report and the Inuit memory, very few press or book accounts referred to what happened to the dogs: authors were quite rightly preoccupied with the human victim. Second, from the very beginning, there was a common aversion to assigning blame to anyone, including the dog owners and the victim herself. The official report carefully made it clear that, apart from the fact that sled dogs were not known to attack adults, these dogs were very well fed and in excellent condition. In other words, the detachment had not abused or neglected its animals, which perhaps could have explained aggressive behaviour. The unwanted inference might be that Maggie Clay somehow brought the accident about by her own carelessness, but this is only very slyly suggested in the memoir by Luta Munday, the previous RCMP wife at Chesterfield. She mentioned her brief meeting with Maggie Clay in a chapter entitled "The Dogs—My Greatest Friends." The implication was that Mrs. Munday got along very well with these sled dogs, as most sensible people would.[106]

Intriguingly, it was not until 2004 that information was published hinting that the absent S/Sgt. Clay might have inadvertently contributed to his wife's tragedy.[107] A biography of one of the men on the spot, Corporal Stallworthy, reported the victim's account of her encounter with the dogs. "She hadn't been in the least afraid of them as they ran and jumped playfully around her. But it was the black dog Clay had brought from Labrador that had snatched at her coat, then took a nip at her leg. Then she knew she was in trouble." And she insisted that the dogs involved in the attack be shot. Stallworthy and Petty did this and Norman Snow, the HBC manager who helped the missionary perform the amputation, shot a number of his dogs too. The detachment and the HBC suffered from a severe lack of transport until a dozen more dogs could be brought in from Labrador the following spring.

It is quite possible that not all the dogs were shot. The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* speculated that dogs belonging to Inuit were shot and compensation was not paid, but this is unconfirmed. First-hand accounts suggest few or no Inuit were on site at the time and according to Luta Munday, there was only one privately owned dog. It is not clear whether the Mission, the only other likely sled dog owner at Chesterfield Inlet, actually possessed any and if so whether they were shot. The purpose of this lengthy digression on the tragedy of Maggie Clay is to underline the unfairness of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* in taking Mark Toiak's oral evidence to task even though his father's memory offered one of the very rare versions to preserve the fact that the dogs were destroyed and, bare of details though it was, lacked the inconsistencies and distortions that mar a number of qallunaat publications on the subject before 2004.[108]

Summary of Public Memory Issues in the Case of the Sled Dogs

The RCMP Review Team gave only the most superficial treatment to problems of witness reliability. It paid even less attention to the issues of why communities remember the historical facts that they do and retell them (or suppress the retelling of them) in ways that are particular to culture and local circumstances. The RCMP Review Team exhibited several different approaches to the use of evidence. The testimony of Inuit whose dogs were killed was generally undervalued because they were not specific enough to warrant laying charges with a high probability of obtaining a conviction, as if a reticence or inability to remember precise details of time, place and names deprived the memory of all truth and value. The report maintained a consistent scepticism towards the oral history of Inuit while neglecting to comment on inconsistencies within the similar evidence provided by non-Inuit. The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* seemed to assume that because an ordinance existed authorizing police to kill dogs in certain circumstances, all killings that occurred met those circumstances and were therefore justified and, by implication, the fault of the dogs' owners.

The underlying weakness in the use of evidence, however, is the odd mixture of a law enforcement approach to Inuit accusations of wrongdoing and a "collective memory" approach to RCMP image and memory. The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* showed more interest in glorifying the RCMP's service in the Arctic than in trying to understand the harshness with which change was imposed when the government's policy swung from dispersing Inuit in the 1950s to concentrating them in settlements in the 1960s. Both versions of the history of this period contain substantial elements of truth. These divergent histories do not exist in isolation from the societies that nourish them. They reinforce the group identities of different elements in the population, chiefly those for whom Nunavut is a frontier to be colonized and others for whom it is already a homeland.

It is obvious that these two groups experienced change differently in the past and will remember it differently in the future. Canadians as a whole would not be well served by a history that lets one of these versions drown out the other. They will be better served by an approach that acknowledges the ongoing legacy of the past, and at the same time chooses carefully from differing memories to meet the needs of both groups to deal with present circumstances in a shared future.

PUBLIC RECORDS AND RESEARCH ISSUES

Loss of Unique Historical Community Records

The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* missed an opportunity to broaden and deepen Canadians' understanding of the part their national police force played in administering the Arctic around the middle of the 20th century. In addition, the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* provided an incoherent explanation of how so much potentially relevant documentation came to be destroyed.

For several generations, RCMP detachments created what were almost the only public records of the local, regional and national affairs of communities in the Baffin Region. Because there were no separate municipal or territorial public bodies in that region, the whole of public life – to the extent that there was any—passed through the office of the RCMP. This gives the detachment records a historical importance much greater than police records anywhere south of 60°. Yet it appears that the great majority of these records are gone, destroyed along with other paperwork considered to be of transitory value, which no government office can or should keep for long. Although documenting the killing of sled dogs is important to many today, it may have been regarded as "routine or not of historical value, either at the RCMP or by Archives Staff" two or more decades ago.[109]

According to a small inventory in the Library and Archives of Canada (LAC), each detachment must have created considerable documentation every year. This judgement is based not only on the survival of RCMP material in other fonds (notably patrol reports and correspondence in LAC's RG85, Northern Administration Branch), but also on inventories of a very small selection of "G" Division (Arctic) records, which were transferred in the 1990s to the National Archives (now the Library and Archives Canada). "These records include operational records, letterbooks, daily journals, daily diaries. Some of the records in this series are from such Northern Detachments as Lake Harbour, Chesterfield Inlet, Bache Peninsula and Fort Resolution."[110] The Lake Harbour [Kimmirut] records include daily diaries from the years 1935–1960, which apparently were created in Kimmirut, but were collected by "G" Division in Ottawa. The same inventory refers to "The monthly, weekly and patrol reports of the divisions concerning their day to day activities [which] are located in the Official correspondence sub-series, part of the Commissioner's office series, (RG18-B-1)." Such material is extremely sparse in the LAC's inventories of RCMP Arctic records. The inference is that these few volumes were kept simply as a sample of what was once typical, but is now lost.

