NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH
GOVERNMENT AND POLICYMAKING

MAN IN THE ARCTIC PROGRAM

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA
THE MAN-IN-THE-ARCTIC PROGRAM

The Man-in-the-Arctic Program, funded by the National Science Foundation, is a long-range research effort intended to develop a basic understanding of the forces of change in Alaska and to apply this understanding in dealing with critical problems of social and economic development. The overall objectives to the program are to:

- Measure and analyze basic changes in the economy, the social conditions, and the population of Alaska.
- Identify significant interactions between outside economic and social forces and Alaska conditions and institutions.
- Analyze specific public problems associated with these interactions and policy alternatives for dealing with them.
- Assist planners and decisionmakers in solving critical problems of concern to both the state and the nation.
MAN IN THE ARCTIC PROGRAM
Monograph No. 3

North Slope Borough Government and Policymaking

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Errors and omissions remaining in the report are my responsibility alone.

Gerald A. McBeath
1981
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

In July 1980, the life chances of Inupiat* on Alaska’s North Slope were better than those of residents in any other rural area of the state and in many of Alaska’s cities. The region had:

- An unemployment rate of 5 percent, compared to 11 percent statewide and nearly 50 percent in some rural regions.
- Over 500 new housing units, including modern facilities and appliances.
- Per student expenditures of $15,000, the highest in the state.
- New schools in each village, controlled by an independent school board and responsive to local interests.

In almost every area of social life, conditions were far better than they had ever been. Now, the opportunities for personal success attracted immigrants, where once the Inupiat had left the region in search of more secure futures.

What is truly remarkable is that these events occurred in America’s least hospitable environment. The North Slope of Alaska has an average annual temperature of 15 degrees Fahrenheit. Since the entire North Slope Borough (America’s largest municipality in land area) is situated above the Arctic Circle, the sun does not set for four months, from mid-April to mid-August. Conversely, the sun does not rise for two months in mid-winter, and days are dark for an additional four months. Low temperatures, snow, ice, forceful winds, and the dark of the Arctic winter make life difficult at best and always hazardous in winter. These climatic conditions are combined with the effects of isolation—each North Slope community is at least 50 miles distant from the nearest village. Obviously, the physical environment and ecology of the region discourage habitation by man.

What has supported permanent Native communities on the North Slope, encouraging their growth through providing residents jobs and a full range of social services? The answer to this question is simple and obvious—the petroleum economy at Prudhoe Bay which developed following the twin oil and gas discovery in 1968 and the construction of the oil pipeline from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez completed in 1977. Oil from the Prudhoe Bay province came on line at a most propitious moment—during a time of worldwide scarcity of oil and an oil crisis in the United States caused by increased domestic energy consumption and reduction of existing oil reserves. Today, the Prudhoe Bay oil field supplies 18 percent of the oil requirements of the United States. Oil company property at Prudhoe Bay gives the region of 4,300 residents a tax base (annual assessed valuation) of $6 billion.

In other energy-rich regions of the United States, substantial resource development has not always brought increased benefits to the local population. In particular, regions popu-

*Throughout this report we refer to the North Slope Native people as Inupiat, for they prefer this term to Eskimo.
Figure 1. North Slope Borough
lated by disadvantaged ethnic minorities have rarely gained full benefits. And resource-rich nations of the Third World infrequently receive benefits commensurate to the costs of development. The chief exceptions are OPEC nations. They have been exporting oil since World War II, and have derived great benefits from oil development since 1973. 

In fact, the question of what supports a full employment economy on the North Slope is the wrong question to ask. The answers are uninteresting, and the discussion fails to explain the dramatic changes that have occurred in this region. The questions we ask in this report are how (in what way) residents of the North Slope have been able to profit from oil and gas development, and why they have sought and gained the degree and kind of results they have.

A report on North Slope Borough government and policymaking will answer these questions. This regional government has intervened in all areas of social life on the North Slope. It has converted energy resources into social benefits for the North Slope people. Understanding the way in which the borough government has developed calls for description in some detail; understanding the reasons behind the borough’s intervention and the effects of borough action calls for analysis.

To explain the how and why of today’s North Slope community is to tell a story that is unique. No other rural government in the United States can draw upon resources such as those of Prudhoe Bay. No other regional (county-type) government operating under a state’s constitution and laws has a majority Native American constituency. Because the North Slope Borough in these respects is unique, its story is of compelling interest.

However, the subject is important beyond the North Slope. The experience of the North Slope Borough as an “Alaska Native government” has meaning for Natives in other rural areas who have not yet organized themselves for regional self-government. The borough example is also of relevance to American Indians on reservations who are currently reassessing the tribal concept and exploring new ways of organizing their relationships with the federal government and the states in which they live.¹

The story of the borough is also instructive for regions of Western states that are undergoing intensive exploration and exploitation of energy resources. As the Prudhoe Bay complex has developed and as planning for and leasing of outer continental shelf (OCS) areas have proceeded, the problems encountered by the North Slope government resembled those of Western coal and OCS oil regions. These regions also face problems of environmental damage as a result of rapid resource development and disruption of social life by the infusion of capital and outside personnel in the process of resource exploitation.¹

The borough’s development of a social infrastructure for a region with a widely dispersed population and no permanent industrial base also offers lessons for other rural governments in the U.S.

The approach we take to an understanding of North Slope Borough government and policymaking is not unified, for our objectives are multiple. We seek to describe a unique system of politics, which calls for an examination of the borough’s history and current operating environment, and we seek to make clear the parts of the borough experience that resemble those of other regions—local governments responding to needs of disadvantaged ethnic minorities (or recently independent Third World states), energy-impacted areas, and rural governments in the U.S. and abroad. For these reasons, we used no single stream of theory in the social sciences to organize the research and to guide the interpretation of
findings. Instead, we have employed concepts and methods from several fields of modern political science.

In analyzing leadership and collecting information on public choices, we will use concepts from the literature of political systems theory, especially those applied in the fields of comparative politics and organizational analysis, and the methods of modern political behavioralism.

In comparative politics, students of political development have tested concepts useful to our research, for example, political institutionalization and political participation. The generation of scholarly research on the politics of newly independent nations has applied these concepts with some success, and recently they have become useful in the study of comparative state politics in the United States. In treating political institutionalization on the North Slope, we will consider the nature of the formal organization(s) through which borough residents make binding decisions; the extent to which such institutions are responsive, adaptive, and representative; and the relative importance of groups and bureaucratic structures in the decision-making process. In treating political participation, we will consider the nature and scope of people's activities that are designed to affect governmental decision-making. We will also consider concepts describing leadership processes—political recruitment, communication, and socialization. In our analysis of leadership and in the collection of information on public choices of North Slope residents, we will rely extensively on behavioral data.

We will also borrow concepts from the new eclectic field called "policy analysis," which differs from the comparative politics tradition generally in its concentration on the outcomes of governmental policy. We will employ the sequential model of the policymaking process, emphasizing the implementation and evaluation of government programs and policies—e.g., whether they have the impact that was intended.

Our report begins with a description of the conditions from which a borough government was formed. We then trace the development of the borough, analyzing its centralization of power, specialization of functions, and differentiation of institutions, for these processes seem the best guides to the long-term stability of the borough organization. We analyze the leadership of the borough and the way in which borough leaders perceive problems. We then evaluate the way in which this new regional government has distributed public goods on the North Slope and regulated public activity. Finally, we consider the long-term effects of borough government with respect to the welfare, security, and participation of borough residents.

ENDNOTES

Chapter One


2. See especially the studies in political development of the Social Science Research Council's Committee on Comparative Politics, including Communications and Political Development, edited by Lucian W. Pye (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963); Bureaucracy and Political Development, edited by Joseph LaPalombara (1963); Political


CHAPTER 2

SILHOUETTES OF GOVERNMENT ON THE NORTH SLOPE: FROM THE PRECONTACT PERIOD TO 1972

We will review the political history of the North Slope prior to the formation of a borough government in 1972 in three periods. The precontact period was a time of independence of North Slope Inupiat and separation from other cultures. During the early contact period, population centers developed and Inupiat began to enter the Western cash economy. In the post-World War II period, these changes accelerated and new western structures were established in Inupiat communities.

The Precontact Period

We have little evidence about the organization of Inupiat social life before contact with whites in the mid-nineteenth century. Indeed, we can do little better than guess what the relationships of power and influence were on the North Slope.

However, there is no doubt about what formed the economic base of their society. Inupiat lived in a subsistence culture, depending on the animal and fish resources of the North Slope. Subsistence influenced the settlement pattern, community structure, and decisionmaking; we suspect that the Inupiat attitude toward authority was influenced by subsistence, too.

Before contact with white traders and whalers, Inupiat society was the antithesis of urban society in the West. The population was mobile, for Inupiat followed the migratory species on which they depended for survival. This was especially the case in regard to whaling.

There were precontact settlements along the North Alaskan coasts, but these were not towns or villages. Instead, there were usually scattered, single houses, built partly underground, in which lived closely related nuclear families. The communities were homogeneous and organized on the basis of kinship. Spencer described the pattern of precontact society in these terms:

Social reality and the locus of individual activity were operative in terms of bilateral kinship without, however, genealogical reckoning in any elaborated sense. This meant that although kinship might be reckoned out to second, third, or even fourth collateral degrees, practical considerations were paramount; proximity, residence, frequency of contact, mutuality of interest were all more important in the maintenance of kinship ties than the mere recognition of relationship itself. There was no political authority. Loyalties lay solely within the kin group.

In the process of hunting migrating animal species—whales and caribou particularly—kin groups frequently came into contact with strangers. The idea of kinship was the social cement preventing war: fictive-kin (alliance) relationships developed, which made strangers adopted members of families. Anthropologists have described the extent and prevalence of clusters of kin and quasi-kin groups in Inupiat settlements, which seem to resemble the clusters and webs of dyadic groups found in many Third World countries today. Such a
pattern of social action was shifting, impermanent, and fragile, but it was a pattern in which conflicts could be resolved.

The absence of stable political structures suggests there were no leaders who could find solutions to community crises and adopt policies. But the interpreters of precontact North Alaskan Inupiat societies have identified an incipient political organization that was outside the kinship system. This quasi-government was the association of whaling crews. Its bases were the individual crews, led by the whaling captains (umealiq), and the men’s houses (karigi) which extended the influence of economic leaders to social and political areas.

The whaling crew was a primary economic unit in all coastal Inupiat communities of the Arctic Slope. Whaling drew participation from almost all members of the community. The actual hunt was organized into crews, each of at least six men (the minimal number necessary to take whales), who paddled the whaling craft (umiak). Not all members of the crew were kin, and the leader of the crew sought to establish quasi-kin ties. The rigors of the hunt and the coordination of skills needed to take whales forged the crew into a tightly knit group.

The umealiq was the position closest to our conception of a political leader. He selected the crew, and his choices, particularly of the harpoonist, influenced the fate of the hunt. He found a boat and outfitted the boat and crew, drawing upon family cooperation and wealth to do so. Spencer describes the ideal umealiq as possessing an engaging personality and hunting skills. He ought to have:

Physical strength, hunting skills, hunting success, success with women, and ... wealth.... The ideal person was bluff, hearty, possessed of humor, and overtly, at least, expected to ignore insults and slights from lesser men. 5

Hunt leadership was based on either demonstrated success in the past or the potential for taking whales, not upon hereditary status, or necessarily, family connections.

The major way in which whaling captaincy translated into broader social influence was through the men’s houses (karigi). 6 While the extent of this institution is unknown, there were two or more karigi in each of Point Hope, Point Barrow, and some other areas on the North Slope. They were established by several umealiq, each of whom was a co-owner and partner in the activities of the house. The crew members of these founding umealiq were also members of the karigi. Activities included sports, games, and joking relationships, culminating in messenger feasts. 7 Through the activities of the karigi, a crew leader’s influence could expand beyond his crew. Yet, although interactions between the crew of one umealiq and the leader of another were not constrained (individuals could leave one crew and join another), nevertheless, they tended to be loyal to their umealiq. In short, an umealiq, supported by crew members, dealt with other umealiq, in a shifting pattern of alliances or feuds.

Modern Inupiat who have formed the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission (AEWC) state that whaling captains during the precontact period also were organized in a group. 8 Although the anthropological and historical literature is silent on this point, it seems unlikely that there was an organization with rules and procedures. Still, there may have been some resemblance to an organization in the cluster of relationships among umealiq who were partners in a karigi, and in the interaction of these leaders and umealiq of other karigi in the same locale.
Thus, these entities—umealiq, whaling crews, and karigi—did not compose a formal
government, for they did not make decisions that were binding on all who lived within the
area of settlement. However, they did possess decisive influence over individuals who partici­
pated in these institutions, which justifies the label “family government” or “quasi-govern­
ment.”

One person did have influence over all Inupiat living in a given area of settlement. This
was the shaman who interpreted the cosmos to the community and was unique in his ability
to generate fear of the unknown. However, shamans were not completely of the village; they
were spiritual and magical figures, and the authority source of their decisions was outside
the experience of residents. 9

For the Inupiat on the North Slope before the mid-nineteenth century, authority rela­
tionships were close and personal. They were usually expressed through family ties, and
when not, they still carried the imprint of kinship. They did not comprehend all individuals
of the area in the same structure of rules. Instead, they separated individuals into factions
that were impermanent.

The Period of Early Contact

In the 1850s, white whalers arrived in the Arctic and settled there, causing many
changes in the economy, distribution of population, technology, and pattern of social life.

Settlements which previously had been relatively temporary became permanent during
this period. Groupings of families that were a community only in the sense that they shared
interests in subsistence pursuits became corporate units with a common interest in place.

White whalers and traders introduced weapons that made subsistence hunting easier
and more productive. And, of at least equal importance, they brought a cash economy to
the North Slope by trading consumer goods and money for subsistence products. The cash
economy did not expand gradually over time. Instead, there were spurts of intensive partici­
pation—both in whaling, until its decline as a supplier of cash, and in trapping, which by
1920 had replaced whaling as the primary source of cash income. From roughly 1930 until
World War II, however, all sources of cash income declined, and the traditional subsistence
economy was restored, notwithstanding minor sources of income from labor and a limited
sale of subsistence goods.10

Equally dramatic cultural changes appeared in the early 1900s, as missionaries, school
teachers, and other whites arrived on the North Slope with the objective of “Westernizing
the Eskimo.” The immigrants made the purposes of social life and its organization more
heterogeneous, changes that were ultimately reflected in government and policymaking.
Obviously, whites could not be members of traditional kin groups, and their permanent
residence had the effect of weakening these entities. The activities spurred by the arrival of
whites also had a disruptive effect. For example, trapping for cash took adults away from
villages for long periods, disrupting ceremonials and community life.11 Lay ministers com­
peted with and eventually replaced shamans as symbolic leaders. Missionaries and teachers
transmitted Western language and culture, competing with and reducing the influence of
traditional customs and age-based leadership.

The new governments established during this period were alien to the North Slope
social and cultural environment, which perhaps explains the lack of response of Inupiat to
them. For example, in the 1920s resident teachers and missionaries began to encourage
village residents to form local councils. In the words of one scholar, however, they were only "nominally effective." 12

Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) councils were somewhat more effective. Alaska's Inupiat were placed under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in the 1930s. Under terms of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, extended to Alaska in 1936, Eskimos had the right to draft village constitutions and bylaws. When ratified by majority vote and approved by the Secretary of the Interior, Inupiat villages became formal corporations under federal law. They were entitled to act for village residents legally in all programs of the federal government. Barrow Inupiat formed an IRA corporation in 1940.

Such voluntary organizations as churches and cooperative stores also developed during this period. However, the major period for growth of organizations occurred after the war. These groups and the village councils operated in a Western organizational framework. They had constitutions or rules that became the authority for regulations; they used the representational concept, which was new to Inupiat society; and they made decisions and took actions on the basis of a vote, not a consensus.

The effects of this early period of contact on leadership and political organization are difficult to assess. The population had been organized into families and quasi-family groups, without an overall leadership structure. Leaders of family systems were likely to be elder males, but quasi-governments (the karagi, for example) were headed by younger men who had achieved their status. Overall, the population had been independent and autonomous.

White settlers and their organizations weakened these arrangements and patterns, but they did not obliterate them. The new cash economy gradually eroded the autarchy of the North Slope Inupiat subsistence economy. White civil servants began to connect the region to the rest of the United States. These factors made the traditional kin and quasi-kin groups of less relevance and importance. However, traditional leaders retained influence during this period. Chance notes that leaders of Barter Island (Kaktovik) were important brokers for their villages. There was a:

... congruence of traditional Eskimo leadership traits and those required to articulate with whites. The Eskimo leaders' mental alertness, industriousness, generosity, cooperativeness and ability to learn new technical skills were attributes valued highly by whites, which enabled the local leaders to maintain their effectiveness and positions of importance in both groups. 13

But the leadership of Barter Island seems somewhat atypical, and in the other North Slope villages, new permanent residents brought their own organizational network and values. The net impact of the period of early contact was to juxtapose two political cultures on the North Slope, and to validate leadership in each culture by different means. Thus, while organizations had developed which could take action binding on the community, leadership within the new organizations was not accepted as legitimate by the Inupiat unless it was supported by traditional sources of authority.

