



Qikiqtani Truth Commission

Thematic Reports and special studies

1950-1975

Paliisikkut: Policing in Qikiqtaaluk



Qikiqtani Inuit Association

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Errata

Despite best efforts on the part of the author, mistakes happen. The following corrections should be noted when using this report:

Administration in Qikiqtaaluk was the responsibility of one or more federal departments prior to 1967 when the Government of the Northwest Territories was became responsible for the provision of almost all direct services. The term “the government” should replace all references to NANR, AANDC, GNWT, DIAND.

Dedication

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

Foreword

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



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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

Iqaluit, Nunavut

2013

Paliisikkut

Policing in Qikiqtaaluk

This chapter examines the relationship between Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and Inuit in Qikiqtaaluk, especially during the period from the 1940s to 1975. The first permanent police presence in Qikiqtaaluk came with the detachment set up in Pond Inlet in 1922, primarily for sovereignty purposes. Law enforcement and providing other services to about eleven thousand Inuit and the few Qallunaat scattered across the region was only a secondary consideration. Until the 1940s, a few scattered police detachments existed across the region, which endeavoured to deliver basic services to ilagiit nunagivaktangit. Almost all Inuit, with the exception of very few who were working directly for the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) or the RCMP, still followed a semi-nomadic seasonal hunting and harvesting cycle. Some families visited the trading post a few times each year, where they would encounter the traders, and possibly a missionary and an RCMP officer. Even more rarely, the RCMP would make rounds to visit ilagiit nunagivaktangit, with either the support of an Inuit special constable or an Inuit guide. In both types of encounters, the RCMP



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spent time collecting information for annual patrol reports, as well as providing some medical services.

In almost every way, the relations between Inuit and RCMP paralleled the experiences of the RCMP with other First Peoples—they were promising at the start, but deteriorated with the arrival of newcomers. Tensions were aggravated by an imbalance of power, the lack of a coherent justice system, racism, and poor intercultural communications. In Western Canada, the new groups were permanent occupiers (rail workers, farmers, and city-builders). In Qikiqtaaluk, they were more likely to be transients—bureaucrats, military personnel, contractors, teachers, and welfare workers—congregating in settlements. In both regions, however, new government institutions, economic structures, and land-ownership patterns proved to be permanent fixtures on the social, political, and cultural landscape of Indigenous peoples.

Inuit also faced the reality that the policemen (and they were, without exception, male officers who were posted in Qikiqtaaluk before 1975) themselves were transient. Very few officers stayed in the Arctic for more than one or two postings. When combined with the fact that RCMP exercised considerable discretion in their work, Inuit found police to be unpredictable—one missionary complained that they were “involuntarily erratic, inconsistent, and even blundering.” An action that might be ignored by one officer could be deemed by another officer as an offence warranting time in detachments. Further, Inuit were expected to help care for the RCMP in spite of the challenges that families were already facing. Elijah Panipakoocho of Pond Inlet told the Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC):

Without the help of the Inuit, [RCMP] would not have survived, they would have been dead . . . They tell stories of being heroic but they had to be housed, clothed, fed. It was [like] looking after a five- or a six-year-old. They . . . would start suffering immediately

when they were alone. Those Inuit really had a hard time, they had to look after themselves and the RCMP.

Inuit fully recognized the power that police and other Qallunaat authorities had in the north, which went well beyond making sure that specific laws were followed. RCMP were also responsible for doing the bidding of the government on a much wider range of powers. As examples, they ordered Inuit to relocate to other places, including the High Arctic, and they threatened families to send their children to school. In many cases, individual officers may not have been aware that Inuit were unhappy, angry, or confused. That is because of *ilira*, the Inukitut term to describe a sense of fear, intimidation, and embarrassment. In customary contexts, *ilira* was a positive method of social control, but in relationships between RCMP and Inuit the feeling of *ilira* stopped Inuit from speaking out against injustices. The police were the most intimidating of all Qallunaat with which they came into contact. If Inuit failed to listen to RCMP, or didn't adequately understand the police, they could be taken away and imprisoned. In explaining why his family relocated from Inukjuak, Quebec to Resolute, John Amagoalik explained:

I think it's also important for people to understand that when the RCMP made a request to you in those days, it was seen as something like an order. You are ordered to do this. The RCMP officers had a lot of power. They could put you in jail. That's the way they were viewed in those days. A request from the police was taken very, very seriously.

Taissumani Nunamiutautilluta, 1920 to 1945

INUIT JUSTICE

Throughout the Arctic, all Inuit experienced a very long period in which the sea and the land provided almost everything people needed. The QTC reports call this period Taissumani Nunamiutautilluta. The RCMP did not bring policing or justice to the Arctic—it was already there. Since time immemorial, Inuit had their own means of exercising justice and encouraging social cohesion. As described by Inuit, interdependence with the natural world and with each other necessitated certain strong, but largely psychological, means of influencing behaviour to ensure survival and happiness. Inuit were cautious and respectful of nature. Trusted wisdom from previous generations was a framework for Inuit actions and rationales, with control and leadership localized in a kinship-based community. Each group had leaders “whose influence and authority equipped them to make decisions that affected both the community as a whole and their own families within it.” Joshua Idlout told the QTC, “Each clan had its own land, a governance system, and Elders. Elders were the primary decision-makers of that camp.” Social control was normally executed by the family and by the community more generally. Families placed a strong emphasis on self-control, since rash decisions or actions could endanger the entire community.

Mechanisms to control and punish all but the most serious of transgressions were psychological in nature, and included gossip, mockery, avoidance, and ostracism. Storytelling was central for teaching children about dangers, both in terms of the environment itself and behaviours. Humility was seen as a positive means of minimizing direct conflict. If problems persisted, leaders or shamans (called angakkuit in Inuktitut) could address

them individually or during feasts or religious rites, and call upon those involved to reconcile with the community. In some places, conflict resolution could also take place through a singing duel (iviutit), or through physical challenges, where opponents took turns hitting each other (tigutijut). Banishment and execution were rare, almost always occurring in situations when a person was deemed to be too dangerous. Shelagh Grant describes various means of keeping individuals and groups from harm, including taboos and the importance of gaining control over emotions. She also highlights the rich language used to describe emotions and motivations that individuals could experience in relationships and actions associated with maintaining order and control in groups. She writes, for example, that “in North Baffin an adult was expected to refrain from showing anger and instead show isuma, meaning ‘the capacity for a sense of reason.’” Taking a life without prior consent or provocation, inuaqsiniq, was the most serious crime “because of the adverse effect it would have on a group.”

While Inuit were still living in ilagiit nunagivaktangit, the RCMP generally recognized Inuit as sets of autonomous groups for the purposes of law enforcement and justice within the groups. W.C.E. Rasing explains in the context of Igloolik, which was one of the last areas where Inuit moved into a government-sponsored settlement, “the Iglulingmiut [in the 1960s] were hardly affected by Canadian law enforcement . . . only [annual] police patrols reminded people of the presence of the law. Preserving order in the camps in fact remained in Iglulingmiut hands, although the Inuit were officially subjected to the laws of Canada.”

Inuit methods of justice and control were challenged as soon as Inuit began interacting with and living among Qallunaat. Missionaries, traders, and police arrived first, and each of them played specific roles in undercutting customary Inuit beliefs and strategies regarding individual and group behaviour, punishment, and rewards. Further changes came when Inuit attended school and came into contact more regularly with nurses and social workers.