Useful information survived in hands other than those of the RCMP. Government departments received information from each other and the chance of a particular document surviving, somewhere, is better than if only one copy had existed. So while researchers might never find the local RCMP records that document that the RCMP destroyed 286 dogs in Iqaluit in 1958, the tally itself has survived in the records of a sister department.[111] In addition, the RCMP Review Team sought additional records—and created valuable new ones through interviews—to fill some of the gaps. Nevertheless, QTC researchers believe there would have been public benefit for Nunavut, for the Force and for Canadians generally, if more effort had been made to inventory records that are still in detachment offices and in private hands. It would not be possible to release all records immediately to the public, but a more visible commitment to curating the public record would be a benefit. In this vein, it is unfortunate that the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* gave such cloudy explanations of the destruction of records.

Disposition of Records under the *National Archives Act*

The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* approached the apparent destruction of important public records defensively, strongly asserting that no records were destroyed to cover up wrongdoing, and that numerous detachment records, and perhaps some headquarters records, were destroyed to comply with a federal law. In this section, the QTC research team has kept an open mind concerning the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report's* assertion that no incriminating records were destroyed. Once a document is destroyed, its importance can only be assessed through discovery of copies or references to its contents in some other reliable source. QTC researchers cannot prove that there was incriminating material in the wide range of documents that are thought to have been destroyed.[112]

The RCMP Review Team also asserted that a large number of records were destroyed because this was required under federal legislation, namely the *National Archives Act* of 1987 and the relevant federal acts and policies that preceded it. In this version of events, the RCMP was merely performing a duty imposed on it by legislation. The QTC research team found different explanations of the working of that Act, which indicate that responsibility for destroying Nunavut community public records took place under the authority of the RCMP itself, though generally with advice from the National Archives.

Destruction of public records is one of the most necessary and least understood aspects of public administration. The benefits of retaining certain records are obvious not only to historians, but to anyone needing to ascertain a chain of operational decisions affecting public or private interests. This should be especially evident when the records relate to Aboriginal people, towards whom the government has a fiduciary duty. But the cost of retaining records is also high, both with regard to physical control (including storage and a tracking system that allows retrieval of a specific box in a reasonable time) and to intellectual control (knowing what is in each box and why it is being kept). In 1980, passage of the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act* greatly increased the cost of intellectual control because it exposed departments to the obligation to search their holdings for a variety of new and often sensitive reasons. In recent years, more than 95 percent of government paperwork is routinely destroyed when it is thought to have neither operational use nor historical value. With such a large proportion destroyed, sceptical citizens may easily believe that the destruction served a corrupt purpose. The QTC research team has no evidence of inappropriate motives for destroying RCMP records, but deplores the loss of so much historical material that apparently took place.

The RCMP's description of its records disposal processes is not consistent with an explanation of that policy given by the National Archivist, Ian Wilson, in 2000.[113] The records in question, created between 1950 and 1975, had to be managed under the authority of a series of federal policies and laws.[114] According to general principles explained by Wilson, records that were under RCMP control in 1950, and all records created by the Force after that date, have been subject to administrative controls called "scheduling," which means "taking official inventories in order to manage the life cycle of records." Only since1987 has the National Archives possessed authority to forbid the destruction of records it deemed historical, or to take possession of them.

Otherwise, departments and agencies of the federal government have always had ultimate responsibility for deciding what to retain and what to destroy. It is apparent that some local RCMP records were either shipped elsewhere or destroyed locally, possibly after quite a short time.[115] If the National Archives did not consider a record to be of national significance, the creating department still had to evaluate whether it was important to keep for its own business processes, including accountability. As Dr. Wilson explained "when I authorize government institutions to carry out their records disposal plans … I am not ordering the destruction of the remaining records."[116] When the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* described destruction of operational records, it described something that was probably *permitted* by law, but even this cannot be convincingly shown from the selection of evidence in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report.*

Dr. Wilson's explanation published in 2000 gives readers a somewhat different view of departments' responsibility for destroying records than the one offered in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*.[117] That report asserted that "the review team found absolutely no evidence of records being improperly destroyed." But because of the nature of cooperation between archivists and departments through the scheduling process, it would be hard to define what was "improper". The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* alluded to the existence of schedules, but the Review Team did not provide any information concerning their contents, so it remains unclear whether they included a full range of detachment records surviving at that time and, if so, whether items deemed not historic or archival by the National Archives were in fact destroyed.

Regrettably, it was possible in that period to destroy information that was historically important or of continuing business value because, as Dr. Wilson acknowledged, archival staff were not always adequately prepared: "notably over the last twenty years or so, we have been either avoiding or ignoring the tough decisions involved in the undertaking of records destruction … by records managers often without appropriate support."[118]

In addition, decisions about historical value were made far from the sites where the documents were created. Because the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* gave no information about the contents of the RCMP records schedules, readers also lack information on what documentation originally existed, or what disposition was made of it. This comment says nothing about motives. As the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* asserted, the destruction may well have been motivated by the high cost of management and not by worries about what the records might reveal. [119]

The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* also cited an unrelated passage in the *National Archives Act* to suggest erroneously that the destruction of records under departmental control was somehow under the authority of the National Archivist. In fact the subsection quoted (4 [3]) relates to records already under National Archives control and thus has no relevance to the detachment records under discussion. The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* also alleged that records relating to destruction of dogs in Pangnirtung in 1955 "would have been destroyed in 1957, in accordance with the policies established between the National Archivist and the RCMP." But the RCMP in 1957 could not act in accordance with legislation passed thirty years later. And it is equally misleading for the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* to continue, "The destruction of certain RCMP records was done in accordance with its statutory obligations, pursuant to the *National Archives of Canada Act*."[120]

For the sake of better historical understanding, it would have been desirable for the RCMP Review Team to research and describe the records schedules that were created over the years, along with lists of which records were, in fact, destroyed. The QTC's researchers believe that these record schedules do exist and that disclosure of all relevant decisions could help to clear the air. The RCMP had a statutory right to destroy records, but it was not obliged to do so. The destruction that is thought to have taken place was unfortunate. In addition, if any records have survived in detachment files, in private hands or in hitherto-unsearched places in the National Capital Region, knowledge of their existence and a plan for their management would be welcome. They would not only help Canadians understand the hardships Inuit experienced, they would also enrich our understanding of the contributions of Canada's national police force to sovereignty and effective occupation on the frontiers of Canadian expansion in the mid-20th century.

What was Missed?