From the End of World War II to 1972

Following World War II, new economic and social opportunities drew Inupiat to the large villages of the North Slope. Exploration on Pet 4 (1944-53), the national petroleum reserve in Alaska, created jobs for the Inupiat. Construction of the DEW-line (1954-1957) also brought about new opportunities for employment. With the granting of statehood to Alaska in 1959 and the development of an independent bureaucracy, government social
services, especially education, were extended to more individuals on the North Slope. (The War on Poverty and related federal programs also slightly increased government services.)

However, none of these post-war developments bridged the gap between the two political cultures on the North Slope. We will consider briefly the lack of Inupiat participation in program development and administration and the nature of local political organizations. Then, we will turn to a brief history of that indigenous North Slope regional political organization, the Arctic Slope Native Association (which brought about borough government), and consider the motives and the goals sought in forming the borough.¹⁴

Before 1972, there was no strong governmental organization on the North Slope through which the Inupiat could influence socioeconomic change. In this respect, the North Slope was like other rural areas of the State of Alaska. It was unlike the rest of rural Alaska, however, in that it lacked social service program offices. Kotzebue and Bethel had regional offices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and branches of state agencies (e.g., Labor Department). But Barrow, the most populous city of the North Slope and the ninth largest city of the state, had none. Despite chronic unemployment of North Slope Natives, a manpower office did not open in Barrow until 1970. The several schools of the region—both BIA- and state-operated, but none with more than nine grades—were administered from outside the North Slope, as was the Public Health Service (PHS) hospital. Barrow did have a magistrate and a state trooper, and game wardens visited the North Slope. FAA, Navy, and DEW-line personnel contributed a federal presence to the region, but in function they were like state judicial and law enforcement agents: they regulated the lives of North Slope residents; they did not distribute benefits, outside of a few jobs.

Of course, the North Slope was sparsely populated, having only 2,500 residents in the 1960s. And it was distant from major population centers—some 500 air miles from Fairbanks and 700 miles from Anchorage. State and federal resources were limited, and the distance and low population may explain the absence of state and federal government social service agencies. The region’s representation in the state legislature from 1956 to 1966 drew attention to, but did not correct, this problem. Thus, while most Native areas of the state were seriously limited in governmental responses to problems,¹⁵ there is reason to suspect the North Slope was the most disadvantaged region in terms of attention to unemployment, poor health and sanitation conditions, and illiteracy.¹⁶

Prior to the mid-1960s, there were no strong, local political organizations which could apply pressure on the state and federal government or independently mediate changes affecting the region. There were vehicles for local government in the five villages of the North Slope: Barrow was a second-class city; Wainwright and Pt. Hope were fourth-class cities;¹⁷ Kaktovik (Barter Island) and Anaktuvuk Pass, the two smallest communities at that time, had traditional village councils.¹⁸ In the city of Barrow, there were several community associations—the Mothers Club, a Veterans Association, etc.—which interacted with and supported the city council and mayor, leading some observers to suggest Barrow was a progressive Alaska community.¹⁹ In the smaller villages, the premier organization was usually the church. No village had an economic organization—business firm, industry, organized cottage industry—that could influence local affairs and support local government. Thus, village councils or governments were much different from traditional Inupiat quasi-governments that were based on whaling and hunting fraternities. Local governments were largely disconnected from the lives of the people.

The events of the 1960s changed this picture. In 1960, the Atomic Energy Commission
(AEC) proposed to use nuclear explosions to dredge a harbor at Point Hope. This and intervening events stimulated the formation of the Inupiat Paitot, the first Native regional organization on the North Slope. Joining Point Hope leaders were representatives of Barrow and Wainwright who met several times to oppose the proposed AEC project and, increasingly, to discuss common Native concerns. The Inupiat Paitot was also instrumental in the development of the first Native newspaper of the state, Tundra Times. Meetings of Inupiat Paitot brought about a recognition of common interests and needs and strengthened the linkages among North Slope Native leaders. But when the immediate crisis passed, the organization no longer met.

However, in 1966 a new crisis stimulated the formation of the Arctic Slope Native Association (ASNA), an association that began to fill the empty political space of the North Slope. This crisis was the state's selection of lands on the North Slope with oil development potential. The North Slope Inupiat claimed these lands were theirs by aboriginal right, claims never extinguished by Congress or the new state of Alaska. Organizing ASNA were Charlie Edwardsen, Jr. and other young Barrow Inupiat who had earlier formed the Barrow Improvement Board. Supporting them were established local leaders, notably Eben Hopson—formerly mayor of Barrow and at that time a state senator. The ASNA board of directors represented each of the North Slope villages. The president and executive director, who were always selected from Barrow, held most power in the Association, but the association's legal counsel, a non-Inupiat contract lawyer from Anchorage, came to have considerable influence.

ASNA was a land-claims organization and part of the land-claims movement then developing statewide. It pressed Inupiat claims to all 58 million acres of the North Slope. The oil and gas discovery at Prudhoe Bay in 1968 made the land ASNA claimed more valuable than the resources of the several regional Native associations which had formed throughout the state, but ASNA was unable to use its claim to oil-rich lands to establish a controlling position in the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN). In addition to its campaign for land, ASNA called for jobs, housing, and schools for North Slope Inupiat. It used these appeals both to bolster its claims to a favorable congressional settlement in land and cash and to continue the mobilization of support from its constituency. Indeed, at the culmination of the land claims movement in 1971 when President Nixon signed into law the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), this ostensibly single-purpose association had become a multi-purpose political organization—a quasi-government. ASNA had a greater impact on decisions affecting Natives than any of the existing governmental units on the North Slope.

The process of politics on the North Slope in the 1960s showed these characteristics: first, participants were oriented toward external events, persons, and processes. The leading political events of the 1960s on the North Slope were crisis occasions when an external stimulus caused Natives to respond collectively—as in the Barrow “duck-in” of 1961, the response to the AEC’s plan, and the formation of ASNA in response to state land selections on the North Slope. Second, participants had become less parochial and less satisfied with the ability of either traditional leaders or local government structures to handle new problems. A third characteristic, by no means unique to the North Slope, was the elitist nature of political activity. Less than a dozen leaders participated actively throughout the period, notwithstanding the increase in passive involvement of residents. As noted, with the formation of ASNA, a younger group of Inupiat rose to prominence in regional affairs.

Initially, leaders emphasized the material needs of Natives less than the abstract socio
political issues of land claims and environmental control. As the land claims movement gathered momentum on the North Slope, however, the connections tightened; participants focused increasingly on needs for jobs, schools, and housing. Ultimately, leaders demanded regional government with the capability to deal with these needs.

The movement to form a borough government was interconnected with the land claims movement on the North Slope. The same leaders were involved, but the target was the state, not the federal, government. A key participant in the process described these reasons for borough formation:

(At) the oil and gas lease sale...in 1969...the state got $900 million, but the North Slope people got nothing. It was evident then that a government infrastructure would be developed only with an organized borough. In 1970 the state budget went up, but there was no money for the North Slope; and in 1971 there was none either.

After the oil and gas discovery, there was state hesitation to develop Prudhoe Bay. There was no oil spill plan. Industry went ahead with what they wanted. Sanitation, solid waste disposal, roads—all were problems on the North Slope. 23

The process of incorporating a borough government in Alaska involves petitioning the state’s local affairs agency, holding hearings to collect public opinion, a decision on the application by the Local Boundary Commission, and finally an election in the region. 24 Public accounts and interviews reveal that there was no single most important factor motivating leaders and residents to demand a borough government. We can group the motivations into the three functional areas of welfare, security, and participation.

Leaders sought improvement in material conditions of life, but these do not appear to have been the most powerful motivating factors in the drive for regional government. Leaders pointed to needs for improved housing, health care, roads, village sanitation, and provision of a safe water supply. 25 A factor mentioned frequently was the high rate of unemployment in the region, but this problem was not attributed to government. Those seeking borough incorporation mentioned the lack of jobs, particularly year-round, permanent opportunities for employment; but they did not demand regional government in order to create jobs. In the catalog of needs, education was at the top of the list, especially the need for high schools on the North Slope. Leaders asserted that the lack of opportunities on the North Slope for education beyond the ninth grade was the major cause of the low level of educational achievement of the North Slope peoples. Those youth who went to boarding schools outside the region were less likely to be interested in returning to the North Slope upon completion of their studies. At hearings on the petition to incorporate borough government and in press commentary at the time, several leaders identified this need, saying it could be met by a borough government empowered to raise taxes to support public education. 26

Leaders and residents contended that individuals and the Native community needed protection from agencies, organizations, and events which had made their lives unstable. Testimony at hearings reflected these concerns: many speakers pointed out the ways in which valued customs and practices, especially subsistence pursuits, were being threatened; and they worried about the changes that oil and gas development would bring. Leaders related this demand for security to the land-use planning and zoning powers of borough government. 27

We can also interpret statements of political leaders at this time as demands for substantial Inupiat participation and self-government. They stated that: North Slope Inupiat
were not involved in planning the programs which were administered in their region; they knew their needs better than any other people or agency, yet they had limited access to decisionmakers and no authority to make policies; and Juneau was distant, and state (as well as federal) officials neglected the needs of Natives. Leaders seemed to feel that oil and gas development was one of a series of future impacts that would bring great changes and potential hazards to people and the fragile Arctic ecosystem. To leaders, it was imperative that a strong government institution be formed, controlled by North Slope Inupiat. They phrased this demand for both participation and local control in terms of the state constitutional provisions for maximum local government opportunities and home rule.

On 1 July 1972, the North Slope Borough, comprehending all of Alaska’s North Slope, was formally incorporated as a first-class borough. From the independence of the precontact period, Inupiat had become dependent on Western political and economic institutions, but were never completely integrated with them. Finally, they formed a municipal government which permitted them the maximum amount of self-determination permitted under any state’s constitution and laws. The cycle seemed to be nearly complete. We will now investigate the development of this regional government institution, seeking to understand the extent to which the structure integrates Inupiat values and goals with Western procedures and forms of government.

ENDNOTES

Chapter Two


3. Ibid., p. 111.


8. Interview with whaling captains, Barrow, Alaska, December 17, 1977.


17. There are two kinds of local government recognized in the Alaska Constitution: boroughs and cities, divided into the following classes: 1st class borough; 2nd class borough; 3rd class borough; home rule city; 1st class city; and 2nd class city. Until 1972 there were also cities of the 3rd and 4th class, the least powerful municipalities with police powers limited to such functions as setting curfews and rounding up stray dogs.


22. Gallagher, *Etok . . .*, p. 116; see also Margaret Lantis, “The Current Nativistic Move-

23. Interview with participant in the organization of the North Slope Borough, Barrow, Alaska, July 30, 1980.


27. Interview with participant in the process of forming the North Slope Borough, Barrow, Alaska, July 30, 1980.


CHAPTER 3
DEVELOPMENT OF A REGIONAL GOVERNMENT INSTITUTION, 1972—1980

We will take an analytical approach in our description of the borough, presenting the chronology of its development in three stages of growth. From incorporation in July 1972 until the end of 1973, the borough organized itself as a municipal government and with­stood challenges to its existence. From 1974 to 1978, the borough developed a massive social infrastructure, in the process of which it underwent two processes of centralization—transfer of powers and functions from the villages to the borough government and centralization of power within the borough executive. From 1978 to the present, the borough has “normalized”: through specialization of borough departments and increasing integration of programs in the mayor’s office, it has developed capabilities in the areas of Native issues, social infrastructure, and environmental protection; through accommodation to village institutions and mutual accommodations with other regional organizations, the borough has contributed to the unification of the North Slope community. These three stages are worth examining in some detail, for the strategies employed to attain objectives, and frictions resulting from the use of certain tactics, are important indicators of future behavior.

Organization of Borough Power

During its first eighteen months, the borough was under constant attack by Prudhoe Bay oil companies that were reinforced by important figures in the state administration. These companies sought to delay certification of the borough’s organizing election and, when this failed, they sued in state court to invalidate the formal incorporation of the North Slope Borough (Mobil Oil et. al. v. Local Boundary Commission and Mobil Oil et. al. v. North Slope Borough). The central argument of the companies was that the Prudhoe Bay industrial reserve had been included within the borough illegally. Company lawyers contended that Prudhoe Bay would not benefit from borough government; in fact, taxes on industrial property at Prudhoe Bay would be the primary source of borough revenue, but the companies would receive no borough services except the dubious benefits of environmental regulation.

Guarding against the chance that the courts would support the borough’s incorporation, company lawyers and lobbyists sought to restrict the borough’s power of taxation. In 1973 the State Legislature was called into special session and asked by the oil industry and the Governor to pass legislation which would have eliminated entirely the borough’s revenue authority at Prudhoe Bay. The oil companies were successful in establishing both a ceiling on the oil and gas property tax rate assessed by the state and municipalities and a per capita limit on the municipalities’ ability to tax this property. These measures, although applying statewide, were designed to restrict the North Slope Borough, which was the only regional government with the intent to tax oil company properties heavily, and the region with the largest per capita property tax base.

The suits influenced the financial basis of the North Slope Borough government; for while the issues were unresolved, the borough could not collect property taxes from the companies. Delay of tax resources slowed the development of programs in education and social services which borough leaders had planned to begin at once. Finally, in January 1974
the State Supreme Court dismissed the company suits. An important effect of the company challenge was that it put the borough in a combative mood. In the words of a borough advisor: "We are the only borough that had to be approved by the Supreme Court." 3

These challenges notwithstanding, the basic structure of government was established within eighteen months of incorporation. The borough administration rented quarters and, with the assistance of consultants, set up basic staff departments (Administration and Finance, a Planning department, and a boroughwide Planning Commission). Consultants to the borough arranged for the financing of immediate needs (salaries, office equipment, rental of space) through state and private grants, bank loans, and the sale of revenue anticipation notes. The most important organizational activity was the establishment of a property assessment roll and procedures for collecting ad valorem, sales, and use taxes. These were designed to provide steady revenue when legal challenges to the borough’s taxing authority had been removed.

A second important activity was the transfer to borough control and operation of state-operated schools at Point Hope and Anaktuvuk Pass and the beginning of negotiations to acquire and operate BIA schools at Wainwright, Kaktovik, and Barrow. The Planning Department and Commission also initiated surveys for borough social service programs.

Centralization of Power in the Region

In 1972, the new borough had only statutory powers of education, assessment and taxation, and planning and zoning. Existing village governments retained power to exercise municipal functions (in such areas as flood control, housing renewal, and police protection). For the borough to create a uniform, areawide social service system, it had to absorb the powers of villages. Thus, borough leaders proceeded to seek the transfer of village government powers to the borough. At the same time, leaders sought a broader grant of power through the adoption of a borough home rule charter.

The accumulation of area-wide powers in important fields of activity allowed the borough to develop a large-scale Capital Improvements Program (CIP) which was planned, financed, and managed centrally. These several processes have brought into effect a powerful regional government and have weakened the village governments on the North Slope.

Transfer of Powers

The transfer of powers took place in two steps. In late 1972, the borough mayor requested that mayors of the five villages transfer municipal powers to the borough. Shortly thereafter, the mayor sent city mayors a statement of reasons, "Policies and Information to be Presented to All Villages on the North Slope." 4 He argued that only the villages qualified for state and federal revenue sharing, for the borough’s authority was limited to education, taxation, planning and zoning. More to the point, the borough "would be in a much better position to provide police, fire, health, road, airport, and other services" if the villages transferred powers. And the borough could provide services while taxing villagers less, for borough residents were exempt from taxation on the first $20,000 of owner-occupied homes, and residents did not pay sales tax on the "basic necessities of life in the Arctic." 5

The villages responded to this in two ways. The outlying villages, Wainwright and Point Hope, transferred all powers on the municipal list that were requested. 6 However, the councils did so incorrectly; they failed to hold hearings on the ordinances at a meeting publicized in advance.
The city council of Barrow, on the other hand, adopted a position paper objecting to the transfer of powers “until such time as the North Slope Borough has exercised its mandatory powers to the fullest extent possible.” Moreover, council members said the borough had given no indication to the city of “its ability, staff, capability, plan and program of work to permit the borough to carry out said activities.”7

In the second step, beginning in September 1973, the borough mayor instructed city officials in the procedure for passing the ordinance and sent sample copies of hearing notices, legal advertisements, and affidavits for posting; he requested certified copies of meeting minutes.8 However, when the mayor introduced a resolution in the borough assembly to hold area-wide elections on the transfer of all twenty-two powers,9 it was tabled by representatives from Barrow (one of whom was then city mayor).

The following year, the mayor introduced another resolution calling for an area-wide election on June 10, 1974.10 Both Barrow’s city mayor and manager objected again, saying the transfer of all municipal powers to the borough would remove all rationale for the city’s existence.11 At the public hearing held on the resolution, Barrow representatives made four objections to the transfer of all powers: the borough had not established why it needed each power; the borough lacked the resources at that time to administer services area-wide; in some areas, federal, state, city or private parties might better manage affairs; and there was a political need for local city control12 (meaning, the city represented interests of residents better than the borough).