BACKGROUND: THE RCMP AND OTHER INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The North-West Mounted Police (NWMP), which became the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1920 when it merged with the Dominion Police, was established in 1873 to impose a Victorian legal code onto the vast tracts of the Northwest Territories that had recently been sold to Canada by the Hudson’s Bay Company. The government’s failure to consult with Indigenous groups on this territorial transfer inspired mistrust and resistance. It was part of the Force’s unofficial mandate to set these relationships right without compromising any government plans. As police, judge, jury, and jailer, as well as occasional postman and medic, the NWMP officer became a jack of all trades for the Dominion government in the Northwest Territories and held immensely concentrated power in his community. Historian Walter Hildebrandt points out that the entire “goal of the Mounties could eventually be described as a cultural one—to gain the trust of the Natives and then wean them from their customs and beliefs by enforcing laws intended to diminish the Native culture.” In order to facilitate the establishment of the Force’s jurisdiction in the area, First Nations and Métis men (and later Inuit) were hired as special constables, a role that combined the jobs of guide, interpreter, and cultural mediator. This was a subordinate and highly vulnerable role that could involve enabling in the arrest of one’s own family members, and could lead to social ostracism of the constable and his family.

The Mounted Police also worked directly with predecessors of the federal department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, beginning with treaty negotiations in the 1870s. Relations between the police and bureaucrats were at times tense, but they allied in support of the government for most of their institutional histories. Police helped Indian Agents enforce provisions of the Indian Act, scooped children

up for residential schools, enforced liquor laws and restrictions on cultural practices, and ensured that settlers remained undisturbed by any actions, such as hunting or removing fences, that might have been done or contemplated by First Nations and Métis. The Mounted Police therefore acted in many ways as a force of cultural assimilation in themselves, as well as mediators between other forces and Indigenous peoples in the Northwest Territories.

Indigenous peoples' understanding of the purpose of the NWMP and then the RCMP fluctuated according to the level and nature of contact each community had with the Force. In the early years, during the treaty negotiations of the 1870s, the NWMP was probably seen as being a semi-autonomous mediator between First Nations, Métis, and the federal government. During treaty negotiations, the Police frequently accompanied bureaucrats on horseback, often armed and usually in uniform dress. First Nations and Métis felt intimidated and threatened by the presence of the Mounted Police, even aside from their experience during the Métis resistances.

Restrictive and humiliating government policies support by the RCMP, racism in words and deeds, limited recourse to unfair and illegal police actions, and other negative experiences with the RCMP and its paternalistic attitudes caused a multi-dimensional and intense distrust from many Indigenous people, in spite of the Force's highly publicized acts of heroism and support. During the 1970s, when the RCMP became embroiled in scandal for performing illegal activities, one national Aboriginal periodical wrote:

The irony of the present outrage and scandal directed at the RCMP is painful. For a century the RCMP have been victimizing Native people . . . Predictably, little attention was paid to the plight of the Native people who fell victim to the harsh brutality of the RCMP racism. The public can remain oblivious to the Native suffering for 100 years, but let the word get out that a few telephones have been tapped and a few offices broken into by the RCMP and the public

is incensed. Suddenly the public feels the RCMP is out of control. To tens of thousands of Canada's Native people it has never been any other way.

Arrival of the RCMP in Qikiqtaaluk

The RCMP already had almost fifty years of experience policing among Indigenous peoples in Canada before its first criminal investigation occurred within Qikiqtaaluk. In 1920, following reports of a murder of an Inuk man the year before, two police were sent to the Belcher Islands to investigate, after Quebec reminded Ottawa that the Belchers were within the boundaries of the Northwest Territories. Following the investigation and a trial in front of a jury consisting of a police sergeant and the boat crew, no charges were laid. The jury determined that the victim “was killed for the common good and safety of the Band.” The RCMP officers recommended, however, that “a responsible representative of the Government be sent amongst these people to instruct them in the laws of the country.” A year later, while numerous discussions were taking place about ways to ensure Canadian sovereignty over the Arctic Islands, the government sent one officer to Bylot Island to investigate the murder of Newfoundland trader Robert Janes. Sergeant Joy held three Inuit at the new detachment at Pond Inlet while they waited for a trial that was eventually held in 1923.

Prior to this, the RCMP presence had been temporary and focused on sovereignty. In 1903, diplomatic considerations resulting from Norwegian and American interests in Canada's Arctic Islands led the federal government to set up a police post at Cape Fullerton, near Chesterfield Inlet on Hudson Bay. Between 1906 and 1911, expeditions were sent further north as

far as Ellesmere Island under the direction of Captain Bernier as evidence of Canadian occupation of the area. For several years, there was much discussion but very little action concerning the addition of a government presence north of Hudson Strait.

In 1920 and 1921, however, the government began to take threats to its claim over Ellesmere and other Arctic islands more seriously—demonstrating the rule of law became more important. Measures proposed included more police posts, game laws, and relocation of Inuit families to the High Arctic. The government was also receiving more reports of violence involving qallunaat in the Arctic, which gave the RCMP additional reasons to increase its presence in the North. As historian William Morrison explains, “the Canadian government sent the police to bring law to the Inuit not out of concern for their welfare or a desire to regularize their society, but rather to demonstrate that these people and their land belonged to Canada.” Those people consisted of eleven thousand Inuit and a few missionaries and traders. By 1922, through Eastern Arctic Patrol (EAP), the RCMP had a limited presence in Qikiqtaaluk through two detachments (Craig Harbour and Pond Inlet), annual EAP patrols, and patrols from the detachments.

RCMP DETACHMENTS IN QIKIQTAAALUK BEFORE 1975

Detachment Name	Dates of Operation
Alexandra Fiord	1953–63
Cape Dorset	1965–
Clyde River	1970–
Craig Harbour	1922–26, 1933–56
Bache Peninsula	1926–32
Dundas Harbour	1924–33, 1945–51
Cape Christian	1954–70
Grise Fiord	1956–
Igloolik	1964–
Frobisher Bay (Iqaluit)	1945–
Lake Harbour	1927–
Pangnirtung	1923–
Pond Inlet	1922–
Resolute	1953–

Official policy dictated that law enforcement was the foremost concern of the RCMP, but the police were also tasked with collecting taxes and duties, delivering the mail, and distributing first-aid supplies and other necessities to Inuit and traders. The low numbers of police investigations meant that most members spent a significant portion of their time preparing for patrols, keeping their quarters tidy, and conducting interviews with Inuit coming into settlements to trade, participate in religious services, and meet

the supply ships. The RCMP were also expected to send information back to Ottawa to help officials make decisions related to the well-being of people in the region. In practice, however, two types of concerns were top of mind among officials: keeping the cost of administration low and, related to this, keeping trading posts active to off-set the costs of administration and demonstrate a government presence in the area.

RCMP Recruits

The RCMP officers who served in Qikiqtaaluk were drawn from a select pool of individuals who were required to be British (later Canadian) citizens who met education and physical requirements, including a minimum height. The stories of RCMP living in the Arctic, travelling by dog team, and assisting with everything from first aid to mountain rescues, contributed greatly to both the myth of the Force and the attraction it held for potential recruits. The RCMP exploited the stories whenever it could, and many individual members published accounts of their years of service in the Arctic, in particular. In 1954, a member of the Force wrote that “young men volunteered for Northern Service with the idea that it was one phase of life in the Force that they should not miss. They all had visions of travel by dog team, canoe, and aeroplane, and in addition all the associations with Eskimos etc.”

For almost the entire period under study, the RCMP received next to no training on northern work or Arctic conditions. As late as 1962, a recruit spent one hundred and forty hours learning to ride horses, another seventy hours taking care of the stables and only twenty-five hours on the criminal code, out of a total of over twelve hundred hours. In 1953 or 1954, the RCMP began to offer a short course in Edmonton that introduced recruits to northern conditions. It included lectures, which specialized in tuberculosis treatment for First Nations and Inuit, at the Camsell Hospital; lectures

on acts and ordinances enforced in the Yukon and Northwest territories; and films about “police life at isolated places . . . members going on patrol by dog team, attending to dogs, handing out Family Allowance to Eskimos, and numerous views of isolated detachments.” Recruits that ended up working in places like Whitehorse and Iqaluit, where most of the work was done physically within the community, and were likely to involve more non-Aboriginal transients and settlers, were disappointed.