The RCMP Review Team reported having read an estimated 42,000 pages of files, publications and similar information sources. Though substantial, this needs to be put into perspective. It is equivalent to 140 books or—more relevant here—perhaps as few as 20 archival boxes.[121] For many historical studies—academic or governmental accountability research—20 boxes would be little more than a good start. The sources cited, for example, did not include departmental correspondence concerning the Eastern Arctic Patrol. This series contains first-hand comments by a variety of observers, among which we located a document from 1959 that was extremely critical of the RCMP's conduct in dog control. The volume also documents apparent cruelty and misdeeds from which the RCMP evidently did not protect Inuit, including this statement from the DEW Line site at Qikiqtarjuaq:

> *Broughton Island: The Station Chief, Mr. Al. Watson said that there was a dog problem in the area because the dogs were breaking into the food supplies. He had warned the Eskimos to tie up their dogs or else he would have to shoot them. He had already shot several and received no complaints from the Eskimos.*[122]

Mr. Watson had reasons for acting as he did, but he was probably not a Dog Officer under the *Dog Ordinance* and his actions—taking place 200 kilometres from the nearest police detachment—seem irregular. This case from Qikiqtarjuaq, like other evidence in these and related files, helps illustrate the causes of mistrust between Inuit and all government agents, mistrust in which the RCMP were inevitably embroiled even when they were not on the scene or were individually blameless in specific cases.

The review of secondary literature could also have been differently handled. In particular, the review of anthropological writing is wrong to say, "The silence of academia on the subject of systematic dog slaughters by the RCMP is a strong indicator that these allegations cannot be substantiated."[123] This is not necessarily true: anthropologists, like other social scientists, pursue a particular research agenda and do not necessarily digress, especially on subjects that are apt to offend one party or another in a dispute. (It is also possible that dog officers, including police, were careful not to shoot dogs when visiting scholars were around.) Furthermore, Toshio Yatsushiro of McGill University, whose work appeared in the bibliography of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report,* wrote in some detail and with sympathy for the Inuit point of view on the Iqaluit dog killings of the 1950s.[124] John and Irma Honigmann noted that in 1963 the Iqaluit radio station broadcast warnings against letting dogs run at large, but did so almost exclusively in English. Also relevant to the *RCMP Sled Dog Report*'s concern with the reputation of the Force is John Matthiasson's *Living on the Land*, which addresses Inuit–RCMP relations, and which the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* did not mention.[125]

Future users of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* will be hindered by the RCMP Review Team's practice of reproducing documents without indicating their provenance. The bulk of the quoted material from official records is not linked to any archival references – an elementary failure in a research project of this kind. While QTC researchers do not challenge the careful transcription of these documents, neither historical scholarship nor Canadian courts accept such casual presentation of evidence. To have evidentiary value, a document must be clearly attributed, on its face or on its back, to a specific archival fonds, box and file. Scholars would also find fault with the practice of transcribing a document without the handwritten marginal comments that indicate its file location, cross-filing, initialling by those who have read it, and detailed minutes by the recipient and other officials with expertise or authority on the subject. For example, Paul Godt's indignant account of the dog slaughter by police at Apex in 1959 is annotated by numerous colleagues in Ottawa, all of whom blamed Inuit for the difficulties there. At a minimum, researchers have a right to an accurate, detailed reference to each transcribed or quoted document so that they may locate it, verify the transcription, check the marginalia and examine other documents in the same file in their own pursuit of additional information.

A more comprehensive review of the existing literature and a full citation of manuscript sources would not have required the RCMP Review Team to change any conclusions, but should have suggested a change of approach. Profound questions remain to be answered about the conflict between Inuit traditional practices and Canadian law, and the inability of the federal government and its police force before 1975 to resolve these conflicts in a less confrontational and ultimately harmful fashion. The complexity of these issues is apparent in much of the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*'s resource material, but the discussion stopped well short of explaining the history of the period.

Summary of Issues Related to Documentation

The QTC research team developed considerable respect for the effort and accomplishment of the RCMP Review Team in locating and arranging documents that may contribute to a more careful examination and a more subtle understanding of past relations between the RCMP and Inuit in the Baffin Region. However, QTC researchers could not help noticing how much of this information, if differently analysed, could contribute to at least tentative explanations of the profound differences in outlook between Inuit on one side and police and other government agents on the other in their approach to the enforcement of the *Dog Ordinance*.

Conclusion

The 2006 *RCMP Sled Dogs* report was not a conventional work of history. It sacrificed broad analysis to its pursuit of limited interpretations of complex events and their consequences. It closely focussed on reports of a widespread slaughter of sled dogs in the 1950s and 1960s. Much of the analysis was directed not at understanding how Inuit and Canadian society and governance worked in this era, but toward discrediting Inuit memories and interpretations of how and why dogs were killed by the authorities, chiefly the RCMP, at the time.

The report has methodological and interpretive flaws in areas including the explanation of record retention practices of the RCMP, and in its failure to document the cases, probably very numerous, when police or other dog officers may have killed dogs without complying with the letter of the *Dog Ordinance*, especially regarding warnings, seizure and impoundment. It was also cursory and dismissive towards the strengths and limitations of written and oral evidence after the lapse of 40 or more years, denying the validity of most Inuit oral evidence yet presenting the views of non-Inuit with little negative comment. The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* neglected, throughout its considerable length, to look for deeper meanings or nuances in the way events were recorded as they occurred, written about afterwards or recalled by participants after the passage of decades.

For these and other reasons, the 2006 *RCMP Inuit Sled Dog* report significantly delayed the process of seeking a balanced history of how different state and private actors took part in the great transformation of Inuit life in the Baffin Region between 1950 and 1970. The effort invested in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* therefore delayed the use of elements of that shared history in the cause of reconciliation.

ENDNOTES

1 Quoted in: Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), *The RCMP and the Inuit Sled Dogs (Nunavut and Northern Quebec: 1950–1970)*, 2006, p.148.

2 Toshio Yatsushiro, "The Changing Eskimo; A study of wage employment and its consequences among the Eskimos of Frobisher Bay, Baffin Island," *The Beaver; magazine of the north* (Summer 1962), pp. 19–26.

3 Walter Stewart, "The shameful way we treat our Eskimos," *Star Weekly* (June 25, 1966); see also below, "Dust, Dogs and the Dump."

4 See for example, testimony of Eena Angmarlik, QTC interview QTPA03, 15 May 2008.

5 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 635–36, quoting an article in *Nunatsiaq News* that has not been found in the online archive; Annette Bourgeois, "Acknowledging History, the RCMP Resolves to do Better - Nunavut's Commanding Officer Chris Bothe Says the Force is Preparing an Apology for Actions Committed by Members in the Past," *Nunatsiaq News* (February 26, 1999), pp.1–2.

6 Francis Lévesque, "Les Inuit, Leurs Chiens et l'administration Nordique, de 1950 à 2007. Anthropologie d'une revendication inuit contemporaine" (PhD thesis, Université Laval, 2008). This paragraph draws extensively on chapter 1, pp. 68–109.