Thereupon, Barrow representatives amended the ordinance so that nine powers were left off the list: (1) harbors and marine facilities, (2) cemeteries, (3) police protection and jail facilities, (4) cold storage plants, (5) community centers, (6) recreation facilities, (7) fire protection, (8) parking, and (9) consumer protection.13 Of these powers, only police and fire protection were significant. The assembly then scheduled an election on transfer of powers and the home-rule charter. In this case, resistance by Barrow leaders, both to the early transfer requests and the first call for an election, appears to have moderated somewhat the forces of borough centralization.

In the area-wide election of late April 1974, more than 90 percent of the voters approved the transfer of powers and the home rule charter. However, ballots never reached Point Hope, and for a time the borough attorney questioned the legality of this election.14 Although resolutions of councils conflicted, all villages had transferred fourteen powers, and some had transferred fire and police protection.15 Villages have retained only a small number of powers, and the powers retained by village governments are quite insubstantial in comparison to the powers they transferred to the borough from 1973 to 1976. (In 1976, police powers were transferred, primarily at the behest of the Barrow city council, which lacked resources to carry out this power.)

Home Rule

The home rule charter that was drafted during 1973 and ratified by voters in 1974 provided a general grant of power to the borough: “The municipality has all powers of home rule not prohibited by law or this charter,” and “The power of the municipality shall be liberally construed.”16 The charter specified the powers which the borough could exercise immediately outside incorporated cities (all twenty-two municipal powers of A.S. 29.48.030) and thus gave an immediate authorization for the development of services in the pioneer villages of Point Lay, Nuiqsut, and Atkasook.17 It enabled the borough to extend services in the field in which cities had transferred powers, making it unnecessary to gain a
positive areawide vote in all incorporated cities; and this facilitated the future transfer of remaining powers. It provided for the creation of service areas where the borough could provide higher levels of programs with special assessments in the areas served. (This provision allowed the borough to develop services at Prudhoe Bay, paying for them with user fees.)

The full ramifications of the home rule charter on borough government are not yet understood. In Alaska, court decisions have tended to whittle down the range of home rule.18

On the North Slope, home rule has enhanced the feeling of self-determination. "It is very important to the perceptions of people, (it) makes them feel they are their own source of law."19 When asked what difference it makes, an expert on municipal law said:

If we were a statutory borough alone, we would have to find a statute to do something, and the statute might not exist. As a home rule borough, what we do may be questionable, but we can do it until it goes to court. In trying to establish new plans, etc., we have much more freedom. ... (An) example is our offer to sell revenue bonds [for a gas conditioning plant]. As a home rule borough, it is easier to do this.20

As the transfer of powers provided a legal basis for centralized borough government in the region, ratification of the home-rule charter seems to have made the unified exercise of these powers efficient and legitimate.

**Development of the Borough CIP**

The transfer of powers was a prelude to a more significant change in power brought about by borough government on the North Slope, the Capital Improvements Program—surely one of the most controversial aspects of the borough's brief history.

The idea behind the borough CIP was to create a comprehensive social service system—a village-level network of schools, housing developments, and other public buildings, interconnected by roads and supplied with public utilities including safe water. The need for these developments was obvious. At hearings on the borough incorporation petition, experts supported the idea, and even the companies that sued the borough to avoid financing the projects agreed with the need for them. What did oil companies object to? First, the companies have maintained consistently that Prudhoe Bay oil and gas are state resources, and benefits from their exploitation should be spread statewide. They argued that it was inequitable for the borough to use the revenues from this state resource exclusively for the advantage of North Slope residents.21 Second, the companies objected to the "everything at once" strategy of the CIP. They saw no need for design of comprehensive capital projects, bringing about intensive social development, at the fastest possible speeds.22

Borough leaders took the other side of the equity argument, and they saw no reason to wait. Their values and desire for quick results called for a centralized planning strategy. Briefly, the mayor and key advisors (consultants) engaged in long-range planning functions, already set in motion by the time the borough was formed.23 They commissioned planning studies, the results of which agreed with these ideas;24 and they endorsed a CIP master planning design that would effectuate them.25 A discussion of the financing and management of the borough CIP shows how this process contributed to borough centralization of power.

To achieve the comprehensive, intensive, and rapid development of a borough social service system required massive financial support. There was never any question about the
source of this support—revenues from property taxes on Prudhoe Bay. The question was: how could the borough tax Prudhoe Bay owner companies to the extent necessary to pay for the CIP? One method was to fund the CIP out of the borough's operating budget. However, even if borough leaders had considered direct funding of the CIP, this route was blocked by action of the Prudhoe Bay companies. The oil company suits challenging borough incorporation made it impossible for the borough to collect taxes for the first eighteen months of its existence. By the time the Supreme Court had validated borough incorporation, the state's oil and gas taxation policy had changed. The special session of the state legislature in 1973 made important changes in the borough's ability to tax. Pressured by oil companies, the legislature limited the tax rate of municipalities and the state on oil and gas properties. First, municipalities were limited in the tax (or millage) rate they could assess by the size of the municipal population (initially the limit was $1,000 per capita, later raised to $1,500 per capita), or by a complex formula based on assessed property valuation and population. Since the North Slope Borough population was among the lowest in the state, the borough's ability to set a high tax rate to fund a large operating budget was curtailed. Second, the legislature set a ceiling of 20 mills on all taxation of oil and gas property by local governments and the state. In other words, as local jurisdictions taxed more, the state's taxation revenues would fall, giving the state an interest in reducing municipalities' tax rates. Both factors limited the borough's ability to fund the CIP out of the operating budget.

The second method available to the borough was a bonding strategy. The advantage of municipal corporations nationwide is their legal ability to finance long-term capital projects through bonded indebtedness, pledging the "full faith and credit" of the municipality in retiring bonds. Further, the borough's interpretation of state municipal finance law and the 1973 revisions was that there were no limitations on taxation to pay debt service for bonds. In other words, if the borough could develop investor confidence in its bonds, it could pay service charges without limit. The bonding strategy developed at the time (in 1973) when borough leaders first contemplated a massive CIP. Borough finance officers and advisors developed investor confidence in the early days by repaying revenue anticipation notes promptly. Then, in 1974, the borough proposed the sale of some $51 million in general obligation (G.O.) bonds, which were rated "A" (raised from the earlier rating of "BBB") by New York investment firms that saw the multi-billion dollar value of Prudhoe Bay as collateral for an even broader bond offering. A crisis developed in the bonding strategy when the state and oil companies objected to the borough's interpretation of the debt service limit. Oil companies argued that the borough could not tax over and above the mill rate established by legal procedures to pay for debt service. The oil company suit (Sohio v. State of Alaska) in 1976 made it impossible for the borough to sell bonds until the issue was resolved (in the borough's favor) by the state supreme court in 1978.

The "everything at once" strategy of the CIP necessitated a large sale of bonds. A massive offering of bonds would permit immediate construction of many projects, implementing quickly the powers transferred to the borough and alleviating needs. The original design of the CIP was for a six-year period, from 1974 to 1980; the scheduling of some eighty different projects during this period would address in a comprehensive fashion the multiple problems in North Slope society. Second, the retirement schedule of bonds was relatively short (ten to twenty years), so that most bonds would be paid by 1991. That was the year when leaders thought oil resources at Prudhoe Bay would begin to decline, bringing about a corresponding decline in borough revenues. Also, the other major taxpayer of the borough was the Native regional corporation (ASRC), and leaders wanted to pay off the bonds before Native lands became taxable in 1992.

The adoption of this financing strategy reinforced the centralized decisionmaking re-
flected in CIP planning and design. The supply of funds for each project, irrespective of location, depended primarily on the sale and administration of proceeds of borough bonds. The financing strategy also made CIP construction dependent on action of the state legislature and state court decisions (as in the Sohio case).

Borough leaders also became directly involved in the management of the CIP. This involvement was partly the consequence of the system of CIP management selected by the borough. If the borough had opted for a system of competitive bidding, contracting with firms for the construction of CIP projects, borough officials would not have been extensively involved in the projects (which is not to suggest that local residents would have had a part in project management). Borough leaders objected to competitive bidding, however. They felt that bidding out projects would leave them and local residents without any control over project design. They were also unwilling to allow firms without Arctic building experience or those about which little was known to participate in construction. Of most importance, they felt a competitive bidding system would not bring about the employment of Natives in borough projects. (Leaders felt that any local-hire ordinance passed by the borough would be declared unconstitutional in the courts.)

For these reasons, borough leaders employed a construction management system. The borough contracted with a construction management firm for one or several CIP projects. The firm then subcontracted with village corporations, laborers, and outside firms to perform the actual work on projects. Although the construction management firm was responsible for the rate of progress on its projects, the borough administration became extensively involved in CIP administration. The Public Works, Planning, and Administration and Finance departments and the Mayor's office made decisions on priorities in construction and work scheduling. Borough administrators were involved from start to finish.

Effects of Borough Centralization on Villages

What impact have these processes of political and administrative centralization had on the villages of the North Slope? Currently, the villages hold few substantive powers. Barrow is the region's only first-class city; it is in the process of transferring the fire-fighting powers to the borough and is discussing the transfer of recreation, ports and harbors, and other powers, but city government leaders are reluctant to merge their city with the borough.

Point Hope, Wainwright, Kaktovik, Anaktuvuk Pass, and Nuiqsut are all second-class cities. As such, they can control dogs, set curfews, and assess sales taxes among other functions. Village government leaders vary in their attitude toward further transfer of powers. One generalization, however, is that leaders of Barrow and the two largest outlying villages—Wainwright and Point Hope—wish to retain those powers they can exercise with local resources. And, under the aegis of a dynamic local leader, the Point Hope city government has undergone something of a revival. The pattern seems to be that within a centralized regional government, activity of village governments depends on size of the village population and availability of leadership.

Were villages to transfer all remaining powers, they would still be governmental units of a sort. Under Alaska statutes, local governments possess regulatory as well as substantive powers—for example, the power to regulate parking, building and housing codes, etc. Boroughs can gain these regulatory powers areawide only through elections held locally.

Is elimination of village governments on the agenda of leaders of the borough? There has been support for unification of the villages with the borough in the past. In fact, the
issue was brought before the assembly (but was tabled, at the opposition of Barrow representatives). Perhaps the strongest statement in favor of unification of village and regional governments on the North Slope comes from one of the borough’s consultants:

Village councils get in the way. . . . Who needs them? The Barrow city council won’t turn the land over for borough housing. . . . Those holding out against unification stop progress. Everyone is protecting his turf. . . . Rural areas should be more streamlined. They can’t afford strife. If you are organized for confusion, you get it, and it costs money. 

But this speaker represented a minority point of view, and even to him the issue of unification was not important.

From the perspective of most borough leaders, there is presently little need for unification. For its major purposes and programs, the borough already is a de facto, unified regional government. It can deliver social services on an areawide basis, and it has full authority to sell bonds. Too, there are certain advantages to the status quo, as pointed out by a borough official:

Cities are potentially large landowners—they can get land from village corporations for expansion. This is a difficult problem—finding land available for development of municipal services. Usually the villages have deeded land, sometimes village corporations.

The difficulty is that village corporations haven’t made all the municipal expansion land transfers to the cities. But usually it is a cooperative process. . . . Municipalities (city councils) can transfer land to the borough without payment; corporations in villages can’t easily give up land.

That is, the borough can get land for development of areawide services from city councils more easily than from village corporations. City councils then are important to the borough as land brokers.

From the perspective of the villages, of course, there is insufficient governmental power locally to handle local problems, such as alcoholism and juvenile delinquency. The first- and second-class cities have very limited policymaking capabilities, and the two other North Slope villages—Atkasook and Point Lay—have local government only via traditional councils. But this state of affairs is less a consequence of the previous transfers of power to the borough, than the limited availability of local capital and human resources that could be used by local councils for local development.

For the most part, village residents have not consistently used village government structures to deal with their problems. This is perhaps less a consequence of borough centralization than of the malintegration of the city government structure in small villages. Even as the villages have been tied more tightly into the web of regional government on the North Slope, village governments have not been transformed into borough management units (for village mayors, councilmen, and managers do not work for the regional government as new borough administrators). And when the borough has attempted to integrate village governments through establishing a liaison with them in the position of a village coordinator (described below), the links failed to form and coordinators became borough equipment managers.

In short, borough centralization has changed radically the role of local, village governments only in larger villages, particularly Barrow. In the smaller villages, city councils had not uniformly exercised their powers before centralization. Their current failure to do so represents no change of activity.
Obviously, the development of a centralized borough has increased dramatically the need for representation of local interests to the borough administration and assembly. Residents of villages have complained of lack of representation during those periods when no outlying village was represented on the assembly. Since the incorporation of the borough, only the city of Barrow has been represented consistently in the assembly and in the administration of the borough. Outer village representatives have participated increasingly in campaigns for assembly office. Significantly, each of the last three assemblymen representing outer villages was a leader of his village corporation, and this informs us about an important change in government at the village level.

Needs of village residents for representation are not being met by city or traditional councils, again except for Barrow, and on occasion, Wainwright and Point Hope. In all other villages, village corporations created under ANCSA have come to represent village interests. For example, when problems developed in the design of the CIP or in its implementation, councils did not rise in protest; instead, village corporations represented village residents in protest. Point Hope villagers who objected to the slow pace of relocation of their village and to the architectural design of the new community school were led by officers of the Tigara (Point Hope Village) Corporation in their presentation to the borough assembly. Corporations in the other villages have also assumed the villages' symbolic and representational roles. Thus, the functions of government have not disappeared at the village level; for most village residents, village corporations appear to be more congenial structures for representing their interests than city councils. Village corporations have the resources to maintain an office and full-time staff. They have an organizational capacity to respond that all but the largest of the city councils lack.

Centralization of Power and Authority within the Executive

The pattern of centralization we have just examined was more political than administrative—the transfer of power and government functions from local units of government to the regional government level and the exercise of these powers in a massive half-billion-dollar CIP. The second pattern has been one of administrative centralization—moving government decisionmaking and administration of programs upward to the regional government, and within it, to the mayor's office. We seek an explanation for this centralization of administration in: analyses of executive government; the personality of the borough's first mayor, Eben Hopson; and the relatively limited influence of bureaucratic and legislative agencies.

Executive Government

In form and structure, the North Slope Borough is a strong mayor-assembly type. The borough's home-rule charter gives the mayor powers in the areas of appointment, legislation, and administration. Concerning appointment, the mayor may:

Appoint the borough clerk, the borough attorney, the borough treasurer, the borough police chief, and all other borough employees, administrative officers and department heads. Officers appointed by the borough mayor serve at the mayor's pleasure; appointments by the borough mayor of the borough clerk, the borough attorney, the borough treasurer, and borough police chief, are subject to confirmation by the borough assembly.

The assembly does not check most of the mayor's appointive powers, particularly those of functional department heads. Until the selection of a personnel officer in mid-1977, Mayor Hopson was actively involved in all personnel functions. Most critical to his appointment powers, the mayor may "suspend or remove by written order all borough employees and ad-
This removal power requires no assembly confirmation. Mayor Hopson used it sparingly, hesitating to fire borough employees even when they demonstrated incompetency or corruption. The significance of this power was exemplified in the mayor’s dismissal of one department head and a liaison officer who loomed as rivals in the 1978 mayoral elections, and his firing of the public safety director when the latter made public remarks on the degree of alcoholism in the borough that embarrassed Native leaders.

The mayor’s legislative powers come from his authority to “prepare the annual budget and capital improvements program for the assembly,” to propose ordinances and make periodic and annual financial and administrative reports to the assembly, and to participate in the discussion of “all matters before the assembly” (without voting). He may veto ordinances, resolutions, or other assembly actions; and he has a line-item veto on all appropriations save the school budget. The borough assembly can override his power to veto ordinances and single appropriations only by a two-thirds vote. Significantly, there has been little need for the mayor to use his veto power, for he found little opposition, and on those occasions when opposition developed, he sought to achieve a consensus.

As the chief administrative officer of the borough, the mayor supervises enforcement of borough tax and expenditure policies, directs all borough employees, and oversees administration of borough programs.

These charter provisions did not “cause” the development of a strong executive government on the North Slope. They were enabling factors that permitted the growth of mayoral power. For an understanding and explanation of executive government, we must turn to the personality and leadership dynamics of the North Slope Borough’s first mayor—Eben Hopson.

The North Slope Borough’s First Mayor

From the incorporation of the Borough in 1972 until his death in June 1980, Eben Hopson was the mayor of the North Slope Borough. As the first mayor, he and the advisors he selected influenced decisively the structure and power of executive government. His background and experiences, his goals and visions—all had an impact on the way in which the mayoral office developed.

Eben Hopson was the grandson of a Liverpool whaler who settled on the North Slope in 1886 and married an Inupiat woman. The mayor’s father, Alfred Hopson, Sr., operated a Barrow cafe, but maintained a subsistence lifestyle closer to Inupiat than Euro-American culture. Eben Hopson divided his childhood between his home in Barrow and fish camps and hunting sites, gaining a deep experience of the Arctic.