The reason or motivation for a posting had bearing on the quality an officer provided and the relationship that developed between him and the community. An officer might anticipate that a posting in the North could lead to higher wages, adventure, promotions, opportunities to work independently, and a chance to see one of the most unique landscapes in Canada. Others went north to escape financial or personal problems in the south. They were often rotated out after their two years of service, sometimes sooner. Former RCMP officer Hugh Fagan in the film *Qimmit: Clash of Two Truths* recalled:

Those guys didn’t come back North when they went out. They served their time maybe or maybe just part of it and we weeded them out and got rid of them and they didn’t come back. All the people around this table I’m sure were all repeaters. We were sent outside after a length of time and we volunteered to go back because we liked the north, we liked the people, we liked working with the people and we felt that we were doing something worthwhile.

Some men, such as Constable R. D. Van Norman, who served at Iqaluit and along the eastern section of the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line in the 1950s, were very interested in Inuit perspectives and customs, and demonstrated respect for Inuit as individuals. In contrast, a few RCMP tended

to write about Inuit in broad, racist strokes. In between, each community found that the majority of RCMP served their northern tours of duty with little or no interest in Inuit culture beyond collecting anecdotal stories as reflections of themselves.

The policy of keeping postings to two or three years, and of never serving the same community twice, stemmed from the belief that becoming too involved with a community weakened an officer's ability to maintain order. There was also a common feeling among officers interviewed that an officer's role was to "protect . . . the community . . . without trying to change or alter it." This perspective ignored the fact that simply by entering a community, let alone policing it using external laws and policies, a policeman was altering that community.

The most interesting part of RCMP life remained patrolling by dog team or boat with assistance from Inuit special constables. The patrols brought officers into close contact with Inuit. While special patrols were carried out to explore new regions, investigate allegations of crime, treat the sick, or provide food relief, the most common form of patrol was the annual rounds made to visit *ilagiit nunagivaktangit* to collect information for the annual "Conditions amongst the Eskimos" and "Game" reports. Both types of documents listed information under standardized headings, such as health, morale, clothing, general activities and pursuits, hunting equipment and dogs, population in relation to resources, percentage of males and females, intermarriage information, and suggestions for improving economic conditions. Some observations were routine, such as the number of *qimmiit* estimated to be healthy in an area, while others were insightful about conditions and critical of government management of programs and supplies.

The game laws caused hardship for Inuit and were a consistent point of friction between Inuit and RCMP for several reasons. The RCMP were required to work with other government agencies to enforce the laws, specifically the Northwest Game Act (1917) and the Migratory Bird Protection Act

(1932). The rules, especially as they applied to Inuit, made almost no sense in the Arctic context. The regulations were based on best guesses as much as on scientific fact. The authorities charged with enforcing them knew that they were unreasonable and inappropriate. The impacts on Inuit livelihoods, well-being, and cultural practices were profound and the RCMP took advantage of the laws to threaten Inuit with fines and even prison.

Roles of Inuit Special Constables

The capacity of RCMP to communicate with Inuit and to survive in Arctic conditions required help from Inuit, both as employees and simply as neighbours providing support in times of need. All regular police detachments were staffed by at least one Inuk employee, normally serving with his wife and children. Beginning in 1936 and continuing until at least 1970, patrol reports submitted to Ottawa officially referred to Inuit staff as “special constables,” an official rank and employment status within the RCMP. Men sent north with the RCMP often received no special training on northern survival, navigation, or travelling; on patrol, they were entirely reliant on Inuit special constables who hunted food for qimmiit, built iglus, navigated, and translated. An officer is quoted in *Policing the Baffin Region* as stating, “There was nothing in the manual about how to use a dog sled. I learned from the special constable. He did all the travelling with me . . . It was a rare occasion when we travelled by ourselves.” Inuit special constables also maintained equipment and did chores around the detachment. The families of the Inuit special constables also offered considerable and invaluable assistance to the RCMP, often without compensation. Women would make and mend the trail clothing, do household chores, and prepare meals.

Children were expected to help with the detachment chores. Inuit special constables were usually compensated with a salary, although some reports indicate that some Inuit were given accommodations and rations instead. By the 1960s, they were provided with housing that was of the same standard as the quarters provided to regular members, and at the same cost.

Testimonies to the QTC by RCMP and Inuit special constables described roles and relationships between RCMP and Inuit special constables. A former RCMP officer interviewed for the film *Qimmit: Clash of Two Truths* explained:

You have to trust these guys explicitly, because you are putting your life in their hands. One accident at 45 below; if he can't make an iglu, you are dead in the water . . . He was the guy you could trust. He would whip up these iglus and we would sort of watch with amazement.

Another officer said, "I would depend upon him for my life and have . . . We were faced with a charging polar bear once and he killed it without a blink. Now, that was not an easy thing for him to do. He had no intention of wanting to kill that bear, but it was a 'have to' situation."

Inuit were fully aware that RCMP officers, especially new recruits, could not survive without Inuit assistance. Some Inuit special constables described the RCMP as childlike, clumsy, or unskilled. Mosha Akavak told the QTC, "I have never seen the police having their own dog team . . . they couldn't do it." In 1994, historian Shelagh Grant interviewed many Elders about the RCMP as part of her research for *Arctic Justice*. Sam Arnakallak told her:

[RCMP officers] were just like kids, when they were having tea outside and they weren't able to grasp the cup with their hands, the cup would be held for them exactly like children because they were from a warm climate . . . The Inuit would have to dry their mitts and

kamiks. Once they stopped for the night, the [guides] would have to hurry and build an iglu as if they had small children. Once they put them in, they'd have to light the stove to get them warm. Then [the guides] would have to stay outside to feed the dogs.

Timothy Kadloo explained to Grant:

The RCMP told us that they weren't actually sure what to do, that they would need help. Like children, they would watch you before they actually knew what to do. But once they found out what to do, they would start helping out. They would end up helping a lot after that. They were a bit clumsy because they were qallunaat—because they were not used to this kind of activity. That's what we had to do, we had to help each other. We'd learn different things from them. They would help us sometimes.

As Kadloo points out, it took time for an officer to become competent in land-based skills, but some men eventually became proficient at handling dog teams and travelling over snow and ice.

There is little evidence that the RCMP anticipated that special constables might eventually chose to become full RCMP officers. Inuit staff members were not offered any training or duties that might have led to better pay or new positions. The RCMP's use of qimmiit was essentially finished in 1969; as soon as the RCMP no longer needed Inuit to help them travel by dog team, Inuit special constables were largely assigned to the role of interpreter.

Sangussaqtauliqtiluta, 1945 to 1960

The RCMP were key facilitators of the period called Sangussaqtauliqtiluta, meaning “when people started to be persuaded to change their ways.” As the sole representatives of government in most places in the region, the RCMP were responsible for enforcing laws and promoting services in almost every sphere of life. They continued to register births and adoptions, collect people for medical checkups, inoculate qimmiit, and assist with medical emergencies. It was during this period, however, that the government set out to deliver national programs—family allowances and old-age pensions—and become more active in getting Inuit to send children to school.

The era includes the Second World War and the early portion of the Cold War that brought tumultuous change to Qikiqtaaluk as the Arctic gained a higher significance for Canada. Thousands of Americans arrived in Qikiqtaaluk to build the Frobisher Bay airfield in Iqaluit in the 1940s. The construction of the DEW Line in the mid-1950s was a major catalyst for changes in Inuit life and, in many ways, to the duties of the RCMP. DEW Line contracts brought thousands of Qallunaat military personnel and civilian engineers, as well as millions of tons of building materials, into the Canadian Arctic. All the activity also attracted Inuit to construction sites, where they might be able to get temporary employment and access discarded supplies. The attraction of building activity and the potential for work was particularly strong in Iqaluit.