7 Jim Bell, "Solid oral research needed on dog slaughter issue," *Nunatsiaq News* (August 30, 2002), accessed online 7 Apr. 2010 at http://www.nunatsiaq.com/archives/nunavut020802/news/editorial/editorial.html#aug30.

8 Quoted in *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 5. Also available on the House of Commons website, http://www2.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?DocId=1688732&Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=38&Ses=1, accessed 30 April 2010.

9 This is stated at different places in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, beginning at page 1 in the Executive Summary: "The destruction of individual Inuit sled dogs, and other dogs, was undertaken by RCMP members for public health and safety reasons, or because of the need to contain dog disease epidemics, or at the request of the owner." A similar sentence in the conclusion to the brief final report adds the words "in accordance with the law" after the reference to safety reasons. Canada. Royal Canadian Mounted Police. *Final Report: RCMP Review of Allegations Concerning Inuit Sled Dogs*. http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/pubs/ccaps-spcca/pdf/sled-traineau-dogs-chiens-final-eng.pdf, accessed 28 Dec. 2009, pp. 23-24.

10 The five points outlined here were repeated a number of times through the lengthy report. Sample references are provided here for each: (1) *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 1. (2) Ibid., pp. 2, 12, 57–63. (3) *Final Report* p. 15 and *Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 274–311, *passim*, annual reports. (4) pp. 660, 663 for Northern Affairs employees, pp. 471–72. (5) p. 670.

11 A different law, a provincial Act, was in effect in Nunavik.

12 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 113–21, 251–61.

13 The Makivik Corporation and Quebec government also appointed a retired judge to inquire and report into dog killings in Nunavik. See http://www.makivik.org/index.php/en/current/dog-slaughter, accessed online 22 Dec. 2009.

14 Accessed online 3 Dec. 2009 at www.qtcommission.com/actions/GetPage.php?pageId=63.

15 Through the cooperation of RCMP Commissioner W.J.S. Elliott, QTC researchers reviewed the evidence gathered by the RCMP Review Team in 2005–2006. Our review provided insight into some of the internal discussions within the Force over gathering and interpreting these aspects of its history.

16 P. Seixas, "Introduction," *Theorizing Historical Consciousness* (University of Toronto Press, 2004), p. 10.

17 By contrast, criminal convictions require proof beyond reasonable doubt.

18 See Northwest Territories, Council of the Northwest Territories, "An Ordinance Respecting Dogs," Chapter 2, 1949 (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, King's Printer, 1950). Among other inappropriate provisions it was enacted that "No person shall have a dog in harness within any settlement or within one half-mile of any settlement in the Territories unless the dog has a muzzle or is under the custody and control of a person over sixteen years of age who is capable of ensuring that the dog will not harm the public or create a nuisance"—absurd restrictions for Inuit visiting trading posts. Section 9A of the revised ordinance of 30 Nov. 1950 (Northwest Territories, Council of the Northwest Territories, "An Ordinance to Amend an Ordinance Respecting Dogs," Chapter 18, 1950 (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, Queen's Printer, 1953) allowed dog officers to destroy dogs they were unable to seize, without setting a standard for determining what "unable to seize" meant.

19 This is evident in much of the correspondence from retired members in *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 514–615. See also John Matthiasson, *Living Off the Land; Change among the Inuit of Baffin Island* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1992), pp. 91–118.

20 J. Bennett and S. Rowley, eds., *Uqalurait; An Oral History of Nunavut* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 126-37; see additional material on relations with First Nations, pp. 137–42.

21 See W.F. King, *Title of Canada to the Islands North of the Mainland of Canada* (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1905); along Qikiqtani shores, these acts were surprisingly rare and scattered.

22 The Hudson's Bay Company had considerable de facto authority, especially evident in 1933–1947 when its vessels carried the government freight, and its post managers had radios, which the other agencies did not. See C.S. Mackinnon, "Canada's Eastern Arctic Patrol 1922–68," *Polar Record* 27 (161), pp. 93–101; also an unpublished paper by P. Goldring, "The Triumvirate at Pangnirtung," Canadian Historical Association Annual Meeting, 1989.

23 See Paul Groarke, "Review: Legal Volumes from the Arctic College's Interviewing Inuit Elders Series" *Osgoode Hall Law Journal* 47:3 (2009) pp. 787–806 as well as a volume he reviewed, Mariano Aupilaarjuk *et al*., *Perspectives on Traditional Law*, vol. 2, *Interviewing Inuit Elders*, ed. by Jarich Oosten, Frédéric Laugrand & Wim Rasing (Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College, 1999), also available online at http://www.nac.nu.ca/OnlineBookSite/vol2/chapters.html.

24 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 435, 669.

25 See for example, former Asst. Commissioner Robert C. Currie's condemnation of the government's "abhorrent" High Arctic relocations program, *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 636–37 and 685–86.

26 Although much of the material is scattered and interlaced with commentary, the pages from 199 to 452 (32.8 percent of the total) are mainly reproduced excerpts of archival material.

27 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 7.

28 *Oxford Canadian Dictionary* (1998:255) defines *chronology* as "a the arrangement of events, dates, etc. in the order of their occurrence. b a table or document displaying this."

29 The Minister's letter does not define "history," but it must mean something more comprehensive than the "chronology" that she also asked for. *The Oxford Canadian Dictionary* (1998), p. 669 gives several meanings for "history" of which the relevant ones are "2a the study of past events, esp. human affairs. b the total accumulation of past events, esp. relating to human affairs or to the accumulation of developments connected with a particular nation, person, thing, etc. *(the history of Canada; the history of astronomy; has a history of illness)* ... 4a a systematic or critical account of or research into a past event, development, movement, etc. *(the history of broadcasting)* ...

30 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 674.

31 *Oxford Canadian Dictionary* (1998), p. 1546.

32 For comparison, consider the explanation by the J. W. McConnell Foundation, which funds "programs that support Canadians in building a more inclusive, sustainable and resilient society." Its projects " are often complex, collaborative efforts that involve trying out, testing and implementing new approaches. We have found that such innovative endeavours typically take longer to set up and operate than initially planned, and that patience and perseverance in supporting them is essential for their eventual success." www.mcconnellfoundation.ca/default.aspx?page=6&NewsId=78&lang=en-US, accessed 24 Apr. 2009.

33 In the absence of either a chronology or an analytical history of the dog killings, it is important also to note that neither the Standing Committee nor the Minister called for reconciliation between Inuit and the RCMP. This silence may in effect have judged in advance that the RCMP would find that the dog killings were legal.