Hopson attended the BIA school in Barrow, but did not go on to high school there being no high school on the North Slope then. The formal training he received had little relevance to Inupiat life on the North Slope; moreover, in retrospect he regarded it as an attempt to suppress and even eradicate his culture and language.

(We) were physically punished if we spoke one Inupiat word. Many of us can still recall the sting of the wooden ruler across the palms of our hands and the shame of being forced to stand in the corner of the room, face to the wall, for half an hour if we were caught uttering one word of our native language. For eighty-seven years, the BIA tried to destroy our culture through the education of our children.
Hopson served in the army in the Second World War; his later service in the Alaska National Guard introduced him to Natives and whites throughout Alaska with whom he formed lasting relationships. In the 1940s and early 1950s, Hopson worked as a heating and furnace mechanic and heavy equipment operator on the construction and maintenance of the DEW-line sites.

Hopson began his political career in 1946 as a member of the Barrow City Council and later as city mayor. He was elected to the Alaska Territorial House of Representatives in 1956. After statehood, he served two terms in the State Senate, losing a re-election bid in 1966.

Hopson played a very active role during the Native land claims movement; he was an organizer and served as one of the first vice presidents of the Arctic Slope Native Association, and he became the executive director in 1967. He represented ASNA on the board of the Alaska Federation of Natives which formed in 1966, and in 1968 he became the executive director of the AFN during a period of great activity of that association. An active supporter of William Egan in the 1970 gubernatorial election (after having withdrawn from the race himself), Hopson became special assistant for Native Affairs in the Governor's Office following Egan's election. In this position, he helped shape state policy toward Native land claims, and he used his position to enhance local government opportunities for Alaska Natives. He left the Governor's office in early 1972 to campaign for organization of the borough and office of mayor.

Hopson's objectives as mayor can be approached on at least three different levels. First, Mayor Hopson clearly sought to advance the social and economic well-being of North Slope Natives. He wanted village conditions and the Native livelihood to be generally as good as those of white Alaskans and urban residents in the state. In this respect, his objectives were like those of political leaders who champion the disadvantaged, leaving a chain of public works projects which improved conditions (and were personal monuments as well).

Second, Mayor Hopson projected a range of ethnic goals which were complex and, on occasion, appeared somewhat contradictory. There was an unmistakable assimilationist bias— a wish to equip Natives with the tools and some of the central values (e.g., work ethic) of Western society. There were separatist sentiments—a celebration of Inupiat differences and a desire to strengthen Inupiat language and culture. And there was a traditionalist element—a wish to preserve and protect those aspects of Inupiat culture which give identity and warmth, especially to older Natives. These objectives appealed to separate constituencies on the North Slope. By seeking to implement them without stressing their mutually contradictory aspects, the mayor molded a large base of support, as have leaders of other mobilizing ethnic communities.

Third, Mayor Hopson had goals of local control or self-determination both for Natives and whites residing within his jurisdiction, and that did not distinguish him in kind from other political leaders. He did not want to be ignored and expected his region's needs to be met, irrespective of its small resident population. This is the goal of an activist political leader, whether or not he represents ethnic minorities, whether or not his constituents are disadvantaged economically. However, in pursuing self-government, Mayor Hopson's commitment and activity were different in degree from those of other activist political leaders. He was an apostle of self-government, and he was a witness of its value to other rural Alaskans and other Native peoples both inside and outside the United States.
Hopson's goals and objectives were thus a blend of the pragmatic and ideological. Each, to be satisfied, required the commitment of his time and political resources as mayor. Because he was the first mayor of a new borough, his goals and objectives were major factors defining the mission and purpose of the borough.

In view of the small population of the North Slope, the pattern of family interrelations, and tradition of leadership through quasi-kin groups, personality factors enter into the mayor's performance in office. Mayor Hopson's steadfastness (or stubbornness, depending on one's perspective) focused the attention of the borough on areas it would not otherwise have emphasized (post-secondary education, for example).

In important respects, the role of the borough mayor in centralization of power was not greatly different from that of a nationalist leader in a developing country. In such a situation, the leader is without opposition, there being no government in place and no institutions with sufficient force to present checks to his power. In part, the first mayor of the North Slope Borough became powerful by default; he lacked competition from competent rivals, and the assembly had not developed as an institution as rapidly as the executive.

Weaknesses of Bureaucratic Checks on Mayoral Power

First, we consider the weakness of bureaucratic checks in borough government. No other Native on the North Slope from 1972 to 1980 equaled Mayor Hopson's length of statewide electoral experience. Nor did any other Native have a comparable record of administrative experience in state and local government. Development over time of political checks on the mayor by the bureaucracy would have presumed a large Native leadership pool, with "expert" individuals possessing a base of regional support. These preconditions were not met on the North Slope. Since the regional population is small, there were fewer candidates for leadership positions, and the abundance of organizations reduced the availability of candidates for administrative positions (though, as we argue below, this provided more bases for challenges through the assembly). In 1972 no Native possessed expertise sufficient to build a bureaucratic stronghold. The requirements imposed on the administration—those pertaining to setting up an independent school system, developing a system of assessment and taxation, and formation of comprehensive plans and zoning provisions—were such that expert assistance was essential. Natives with actual or potential power bases who became borough administrators thus lacked the independence that expertise confers. (For example, the official responsible for borough accounts had no previous experience in municipal government.) They relied on consultants over whom they did not have ultimate control. The need for success and credibility in borough management justified the hiring of non-Native administrators. However, these bureaucrats lacked a strong base of support from borough residents who had grown to distrust outsiders. In short, there was no bureaucratic check on the mayor because administrative talent was limited, and those holding bureaucratic positions lacked either expertise or support.

Weakness of Legislative Checks on Mayoral Power

Second, we consider the weakness of legislative checks in borough government. The legislative power of the borough rests in the assembly, and it may pass resolutions or ordinances to implement any of the borough powers. The list of powers which require ordinances for implementation appears to give the assembly a major role. It may establish or alter departments, provide penalties, levy taxes, make appropriations, regulate utility rates, adopt subdivision ordinances, authorize borrowing, and convey or lease municipal lands. In the area of oversight, the assembly is empowered to 'subpoena witnesses, administer oaths,
take testimony, and require the production of evidence." But the charter does not allow the assembly to share in the appointment of most borough administrators and prohibits it from removing officials or terminating contracts, which obviously limits its influence over mayor and administration.

Some "professional" legislative bodies with powers such as those of the North Slope Borough assembly have developed power commensurate with and sometimes greater than the executive. The borough assembly, however, is like that of most rural local governments—an amateur body. Members are not professional politicians in the sense that they can live off of their positions. They are paid only for meetings attended and expenses pursuant to assembly business. The main business of most assemblymen lies elsewhere, which leads to absences when job interest conflicts with the assembly meeting schedule. Members also lack time to develop policy initiatives and thus tend to await the mayor's introduction of business; the assembly acts on the mayor's agenda of issues. Most assembly members also lack time to familiarize themselves with the details of resolutions advanced or administrative processes, which limits their ability to play an assertive role in regional government. These factors alone limit the assembly's ability to check executive centralization of power.

Legislative bodies with authority like that of the NSB assembly have also developed countervailing power when they have aggregated and represented interests—institutional interests of the assembly itself, and organized interests of important neighborhoods, groups, or associations within the community. In the borough assembly, turnover has been fairly high (about 60 percent); only two assembly members have served continuously since 1972. No presiding officer of the assembly has used this position consistently to centralize power within the assembly and focus pressure on the borough mayor or administration. And the assembly has not specialized into committees to scrutinize resolutions. (Originally, members formed an assembly finance committee to investigate the borough budget, but this committee soon became a committee of the whole.) These factors have retarded the formation of an "assembly interest" opposed to an executive one.

A more serious problem is the inability of members to aggregate and articulate different interests of North Slope people. The electoral system of the North Slope has militated against representation of outer villages, for the seven assembly members are elected at large. At-large elections have discriminated consistently against the smaller villages and in favor of Barrow, where six out of every ten borough residents live. For two out of the borough's eight years of existence, no assembly member has represented the outlying villages, and village interests have suffered from this loss of representation. This has weakened the legitimacy of the assembly and made it impossible to seize and capitalize on the natural antipathy between seat of government and hinterland.

There have been greater opportunities for the assembly to represent organizational interests, and many have thought that the Native regional corporation (ASRC) has served as a check on the mayor and administration. While several borough leaders agreed that "an ASRC bloc dominates the assembly," ASRC influence has been limited to date. An examination of the lessened impact of occupational roles explains this point. Two of the 1980 assembly members were heads or leading members of village corporations (including the Barrow village corporation); one was employed by an ASRC subsidiary; and four assembly members were central officers of the ASRC. While the four ASRC officers often voted together, they were not a cohesive group. Two were siblings of leading borough officials, which weakened the pull of corporate interest. Both also appeared ill-suited personally to maintain an organizational viewpoint without back-up support. Thus, only two assembly
members were unconstrained in their ability to represent a genuine ASRC interest—which explains perhaps the lack of organizational opposition to mayor and administration.

Then what role does the assembly play? It serves as a kind of regional ombudsman for dissatisfied residents as a group, and it criticizes those items of administration policy which presently affect adversely members' personal and sometimes group interests.

As an ombudsman (albeit a passive one), the assembly represents a body to which those angered by events can register protest. In the borough's brief history, there have been several occasions when this has occurred. For example, in November 1975, Point Hope residents presented the assembly with a list of forty-eight grievances over the housing program designed for that village; in February 1977, senior citizens petitioned the assembly to expedite the construction of housing for the Barrow elderly; and in March 1980, Barrow residents pressured the assembly to improve child care services in Barrow.

We have noted the assembly's defense of Barrow and the outlying villages in its opposition to and ultimate modification of the mayor's request for a transfer of all twenty-two municipal powers to the borough. Attendance at assembly meetings, ranging from a handful of residents to almost seventy persons, reflects the assembly's function as a regional ombudsman.

On several occasions, individual members have raised objections to borough administration. For example, one member recommended that the borough terminate its contract with an architect. Another complained about the administration of the tuition grants program at Inupiat University.

In summary, the assembly plays a limited role in several areas of borough domestic policy—notably the implementation of capital improvement projects. Assembly cliques (of two or three members) have examined closely some borough budget appropriations, bonding practices, and taxation (especially sales tax) policies. However, with respect to external crises affecting the borough—limitations on subsistence hunting or whaling, policy toward oil and gas regulation, taxation policy—the assembly has not acted to define or adopt courses of action independent of the mayor. To the present, the assembly's representation of interests has been diffuse.

The image that results from this analysis of executive centralization is not one of an aggressive, assertive mayor riding roughshod over opposition. There is little opposition at all of a stable institutional nature. And, as we shall note below, there is a considerable amount of consensus on executive power and support for the mayor.

Specialization and Differentiation of North Slope Institutions

An important process in the growth and survival of institutions and communities is the division of labor, the specialization of roles, and differentiation of functions. By specialization, we mean that officials concentrate on a relatively narrow objective, for example, purchasing one type of heavy equipment for building roads instead of doing something at every stage of road construction—designing a construction plan, hiring workers, purchasing supplies, testing road gradients, etc. By differentiation, we mean the setting off—usually in an agency, bureau, or department—of each functional area. Governments specialize and differentiate roles and offices so that they can efficiently address complex problems in their environments and adapt to changes and crises impinging on them.
We are concerned with the extent to which there has developed a successful division of labor within the borough itself, between the borough and village-level organizations, and between the borough and other regional organizations. However, there are dangers of fragmentation in excessively specialized institutions, a disconnection of agencies from their purposes. Thus, we are also concerned with the degree of integration of institutions regionally—that is, the extent to which roles, offices, and structures interrelate effectively and cohere in attempts of North Slope people to address problems.

Specialization Through Borough Departments

Currently ten departments administer regional government affairs on the North Slope; their work is integrated primarily by the influence of the mayor and the crises which have affected the borough.

The borough began with departments aligned by function (planning, finance [including assessing] in addition to the school district which then, as now, was semi-autonomous), and since 1972 there has been a tendency to continue forming departments for each function. The process has involved either the creation of a department when the borough assumed a new function, or specialization of function by creating a new, more narrow department out of an existing one. In 1974, departments were established for the new line functions of public works and health. Public safety was a function assumed by the borough in 1976; it became an independent department at that time. An environmental protection department was formed in 1977; its first director had been a special assistant to the mayor responsible for environmental issues and had brought about the creation of the department. Housing and public utilities emerged as offices of the public works department during the course of the development of the borough CIP. By 1978, housing had become an independent department, and in 1979, the mayor formed a separate department for public utilities, which became responsible for maintenance and operation of water, sewage, solid waste disposal, and power generation systems throughout the borough.

Staff functions, with the exception of law, have developed through expansion of the administration and finance (A&F) department. Formerly, borough assessing was done by a professional assessor who worked out of a Seattle office, with supporting staff in the borough. However, this assessor was put on an on-call basis in 1978, a Native director of assessing was appointed, and a department was formed shortly afterward. In 1978 the administration and finance department was divided into the functional divisions of administration, treasury, accounting, purchasing, and data processing. Until 1978, the borough’s legal work was contracted out to Anchorage attorneys who handled borough law cases on a call basis. Then, the borough employed a resident lawyer.

Over its brief history, the borough government has attained a high degree of specialization of functions, encased in separate departments and divisions. Administratively, at least, the North Slope Borough is like other boroughs in the state.

Integration Through the Mayor’s Office

Some programs of the borough’s departments are coordinated through the office of the mayor. However, this office is much more significant as the link between the borough government, its community, state, and nation.

The mayor’s office includes three levels of staff and several consultants. Three secretaries and two administrative assistants perform supportive staff roles; they are technical per-
sonnel who do not contribute to the making of borough policy.

A second level of major representatives or liaison agents was created in 1978. This includes a liaison to Inupiat University and a liaison officer on the Inupiat Language Commission, both areas of deep concern to Mayor Hopson. A community relations officer and a public information officer (who works in Anchorage), two posts created recently, channel borough information to the community and outside.

The highest level of staff, directly beneath the mayor and comparable to department heads in their influence over borough affairs, comprises resident and nonresident aides or special assistants. There have been nine resident mayoral assistants since 1972 (usually only one held the position at any given time), six of whom have been whites. The aides have been well-educated: one held a Ph.D. in public administration; three had graduated from law schools. The mayor entrusted these aides with the day-to-day management of his office—answering correspondence to the mayor, preparing letters to governmental agencies, writing ordinances and collecting background materials for the assembly, and coordinating departmental activities. Recently, they have assisted in liaison capacities with the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission and worked on D-2 issues of importance to the borough. The position of special assistant closely resembles that of borough manager.

In 1980 there were two nonresident mayoral aides—a federal (Washington, D.C.) chief liaison officer of the borough and an Anchorage liaison whose missions varied depending on borough problems and individual initiative. Each aide enjoyed a special relationship with Mayor Hopson, extending his grasp in different areas. The Washington liaison office has been primarily a lobbying center for the borough and an external grants and contracts branch. The Anchorage officer has been a source of ideas on borough foreign policy (the Inuit Circumpolar Conference), education (Inupiat University), oil company strategy, environmental protection, and issues of general intergovernmental coordination and conflict.

While most of the borough consultants are affiliated directly with departments, the mayor approves all consultant contracts, and he personally directs the work of several consultants. The borough’s legislative lobbyist in Juneau, the CIP construction management firms, and the borough’s financial consultants are primarily associated with the mayor, although each operates from an independent basis of expertise and handles other clients.

Lending greatest unity to borough administration is the amount of centralization of programs in the mayor’s office. By assigning issue concerns to special assistants and aides who go out to the departments, the mayor has been able to encourage some coordination. Despite a considerable measure of centralization in the borough executive, however, the borough administration as a whole is loosely coupled. Departments are relatively autonomous in their operations, and most of the work of the mayoral office concerns relations with those outside the borough.

Relations with Local Institutions

Although centralization of borough government has not resulted in the disappearance of village governments, it has weakened them, especially in more populous areas (Barrow, Wainwright, and Point Hope, until the recent resurgence of interest there). This has brought greater interest of village residents in representation in the borough assembly and, indirectly at least, influenced village corporations to adopt governmental roles.
The outlying villages’ lack of representation impelled an assemblyman from Kaktovik, then resigning from the assembly, to “urge the members of the assembly to recognize the voice of the villagers of the North Slope.”60 This was an issue in assembly elections in October 1977, when a candidate from Point Hope protested the lack of representation of outer villages in the borough assembly.61

When councils have been unable or unwilling to represent local interests, village corporations have assumed their functions. Reflecting this trend, the most outspoken village mayor on the North Slope in the 1960s returned to his village in 1977 to serve as executive director of the village corporation. In two recent events in the villages, corporations have acted as though they were local governments.