Military police operated on the bases themselves, but the RCMP was responsible for the policing of all civilians, including contractors, suppliers, and Inuit. Terry Jenkin, a retired RCMP officer, told the QTC, “The military were not allowed fraternization. One of our duties was to monitor such

activity to ensure that there was no collusion between airmen and young Inuit girls. If we did find that, we took the Inuit girl back home and reported the airmen to the authority.” Sexual relations between military contractors and personnel were known to be taking place, some of which were certainly against the law, either because the girls were not of age or because they were sexual assaults. In 1958, for example, a Canadian worker at a military station (FOX-3 on the DEW Line) in Qikiqtaaluk felt compelled to write an anonymous letter to the Minister of Northern Affairs, saying:

Eskimos are getting a raw deal on the Dew Line. In one instance a Federal Electric officer is currently taking advantage of his position as Station Chief of Fox-3 to rape Eskimo woman. This man should be banned from Northwest Territories if law and order are to be maintained in this country. Apparently Federal Electric is aware of this fact because it is known to everybody on the Line.

It is unknown if action was taken.

In 1959, RCMP officer Van Norman spoke out against what he saw as the sexual and emotional exploitation of Inuit women by DEW Line employees.

The Canadian government determined that an increased police presence was needed to maintain order in this quickly changing social atmosphere. The RCMP shifted its work to policing the increasing number of Qallunaat who were working and settling in Qikiqtaaluk while simultaneously being removed from having to deliver other types of services.

The end of the era came around 1960 when many of the tasks historically undertaken by the RCMP were fully taken over by civil servants, most notably area administrators and northern service officers. In between those years, almost all Inuit moved, often under pressure, into government-run settlements for schooling, medical services, and housing. The effect of life on Inuit was profound, as described in more detail in other QTC histories. The ways that Inuit governed themselves and chose options for the future

changed, and the RCMP was a key player in the changes. In his autobiography, Inuit leader John Amagoalik succinctly explained:

When Inuit families were out in their seasonal camps they were in control of their lives. But once they moved to communities where the RCMP, the missionaries, and the Hudson's Bay Company were, they had no more say. The qallunaat decided what was going to happen in those communities, and nobody else had any input.

RCMP DUTIES AND THE ARRIVAL OF THE NORTHERN SERVICE OFFICERS

Through most of the era, the RCMP spent a major portion of its time on duties that would have been the responsibility of other agencies in other parts of Canada. The Force did this work “not by choice or because they were trained to do so, but for the usual reason—because they were on the scene” and it was cheaper than creating a separate administrative unit. The variety and the tedium of the job are evident in the explanation of duties from the 1951 RCMP Annual Report:

Nineteen federal departments alone depend on our assistance in the North in such things as the registering of vital statistics; the issuing of various licenses, destitute rations, family allowances, medical supplies, the collecting of Income Tax, Fur Export-, Crown Timber-, Fur farming-fees, Customs and Excise tariffs, meteorological data; the inspecting of drug stores, scales and weights, and licensed and unlicensed magazines containing explosives; and acting as agents for the Public Administrators in cases where persons have died intestate.

In 1954 the position of Northern Service Officer (NSO) was created to administer programmes, “improve economic, social, and cultural conditions,” and “supervise and develop Eskimo participation” to “diversify the economic basis of Eskimo life.” The tension between the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources and RCMP in serving as the “authorities to whom they should look and listen” crept into much of their correspondence in the 1950s. Into the early 1960s, there were obvious overlaps in the responsibilities of various federal agents, to the extent that confusion about roles was common. Initially, NSOs were expected to travel widely to visit Inuit wherever they lived, leaving the RCMP at detachments to do minor administrative duties and law enforcement. Within a few years, however, NSOs were spending most of their time in settlements where most Inuit lived.

TWO VIEWS

RCMP and Inuit perceptions of the relations between police and Inuit during the patrols to *ilagiit nunagivaktangit* offer contrasting perspectives. Although some RCMP officers recalled feeling isolated and ostracized by Inuit, they generally recall positive experiences. Calvin Alexander, who served in Pangnirtung, described how communities went out of their way to welcome and honour RCMP officers:

We would pull in to a camp and everybody would turn out. After you got done shaking hands with everybody from the camp boss to the baby on the mama’s back the men unhitched the dogs for you. They fed them for you. It was protocol. You always stayed at the camp boss’ home. Mama first kicks the kids out to go live with grandma or auntie. John and I were given the children’s sleeping platform for the duration of our stay. We would feed the family while we were staying with them and leave them with what goodies

we could spare, depending on what camp it was and how far we had to go yet. On the trail, Joanasie was the boss and I was the junior man. When you pulled in to a camp Mama took your furs, if you had to wear them that day, and beat the frost out of them and hung them up to dry. She took your kamiks and put them over the qulliq. In one instance, she patched the hole in my duffle socks.

Alexander took this special attention as a sign of affection and welcome, and assumed that the relationship was based on reciprocity and mutual aid:

You never went in to a camp where you weren't welcomed with open arms and after you got settled and had a bite to eat, you went over to visit other homes and asked how the hunting was, how their health was. If anybody was sick you got told about it real quick when you got in to camp. In the joint society there were parameters that we did our best to look after the administration side (welfare, family allowance) for the people. We looked after things that were strange to them and when we got out on the land and it was relatively strange to me they looked after me.

Inuit often felt quite different about the relationship. For many, the warm greetings and hospitality expressed in the *ilagiit nunagivaktangit* masked their discomfort. Joe Tikivik told the QTC, "We were so scared of the police we couldn't even look at them." He continued to recount how Inuit reacted to news that RCMP would be arriving, saying "We used to check to see if we had done anything wrong just before the police came in, just thinking 'maybe I did something wrong' . . . because we didn't know any better." The RCMP and Inuit represented "two solitudes in a single land," and experienced a deep cultural disconnect that RCMP did not always even know existed.

HIGH ARCTIC RELOCATIONS

One of the critical episodes in the relations between Inuit and RCMP concerns the High Arctic Relocation, a subject that has been covered in previous studies that include information from Inuit about their experiences. While it fits into the era when the government was still uncertain about whether it should be finding ways to support Inuit living on the land or whether it should be preparing everyone for life in settlements, the decisions made by the government were part of a pattern that clearly spoke to its determination to exercise control over Inuit, no matter where they lived. Relevant histories describe the RCMP's role in the relocations in detail, including choosing the families who would move, choosing their destinations, gathering them for the move, accompanying them, acquiring goods for them, and even managing money on their behalf. Individual officers provided support to the families and “at times circumvented the illogical rules through their own initiative,” but they were also clearly attached to the government and its objectives.

Nunalinnguqtitauliqtiluta, 1961 to 1975

In the 1960s, almost the whole population of Qikiqtaaluk lived in centralized settlements, with outside forces shaping them into the present thirteen communities. R. Quinn Duffy, in *The Road to Nunavut*, describes the Euro-Canadian political framework that was systematically installed in Qikiqtaaluk in the late 1950s and 1960s as a “total social system.” It encompassed “the legal system, land tenure, resources ownership regulations, communications networks, military organization, and system of individual rights

and privileges.” This period of “Nunalinnguqtitauliqitilluta” was marked by increased specialization among government agencies, the pushing of the RCMP into a more traditional policing role, and the arrival of many more Qallunaat into the region.