34 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 1–2.

35 The long duration makes redundant the RCMP Review Team's efforts to show that the RCMP in the North never had access to enough amunition to conduct the killings in a short period. See *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 121, 577, 665–66.

36 Ann McElroy, *Nunavut Generations; Change and Continuity in Canadian Inuit Communities* (Long Grove Ill.: Waveland Press, 2008).

37 Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 109 (Canadian Wildlife Service), Series B.1, Volume 407, File WLU 229 Part 1, "Dogs – Generally – Rabies and Distemper", Chapters 2 and 18. Section 2(e) defined "run at large:" "means to run off the premises of the owner either when the dog is not muzzled or when the dog is not under the control of any person." "Premises" is not defined.

38 In drawing attention to prestige as a factor promoting ownership of dogs, Van Norman missed the underlying importance of sled dogs in Inuit culture; these are explored in Francis Lévesque, "Les Inuit, Leurs Chiens Et L'administration," pp. 139–75.

39 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 364.

40 Autry National Center, Institute for the Study of the American West, Braun Research Library, Collection MS 212 (Toshio Yatsushiro), Box 2, File 44, transcript of interview with Joomii, E-7-444, 26 July 1959.

41 Autry National Center, Institute for the Study of the American West, Braun Research Library, Collection MS 212 (Toshio Yatsushiro), Box 2, File 44, transcript of interview with Halli, E-7-66, 29 Aug. 1959.

42 *The RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, at pp. 35–39, discusses the Inuit sled dog in Inuit culture. The complex and ambivalent role of dogs in qallunaat cultures is left unexplored.

43 Quoted in Toshio Yatsushiro, "The Changing Eskimo; a study of wage employment and its consequences among the Eskimos of Frobisher Bay, Baffin Island," *The Beaver* (Summer 1962), pp. 20–21. Yatsushiro's own gloss on the policy was that "the RC.M. Police detachment stationed in Frobisher Bay has been exterminating unleashed dogs owned by Eskimos, on the ground that such animals constitute a menace to the community, especially the white residents."

44 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 686, 46: "Many former members reported instances where they gave a lengthy explanation to the Inuit for a decision being made, only to witness the interpreter reduce it to several sentences. The assumption by the members was that the interpreter conveyed only the decision, not the explanation."

45 This is dealt with in detail below. The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* did not discuss how real risks are misrepresented and misunderstood by using unrepresentative examples. For a non-expert review of scientific literature on this subject, see Dan Gardner, *Risk: the Science of Politics and Fear* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2008), pp. 62–76.

46 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 327–28.

47 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 58–59.

48 See especially *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 226–27 where the Administrator of the Arctic discussed the RCMP's apparent reluctance to administer the *Dog Ordinance*; "My own feeling is that if the R.C.M. Police are asked to enforce the Ordinance, and agree to act, *they are likely to shoot stray dogs but would make little effort to round up and impound strays*. I would like to see a very serious effort made to have stray dogs impounded, and have the owners charged for their release." [Emphasis added.]

49 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 148–49.

50 The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* provides summaries of statements from newspapers and witnesses before Parliament; see especially pp. 113–21 and 123–45.

51 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 660.

52 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 663.

53 As noted above, the limited scope of this inquiry prevented discussion of how Inuit were involved in decisions affecting the treatment of their dogs. See *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 148.

54 See *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 516, "Members were so incensed by these allegations, reported in the media, that they came forward in significant numbers, simplifying the process of locating them."

55 Quoted in *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 635.

56 Two comments are needed here: it would be more accurate to say that positive and cordial relations are highly desirable but that relations remain ambivalent., and the word "alleged" is at odds with the good intentions shown in the rest of the statement.

57 Canada. Royal Canadian Mounted Police. *Final Report: RCMP Review of Allegations Concerning Inuit Sled Dogs*. http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/pubs/ccaps-spcca/pdf/sled-traineau-dogs-chiens-final-eng.pdf, accessed 28 Dec. 2009, pp. 23–24.

58 Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 109 (Canadian Wildlife Service), Series B.1, Volume 407, File WLU 229, Part 1, "Dogs—Generally—Rabies and Distemper," Chapter 18, An Ordinance to Amend an Ordinance Respecting Dogs, 30 Nov. 1950; see the "SCHEDULE Description of Areas" naming Lake Harbour and Frobisher Bay and any place within one quarter mile of any "dwelling" in the settlement.

59 Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 85 (Northern Affairs Program), Volume 1321, File 530-25, Part 5, "Dog Ordinance, NWT," letter from F.J.G. Cunningham, Director, to James R. Whitford, Welfare Teacher, 24 Dec. 1954. This letter is quoted at length because it is not in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* where logically it should appear with related correspondence at pp. 206–07, and because the issues of Inuit consent and Inuit culture raised in December 1954 were only weakly raised and then overturned in discussions about Iqaluit two years later. Cunningham's letter was drafted by his immediate subordinate, Chief of the Arctic Division Bent Sivertz, but the contents suggest input from Alex Stevenson or James Cantley.

60 "Read to and approved by Adams, Jacobson, Brown & Stevenson. F.J.G.C."

61 NWT Archives, Series G-79-003 Box 163, File 3, former Northern Administration Branch file 530-25-1, letter from H. Graham Ross, M.D. to B.G. Sivertz, 13 Nov. 1956.

62 NWT Archives, Series G-79-003, Box 163, File 3, former Northern Administration Branch file 530-25-2, B.G. Sivertz to Director [F. Cunningham], 9 Oct. 1956.

63 NWT Archives, Series G-1979-003, Box 163, File 3, Memorandum from A.F. Flucke, Northern Service Officer to Chief, Arctic Division, 5 Feb. 1957.

64 NWT Archives, Series G-1979-003, Box 163, File 3, RCMP Report forwarded by W.J. Fitzsimmons, Inspector, G Division, 4 March 1957.

65 NWT Archives, Series G-1979-003, Box 163, File 3, Letter from F.J.G. Cunningham, Director, to H.A. Larsen, Superintendent, Officer Commanding G Division, RCMP, 26 Nov. 1956; drafted by Sivertz, copies were sent to Flucke in Iqaluit and to medical officers of the DEW Line and the Indian and Northern Health Service.

66 Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 85 (Northern Affairs Program), Volume 1473, File 201-1-8, Part 6, "Reports re: Arctic Inspections," P. Godt, Acting Chief, Co-operative Development, Report, 21 May 1959, "Trip to Cape Dorset."