In mid-1977, Chevron, which had had a contract with the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC) since 1973 for the exploration of petroleum on regional corporation lands, planned to begin test drilling in Point Hope, between the site of the old village and the relocated village. Villagers learned of these plans and, before the drilling commenced, three officials of the village corporation (Tigara) called a community meeting at which ASRC and oil company officials presented the plans. Tigara officers organized discussion in the meeting, pointing out potential dangers to local subsistence hunting and to village community life from exploration activity. After the meeting, plans to conduct drilling in Point Hope were cancelled. Commenting on this incident, a corporation leader remarked, “There’s been a downfall of local government itself... but Tigara carries its own.”62

The second case involved relations between the Kaktovik village corporation and Arctic Gas Company. ASRC officials suggested that members of the village corporation discuss with Arctic Gas the possibility of using Kaktovik as its staging area for the gas pipeline, so that the village could benefit from the gas and from construction jobs. The corporation formed a planning commission, and it recommended a change in the gasline route (moving the line 30 miles inland); it proceeded to involve local Natives in Arctic Gas’s preparation of an environmental impact statement, and negotiated a limitation on the number of workers from outside who would enter the town during construction.63 When the leader of the village corporation approached the borough mayor to endorse the Arctic Gas route, however, the mayor refused because he had joined with the Inuvaluit of Canada’s Western Arctic to oppose the Arctic Gas route, however, the mayor refused because he had joined with the Inuvaluit of Canada’s Western Arctic to oppose the Arctic Gas route for reasons of caribou habitat protection.

In a more recent case, village governments have represented local interests and have been in conflict with the borough. This case concerned the state/federal sale of leases in the Beaufort Sea outer continental shelf (OCS) of December 1979. Initially, the borough’s position had been to delay the sale and, if this were impossible, to protest any drilling in the Beaufort OCS. The borough mayor later altered his position, however, for strategic and legal reasons. He decided to actively oppose only leasing outside the barrier islands; the limited sale of tracts inside the barrier islands where potential oil spill damage might be less and where there appeared some prospect of oil development that would benefit the region appeared to have borough support.

During environmental impact hearings scheduled by the village governments of Kaktovik and Nuiqsut in May 1979, residents expressed strong opposition to the proposed lease sale and did not distinguish between near shore areas and those outside the barrier islands.64 While the borough’s position changed, the village governments continued to oppose the lease sale and all OCS development activity.65 Ultimately, the village governments, assisted by an Alaska Legal Services (ALS) attorney,66 filed suit to prevent the sale. When this tactic did not succeed, the governments filed suit to delay exploration activity.
Village corporations in Kaktovik and Nuiqsut were silent on this issue, partly because their parent regional corporation might benefit from OCS oil exploration and the ASRC had endorsed offshore leasing within the barrier islands. And, as the borough mayor pointed out in a heated exchange with the ALS attorney, there was some question as to whose interests were being represented—those of village residents or environmentalists outside the North Slope.

Nevertheless, this case indicates that village governments are not yet moribund, and they may, on occasion, take courses of action different from the borough. It also indicates that at the local level, even in the region's smallest villages, there is an interest in keeping all organizational options open. The pattern of organizational activity at the regional level demonstrates this pattern more conclusively.

Specialization and Integration of Regional Organizations

Three organizations, in addition to the borough, operate regionally on the North Slope—the regional corporation, school district, and IRA corporation. Despite some friction between the borough and these organizations as each has developed, a degree of interorganizational harmony has been reached.

ASRC. The ASRC formed before the borough (in March 1972), following the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. It is a wealthy regional organization: by the terms of ANCSA it will receive approximately $48 million and approximately 4.6 million acres of subsurface estate on the Arctic Slope. ASRC has strong links with the villages; it assisted in forming corporations in each of the five original villages, and it helped establish corporations in the pioneer villages of Point Lay, Nuiqsut, and Atkasook.

ASRC has directed its efforts toward investment and development of its home region. Through its own operations and those of wholly owned subsidiaries, it has engaged in general contracting, catering, and heavy equipment operation; it has leased part of its subsurface estate to major oil companies, earning $29 million by 1979 from rentals and bonuses; and it bought the department store in Barrow and built a hotel/restaurant there. At the peak of the construction season in 1980, ASRC employed almost 1,000 workers—150 in its modernistic corporate headquarters building in Barrow and over 800 through its partnerships and subsidiaries. It has increased greatly the capital supply and investment opportunities for Natives.

As noted above, the borough assembly is one arena of contact and possible conflict between the borough administration and ASRC. An analysis of assembly behavior, however, does not reveal two parties—an ASRC opposed to a borough executive bloc. The 1975 mayoral elections were a second arena. The ASRC president of that time began a campaign against the borough mayor, but he dropped from the race, claiming the press of his duties with the corporation left him little time to campaign. Resource development strategy has been a third arena of conflict, with the ASRC promoting oil and gas exploration and development, and the borough mayor urging a more cautious development strategy with attention given to environmental protection and gains for residents.

However, changes in time and personnel, and development of interlocking relationships have brought about accommodation. The early concern about protecting "organizational turf" lessened as leaders recognized the implicit division of labor between a public institution with a vast potential to improve social conditions and a for-profit corporation with an equally vast potential to improve economic conditions, especially if oil and gas were discov-
ered on corporation lands. The founder and first president of the ASRC, who lost his post to the mayor’s elder brother in 1977, was personally and politically opposed to the mayor. And the interlocking of administrators in each organization through family connections has had some effect on increasing harmony.

On those issues recognized as “borough interests,” the ASRC has become supportive. It donated funds to the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, a special project of the borough mayor. It withdrew its objections to the borough’s funding of the private Inupiat University. It has supported the borough’s CIP, participating with the borough in the development of the housing program. The borough, in turn, has not opposed oil and gas development on ASRC lands when borough officials have had the opportunity to do so. In its taxation policies, designed to tap Prudhoe Bay reserves now so that there will be less need to tax ASRC property when it becomes taxable in 1991, the borough has favored the long-term interests of the regional corporation. And since 1978, the borough has contracted with ASRC subsidiaries for CIP construction.

School District. The North Slope Borough School District formed in 1972 at the time of borough incorporation. In 1980, it employed over 400 persons and was the second largest public employer on the Arctic Slope. The relations of the district school board and school superintendent with borough personnel have, with a few exceptions, been harmonious.

Promoting school district autonomy is the independent election of its board and the board’s selection of a school superintendent. Potentially limiting autonomy is the district’s dependence on borough revenues for half of its budget—a greater reliance on local revenue sources than in any other borough of the state. Moreover, the funding structure for education is such that it competes with other borough activities. Under law, the school’s budget must be funded first, and then general government programs are financed. Mayor Hopson objected to this arrangement and appeared to challenge the autonomy of the school district by treating education as an ordinary borough department. However, the assembly has never made any significant cuts in the school district budget, even during the fiscal crisis of 1976-77, although it has criticized supplemental appropriation requests made late in the year. And the borough has allocated more CIP funds to school construction than to any other project area.

The other areas of school district activity which provide a test of harmonious—as opposed to antagonistic—relations in policymaking are design and construction of school facilities, recruitment and retention of administrators and teachers, and curricular programs in the schools. The borough assembly approves architectural and other CIP construction plans for schools, and the mayor (via public works) monitors them. The assembly has rejected only one plan, primarily because of the high cost of the projected construction, and the assembly and mayor criticized and ultimately dismissed the architect who designed schools in Anaktuvuk Pass and Barrow educational facilities. In both cases, the assembly acted on behalf of the school board. The school district has upheld the state certification requirements for teachers employed in North Slope schools, but it has been responsive to the mayor’s goals of Native hire (and those of most adults in the community) by employing a very large number (200) of Native teaching aides and providing them the equivalent of an adult education program. And school district administrators having antagonistic personal relationships with the mayor have not been pressured to resign. In curricular policy, the school board and administration have been responsive to the mayor and others by introducing Native culture and bilingual education courses. In cases of community conflict over programs—for example, sex education in the schools—the school board has solved its problems alone.
In sum, with respect to areas of statutory responsibility for education, the borough has tended to support the decision of the school district board and superintendent. In areas closest to the education function—what is taught and how—the school district operates independently.

ICAS. The Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (ICAS, a regional Native corporation chartered under terms of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1936) organized in 1971 in order to provide a shelter to protect Native lands and provide governmental and social services to Natives. In October 1971, the IRA corporation entered a suit against the oil companies, asking for trespass damages as a result of oil company exploration on the North Slope and destruction of Native residences, fishing, and hunting areas.80

Until the passage of the Indian Self-Determination Act of 1975 (PL 93-638), the ICAS was inactive. In 1977, BIA officials in Fairbanks encouraged the resurrection of the IRA corporation.81 ICAS then enrolled Natives on the North Slope and began to apply for restricted Indian funds. In 1979, the council increased its membership to represent villages more effectively.82 ICAS program areas are those in which the BIA has been funded regularly—assistance in real estate management, career counseling, health and welfare assistance, and aid for higher education,83 areas which overlap somewhat with functional activities of the borough, regional and village corporations. A new and potentially very significant function is TERO, the Tribal Equal Rights Office. It may become the region’s major local hire and equal opportunity monitoring office, as well as training program for pipeline employment.84

Since the borough health agency and school district may not contract directly for restricted Indian health and education funds, the ICAS expands those federal funds available on the North Slope. It does so without competing with borough agencies by passing resolutions which authorize borough agencies to administer programs using BIA funds.85 This cooperation pattern is likely to continue, for the borough supplements funds received via BIA, funding that would be lost were ICAS to administer all Indian programs on the North Slope.

ICAS has some potential as a government for North Slope Inupiat. Unlike the borough, it can never be controlled by non-Natives. Too, it can work directly with the federal government, avoiding interference by the state government.

However, for the foreseeable future, ICAS seems unlikely to challenge the borough’s monopoly of government functions, because it lacks secure resources and has insufficient control over federal Indian funds. No determination has been made as to what is “Indian country in Alaska,” and thus ICAS is a tribe without a land (and resource) base.86 Congressional funding of BIA is variable, and with BIA funding comes BJA control, rhetoric of “self-determination” to the contrary notwithstanding.87

The borough’s varied relations with the ASRC, School District, and ICAS describe an evolving pattern of cooperation. North Slope leaders have recognized and for the most part accepted areas of specialization and interest (see appendix for a description of these interviews). While three out of four leaders believed the ASRC was influential in the borough assembly, only one in four felt there was an ASRC bloc. No more than one or two leaders felt the ASRC board influenced borough policymaking or that the borough influenced ASRC investment policy or hiring. Whereas one in three leaders believed the school district influenced the assembly, only one of some twenty-five leaders who were asked about this
area felt that the district influenced overall borough policy; and only one of eight leaders felt the borough influenced school district policy. A slightly larger number, one in four who responded, felt the borough influenced school district hiring. When asked about potential conflict between borough and the IRA corporation, only two of the twenty-five leaders questioned on this point saw reason for concern.

This perceived lack of reciprocal influence of regional organizations is evidence for the development of differentiation of functions and non-intersecting spheres of activity and influence on the North Slope.

Normalization of Borough Government

In 1977, borough leaders were:

- Apprehensive about the direction of political leadership on the North Slope.
- Insecure about the borough’s present and future finances.
- Antagonistic toward oil companies, and state and federal government agencies.

Three years later, these feelings had changed. The borough had undergone its first mayoral leadership succession. All leaders painted the rosiest of pictures about the borough’s financial future, and the actual revenues in the 1980-81 fiscal year were more than 100 percent greater than in the 1977-78 fiscal year. And while leaders were distressed that powerful external forces should continue to influence change on the North Slope, they had developed means to accommodate changes antagonistic to their interests. In fact, there was an air of normalcy in the borough that was unimaginable in 1977. We need to explain these changes in the borough’s self-confidence as an institution before we turn to an analysis of the level of institutional development.

Leadership Succession

In late June 1980, Mayor Eben Hopson died in Barrow, an event which brought grief to the North Slope people, but little fear about the region’s political future. Not only was the event expected, but also the borough was prepared, so that the succession to power was smooth.

Mayor Hopson had been in ill health since 1976, when he was treated for throat cancer. After 1978, his health worsened, and officials in the borough began to prepare for the succession. During those periods when the mayor was hospitalized (including most of the six months prior to his death), the director of Administration and Finance served as acting mayor, with power to make decisions independently. At the death of Mayor Hopson, three Native leaders were qualified to succeed him: two had several years’ experience in borough administration, and the third, while lacking experience in borough administration, had been an executive in the regional corporation since its founding and had acted in the past as presiding officer of the borough assembly.

In an action that would have been uncharacteristic in 1977, the borough assembly declared the office of mayor vacant and, under terms of the home rule charter, elected an interim mayor (Jacob Adams) for the period remaining before the October 1980 borough elections. The new mayor proceeded to take office and insure that there would be no break in the continuity of mayoral leadership.
The death of the founder of any organization frequently brings about crises and instability. In the case of the North Slope Borough, however, this has not been the case. Within one month of his succession to the mayoral office, the interim mayor had gained the support of his rivals in the borough administration and set about providing for election on his own merits.

Fiscal Security

As noted, the 1973 special legislative session constrained the taxation power of municipalities by imposing a per capita limit of $1,000. This action affected the North Slope Borough more than any other government in the state. During the 1976 session of the legislature, the per capita limit was raised to $1,500. Borough leaders were optimistic that the ceiling would be raised further or eliminated upon Governor Hammond's re-election, but this did not transpire. Since 1976, concern over borough fiscal security has focused on the borough's continued ability to sell bonds and on the prospects for future oil and gas development on the North Slope.

From 1976 to 1978, the borough's ability to sell bonds was curtailed by the Sohio suit, and many CIP projects came to a halt. By 1980, however, there was no controversy or litigation that threatened, restrained or enjoined the borough's issuing, sale, or delivery of bonds. The borough's "full faith and credit" could be pledged to the sale of any amount of bonds in which investors had confidence. In fact, the borough's ability to develop capital projects had expanded.

In October 1978, the Supreme Court of Alaska decided the Sohio case (North Slope Borough v. Sohio Petroleum Corporation, et al.) in favor of the borough. This controversy over the property tax was a tripartite case to which the borough, the state and various oil and gas companies were parties. Among other issues in the case was a claim by the oil and gas companies that the borough's tax levies were limited by state law. The Supreme Court of Alaska held that, to the contrary, the borough could levy taxes "unlimited as to rate or amount" in order to pay debt service on its bonds.88

Would the uncertain future of oil and gas development on the North Slope preclude the borough from selling bonds? An important financial advisor of the borough gave this response:

The same thing you see in the North Slope now, I saw in Fairbanks in the 1950s. Then there was just the university and the military, and the military was talking of pulling out. Everyone had a mining camp attitude. Any community can implode. Mining camps abounded in Alaska—look at Nome. People move in and out. The long-term prospects for oil are good. But the North Slope also had one-third of the state's coal and will have gas longer than oil. But they will have an infrastructure they won't have to pay for again.89

The new mayor exuded optimism about the borough's financial prospects, mentioning that oil and gas would surely be discovered on regional corporation lands and that there was oil in the Beaufort, developments which could be taxed by the borough.90 And the regional corporation official most likely to know about future developments on these lands owned by North Slope Natives said: "I see the borough as being secure financially for the next five or six generations. I know the oil won't run out after Prudhoe Bay, and we have coal and gas for more than a century up on the Slope."91 Borough leaders agreed that available revenues were the only constraint on the budget. They felt that in the event revenues did decline, they would be able to scale down projects, raise user fees, and "compress" general government expenditures.
In the heady financial atmosphere of the early 1980s in Alaska, these optimistic assessments are difficult to evaluate. There is substantial agreement, however, with the feeling of borough leaders that current revenues will not decline before the 21st century.

Good Feelings Toward the Oil Industry

It was natural for leaders of a borough that was sued by oil companies over incorporation and property and sales taxation, and that was challenged when it exercised its regulatory powers, to display a siege mentality in their relationships with oil companies. In 1978, a transformation occurred in these relationships, bringing about an "era of good feeling" between the oil industry and Native government. A borough leader described the reasons for this changed state of affairs:

We have good relations with oil companies now. The administration tries to cooperate with them, even on the environmental problems with leasing. We have tried to work out the other problems... (Eben Hopson's) attitude was consistent. But the oil company suits, this had Eben in a combative mood... Now the Industry accepts the borough. Also, oil companies are starting to feel that since they pay the bill, they may as well take the services, and like it.

Industry can always be disruptive. If we opposed industry's primary goal to explore, they would hurt, even destroy the borough. When they realized that we didn't want this, things got much better... (Another reason is that) when the borough began, Prudhoe Bay companies almost went bankrupt. Now they are making money, and good relationships are at a high level. So far as the borough administration goes, there will be no change in this relationship in the next few years. There are no anti-industry people in the assembly or administration.92

A further indication of this changed relationship is that the oil companies have hired local residents to provide them information, to assist them as representatives in North Slope villages, and to make regular input into the borough's decisionmaking processes.

Obviously, there are still conflicts between the goals and objectives of the borough and those of the oil industry, and the history of antagonistic relationships has not been forgotten by either party. Nevertheless, the borough has now established working ties with its major taxpayer that, however temporary, are not adversarial in nature.