Both police and Inuit were forced to adapt to a new relationship once RCMP officers’ duties became increasingly focused on enforcing both new laws and laws previously unenforced. This led to confusion over the role of RCMP and Canadian law in communities, with no forum available for Inuit to speak their minds or contribute to solutions due to language and to the lack of democratic institutions in which their voices would matter. No evidence was found that would show that Inuit were told the limits of police power or their rights in the cases of arbitrary arrest, seizure of property, or perjury. Important English words had no equivalent in Inuktitut, including the word “guilty.” In 1962 an official explained:

[Inuit are] quite confused about many of the white man’s ways and one of the spheres of misunderstanding particularly relative here is the white man’s law . . . It was suggested to me from several quarters that considerable education “in the law” should accompany law enforcement.

Inuit were confused, but they also sought a solution. Cape Dorset petitioned for an RCMP detachment in that same year because “it [was] felt a representative of Law and Order should be present to assist and teach our young people about these matters.”

During the whole era, Inuit never had an opportunity to adjust their own social and cultural beliefs and structures to the new system—as Duffy writes, it was just “grafted” onto them. The RCMP were only one part of the new system, but the most visible and powerful on the ground. When Inuit moved into settlements, they became part of a collective to which more laws and rules applied, such as ordinances concerning loose dogs and

liquor consumption. More mechanisms were also in place to ensure that rules were not broken. Police exercised their powers of arrest, fined people, and held sway over potential employers and the distribution of social benefits. July Papatsie recalled that his father forced him to go to school after the RCMP warned his father, “If your son doesn’t go to school, you are not going to get family allowances, and you are going to lose your job. And, also if you get sick, you will not be allowed to go to the hospital.”

The Qallunaat who most commonly moved to these settlements were transportation engineers, nurses, teachers, government employees, and church officials. This meant that RCMP could relinquish their official social welfare duties to new administrators, narrowing their own set of responsibilities to strictly policing as much as possible.

The RCMP still maintained responsibility for delivering social services in some of the communities. The Force was very reluctant to give up these duties to other agencies, since it provided steady work for officers and allowed them to go into the community and speak to people for reasons other than crime. Detachments were very aware of the impact of the changes in their duties on their position in communities.

In 1971, the renewed Agreement for Policing the Northwest Territories dealt with significantly narrowing the range of duties the RCMP was to perform. The new agreement required the RCMP to perform “such duties and render such services as are ordinarily performed or rendered by peace officers in aiding the administration of justice and in carrying into effect the laws of the Northwest Territories.” This no longer included issuing licenses, collecting taxes or fees associated with licenses, impounding dogs, carrying out inspections related to health, sanitation, or fire related bylaws, or any other “laws of a similar regulatory nature which . . . are not suitable for enforcement by the Force.” This change was designed to keep a “policeman’s role in its proper realm and generally restrict him from performing non-police duties.” In 1976, the Force instituted a cross-cultural education course to be taken by new recruits. The course was designed to create “an

awareness of cultural and individual differences existing in a multicultural country, with the Canadian natives being used as a focal group to sensitize the student to their desires, attitudes, and heritage.” By 1977, the police were no longer responsible for prisoner transfers, runaway juveniles, collection of fines, collection of fur-export tax, enforcement of non-police orientated bylaws, mental patients, serving jury summons, or a wide range of other activities. The police were now only responsible for the duties expected of community police anywhere in Canada.

IQUALUIT

The further growth of settlements in the 1960s added to the strains in the relationship between the RCMP and Inuit, as did the increasing amount of alcohol available in communities. The influx of Qallunaat as contractors, teachers, traders, prospectors, government administrators, and transport workers meant that RCMP officers were now responsible for maintaining order within and between Inuit and Qallunaat groups.

The impact was most acutely felt in the rapidly growing centre of Iqaluit, where the police presence was strengthened, rules were more strictly enforced, and fewer opportunities existed for informal cultural contacts between the RCMP and Inuit. As the regional transportation hub and administrative centre, it attracted a large population of Qallunaat and Inuit from all over the Arctic looking for work. Everyone (academics, Qallunaat, and Inuit) agreed that modernization forces in Iqaluit in the late 1950s and early 1960s were having a severe impact on Inuit residents. Anthropologist Toshio Yatsushiro, who conducted field work in Iqaluit in 1958 and 1959, wrote “The incidents of theft, marital discord, deviant sexual behavior . . . gambling, and drinking are causing considerable anxiety” to Inuit Elders. The police, now surrounded by more Qallunaat, more crime, and more Euro-Canadian amenities, stayed near their detachment rather

than undertaking regular patrols. For Inuit, life in the settlement included more frequent contacts with Qallunaat and activities that could lead to legal infraction, including accusations of theft, charges under the Liquor Ordinance, and exposure to the effects of the Ordinance Respecting Dogs. At the same time, RCMP became less dependent on Inuit for survival, which meant that the job position of Inuit special constable was more closely aligned to the day-to-day activities of the police and other authorities.

In 1961, the head of the Frobisher Bay detachment described the impact on RCMP work:

It would be well to mention that in the eyes of the local Eskimo the Force at this point is associated with the ills of the transition period of the Eskimos adapting to a new way of life. The active enforcement of liquor and criminal law, a departure from our traditional role of benefactor and protector as in smaller Eastern Arctic settlements, cannot be rationalized by the Eskimo. Consequently, there is no particular desire to associate themselves with the Police; Eskimos who actively aid the Police are viewed with disfavour among the Eskimos.

For detachments other than Iqaluit, the lack of criminal activities also made it increasingly difficult to justify keeping RCMP in many communities. T. E. R. Lysk, Inspector in Charge of the Criminal Investigations Branch, wrote in 1964: “It should be clear to our members that if we had to rely strictly on police work to justify our existence, then all our detachments would probably be closed with the exception of one or two.” Officers continued to provide maintenance, plumbing, heating, and even tax help alongside their policing duties in communities into the late twentieth century.

INUIT SPECIAL CONSTABLES AND INTERCULTURAL INTERPRETATION

The duties of Inuit special constables in the era also narrowed from general guide and aide to the important role of translator and intercultural mediator. The goal of the RCMP was in many ways a cultural one, helping Inuit to shift from one cultural legal framework to another. Despite this, the force's central responsibility to accurately convey information between the government and Inuit was passed on to Inuit special constables because the RCMP did not deem learning Inuktitut to be necessary, and so it was acquired informally at the officer's discretion, if at all. In any case, pressure was placed on Inuit special constables to be translators, both linguistic and cultural, for the RCMP. As Mosha Akavak told the QTC, part of his father's role as a special constable was "to try to inform the people of Kimmirut about what the RCMP was doing in the area." Inuit special constables were vulnerable in the community because of this role as cultural intermediary, and sometimes ostracized for their involvement with RCMP.

The quality of translations provided by Inuit varied since they, too, received little formal training. Mosha Akavak spoke to the QTC about his father:

[He] was not an official interpreter. He only spoke a little bit of English but he could understand. And I remember him doing that, interpreting. For more technical messages that were to be conveyed to the people they had interpreters like store clerks or ministers. When there was a good interpreter available, they would use interpreters. My father was not an official interpreter. My mother understood more English than my father . . . My mother used to help with interpretation.

Ejesiak Padluq told the QTC that one Inuit special constable he remembered from his youth was a “very bad interpreter and wouldn’t really relay information.” The quality of interpretation, translation, and therefore intercultural communication varied widely in different communities and over time, and translators were often faced with trying to translate terms that had no equivalent expressions in the other language. For example, even in 2012 there was no Inuktitut word or expression meaning “guilty” or “not guilty.”

Lack of institutional support for translation training for either Inuit special constables or RCMP severely impeded the force’s performance in Qikiqtaaluk, although individual RCMP officers did not always realize the extent of this impediment. Other times, the RCMP blamed their interpreters, whether trained or informal, for any miscommunications. The *RCMP and Inuit Sled Dogs* report states:

Unfortunately, many members were not fluent in the Inuit languages and dialects, and therefore had to rely upon interpreters, who often were special constables. 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.