67 Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 85 (Northern Affairs Program), Series D-1-a, Volume 1220, File 530-25-2, Part 1, "Dog Officer—NWT (Appointments)," Memorandum from J.F. Delaute, A/Regional Administrator of the Arctic, 21 Sept. 1959.

68 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 225.

69 NWT Archives, Series G-1979-003, Box 183, File 4, Memorandum from C.M. Bolger, Administrator of the Arctic, to Deputy Commissioner of the NWT, with attachment, 8 Nov. 1960.

70 The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 14, notes that the RCMP Review Team believed it was overreaching its mandate by going into these matters. "The review team became aware of the magnitude of the work done by RCMP members in the north, including their key role in the Inuit sled dog vaccination program, much of which was virtually unknown to history. It was considered to be essential that the work done by the members to promote and preserve the Inuit culture be told, and accordingly, the scope of this report was expanded to this limited degree." The RCMP Review Team's narrow interpretation of its mandate has been commented on above.

71 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 633.

72 Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 18 (RCMP), Series 1985-86/048, Volume 55, File TA 500-8-1-11, Conditions Among Eskimos – Pangnirtung, Memo to Officer Commanding from H.A. Johnson, 1955. The annual RCMP reports on "Conditions Amongst the Eskimos" were required to report, for each detachment area, whether members felt that "loitering" was a problem. Loitering meant remaining at a trading post after completing the commercial purpose of the visit, and deserves its own study in the history of inter-cultural relations. See Adamee Veevee. Testimony before the QTC, Pangnirtung [QIPA13].

73 John Matthiasson, *Living on the Land*, especially pp. 91–129, "The coming of the Bureaucrats" and "A Changing Political Paradigm, and the Impact of New Statuses."

74 Figures derived from appendices in the annual report by the Advisory Committee on Northern Development on *Government Activities in the North*.

75 H. Brody, *The Other Side of Eden* (Vancouver and Toronto: Douglas and MacIntyre, 2000), p. 43.

76 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 14. The assertions in this paragraph were amply supported in the report by e-mails and interviews involving retired RCMP members who served in the North.

77 Getting this recognized is not a new problem. See the *Ottawa Journal* review of the Glassco Report in 1962: "It is disappointing, too, to see the Report show so little awareness of the role of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in the North. Such reference as is made is lacking [sic, i.e. *not* lacking] in accuracy, but there is no proper recognition of the RCMP's great work up there. The Mounties are more than mere police in the North and a tribute to them was in order." Undated clipping on file, circa mid-Nov. 1962, in Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 85 (Northern Affairs Program), Volume 1654, File NR1/1-12, Part 1.

78 One passage suggests that interpreters, usually special constables, passed along instructions, but not explanations or choices. See *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 46, 685.

79 For the Igloolik incident around 1959, see evidence of Maurice Arnatsiaq; for Pangnirtung, see the section below, "Cst. Jack Grabowski and the dogs of Pangnirtung, 1966."

80 Mr. Justice J-J Croteau has concluded that there were breaches of the fiduciary responsibility in Nunavik.

81 The question of whether there is "wrongdoing" without a breach of statutes or ordinances is one on which the QTC research team and the RCMP Review Team would probably not agree. The position adopted here is that when people in authority perform lawful acts in an arbitrary or disrespectful manner or without regard for harm done to individuals, a wrong has occurred, even if no specific law has been broken.

82 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 454–67.

83 The landmark Supreme Court of Canada ruling on this principle is Delgamukw vs Regina, 11 Dec. 1997. It has generated an enormous literature, including the very accessible book by Dara Culhane, *The Pleasure of the Crown; Anthropology, Law and First Nations* (Burnaby: Talon, 1998). The QTC is preparing a background paper on the fiduciary obligations of the federal government, which will contain further analysis of Delgamukw.

84 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 197–98.

85 Peter Seixas, "Introduction," in *Theorizing Historical Consciousness* (University of Toronto Press, 2004), p. 5.

86 Michael G. Kenny, "A Place for Memory: the Interface between Individual and Collective History," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 41:3 (July 1999), pp. 420–37, esp. 423–26 concerning "cultural amnesia."

87 Roger Simon, "The Pedagogical Insistence of Public Memory," in Seixas, ed., *Theorizing Historical Consciousness*, p. 191.

88 Peter Seixas, "Historiographies and Historical Consciousness," in Seixas, ed., *Theorizing Historical Consciousness*, pp. 22–23.

89 Seixas, "Introduction," p. 15.

90 Simon, "Pedagogical Insistence of Public Memory," p. 195.

91 Simon, "Pedagogical Insistence of Public Memory," p. 197. Conversely, Inuit understanding of the past may need to change to take into account further insights into qallunaat culture.

92 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 435–36. His superiors in "G" Division headquarters believed he had over-reacted and after a short review he was informally disciplined for this. The RCMP Review Team used this incident in the final report to Parliament as evidence that the RCMP did not condone indiscriminate or systematic slaughter of dogs.

93 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 631.

94 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* p. 502.

95 Rosie Katsak. Testimony before the QTC. (19 December, 2008) Pond Inlet [QTPI20].

96 The name is taken from her grave marker at Chesterfield Inlet. Officially she was, of course, "Mrs. S.G. Clay" and some sources call her "Marie Agnes Clay."

97 Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 18 (RCMP), Volume 3301, File HQ-660-G-1, Petty to O/C "F" Division, Prince Albert, 30 Sept. 1924.

98 Two official files on this tragedy are held by Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 18 (RCMP), Volume 3301, File HQ-660-G-1, Mrs. Marie Agnes Clay wife of S/Sgt. S.G. Clay—Chesterfield, Northwest Territories—Death of from wounds received when attacked by sled dogs; also Record Group 85 (Northern Affairs Program), Volume 612, File 2816, Parts 1, Mrs. S.G. Clay—Killed by dogs - Appt. of Staff Sgt. Clay as J.P. and Coroner Outside Dates: 1922–1936. For a recent tribute, see http://www.rcmpgraves.com/vetcorner/vetmonth-feb.html, accessed online 25 June 2009. By far the best account of the incident is from the private papers of Cst. Stallworthy by William Barr. See his *Red Serge and Polar Bear Pants; The Biography of Harry Stallworthy, RCMP* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2004), pp. 60–71.

99 The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* deals with Mark Toiak's account and Mrs. Clay's death at pp. 290–91, 607 and 684 note 81.

100 Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 18 (RCMP), Volume 3301, File HQ-660-G-1, Petty to O/C "F" Division, Prince Albert, 30 Sept. 1924.