Relations with State and Federal Government

Neither state nor federal government had welcomed the borough's assumption of area-wide powers on the North Slope, and in 1977 few leaders could point to agencies with which cooperative relations had been established.93 Although the borough continues to stage confrontations with state and federal agencies, the process has been routinized. A knowledgeable borough administrator described the method in these terms:

Part of the way the borough does things is (still) through confrontation tactics. The borough passes an ordinance for something where there is some basis for the borough's authority. The borough uses the fuzziness of municipal law to its advantage, knowing there will be a challenge. There is not much case law on municipal issues... The borough uses the system to solve a few problems early on. But confrontation is used later on. It is another tactic to accomplish the objectives of the borough. The borough can't rely on political influence or the administrative process alone.

We make a determination in each case based on our needs. There is a danger, of course, of getting bad case law, but sometimes we have little choice. The question must be severe, however, before we use this tactic.94

In its first years, observers of the borough had the impression that it would file suit on any issue. Now, the borough's sphere of activity has enlarged to such an extent, and its
intergovernmental ties have become sufficiently secure, that it can be more selective. "As the borough moves to more frontiers and its issues become more global, and less basic, there is less time for each. So now we must decide what to do, on which front to move; we can’t do everything." Finally, when asked whether the borough was moving into a consolidation phase, one leader remarked:

It might. That’s probably the trend—to consolidate the gains, to improve maintenance and operations. This is becoming a normal borough. The borough has thought about the Inupiat on the national level, and now it will probably look inward.

This recognition of limitations in political resources and time is important evidence of the normalization and routinization of North Slope Borough activity.

The Level of Borough Institutional Development

After eight years of borough government on the North Slope, we can make a preliminary assessment of its level of institutional development. Viewed impressionistically, the borough has survived very well indeed, having literally transformed the political landscape of the North Slope. Viewed analytically, some questions emerge about the borough's long-term institutional stability.

We have treated institutional development in terms of two system-level processes—centralization of power and authority, and specialization and differentiation of functions. In discussing centralization, within both the North Slope as a whole and the structure of borough government, we noted there was no substantial opposition to the unification of territorial government. The results—a borough, the jurisdictional authority of which is unchallenged by any organization on the North Slope, and a borough executive whose will may become borough policy—in our opinion, are conducive to institutional stability; for the problems North Slope Natives encounter are regional, not local, in scope, and the crises which confront public institutions require an immediacy and continuity of response that a centralized executive can provide. The problems which have developed in the course of this centralization of power—for example, limited village and economic interest representation in the borough—can be solved through existing structure. The evolution of the borough assembly and bureaucracy in recent years shows possibilities for greater sharing of power without fragmentation. At present, such a sharing of power is not necessary for borough stability, because there has not been strong pressure for increased participation. However, should youth, the elderly, or most residents in outlying villages demand participation, the dangers inherent in the current centralization of power will become evident.

Regarding the organization of borough offices, village governmental units and parallel regional organizations, we noted that specialization of function had not become excessive. There has been a substantial amount of division of labor within the borough, with the various departments integrated to some extent through the mayor’s office. Increasingly, village corporations represent local interests, the regional corporation expresses economic interests, and the school district manages educational functions without undue friction. The North Slope’s division of labor among institutions is, of course, incomplete, and several power relationships among organizations are still ambiguous. There has been some interorganizational rivalry and friction, but to date this has not influenced the capability of any institution other than village governments.

Additional factors influence the degree of institutional development—crisis management and leadership succession, for example. Although the North Slope Borough is still the
newest of Alaska's boroughs, it has endured more crises than any other Alaska municipality: powerful adversaries (the state and multinational oil companies) challenged its incorporation and two of its three major areawide powers (taxation, planning, and zoning). The borough weathered these crises, and it has reached accommodations on many of the issues of law and government. In this process, its taxation and general regulatory powers have been defined more narrowly, which as we noted in the Sohio case has sometimes worked to the borough's advantage. Concerns over the nature of future challenges (for example, attempts to equalize property taxes statewide, or changes in the legislation affecting rural governments following reapportionment of the state legislature) and the extreme reliance of the borough on a single source of revenue make necessary qualifications in our appraisal of the borough's development. However, in the area of leadership, no qualifications are necessary. The borough has survived the death of its pre-eminent leader, Eben Hopson. The transfer of power to a successor without a disruption of government indicates institutional stability.

In summary, public institution building on the North Slope is off to a good start. The borough has succeeded at the management of power and governmental functions. The efficiency and effectiveness of government are topics we will explore in greater detail below.

ENDNOTES

Chapter Three


3. Personal interview with participant in the organization of the North Slope borough, Barrow, Alaska, July 30, 1980.

4. "Policies and Information to be Presented to All Villages on the North Slope," not dated but believed sent between October and December 1972.

5. Ibid., pp. 1-2.

6. Resolutions of Point Hope city council, April 2, 1973; letter from Wainwright city clerk, Walter Nayakik to Eben Hopson, April 19, 1973; no data confirming transfers from Kaktovik and Anaktuvuk Pass were located in the borough files. The assembly minutes of March 12, 1974 reflect that Point Hope, Anaktuvuk Pass, and Kaktovik transferred the fifteen powers requested. Wainwright added three other powers, including police and fire protection and community centers.

7. "Position of the City of Barrow as it relates to the transfer of powers to the North Slope Borough," no date.

8. Memorandum of borough mayor to city council mayors, September 6, 1973; transfer of powers file.


17. ANCSA provided an incentive for the revival of traditional villages, in that they would be given surface estate. Additional settled villages in an area would also add to the subsurface estate of regional corporations. After the passage of ANCSA in 1971, the new regional corporation proceeded to enroll Natives who had once lived in communities other than the five villages of the North Slope and to form village corporations for Atkasook, Point Lay, and Nuiqsut. The borough was involved in this process, for it planned construction of housing and community facilities in the new villages.


26. In a personal communication to the author, a borough advisor writes:

   In 1975, when the Commissioner of Revenue saw the Borough's 1976 budget document, he unilaterally wrote to the Prudhoe Bay taxpayers to assert that debt service levies by the Borough would not be credited to the 20-mill tax on Prudhoe Bay property. This resulted in law suits which shut down the Borough's CIP project for a year at a cost to the borough of several million dollars.
27. Three suits on this issue were consolidated into one, *North Slope Borough vs. Sohio Petroleum Corporation, et al.*, No. 1750.

28. The Native land claims legislation (ANCSA) had prohibited state and local taxation on regional Native corporation lands for twenty years, from December 17, 1971 until December 18, 1991.

29. Bond proposals were managed by the borough’s financial consultant and were sold in New York.


The CIP local hire policy was based upon making all CIP construction workers Borough employees. By acting as its own contractor, the Borough was able to engage construction managers rather than let construction contracts which might have been won by unionized contractors, who would be unable to hire locally, and would have had to establish camps to house outside union labor, thus denying local jobs to local citizens, and cause social disruption. By making construction managers use borough construction employees, who were paid union-level wages, the problem of outside workers on rural Alaska construction projects was avoided by the NSB.

31. “The city council and people of Wainwright decided and wants to keep the five remaining ... powers.” Minutes of Wainwright City Council, July 1975. See also, Minutes, Point Hope City Council, June-August 1975.

32. Personal interviews with members of the city council and village corporation, Point Hope, Alaska, January 6-7, 1978; Point Hope council minutes, May-June 1980.

33. The borough attorney wrote the mayor in 1974, pointing out:

Even though the borough should acquire all of the powers described in A.S. 29.48.030, thus depriving the cities the exercise of that power, the cities nevertheless exist for the purpose of exercising the regulatory powers described in A.S. 29.48.035 (a). Those powers include but are not limited to such matters as vehicle parking, building and housing codes, and others. A borough may acquire the exercise of those powers on an areawide basis only by compliance with the provisions of A.S. 29.33.250.” (Memorandum of October 4, 1974).

34. A.S. 29.33.250.

35. Personal interview with borough consultant, Barrow, Alaska, July 30, 1980; a 1976 memorandum of the acting borough attorney on unification shows the interest of the administration in it at that time. (August 3, 1976).


38. For example, see comments in Minutes, February 13, 1976.


40. *Home Rule Charter, Sec. 5.010 (B) (1).*

41. *Ibid.*, Sec. 5.010 (2).
42. Over the period 1973-1977, four formal reprimands were made to employees, one of which resulted in the borough's bringing suit for the restitution of borough property. (Reading file, mayor's office, 1973-1977.)

43. Interview with borough consultant, Barrow, Alaska, February 6, 1978.


45. "The construction, maintenance, and operation of all borough roads, bridges, drains, buildings and other public works," Home Rule Charter, Sec. 5.010 (10) (c).

46. See testimony, U.S. Congress, Hearing before the Subcommittee on Indian Affairs, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, October 17, 1969. (Transcript includes statements by Mayor Hopson about his youth and upbringing.)

47. A short biography of Hopson's life says this about his educational career: "When he was 15 years of age, Eben wrote to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C. to complain about the school principal's use of the unpaid student labor on small BIA public works projects. When the BIA forwarded the letter to the principal in Barrow for his disposition, Eben was branded a trouble maker and was prevented from boarding the BIA ship, the North Star—to travel to the boarding high school." (From Arctic Coastal Zone Management Newsletter [hereafter ACZMN], No. 29 [August 1980], p. 6.)


49. Hopson also ran against Egan briefly in the 1974 Democratic gubernatorial primary election, in retaliation for the Egan administration's support for a limitation on the borough's revenue authority in the 1973 special session.

50. Home Rule Charter, Sec. 4.060.

51. Villages suffered in that there was no regular forum they could use to address problems in borough construction projects in their villages, and there was no routine means they could employ to bring problems of their villages to the attention of administrators in Barrow.

52. Personal interviews with assembly members and borough administrators in Barrow, Alaska, October 13-14 and December 15 and 17, 1977. There was much less discussion of this point in 1980.


55. ACZMN, No. 27 (March 1980).

56. Minutes, April 7, 1976.

57. Minutes, July 1, 1975. Inupiat University has the most checkered history of any public institution on the North Slope, and affairs relating to its structure, personnel, and programs have frequently surfaced in assembly meetings (for example, it was an item of discussion at each meeting from January to June, 1980). (Footnote 57 continued)
After seeking assistance from the University of Alaska to develop a community college to aid in the training and development of borough and ASRC staff, and being turned down by the UA president at the time, Mayor Hopson asked Antioch College to join with Sheldon Jackson College to design a specialized work- and field- centered post-secondary education program. This program over time became Inupiat University of the Arctic.

The University of Alaska then established a Barrow Extension Center, and its director tried to control Unipiat University, taking over its financial management. The financial and academic management of both centers became controversial topics from 1974 to 1976, as officials were charged (and later convicted on twelve counts of felony fraud) of embezzlement and assigning credits irresponsibly.

The borough then assumed control over post-secondary programs by creating a private university, the Inupiat University of the Arctic Slope. Two problems with this arrangement have led to its disestablishment: first, under the state constitution and law, public bodies may not give financial support to private institutions. The borough sought to avoid this problem through making tuition grants to the university students. When this was ruled illegal, the borough contracted with the university to provide technical reports and training for borough employees. Questions were raised about the products, however, and current discussion centers on (a) making the institution part of the statewide University of Alaska system or (b) funding it as a public university of the borough.

The second problem has been the academic integrity of the institution. The regional accrediting agency advanced it to candidacy status, but it has indicated it will not confer accreditation until a secure source of funding is found. The borough advisor intimately involved with Inupiat University had this to say about the borough’s experiences with post-secondary education: “The IUA story illustrates the lengths to which the Barrow community will go to avoid the establishment of a social institution controlled from elsewhere, by others.” (Personal communication, January 1981)

58. The Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission was organized by the borough during the whaling crisis. It consists of representatives from all borough whaling villages, plus two St. Lawrence Island villages. The AEWC is supported by both borough and state funds.

59. The Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC) is an international coordinating agency of circumpolar Eskimos. The idea for such a conference was Eben Hopson’s, and it grew out of his concerns about the dangers of Arctic oil exploration. The first formal conference convened in Barrow in June 1977. The second conference met in June 1980, in Nuuk, Greenland.


64. See “Memo to Persons Concerned about the Beaufort Sea,” from Alaska Legal Services attorney Mike Jeffrey, May 22, 1979 and May 23, 1979.

65. The villages are located in areas closest to the Beaufort Sea OCS lease tracts and thus residents would be affected adversely were there environmental damage.

66. Lawyers of the Alaska Legal Services Corporation have played an increasingly active role in Alaska’s villages since the late 1970s. In this case, it appears as though the ALS inspired opposition which might not otherwise have developed.

67. Personal interview with executive of Native regional corporation, Barrow, Alaska, July 30, 1980; also see letter to Governor Hammond from Jacob Adams, Acting President, ASRC, supporting a limited lease sale in the Beaufort Sea, October 11, 1979.


70. Memorandum of Joe Upicksoun, borough elections file, September 1975.

71. See “Mayor Eben Hopson’s Warning to the People of the Canadian Arctic,” Testimony before the Berger Commission, September 21, 1976.


73. Personal interview with ASRC executive, Barrow, Alaska, July 30, 1980.


76. For example, see discussion reported in Minutes, April 1, 1975.

77. Minutes, August 16, 1977.


80. The Edwardsen v. Morton suit claimed that while ANCSA would settle land ownership, all land dispositions prior to then were invalid, and Alaska Natives were still due trespass damages for all actions (billions of dollars in oil exploration activity) on any land they had ever claimed (90 percent of the state of Alaska). Now called U.S. v. Arco, the suit was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court following negative rulings in U.S. district and appeals courts. On October 6, 1980, the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear a further appeal. (Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, October 7, 1980.)


82. Personal interview with executive director, ICAS, Barrow, Alaska, July 31, 1980.

84. Personal interview with ICAS official, Barrow, Alaska, July 31, 1980.


86. Personal interview with ICAS official, Barrow, Alaska, July 31, 1980.

87. When Barrow Natives in 1980 attempted to use ICAS as a protest agency on environmental and related issues, BIA responded by calling up program accounts for audit.


89. Personal interview with borough consultant, Barrow, Alaska, July 30, 1980.

90. Personal interview with interim borough mayor, Barrow, Alaska, July 29, 1980.

91. Personal interview with ASRC official, Barrow, Alaska, July 31, 1980.


94. Personal interview with borough administration official, Barrow, Alaska, July 29, 1980.

95. Ibid.

96. Personal interview with borough consultant, Barrow, Alaska, July 30, 1980.

97. Of course, the borough’s authority is still ambiguous so far as superior governments and multinational corporations are concerned.
In 1977 and 1978, we conducted interviews with forty leaders of the North Slope. We selected respondents on the basis of their position in borough government (including all assembly members, the mayor, department heads and directors, and consultants), in village corporations or governments, and in parallel regional organizations on the North Slope. For two-thirds of the respondents, we attempted to collect standardized data on attitudes toward: (1) borough needs, problems, and accomplishments, (2) oil and gas development, (3) Native issues (including subsistence pursuits, Inupiat culture, and circumpolar contacts), (4) borough relations with villages, parallel regional organizations, and the state and federal governments. We collected socio-demographic data, and in most cases asked respondents to complete a survey of their perceptions of changes in Barrow (or their village) from 1970 to 1977. For all respondents we used the interview setting to gain information on processes of borough politics and policymaking. In 1980, we re-interviewed eight respondents, and interviewed six leaders who were new to the borough. In this and the two following sections, we will draw on these materials extensively.

Our concern in this section will be to understand processes of leadership and policy formation in the borough by analyzing the recruiting of leaders, their role socialization, intra-elite communication, and the borough decisionmaking process.

Recruitment of Borough Leaders

"Recruitment" refers to the process by which individuals are brought into an organization and the effect this process has on the organization's adaptation to its environment. The North Slope Borough was a new organization in 1972, and it took the form it did largely because of the nature of the people who were recruited as assembly members and borough administrators. The way in which borough leaders were selected also influenced borough operations, for it defined the relevant authorities for them, which influenced their behavior.

Leaders on the North Slope gain office either by election or appointment. The seven assemblymen and mayor are elected officials. The appointed borough officials are individuals whose qualifications fit a job description, those with personal ties to the appointing official, or those who know other borough officials. Of twelve leaders of the borough administration in 1978 (excluding the mayor), only one gained employment through national advertising, coming to Barrow from the lower forty-eight. Seven were present on the North Slope when hired and had previous occupational experiences related in some way to the position they assumed in the borough; the remaining four were appointed primarily because they had personal ties to the mayor or other officials, notwithstanding some limited qualifications for the position. Thus, while most administrators are not personally dependent on the mayor for their positions, it is evident that knowing the mayor or other officers helps one gain position in the borough.

What are the characteristics of North Slope leaders and, among leaders, how do those who administer borough affairs differ from assemblymen? All but three of the leaders of the North Slope are men, and their average age is 34 (no leader is older than 59). Leaders were more likely to have been born and to have spent their formative years in Barrow than
any other place on the North Slope or outside it, a factor which influences both educational attainment and occupation prior to assuming a leadership position. Of the leaders for whom educational data are available, two completed six grades or less, six attended school to the end of the ninth grade, and another five graduated from high school (see Table 1). Twelve leaders took some college work, and thirteen graduated from college and attended graduate school (those attending graduate school, with one exception, were non-Native leaders). Significantly, almost two-thirds of the leaders have had a post-secondary education; but less than half of the Native leaders have gone to college. Inasmuch as there were no high schools on the North Slope at the time leaders attended school, those who went to school beyond the eighth grade attended either Mt. Edgecumbe (the BIA high school in Sitka) or schools outside the state. Experiences of those without a high school education are thus likely to have been more provincial than those who attended school outside the North Slope.