RCMP headquarters was aware of ineffective translation services, but did little to change it. In Iqaluit in 1961, for example, the position of Inuit special constable stayed vacant for almost a year because the RCMP was not willing to increase the salary for the position to be on par with other departments that were hiring translators and interpreters. In one case, an Inuk suspected of stealing a rug had been held for seventeen days before the police could get a statement from the accused because there was no interpreter available. This issue still had not been solved by 1973, when the officer commanding “G” Division reported:

Several of the Eskimo leaders raised the matter of lack of direct communication between our members since very few of our people speak the Eskimo language. Our special constables act as interpreters but this is not always satisfactory since there is often a loss in the translation which leads to misinterpretation and misunderstanding . . . I feel that it is very important that more of our members learn to speak the Eskimo Language inasmuch as our role in the North is quickly changing . . . Our police role with all its manifestation is not clearly understood by the Eskimos because they do not understand the intricacies of the various laws and ordinances.

This sentiment was echoed by retired RCMP constable Terry Jenkin, who explained to the QTC the difficulties he faced in communicating with Inuit: “I got some basic understanding and ability to speak Inuktitut. You don’t know how well you are communicating. It was with great difficulty.”

Recognition of Inuit special constables has been scarce. One constable, Kyak, was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada for his “service to his fellow Eskimos as a Special Constable in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for nearly thirty years.” Deceased special constables at Cambridge Bay have recently been recognized by the placing of RCMP markers at their grave sites. Inuit special constables, who contributed so much to the RCMP northern history, have yet to be recognized as a group. This omission seems particularly inappropriate since the RCMP chose to recognize in 1973 the contribution of qimmiit to the Force’s northern work.

An RCMP report from 1961 complained that it was becoming very difficult to hire “competent Eskimo interpreters,” especially in Iqaluit, because the pay for special constables was relatively low compared to the salaries offered by other federal, military, and private employers. The RCMP also admitted that they had reduced the number of people interested in the

job due to its own actions, stating that a large group of potential bilingual candidates “[had] been involved with the Police—principally in infractions of the N.W.T. Liquor Ordinance.” The detachment was so severely affected by the lack of interpreters that it even opened the possibility of using a female Qallunaat stenographer, noting that the potential candidate “[was] fluent in Eskimo and English, and [had] good experience in stenographic duties.”

RCMP officers with experience in the Arctic expressed dismay over the many changes that affected the Force in the 1950s and into the 1960s. The emphasis on the enforcement of laws, without the benefits of a full justice system consisting of courts, lawyers, interpreters, and laws made by the people most affected by them, meant that many Inuit were even more likely to view the RCMP as threatening authority figures, a power dynamic that has permeated Inuit–RCMP relations ever since. In the process, *ilira* was replaced by resentment.

Game laws and related rules meant that the police could dictate to Inuit where to go, what to hunt, and how to behave. Repeatedly under the Liquor Ordinance the police imprisoned and punished people—under the Dog Ordinance they killed *qimmiit*. In numerous places, RCMP had sexual relationships with Inuit women that resulted in both anguish for the women and lingering hurt for children who never met their fathers and were physically different than others in their community.

Additionally, Inuit actions that had traditionally been acceptable were now coming into conflict with Canadian law, which had been in place for decades but which was now being more strongly enforced. For instance, with *Regina v. Amak, Avinga, and Nangmalik* (1963), three Inuit were charged with assisting in Arrak Qulitalik’s suicide. Bob Pilot, the RCMP officer assigned to the case, was hesitant about proceeding but was told that this was a case worth prosecuting in order to demonstrate the “evolution” of the police and to show “that the police are not just givers of welfare.” The three pleaded guilty, but their sentence was suspended by Judge Sissons on the

advice of Pilot, who pointed out that punishing the men with incarceration would remove three important hunters from the ilagiit nunagivaktangit and their families.

Some RCMP, like Bob Pilot, attempted to bend the laws to conform to traditional Inuit practices, but in the 1960s in particular more laws were being introduced and police were increasingly being called upon to enforce them more vigorously. While Inuit had no option but to comply with laws, they did not accept these laws as their own. With respect to game laws, for example, Qanguk told Hugh Brody, “When we knew that the police were coming our way we knew that we were going to be asked all kinds of questions. And we began to get our answers ready.” In some cases Inuit moved away from the police to avoid contact with them. Qanguk explained, “We knew that we were going to be asked about the animals we had killed . . . We were not allowed to kill too many. This was against their rules. So we decided to move farther away, and to go and live beyond the policemen’s journeys, because we were scared.”

A report to the Commission of the NWT in 1978 about new policing agreements provides a helpful summary of the RCMP’s perceptions about the challenges that it faced in performing “non-police duties” over the previous decade. The duties addressed in the report included among others acting as prosecutors, collecting taxes, issuing licenses, impounding dogs, and enforcing municipal bylaws. The section on serving as prosecutors revealed the extent to which many officers were uncomfortable with the role. The report stated:

One final tension point revolves around the fact that the RCMP are required to prosecute cases coming before the Justices of the Peace Courts. Mixed feelings were expressed to the Committee about the RCMP assuming this role. Some individuals thought that the conflict was so fundamental that they should restrict their role to traditional policing work; others enjoyed the experience;

others felt they should receive more detailed training to handle such responsibilities. Few saw any real alternatives to the present system. This can and occasionally does have unfortunate results. Individual RCMP can be called upon to provide policing, prosecutorial, and defence counsel services and, in addition, to provide guidance to a lay Justice of the Peace on the laws. Such tripartite conflicts in a court situation can affect community perceptions of the role of the RCMP.

Dog Ordinance and the Killing of Qimmiit

As is discussed in other chapters, a recurring point of conflict between Inuit and RCMP was the handling of qimmiit. For decades, RCMP were entirely reliant on qimmiit for their work, especially for the multiple patrols they made each year to visit ilagiit nunagivaktangit or to check up on traders and missionaries where there was no detachment. RCMP were responsible for inoculating qimmiit against rabies and doing whatever was needed to stabilize qimmiit populations. As an example of RCMP actions to help keep qimmiit healthy, after the qimmiit population in Cumberland Sound was almost destroyed by disease in 1959, the RCMP transported qimmiit from other regions into Pangnirtung—RCMP officers even tried to establish a qimmiit breeding program in the community. In the same period, however, RCMP were invoking the Ordinance Respecting Dogs to kill loose qimmiit in places like Iqaluit where Inuit were likely to stay for extended periods of time and where many Qallunaat were also living.

As of 1950, all RCMP officers officially became dog officers and could and did shoot qimmiit not tied up or otherwise in violation of the Ordinance. In

his autobiography, Inuit leader Paul Quassa of Igloodik described an incident in Igloodik:

The RCMP said that the dogs had distemper or rabies or some kind of sickness, but they weren't sick at all. The community was growing but the dogs weren't everywhere. The dogs were in one place. Perhaps the RCMP constables were scared of them and they slaughtered them. Sometimes they didn't even tell the owners.

In effect, enforcement was both a result of the conditions of the time and place, and the inclination of specific officers. In some cases only a single qimmiit was shot, while in other cases entire teams were destroyed. In two particularly excessive examples, the police shot more than two hundred and fifty qimmiit in both Iqaluit and Pangnirtung. Other authorities were allowed to shoot qimmiit, but in most cases, the shootings would have been done with RCMP knowledge and in many cases with RCMP involvement, either by officers or by Inuit special constables.