101 Library and Archives Canada, RG 18 (RCMP), Volume 3301, File HQ-660-G-1, Insp. J.T. Parsons to Commissioner, 29 Dec. 1961.

102 T.M. Longstreth, *The Silent Force* (New York: The Century Company, 1927).

103 I. Rabinowitch, "Clinical and Other Observations on Canadian Eskimos in the Eastern Arctic," *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 34:5 (May 1936), p. 497.

104 Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 85, Volume 612, File 2816, McKeand to Morrison, 4 June 1936.

105 The *RCMP Sled Dogs Report* reported aspects of the Clay tragedy at eight separate points, including a detailed discussion in one of the endnotes. See pp. 60, 119, 191–92, 273, 568, 607, 616 and 684.

106 Luta Munday, *A Mounty's Wife; being the life story of one attached to the Force but not of it* (London: The Sheldon Press, 1930), pp. 192–96, 210–11. Munday's account is the only one reviewed to date that states that Maggie Clay disliked Chesterfield Inlet and was afraid of the country and the Inuit. All others make her out to be positive and cheerful, even when facing death.

107 William Barr, ed., *Red Serge and Polar Bear Pants*, pp. 62–71.

108 See also the comments attributed to Iqaluit businessman and historian Kenn Harper in 2006, *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 616: "He thought that some dogs may have been shot by authorities when they shouldn't have been. There was no doubt, in his view, that there may have been over-conscientious police or others in authority that remembered the "Mrs. Clay" incident, the wife of an RCMP officer who was mauled to death by sled dogs, or other deaths and/or serious injuries inflicted by loose sled dogs that caused these authorities to be overly aggressive in destroying loose dogs."

109 This view was expressed to the QTC research team by Glenn Wright, former Archivist (LAC) and Staff Historian (RCMP) in a memorandum datred 23 June 2010.

110 LAC website, online description of MIKAN No. 158663. Accession: ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE / GENDARMERIE ROYALE DU CANADA (123-000691-5), accessed 22 June 2009 at http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/.

111 Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 85 (Northern Affairs Program), Series D-1-a, Volume 1473, File 201-1-8, Part 6, Reports re: Arctic Inspections; this document is not included in the *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*.

112 Wrongdoing does not necessarily leave a paper trail. Only if record creation and retention rules were strictly followed can the integrity of the whole record be guaranteed. The official record would be unreliable if decisions were made in person or on the telephone, if correspondence was treated as personal, failed to be placed on any official file, or was subsequently removed by any person.

113 Ian Wilson, "The Fine Art of Destruction Revisited," *Archivaria* 49 (Spring 2000), pp. 124–39. At the time Wilson wrote, the authority he exercised was in the *National Archives of Canada Act*, as amended in 1988. At present, similar authorities exist under the *Library and Archives of Canada Act of 2004*; for a description of the disposition process, see http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/government/disposition/index-e.html, accessed 23 June 2009.

114 Until 1966, departments could consult a Public Records Committee, which oversaw the destruction or preservation of records referred to it. From 1966 to 1987, a Treasury Board directive, the Public Records Order, required departments to consult the Dominion Archivist before destroying their own records.

115 See RCMP Archives Management Section, file TP-400-18, Mills to CO G Division, 22 Nov. 1965, concerning the lack of written records to document recent attacks by dogs on humans.

116 Wilson, "Fine Art of Destruction Revisited," p. 133.

117 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, pp. 64–66.

118 Wilson, "Fine Art of Destruction Revisited," p. 136.

119 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 65.

120 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 66.

121 A standard 12-inch archival box could hold anything between 1,000 and 3,000 pages, generally single-sided, often with multiple copies of the same document, and some of it blank or of little interest.

122 Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 85, Volume 1473, File: 201-1-8, Part: 6 "Reports re: Arctic Inspections," A. Stevenson for RAJ Phillips, Ottawa, Memorandum for Mr. Brown, "Eastern Arctic Patrol Report Pangnirtung District, 2 Dec. 1958."

123 *RCMP Sled Dogs Report*, p. 162.

124 In addition to an official government report and an article in *The Beaver*, QTC researchers located a file of government correspondence with Yatsushiro, and his interview transcripts, in a library in California.

125 John Matthiasson, *Living Off the Land*, pp. 91–118. Ann McElroy's interview with Naki Ekho, discussed above, was published after 2006.

Foreword (2013)

As President of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, I am pleased to present the long-awaited set of reports of the Qikiqtani Truth Commission.

The *Qikiqtani Truth Commission: Community Histories 1950–1975* and *Qikiqtani Truth Commission: Thematic Reports and Special Studies* represent the Inuit experience during this colonial period, as told by Inuit. These reports offer a deeper understanding of the motivations driving government decisions and the effects of those decisions on the lives of Inuit, effects which are still felt today.

This period of recent history is very much alive to Qikiqtaalungmiut, and through testifying at the Commission, Inuit spoke of our experience of that time. These reports and supporting documents are for us. This work builds upon the oral history and foundation Inuit come from as told by Inuit, for Inuit, to Inuit.

On a personal level this is for the grandmother I never knew, because she died in a sanatorium in Hamilton; this is for my grandchildren, so that they can understand what our family has experienced; and it is also for the young people of Canada, so that they will also understand our story.

As it is in my family, so it is with many others in our region.

The Qikiqtani Truth Commission is a legacy project for the people of our region and QIA is proud to have been the steward of this work.

Aingai,

E7-1865

J. Okalik Eegeesiak, President, Qikiqtani Inuit Association

Introduction to the Work of the Qikiqtani Truth Commission

This work began with the breaking of a long silence. In the 1990s, Inuit made great strides in taking charge of their own affairs through the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and the creation of Nunavut. They were then ready to examine the past, including the harm done during the period of greatest change, from 1950 to 1975. They wanted to understand more about their own lives and those lived by their parents, grandparents, and siblings in an era that was profoundly marked by game laws, residential schools, medical evacuations, substantial population movements, and broken promises about housing and jobs. One especially sensitive source of anguish and disturbing memories was the government's campaign to eliminate qimmiit (Inuit sled dogs) from the settlements. Qimmiit were often shot without warning by the RCMP and others, leaving many people without any means of winter transportation. In a culture where qimmiit were vital to hunting and travel, and valued as companions, this campaign struck very close to the well-being of every Inuit family. The history is still a painful wound for many Inuit in the Qikiqtani Region.