Leaders were more likely to have served in the military than not; of fifteen with military records, eight has experience primarily in the National Guard. Four of five with military experience had served over two years, a period long enough to have influenced their behavior and attitudes in civilian roles. Originally, we thought that there would be a relationship between military service and both leadership position and perceptions of change on the North Slope. No such relationship appeared in the analysis of data.

We gathered information on the 1970 occupations of thirty-three leaders. At that time nearly one-half were in positions comparable to their 1977 occupations—split between craftsmen, operatives, or laborers on the one hand and clerical positions on the other. Occupation, of course, depends on education: those whose formal education stopped at the eighth grade were, with one exception, likely to be heavy equipment operators in 1970, employed in the construction trades. Those with college educations were as likely to be professionals or managers in 1970 as in 1977. All leaders currently earn high salaries and hold positions that resemble one another, but this was definitely not true of their employment in 1970, before the passage of the land claims settlement act and the organization of the borough. For Native leaders, the passage of these seven years had brought a quantum jump in occupational grade and job status; for whites occupying positions of influence in the North Slope (and the leadership group included fifteen whites), there were incremental changes, if any at all.

Most of the leaders were likely to have engaged in subsistence pursuits in the previous year: almost all Native leaders had whaled, hunted, and fished; however, few spent more than 20 percent of their time in subsistence (three of twenty-one), and only one leader, who was then “between jobs,” said he spent most of his time in this way. Of those who engaged in subsistence, a far greater number did so after work or on weekends than by taking subsistence leave.

The previous political exper-

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<th>Table 1 Educational Background of North Slope Leaders</th>
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<td><strong>Years of School Completed</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Source: North Slope Leaders Survey, 1977-78.
ience of North Slope leaders is varied and extensive. Most borough assemblymen and Natives in the borough administration had served in city councils. For three of the twenty-five Native leaders, this experience went back to the territorial period. However, six of the Native leaders had become active in politics only after the incorporation of the borough. Over one-third of the Native leaders had played leading roles in the land claims movement—for example, by serving on the ASNA board of directors. The land claims leaders were somewhat more likely to hold positions in the borough administration and assembly than in other organizations on the North Slope, for example ASRC.\(^5\)

Interesting differences do appear in a comparison of assembly members with borough administrators, the most significant of which is ethnicity. We have indicated that Native leaders are less likely to have graduated from high school (especially those over 40), had lower status occupations in 1970, and were less likely to have been outside the North Slope for extended periods. All members of the borough assembly, the governing boards of the regional and village corporations, the IRA corporation, and the school district board have been Natives. But only five of the thirteen leading members of the borough administration in 1977-78 were Natives (a slightly larger proportion of the administrators of ASRC and a much smaller proportion of the central administrators of the school district were Natives). All consultants to the borough and other corporations on the North Slope have been whites.

Of the seven departments in the borough administration in 1977, five were headed by non-Natives, two of whom were married to Natives. The ratio of white to Native managers has declined only slightly as the borough has expanded. In 1980, five of ten department directors were whites. Borough leaders suggest this is not the major issue; they claim that in appointing white staff, the number of white consultants has been reduced, but this applies to only one of the borough departments. A number of leaders interviewed mentioned that more important than an “all-Native” borough administration was one that was resident.\(^6\) While two departments, planning and health, have been headed by whites since their creation, assessing and public works are departments in which Natives were trained to succeed whites. Administration and finance and environmental protection have been headed by Natives since their inception.\(^7\)

One consequence for policymaking of these sociodemographic characteristics is the potential difference in perceptions and attitudes of Natives and whites. Differences in background separate assembly and administration, and divide the administration itself. However, to the present, background differences have not become attitudinal cleavages, for reasons both of deference and value consensus. Native leaders are less well-educated than white administrators and consultants, and they appear inclined to defer to the educational credentials of these officials. And Natives occupy positions for which they are less likely to be qualified by training or experience. Second, white administrators in the borough have tended to share the self-determination values and development goals of Native leaders.

Other influences of background factors on leadership behavior include combativeness which issues from long experience representing Native peoples in a state that only recently has begun to give Natives their due, and from the successful experience of several borough leaders, notably Eben Hopson, in the land claims movement. Much of leadership behavior, however, is entirely unrelated to socioeconomic background factors; for the effect of crisis government on the North Slope (until 1978 at least) has been to evoke common responses from Native leaders, irrespective of differences in education, occupation, or status.

We have noted that the recruitment system of the North Slope is not influenced solely
by merit concepts, and this applies to the exit pattern of leaders as well. Leaders depart office by resignation or through dismissal due to personality and political conflicts. Only two members of the borough assembly have lost bids for re-election, but eight assembly members over the eight-year history of the borough have resigned their positions before the end of their terms (one of the assemblymen elected first in 1972 remains on the assembly today). There has been a lower rate of turnover in the borough administration. No borough administrator has lost office because of incompetence (although one consultant contract was terminated for this among other reasons). Three administrators were fired because they lacked political discretion. (Three of the ten departments have had no turnover at the top.)

Socialization of Leaders in the Borough

Limited educational attainment and occupational experiences unrelated to the work they presently do have made socialization (training or learning) to their roles of major importance to Native leaders in the North Slope Borough.

No boroughwide training or apprenticeship program has been developed for those who might gain borough leadership positions. Several of the middle-level managers in the borough have gone outside for degree-related work or training courses in their area of specialization, but they are a small proportion of those requiring training. One of the motives behind the development of post-secondary education on the North Slope was to train leaders for positions in regional organizations. However, the programs of the independent Inupiat University were designed for entry-level borough personnel, and borough leaders have not been satisfied with them. The regional corporation planned seminars for Native board members and funded a large scholarship program for those wishing to continue their education outside the region (although not necessarily to train for corporate positions). Neither regional organization has developed a satisfactory method of training new managers.

Given the absence of preservice training programs, Native administrators and assemblymen have learned their positions and many of their position-relevant attitudes on the job. (This observation applies to the regional corporation as well as the borough.) The learning experience, for the most part, has been self-directed training through the mastery of crises and routines. Several leaders recounted their experiences in dealing with situations that could not be predicted and that affected their department or job adversely. The revenue shortfall brought on by the Sohio suit in 1976 affected most administrators in the borough, there being no financial exigency plan to deal with such a situation. Borough leaders agreed jointly to close down projects far from completion (for example, work on the borough sanitation project at Prudhoe Bay) and to fund nearly-completed projects out of operating revenues. They stretched these revenues by freezing hiring and purchasing of materials. Mastering this and other crises has enhanced the confidence of borough leaders, but it has not brought about universal competence in borough roles. Routines have been good teachers of North Slope borough leaders. An assembly member who, in the first year of the term, did not know the meaning of “executive session” had two years later learned how to table resolutions and call for a recess or adjournment to avoid discussion of a controversial issue. A planner without previous experience in census taking, had, through the experience of several censuses, become able to produce population counts accepted by the state. Mastering routines has also developed self-confidence in assembly members and administrators, and it has increased competence in the job.

There have been other rewards to successful role learning beyond increased self-confidence and competence. Some Native administrators have won fairly rapid promotions, and three Natives hired at the middle-management level have been promoted to director of their
departments. Of course, the continued hiring of non-Native directors has been a disincentive to the Native members of the borough administration and the assembly. Nonetheless, it seems likely that other young Natives will soon be promoted to positions of authority, and the experience of upward mobility, even within middle-management ranks, has doubtless been an important factor contributing to the low rate of turnover in the borough administration.  

Lateral mobility, particularly movement between the borough administration and the parallel regional organizations, has been relatively rare on the North Slope. This is a comment not only on the differentiation of these structures, but also on the development of an identification with each institution and its goals. In the case of the borough, non-Natives as well as Natives tend to be “loyal” to the institution. When questioned about the “failures” of borough programs, only one borough administrator made remarks that could be construed as critical of the borough institution (but several of those with positions in the ASRC and village corporations did so).

It is a commonplace in studies of socialization that different agencies contribute different attitudes, orientations and values to the individuals they socialize. Until recently, scholars thought that adult socialization in the workplace was a less important factor in the development of individual attitudes and behavior than parental training and adolescent socialization through the schools and peer groups. Researchers now hypothesize that career socialization may be an equal determinant of sociopolitical attitudes and behavior. Although we have not studied the childhood and adolescent political socialization of the North Slope people, it seems likely that career socialization is an even more important factor for them than it is for adult Americans generally. The borough looms large in the life of Native administrators and assemblymen, and the borough is a creator of values for those active in it.

Communication Among Leaders on the North Slope

We indicated the arrangements and mechanisms which have had the effect of reducing conflict and producing mutual accommodation among North Slope structures with divergent goals. Now we turn to the processes by which communication has been facilitated, both inside the borough and between it and village-level organizations on the one hand and parallel regional organizations on the other.

The organization chart on the following page (Figure 2) indicates relative placement of departments and offices in terms of reporting requirements as currently understood. Like any organization chart, it does not describe the patterns of influence within the borough administration—the inner face of communication. Because routing procedures are flexible, directors and department heads tend to report on a “need to” basis. And because personal rivalries separate some leaders, and personal and kin-ties join other individuals at different links in the chain of command, lines of communication are frequently unclear.

Obstacles to efficient downward communications in the borough (from the mayor to directors and their staffs) are personal relationships that confuse the hierarchy and a tendency to rely on oral, not written communications. Upward communications to the mayor are more efficient. Mayors have had “open door” policies, and they have sought out information from the departments. Messages including complaints and suggestions do get through to the top.

Interdepartmental communications present the greatest problem in borough admin-
istration. Various devices have been used to bring about interdepartmental consultation and joint planning—for example, circulating monthly activity reports for each department and holding weekly staff meetings. Of these, staff meetings have been more effective recently. The greatest contributing factor to poor interdepartmental communication has been the tendency of the mayor to let trusted individuals be responsible for their own affairs without creating coordinating mechanisms. Contributing to unity are information cliques formed by those working in common policy areas (for example, public works and accounting on CIP projects), the mayor’s office staff, and the working groups formed to manage borough crises.

The closest village to Barrow is fifty miles away, and the farthest is 300 miles distant; only one of the villages is connected to Barrow by regular air service. The problems in integrating such a widespread borough population were recognized at the start of borough government. A planning consultant suggested that each of the villages have a village coordinator who would be a two-way transmission belt. In late 1972, the mayor appointed coordinators for each tillage, putting them on the borough payroll. But it was not clear at that time who was to supervise and train coordinators, and what they were to do. Managed by the planning department for two years, coordinators’ work was increasingly integrated into the public works department; today, coordinators have become little other than managers of the borough’s heavy equipment.

To some extent, the defects of the village coordinator system have been remedied through expansion of the borough CIP. Borough administrators have found it necessary to visit villages, making on-site inspections of the progress of projects. (The public works director goes to villages on the average of once a month. And the planning department has conducted meetings in villages on occasion.) And to a limited extent, the development of boroughwide commissions—the Planning Commission, History and Culture Commission, and Fish and Game Commission—has improved communications to the villages, for residents of each are represented, and frequently they are brought to Barrow for meetings.

Personality conflicts among the leaders, until recently, have also contributed to poor interorganizational communication on the North Slope. Structurally, each of the regional organizations on the North Slope has its own information grid, consisting of consultants, liaison personnel, department directors, and key administrators. Borough administrators have been unaware of the exact development activities and plans of the regional corporation, less due to the corporation’s secrecy of planning than to the fact that no one privy to these plans was in regular, daily contact with a borough administrator with an ostensible need to know.

On the other hand, middle-management personnel of regional organizations trade information regularly. Personal relations between corporation and borough administrators enhance the flow of information. Information is shared regularly at borough assembly meetings, but primarily on items of borough business. And regional crises—for example, that over the quota the International Whaling Commission (IWC) imposed on North Alaska whalers—have resulted in the formation of task forces that join members of different corporations. This form of communication has become routine through the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission (AEWC), organized by the borough in response to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) attack on subsistence bowhead whaling rights.

Decisionmaking in the Borough: Cases, Issues, and Perceptions of Influence

What is typically involved at the stage of borough decisionmaking is not selection from
Figure 2. ORGANIZATION OF THE NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH (1980)
among all possible alternatives, for the borough is a municipal government constrained by the state and federal government on the one hand and powerful multinational corporations on the other. Instead, borough leaders take action on an available preferred policy alternative—one for which they think they can win approval, even though it does not provide all that they might like. In many instances, the policy decision will be only a formality. In a few instances, the question will be in doubt until the votes are counted or the decision is announced.

Although private individuals and organizations on the North Slope also participate in making borough policy decisions, formal authority rests with public officials—principally, the mayor and assembly. The home-rule charter gives the assembly broad legislative powers, constrained in scope by federal and state laws. The charter gives the mayor important decisionmaking authority that is enhanced by the centralization of power which has taken place in borough government.

The borough makes policy decisions in the functional areas of oil and gas development, taxation, subsistence protection, and social welfare. To illustrate the environment of decisionmaking, we consider examples drawn from recent cases and controversies concerning energy development and subsistence. In each area, we ask who initiates discussions, how problems move to the borough's action agenda, and who formulates and adopts borough policy. We also consider how support for a preferred policy alternative is developed and maintained. We base this analysis primarily on the perceptions of leaders and information they were able to supply on decisionmaking.

The Decisionmaking Environment for Resource Development Issues

In the area of resource exploration and development—both onshore and on the outercontinental shelf (OCS)—most basic decisions had been made before the borough was organized. Founders of borough government, however, thought a regional structure would give Natives some influence over the way in which petroleum development on the Arctic Slope proceeded.

**Prudhoe Bay.** Leaders we interviewed indicated that the borough had little influence over on-shore petroleum development that was in place (Prudhoe Bay). Only one-tenth of the leaders felt the borough could affect the location of new industrial facilities within the Prudhoe Bay complex, a sign that the borough was powerless to influence developments on state (or federal) land for which there was a statutory authorization. To most leaders, this area was outside the policy sphere of the borough government.

Lacking influence did not deter leaders from expressing hopes, fears, and expectations about the present effects of development at Prudhoe Bay. Twice as many leaders feared the development of resident communities of non-Natives at Prudhoe Bay as welcomed them. Only one-fourth of the respondents felt the borough had had any influence over hiring at Prudhoe Bay, and no leader was satisfied with the number of Natives hired, either at the industrial site of Prudhoe Bay or in oil pipeline construction. Yet, three-fourths of the leaders were satisfied with the amount of revenues generated from industrial property taxes assessed on the owner companies at Prudhoe Bay—taxes which account for two-thirds of the borough's total revenue.

Leaders were somewhat less ambivalent about their ability to control future effects of in-place oil development. In 1975 the borough contracted with the NANA regional corpora-
tion for the construction of a sewage/solid waste treatment plant and sanitary water facility at Prudhoe Bay. Leaders outside the mayor’s office, planning department, and assembly did not know why the service area was developed. (Existing facilities were in violation of state and federal environmental regulations, and the state asked the borough to intervene. Too, the mayor and his advisors thought this service area would be a gesture to oil companies, showing that the borough was interested in facilitating oil development. Finally, since the owner companies would pay for the facility with use taxes, it would cost the borough nothing to construct it.) Not all leaders were aware of the management and financing of the new facilities. But most leaders thought the borough, and not the state or federal government or private industry, should develop the service area.

When they compared the modern sanitation services planned for Prudhoe Bay to the primitive water and sewage-hauling system used in North Slope villages, some leaders objected. Most leaders, however, concurred with the borough administration’s plans, provided that user fees from oil companies covered all costs. When asked whether the borough should extend other services to the Prudhoe Bay complex, leader opinion divided evenly. Finally, two-thirds of the leaders thought the borough government should seek greater control over the social behavior of nonresidents (workers at Prudhoe Bay).

In short, borough leaders have accepted the development of Alaska’s largest oil production complex with some measure of equanimity, registering concern over effects of development, and expressing support for the mayor and borough administration’s positions on issues.

Gas Pipeline. The planned construction of a gas pipeline from Prudhoe Bay to the lower forty-eight states is another case showing the environment of policymaking in the North Slope Borough. Discussion over alternate routing plans began in 1976; the borough mayor did not publicly support the El Paso proposal for an all-Alaska route, but he did not object when El Paso supporters claimed his support. Kaktovik village corporation officials with the implicit support of ASRC supported the Arctic Gas route, to which the mayor objected as we noted above. The third proposal, Northwest Pipeline’s Alcan route, which would follow the oil pipeline to Fairbanks and the Alcan highway through Canada to the lower states was developed later; the mayor supported it when it became clear the El Paso proposal would not succeed. By a ratio of two to one, borough leaders supported the federal endorsement of the Alcan route—an indication that opinion on this issue was changeable.