As is discussed elsewhere in this book, the manner in which qimmiit were killed proved very painful for Inuit. Jacopoosie Peter's family's qimmiit were killed by the RCMP in 1966. He told the QTC:

That year in the summer, I had the fright of my life. I was nearing three years old. My mother shouted, "The police are shooting the dogs!" We all went outside. My mother went outside and was screaming and yelling. My grandfather chained the dogs . . . I remember shots being fired and an RCMP officer running. I was very scared that time. I always had nightmares over it.

For Mosese Qiyuakjuk, the RCMP officers shooting qimmiit was representative of their broader disrespect for Inuit. He told the QTC:

The RCMP used to mistreat us badly those days when they considered themselves superior to Inuit. The RCMP considered Inuit as though we meant nothing in their eyes. The mistreatment of Inuit and their actions were inconsiderate of Inuit welfare those days. They did not have the audacity to inform or warn us that they would shoot and kill off our dogs. The RCMP had no concern of Inuit rights then and they are more considerate now and inform the owners prior to killing dogs now. In those days the RCMP did their own thing without informing Inuit of any of their actions. In those days I remember their actions and what they did to Inuit were unforgiving and deliberate as if trying to scare the Inuit by their actions.

Witnesses who spoke to the QTC recalled that it was difficult for Inuit to kill qimmiit, but that they were compelled to do what they were told by the police while trying to keep Inuit safe from the mayhem. Joshie Teemotee Mitsima told the QTC about an incident during his childhood in the late 1960s when the RCMP were shooting qimmiit in Apex in Iqaluit. The Inuit special constable, Paul Idlout, “was ordered by the RCMP Constable, a white guy” to untie the family’s qimmit. The dog immediately ran towards young Joshie, who described:

[Paul Idlout] was yelling to the other policeman “Don’t shoot!” Because I was in the way. The other policeman shot the dog anyway. Just as it was between me and the policeman he shot the dog. It looked like he was shooting right at me. It was like in slow motion I could almost see the bullet coming down and hitting the dog. It was so strange.

The perception that RCMP were largely responsible for the killings, and the poisonous relations that were being created, was captured by

anthropologist Toshio Yatsushiro, who quoted an Inuk in 1958 as saying “Maybe the police will kill Eskimos then, just like the dogs.”

RCMP and Inuit Women

The RCMP held a policy that condemned romantic or sexual interactions between officers and Inuit women, whether due to racist beliefs, a fear of compromised policing, or a concern for abandoned illegitimate children once officers returned South. Despite this policy, sexual interactions were well known, according to Inuit and historical records. The relationships were common enough that a cartoon about liaisons between Inuit women and RCMP made it into the magazine *RCMP Quarterly* in 1950 (Figure 1). Romantic relationships followed a spectrum of interaction, from brief, consensual relationship to longlasting marriages, but it is also certain that some RCMP used their position of authority to coerce Inuit women into sexual acts.

July Papatsie, from Pangnirtung, described the RCMP’s power over women:

With that much power, they could do anything they wanted to do. . . . The RCMP could do anything they wanted with any woman that was living up north. Anything. Now that woman who was forced sexually by this officer cannot talk back, has nowhere to go and complain. Her husband knows but cannot do anything, is powerless.

He also explained that the RCMP took advantage of Inuit customs:

Inuit used to live a simple life. Adultery was not accepted but swap was allowed. RCMP exploited it to the extreme. Once they

found out they could trade husbands and wives freely . . . people were forced for sexual favours. If the DNA of RCMP officers were to be looked at, they would be found everywhere because people were forced for sexual favours. We Inuit know that. When they accepted, the child was told what happened in tradition but with the RCMP, the child would not be able to talk to the father.

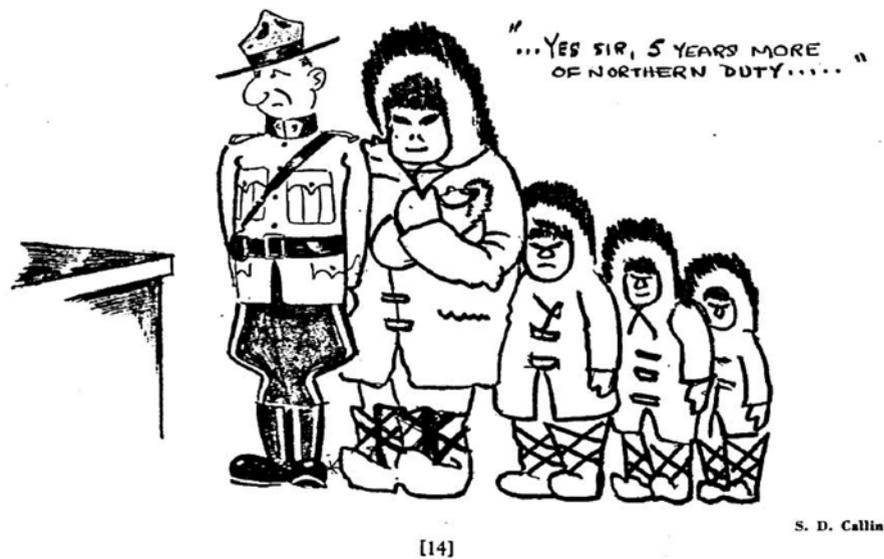


Figure 1: *RCMP Quarterly*. Cartoon Supplement, 1950.

Papatsie linked the “negative energy” from RCMP relations with Inuit women to problems within families, including abuse.

Some Inuit told the QTC about their experiences as children of Inuit women and Qallunaat RCMP officers. Elisapee Ootoova told the QTC, “I have an RCMP father. I am different from my sister. I am an illegitimate child. And it is embarrassing. I was so close with my [non-biological] father

and when I started learning that I have a white father, when I started going older, I was very agitated by it.” Joshua Idlout told the QTC that his mother getting pregnant by his RCMP father had severe repercussions for his family: “My mother’s husband . . . was out for TB recovery [and] came home to find his wife pregnant. This was one of the biggest painful experiences he went through. She had me for nine months although her husband tried to have me miscarried. I heard a lot of bad stories about it.”

Conclusion

Our ancestors survived without a formal court of justice by following traditional and appropriate laws for peace. People shouldn’t say that our traditional laws are outdated; they worked. If people think our traditional laws didn’t work, they should consider today’s much higher rate of crimes and disputes. —Mary Anulik Kutsiz

Inuit and RCMP share a history, in the sense that many of the events that shaped their pasts unfolded in the same time and place, even though the impacts and experiences were personal and singular. Both groups were being bombarded with messages that the North would be developed and that they needed to either move aside or take positions in support of new, comprehensive economic and political agendas. For the RCMP, this meant that officers were expected to focus on law enforcement near military bases and other places where Inuit were arriving in growing numbers. For Inuit, who found themselves suddenly living year-round in settlements, this meant continuous exposure, without any support, to dozens of laws in a justice system that was both new and complicated.

In their long history in Qikiqtaaluk, the RCMP viewed themselves as guardians of Inuit, enforcers of Canadian laws and values, and interpreters

of a new political, economic, and cultural system that was always believed to be just around the corner. For Inuit, however, police in the local detachment or on patrol embodied an outside world that was imposing strange and inappropriate laws and practices on Inuit life. Individual officers, who rotated in and out of detachments every two or three years, could be sympathetic or mean, reliable or unpredictable. Some officers caused great distress in communities and families due to personal actions and behaviours. Inuit were unable—or afraid—to challenge the RCMP directly. Also, as the RCMP admitted in its report *RCMP and Inuit Sled Dogs*, many officers were paternalistic in their attitudes and behaviours—they acted as though they knew what was better for Inuit than Inuit themselves.