For a long time, many Inuit grieved in silence. Others spoke out in anger, aware that their experiences seemed to follow a pattern that was hard to decipher, but was important for understanding the problems in communities today. These feelings led the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) to interview Elders in 2004 about various issues related to moving into settlements. In 2007, the QIA created the Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC), a forum where Inuit could speak openly about difficult events in the decades after the Second World War and understand more about how communities took shape and the true costs of the changes. The QTC's investigation had two closely related activities. The first was to gather testimonies about events between 1950 and 1975 from Inuit who had lived through this difficult period, as well as from their children who continue to remember the suffering of their parents and other relatives. Commissioner Igloliorte and QTC staff travelled to all thirteen communities in the Qikiqtani Region between January 2008 and May 2009, and invited all interested residents to share their memories and feelings about how their lives had changed. They also held hearings for the Inuit community in Ottawa, and paid return visits to all communities in early 2010 to report on findings and ask for comments on proposed recommendations. Including interviews that the QIA had already conducted in 2004, the QTC had testimonies from approximately 350 individuals. Hearings were conducted with more flexibility than normal legal proceedings, but to emphasize the seriousness of the task, Commissioner Igloliorte asked all witnesses to affirm that they would tell the truth to the best of their knowledge. He also respected the decision made by a few individuals to keep their experiences private.

In addition to learning about events and impacts through testimonies, the Qikiqtani Truth Commission also completed an extensive archival research program and interviewed Qallunaat who worked in the region during this period. Among the people interviewed were several retired RCMP officers, government officials, and academic researchers.

The Evidence

THE WITNESSES

The QTC is indebted to the many men and women who attended meetings and opened their homes to give their testimonies. People welcomed the commission warmly into their communities and spoke freely and honestly about their lives. Without their testimonies, the commission would not have been able to fully appreciate what happened to Inuit during this period of immense transition. They also provided very thoughtful and constructive feedback and suggestions regarding the kind of recommendations that would promote reconciliation between Inuit and government. A full list of individuals is included in the List of Witnesses on the QTC website.

ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

The QTC's research team collected and reviewed accessible archival and secondary sources for the period in focus, 1950 to 1975. This included examinations of relevant records from Library and Archives Canada, as well as the Archives of the Northwest Territories, the RCMP, the Hudson's Bay Company, and Anglican and Roman Catholic bodies. Thousands of documents were digitized for the QTC's research database.

MAPS

Maps provide important details about how Inuit lived and used the territories surrounding their present-day communities. These maps reject a common idea in the south that the Arctic is "empty." In addition to showing the sites of ilagiit nunagivaktangit, details on twentieth-century maps include place names indicating how Inuit knew and utilized the land, along with their travel routes, and the best places for hunting. This kind of information began to be set down on paper before 1840. However, some of the most thorough maps are those created by Inuit for the Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project (1976) and the Nunavut Atlas (1992).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (2024 EDITION)

The reports drafted in 2010 for the Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC) were prepared under the direction of James Igloliorte, Commissioner, and Madeleine Redfern, Executive Director, QTC. The Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) project managers in 2013 were Bethany Scott, Navarana Beveridge, and Sandra Kownak.

The primary authors of most reports were Julie Harris, Contentworks Inc. and Philip P. Goldring, Ph.D. Writing and research support was provided by Joan Bard Miller, Francis Levésque, Ryan Shackleton, Frank J. Tester, Anna Gilmer, Alice Glaze, Teresa Iacobelli, Natascha Morrison, Linda Radford, Dr. Yvonne Boyer, and Brian Cameron.

The translation team for the reports produced in 2013 included Jay Arnakak, Mali Curley, Julia Demcheson, Veronica Dewar, Elisapee Ikkidluak, Emily Illnik, David Joanasie, Leonie Kappi, Pujjuut Kusugak, Nina Tootoo, and Blandina Tulugarjuk. Additional translation for the 2024 editions was provided by Ruth Kadlutsiak.

The work of the QTC would not have been possible without the financial support of the following organizations: Qikiqtani Inuit Association; Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated; Makivik Corporation; Walter & Duncan Gordon Foundation; First Air; Air Inuit; Unaalik Aviation; Kenn Borek Air Ltd.

The 2024 editions of the QTC reports were prepared by Julie Harris, Augatnaaq Eccles, Zarina Laalo and Anne Brazeau of Contentworks Inc. under the direction of Inukshuk Aksalnik, Jennifer Ipirq, and Simon Cuerrier of QIA.

For many years, Inuit Elders in the Qikiqtani (Baffin) Region have been haunted by a deep sense of loss as they remember how their lives changed in the decades after 1950. The thematic reports and special studies in this collection explore themes that emerged during the work of the Qikiqtani Truth Commission. What started as an inquiry into the slaughter of sled dogs quickly grew to include other experiences of profound colonial change.

Commissioner James Igloliorte's Final Report, titled *Achieving Saimaqatigiingniq*, and 22 companion thematic and historical reports published by the Qikiqtani Inuit Association in Inuktitut and English weave together evidence from testimonies and documents collected during the Qikiqtani Truth Commission about the consequential 1950–1975 period.

QTC Report Collection

Aaniajurliriniq: Health Care in the Qikiqtani Region, 1950–1975

Achieving Saimaqatiqiingniq: Final Report of the Commissioner of the Qikiqtani Truth Commission

Analysis of the RCMP Sled Dog Report

Igluliriniq: Housing in the Qikiqtani Region, 1950–1975

Illinniarniq: Schooling in the Qikiqtani Region, 1950–1975

Nuutauniq: Moves in Inuit Life in the Qikiqtani Region to 1975

Paliisikkut: Policing in the Qikiqtani Region, 1950–1975

Pivalliajuliriniq: Economic Development in the Qikiqtani Region, 1950–1975

Qimmiliriniq: Inuit Sled Dogs in the Qikiqtani Region, 1950–1975

The Official Mind of Canadian Colonialism

Arctic Bay (Ikpiarjuk) Community History, 1950–1975

Clyde River (Kangiqtugaapik) Community History, 1950–1975

Grise Fiord (Ausuittuq) Community History, 1950–1975

Igloolik Community History, 1950–1975

Iqaluit Community History, 1950–1975

Kimmirut Community History, 1950–1975

Kinngait Community History, 1950–1975

Pangnirtung Community History, 1950–1975

Pond Inlet (Mittimatalik) Community History, 1950–1975

Qikiqtarjuaq Community History, 1950–1975

Resolute Community History, 1950–1975

Sanikiluaq Community History, 1950–1975

Sanirajak Community History, 1950–1975

Qikiqtani Inuit Association

QIA

QIKIQTANI TRUTH COMMISSION