As document records and Inuit memories show, many RCMP officers shared a strong admiration for Inuit skills, knowledge, and culture, and in many instances individual officers lobbied the federal government on behalf of Inuit. Police officers requisitioned supplies, travelled great distances to get medical help, and stretched rules to issue relief. In general, however, paternalism, coupled with immense authority and the power to enforce laws that made no sense in the cultural and environmental context of Qikiqtaaluk, created an imbalance in the relationship between Inuit and RCMP. As a result, Inuit ended up doing things they did not want to do, or resisted and ignored laws. The RCMP found it very difficult, for example, to hire special constables when other jobs were available, noting that Inuit exhibited “some reluctance” to take jobs with the RCMP.

The RCMP has served as the longest-standing agent of the federal government in Qikiqtaaluk. For this reason alone, a more thorough examination of the shared history is called for. The history is needed both for the sake of RCMP serving in the North, so they can better understand how their predecessors’ actions have affected Inuit, and for Qikiqtaalungmiut, to provide them with a more balanced history about important issues, such as the enforcement of liquor laws and the treatment of Inuit women, than what has so far been made available.

Endnotes

General Comments on Sources

- Despite the voluminous amount of material written on Qikiqtaaluk and Inuit, no single work addresses the functions and roles of the RCMP and relationships between RCMP and Inuit in post-war period. The 700-page report and compilation of documents titled *RCMP and the Inuit Sled Dogs (Nunavut and Northern Quebec: 1950-1970)* report (hereafter referred to as the *RCMP and Inuit Sled Dogs Report*) produced in 2006 by the RCMP contains information about roles, responsibilities, and policing conditions in Baffin communities. The report's narrow focus on dog killings, however, precluded a more complete history of the force's northern service from emerging. Other RCMP sources have been helpful, especially the 1995 *Policing the Baffin Region, N.W.T.* report (hereafter referred to as the *Policing the Baffin Region Report*) created as part of the Eastern Arctic Crime and Justice Study, which interviewed 157 current or retired officers who served in Qikiqtaaluk between 1940 and 1994. While the report does not examine or present Inuit perspectives on the RCMP, it serves as a useful source about the working conditions of officers serving in Qikiqtaaluk during the second half of the 20th century and presents regional and individual "experiences, perspectives, and opinions on a wide range of issues related to crime, criminal justice, and policing in the Baffin Region." The RCMP also provided the Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC) with access to files held at both RCMP headquarters and Library and Archives Canada (LAC). The research team focused efforts on material about Qikiqtaaluk specifically and on training

and personnel policies of the RCMP between 1950 and 1975. Additional archival records were searched within the Department of Northern Affairs fonds at LAC, the Northwest Territories Archives and, to a lesser extent, other collections.

- The testimony provided to the QTC and statements collected by the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), along with other oral sources from books and articles, provides insight into how the RCMP was perceived and remembered by Inuit, and the deep impact of police actions on daily life. Despite invitations made to individual officers and a general call for participants made in the RCMP veteran's magazine the RCMP Quarterly, only one retired member of the force chose to participate in the QTC hearings.
- Missionary quote: Archives Deschâtelets, HR6903.C73R2, "Notes by Roger B. Buliard, re: Matters to be discussed at the General Meeting on Eskimo Affairs to be held May 19th, 1952," 19 May 1952.
- Elijah Panipakoocho: QTC, 19 December 2008, Elijah Panipakoocho.
- *Ikira*: Hugh Brody, *The Other Side of Eden: Hunters, Farmers and the Shaping of the World* (New York, North Point Press, 2001), p. 43. "Ikira is a word that speaks to the subtle but pervasive result of inequality. Through the inequality it reveals, the word shapes the whole tenor of interpersonal behaviour, creating many forms of misunderstanding, mistrust, and bad faith. It is the fear that colonialism instils and evokes, which then distorts meanings, social life and politics."
- John Amagoalik: Louis McComber, *Changing the Face of Canada: The Life Story of John Amagoalik* (Iqaluit, Nunavut Arctic College, 2007), p. 19.

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- Inuit justice and leadership: See W.C.E. Rasing, *Too Many People: Order and Non-Conformity in Iglulingmiut Social Process* (Nijmegen, Katholieke Universiteit, Faculteit der Rechtsgeleerdheid, 1994), 105-14,

142-44; the Rasing quotation is from 105. See also: John Bennet and Susan Diana Mary Rowley, eds., *Uqalurait: An Oral History of Nunavut*, McGill-Queen's Native and Northern Series (Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 95-105; and R. Quinn Duffy, *The Road to Nunavut: The Progress of the Eastern Arctic Inuit since the Second World War* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 196-97.

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- Various roles of the NWMP Officer: David Ross and Robin May, *The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 1873-1987* (London: Osprey, 1988), pp. 5-6; Harring, "There Seemed to Be No Recognized Law," *Laws and Societies in the Canadian Prairie West, 1670-1940*, eds. Louis Knafla and Jonathan Swainger (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2005), p. 93; and Andrew R. Graybill, *Policing the Great Plains: Rangers, Mounties, and the North American Frontier, 1875-1910* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2007), p. 30. As Harring points out in "There Seems to Be No Recognized Law," (2005), p. 120, this type of concentrated power would be unheard of in Ontario or Quebec.
- Walter Hildebrandt: Walter Hildebrandt, *Views from Fort Battleford: Constructed Visions of an Anglo-Canadian West* (Regina, SK, Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina, 1994), p. 36.
- Special constables: R. C. Macleod, *The NWMP and law enforcement, 1873-1905* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1976), pp. 148-49; *Royal Northwest Mounted Police, Report of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police 1907* (Ottawa, King's Printer, 1908), p. 64; Harry Hampton Aimé,

Overalls, Red Serge, and Robes: Life and Adventures in the Great Canadian North (Red Deer, AB, Hampton Press, 2004), 77; “Few Indians Join RCMP,” *Kainai News*, 1 December 1971, p. 12; and “Indian Group Claims To Have Damning RCMP Evidence,” *Kainai News*, 1 August 1976, p. 12. Special constables were eventually integrated into the regular constable stream under the Aboriginal Policing Services Directorate; see Solicitor General Canada, *Annual Report 1989-1990* (Ottawa, Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1990), p. 28.

- Relationship between RCMP and bureaucrats: Royal North-West Mounted Police, *Report of the Royal North-West Mounted Police 1902* (Ottawa, King’s Printer, 1903), p. 71 (help “keep the Indians in order”); *Report of the Royal North-West Mounted Police 1903* (Ottawa, King’s Printer, 1904), p. 60 (praise given for all the work the Department is doing); also *Royal Northwest Mounted Police, Report of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police 1914* (Ottawa, King’s Printer, 1915), p. 188 (“The work in connection with this department is rapidly increasing”); *Report of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police 1917* (Ottawa, King’s Printer, 1918), p. 108; and *Report of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police 1928* (Ottawa, King’s Printer, 1929), p. 25 (the involvement with Indian Affairs is “close and friendly”); *Report of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police 1930* (Ottawa, King’s Printer, 1931), p. 39 (the work with DIA is “considerable”); *Report of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for the eighteen months ended March 31, 1934* (Ottawa, King’s Printer, 1934), pp. 31-32.
- RCMP in treaty negotiations: Graybill, *Policing the Great Plains*, (2007), pp. 38-41. See also Hildebrandt, *Views from Fort Battleford*, (1994), p. 37.
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vaktangat (plural ilagiit nunagivaktangit). The English translation (and meaning of the term in English) is based on the Inuktitut definition: “A place used regularly for hunting, harvesting and gathering.” Implicit in this meaning is the concept of home before the settlement period. The choice of the term was determined through a terminology/linguistics workshop organized by the QTC in April 2010.

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- Dog Teams and Canoes: LAC, RG 18, RCMP, Accession 1985-86/574, Volume 4, File G-15-1-G (1960), Organization, Procedure and Functions - “G” Division, Memorandum from L. A. Gibbs, Whitehorse Detachment to Officer Commanding, RCMP, re: familiarization course for RCMP members going north, 24 January 1955.
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