Although the routing decision was outside the borough’s policy sphere, gasline construction will have a major impact on borough residents. When interviewed in 1977 and 1978, borough leaders were in the process of formulating responses to development scenarios. Those who had an opinion on gasline development were concerned about job training and employment opportunities for North Slope Natives during the construction of the pipeline—the issue of Native hire. Most feared that gas pipeline activity would attract non-Native residents to the North Slope and that both increased population growth and pipeline-related activity would affect hunting and fishing. Fewer leaders were concerned about potential demands for new borough services as a result of the construction. Thus, borough leaders were concerned about the effects of gasline construction, even though most felt there was little they could have done to affect the routing decision.

As Northwest Pipeline Company engaged in planning and began to seek financing for this huge project (now estimated to cost $40 billion), borough leaders, particularly the
mayor, became more directly involved. In January 1980, the borough assembly resolved to hold a bond election to authorize sale of $4 billion in revenue bonds to finance construction of a gas conditioning plant on the North Slope. A knowledgeable informant described the reasons behind this decision:

Eben (Mayor Hopson, who introduced the ordinance) wanted to demonstrate recognition of the importance of oil and gas development to the borough. He also wanted to show that the borough was willing to contribute to a solution to the national energy shortage. He wanted to change people's minds that the borough was obstructionist...to indicate that the borough was sincere.

If we build a plant, or pay for one, we will get revenue that is not tied to either of the state's revenue formulas, both of which limit us. We don't have to own the plant and probably don't want to. We want to be the mechanism through which a tax exemption is granted. We will get a service fee...probably about $10 million dollars...for marketing the money. Valdez is the example that we are following.20

Additional factors explaining the assembly's adoption of policy were the opportunities for Native hire and environmental regulation. As financer or construction agent, the borough would put into effect its Native hire objectives, and it could control the environmental effects of the new industrial activity.

Other Onshore Resource Exploration. Most leaders felt the borough had opportunities to influence ongoing oil and gas exploration outside of Prudhoe Bay. In general, leaders supported oil exploration in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A, previously called Pet-4), on Native village and regional corporation lands, and on state lands. In discussing controversial issues related to this exploration, leaders indicated they were familiar with the environmental dangers and risks. When asked what impact the borough might have on this exploration, approximately one-fourth did not know. But from two-thirds to three-fourths of the remaining leaders felt the borough had already demonstrated influence through its land selections, its water- and gravel-use permitting, and its zoning powers. These actions have redefined control over energy development in ways susceptible to borough regulation.

Under state law, boroughs are entitled to 10 percent of the vacant and unappropriated land within borough boundaries. The North Slope Borough filed suit against the state Commissioner of Natural Resources in 1977 when the state delayed transfer of lands around Prudhoe Bay to the borough. The rationale for the borough's suit suggested by several leaders was that land ownership would give the borough revenue and ultimate control over development of populated areas and areas important to Native subsistence.21 But the borough lost its suit, and in 1978 the state legislature allotted specific acreage for conveyance to the borough—89,000 acres. The borough will select these lands (excluding Prudhoe Bay petroleum lands) for their value to community expansion. Also, as one borough leader suggested:

Gravel is a resource on some of the lands we have filed for. We want to control gravel sites and to find new sites. We want to come up with a consistent position on opening new gravel sites on the North Slope.22

The borough had become a commenting agency in 1977, able to file objections with the Army Corps of Engineers or the state Natural Resource Department concerning gravel use on state lands.23 But few leaders thought use permits would be an effective means of controlling the rate of resource development, perhaps because leaders then were less familiar with the borough's influence in the process of issuing permits for the use of water and gravel necessary in exploratory phases of petroleum development.
To leaders in 1977-78, the borough's most effective weapon was its zoning power. Leaders were generally aware of the activities of the Planning Commission, and thought that restrictive clauses in the zoning ordinances would give the borough some control over the direction of oil and gas development on land.

This has been the case, as indicated in the borough's development of a coastal zone management (CZM) plan and, when this was not approved, in its development of an interim zoning ordinance that is now in effect.

The borough's development of a CZM plan followed the state legislature's passage of the Coastal Zone Management Act. This act called for the creation of a Coastal Policy Council, broadly representative of coastal areas in the state, that would approve, before their submission to the legislature, management plans for the coastal areas in the state.

The borough was represented on the council by Mayor Hopson; and the borough mayor, planning department officials, and consultants worked energetically over two years to prepare a CZM plan for submission to the council. The borough's participation in the council represented a change in strategy. An informant commented on the reasons for this new approach: "The borough wanted to do something locally but the oil companies objected. The Coastal Policy Council is a mechanism to give local governments credibility." 24 Another advisor specified the nature of industry opposition and local feelings about participation on the council:

We have strong opposition. The Alaska Oil and Gas Association spends $80,000 per TV spot on slick, well-produced Hollywood commercials, arguing for oil's freedom to develop their own standards of conduct, to do whatever they want. We're serious about coastal zone work, but many call it busy work and say it will never be effective. Right now, the borough doesn't have too many restrictions it can put on development through permitting, control of gravel and water use. (So) we tried to do zoning through the coastal zone management plan. 25

The planning department, with the assistance of consultants and an environmentalist organization (Trustees for Alaska), prepared a comprehensive plan for the mid-Beaufort region of the Arctic Coast, gaining assembly acceptance of it, and presenting it to the Coastal Policy Council in 1979. 26 Discussions in the council, however, indicated clearly to the mayor and borough planning officials that the borough's mid-Beaufort plan would be rejected. One advisor thought the borough’s plan was faulty because it invited controversy:

The trouble we had with the CZM at the council was that the borough put too many controversial things into it. Actually, this wasn't necessary. We can do most of these things under Title 29. [Alaska Municipal Code, that vests municipalities with interim authority] What CZM requires is that the state and federal government be in conformance with the borough's local laws. If we take the controversial things out, the coastal policy council would have to pass it. 27

The author of the borough's proposal indicated that the submission was premature:

Among policy workers, there is now general acknowledgment of the effects of development in near shore areas. That they must have different programs that aren't in place. There is less tension about this than about whaling. We pulled (the CZM plan) out because there was every indication that the council wouldn't approve it. The people didn't study that document as a whole. Deficiencies were perceived that were covered. 28

Facing the prospect that the council would reject the borough's CZM, the borough withdrew it, and planners and advisors developed another strategy: the development of an interim zoning ordinance to regulate development in the mid-Beaufort Region (the region in which OCS oil and gas developments would occur). 29 The borough assembly accepted the
zoning ordinance without argument. The principles behind the ordinance were the same as those of the CZM plan, and in the future the ordinance form seems likely to be used:

We will rework the ordinance, some parts of the program, do more inventories, analyses, and write new ordinances. We intend to do more ordinance work—a general ordinance addressing industrial development.30

In this case the decision was ultimately the mayor and assembly's, but the process was influenced by the Coastal Policy Council's deliberations. Although unhappy with the council's reaction, leaders were pleased that the council agreed with the borough's interpretation of zoning powers: ordinances could be used to regulate industrial development. The co-chairmen of the Coastal Policy Council expressed this belief in their letter to the state attorney general, asking him to interpret the scope of borough authority:

In the course of our recent review of the North Slope Borough's (NSB) Coastal Management Program, a significant legal question arose regarding the extent of NSB's zoning powers, and thus the extent of such powers under Title 29 for any similarly constituted local government in Alaska.

The question relates to the extent to which a home rule municipality may regulate land and water uses or impacts that are already regulated by the state. Of course, the particular uses at issue in NSB's case were oil and gas exploration and development, but others come to mind: air, land and water pollution; and harvesting of fish and game.

The Office of Coastal Management and other reviewers have pointed out other matters in the NSB's coastal program that have clouded the extent-of-authority issue, principally the vagueness of the standards (which) NSB proposed to implement. We can cope with these other issues much more easily if you can provide answer(s) to these basic questions:

Does a home rule municipality have the legal right to set standards for oil and gas exploration and development activities?

And if so,

Does a home rule municipality have the right to insure that such standards will be met through a permit system, so long as the permit system itself is reasonable?

Because questions of this nature arose during our recent review, the Office of Coastal Management was forced to take a position of its own. In essence, OCM's answer to both parts of the question was "yes" because it could find no constitutional or statutory provisions which clearly precluded home rule municipalities from carrying out these functions, or language which exclusively reserved these functions to the state. (emphasis added)31

The interim zoning ordinance is now in force, and oil companies are observing it.32 The issue of borough vs. state and federal jurisdiction has not been resolved, however, and it seems likely that this area of borough policy—like that of taxation—will be decided by the courts.

OCS Development. The most controversial area of oil and gas development on the North Slope is outer continental-shelf policy. When Mayor Hopson campaigned for the Alaska House seat in 1976, he made this the leading issue in his campaign, arguing that exploration technology in the Arctic, especially under pack ice conditions, was inadequate, and that a blowout or spill would endanger the habitat of whales, other marine mammals, and fish—specifies on which many Inupiat depend. Further, the mayor made contacts with Canadian Inuit who had protested oil drilling in the Canadian Beaufort Sea and the Dome Oil (water) blowout of 1976.

Even before the 1976 elections, early in the year, the mayor and two advisors sought
an international arena in which to register their concerns over OCS drilling. As the chief policy advisor in this area commented, the mayor's purpose was to organize a forum through which to pursue a common set of rules for the American oil industry to follow offshore in both U.S. and Canadian arctic waters. He feared that if the industry got away with environmentally substandard operations in the Canadian Beaufort, bad precedent would be established for the American Beaufort.\(^{33}\) The Inuit Circumpolar Conference, held in Barrow in June 1977, was such a forum, and it proposed a moratorium on Arctic OCS exploration.

In this area, the borough's policy has been that of the mayor, but the adoption of a stance—leading to the borough's 1979 suit in federal court to halt lease sales in all Beaufort Sea areas outside the barrier reef—involved the assembly, unrelated administration departments, village councils, and other opinion leaders. Leaders were questioned first on borough OCS policy in 1977 and early 1978, at which time the issue was on the borough's discussion, but not on its action agenda. Then, one-third of the leaders had no information about OCS policy. Of those who knew of the mayor's call for a postponement of the federal/state lease sale of Beaufort Sea development tracts, twice as many thought the borough had brought about the two-year delay in lease sales as thought it had not. Significantly, those who thought the borough influential in OCS leasing were twice as likely to be administrators as assemblymen, and twice as likely to be non-Natives as Natives. (Interviews with state and federal officials cognizant of the scheduling process established that the borough's role had been minimal).\(^{34}\)

Most leaders were not aware of the state's reaction to Mayor Hopson's position; of those who knew, twice as many thought the borough would have to "go it alone" as felt the state, particularly Governor Hammond, supported the mayor. Yet the overall view of borough leaders on OCS exploration was confident and optimistic. Only one leader thought the borough would lack any impact, and four leaders were ambivalent. Most felt the borough would be able to influence OCS development—a larger number, in fact, than thought the borough could regulate effectively resource development on land. Again, borough administrators were twice as likely as assembly members to express confidence about the borough's role in this area, and non-Native officials were more optimistic about borough influence than Native leaders.

We interviewed leaders about OCS policy again in 1980, and on this occasion we had the opportunity to inquire into the way decisions had been made in this important area. An advisor described the borough's suit in federal court in these terms:

> [The suit] was Eben's idea. He initiated the action, the legal wrangle. ... It was Eben's idea to restrict the sale, if possible, to inside the barrier reef. The position for the borough was, optimally, that there be no OCS development at all. The Governor had agreed with Eben that there'd be no sales outside the barrier islands. Then after the Governor and the Interior Department Secretary met, Hammond backed off his earlier agreement. Eben had conveyed to the governor, through LeRésche [Commissioner of Natural Resources], that anything beyond the barrier islands that was leased, the borough would go to court. Eben felt he had made a compromise. When he saw there was no way to block the sale, the barrier islands were the compromise.

> [T]here was agreement [on the mayor's strategy]. The Planning Commission was split at first—there were members who wanted no OCS development at all. There was some opposition in the assembly, too [from two members who] opposed the approval of near shore areas for leasing.

There was [discussion with ASRC] through [the president]. The borough wanted ASRC support; we wanted to avoid ... having the interest of ASRC opposed to the borough. We wanted a united stand in court of all North Slope areas. The deal was that ASRC would not bid beyond the barrier islands. It was their decision not to bid at all. Eben convinced them ... it was necessary to not bid beyond [the barrier islands].

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Kaktovik and Nuiqsut said they'd go along. But they were the ones who would feel the impact. Also, [the Alaska Legal Services attorney] worked with them, and they had hearings and got riled. Eben was perturbed that they wouldn't go along, and he took it out on [the attorney]; for awhile, he wouldn't even let him in the borough building.35

Although the borough mayor controlled the agenda and the options that were considered within the borough itself, the mayor's decision was influenced by actions of the state government administration as well as the villages that would be most directly affected by OCS development. The role of advisors and assistants in this process was significant, as indicated in the following communication to the mayor:

I asked [the Governor and Attorney General] what help the state would give us to prevent leasing north of the barrier islands if you succeeded in convincing the villages to join in an NSB suit against only leasing north of the barriers. Both said they could give us no help. Hammond said he called you to ask for your help with villages because he mistakenly understood you had already narrowed your suit against the outboard tracts, while the villages were preparing to sue to prevent sale of both outboard and inboard tracts. I told him you had not narrowed your suit as he had thought; that you had to sue against all of the tracts, but would settle if the outboard tracts were deleted; that it was not clear the villages would settle on that basis, but you would try to convince them to do so if opportunity to settle were offered. In view of all this, it appears there would be nothing to gain by pressuring the villages to join the borough in a narrower legal strategy based upon your compromise position. Rather, after suit is filed against the sale, you should try to get the villages to settle the suit on the terms of your compromise: the deletion of all tracts north of the barriers, or possibly conditioning their sale upon NSB surface entry permits after adequate experimentation.36

Finally, the borough administrator most knowledgeable about municipal authority in such areas as OCS, describes his impression of the reasons behind the mayor's strategy and the process of influence generally:

I don't think there is much hope to turn things around; rather delay—this is what we wanted. Sure, we're interested in oil and gas development, but not too soon. We want a longer period of activity, too, so that there's a longer tax base for the borough. There was no financial input into the decision to litigate—just the reverse of that, in fact. We want something after Prudhoe Bay, so we don't want to scare the oil companies off. The borough's position is different from the villages. We were willing to accept near-shore development, for we felt the borough could handle the impacts. But the villages saw it as a black and white case. There was a decision on the borough's part to differentiate its concerns.

Early on, Eben was willing to fight the whole thing, near-shore and outside the barrier islands. Thinking back to the strategy of litigation, I think it would have been too simple an answer to oppose the sale, saying there was already much offshore area leased, go there. At the point of decision, Eben said he wanted to hold out a compromise. I don't know how the change came about. But it is easy to make arguments on the amount of damage that would result from offshore drilling, harder on near-shore areas.

Also, looking at the defects in the Environmental Impact Statements the borough was mentioning, there are problems. Whenever you find a defect in an EIS procedure, it influences the whole process. You can't object to a single part, can't split it off that easily. So the whole EIS process is invoked in the OCS.37

The Decisionmaking Environment on Subsistence Issues

"Subsistence protection" refers to the borough's efforts to protect Native subsistence use of marine mammals (particularly, the bowhead whale) and caribou—the traditional staples of Inupiat society.

More individuals and organizations have participated in the policy-making process in the area of subsistence protection, and the policy area is one in which there is less pro-
nounced cleavage between leaders and non-leaders in the borough. The borough’s policy-making has also been reactive, for this policy sector, like that of energy development, is one in which scarce resources have become the object of interest of powerful external groups, especially environmental interest groups; and superior governments—state and federal—have intervened by enforcing regulatory policies which have disrupted traditional patterns of Native subsistence.

Caribou. Responding to reports of a decline in the Western Arctic caribou herd in 1976, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) recommended, and the Fish and Game Board issued, a ban on the hunting of caribou. The borough’s response to this ban was three pronged: the borough mayor opposed the ban and brought the issue to the action agenda of the borough. He made contact with agency, legislative, and executive leaders, complaining of the deleterious effects of the ban on Native subsistence. And he brought wildlife agency representatives to Barrow for hearings with assembly members and community representatives.

Second, the mayor, his spokespersons, assembly leaders, and Natives who symbolized the tradition of subsistence, questioned the data used by the state in issuing the hunting ban, a challenge which weakened the legitimacy of the regulations by questioning their need. The perception that there was no decline in caribou was widespread among Native leaders on the North Slope: seven-eighths of the leaders felt caribou were as abundant as previously.

The third prospective policy action of the mayor and chief advisors was to establish an environmental protection and conservation department. By this action, concern and borough involvement became institutionalized; the new department developed an independent policy; and department officers challenged regularly the state’s projections on the size of caribou herds with its own. Borough protests were a factor in the state’s loosening of the caribou ban to allow each hunter to take one caribou.

This action was the prelude to the borough’s current policy on the taking of caribou: the objective of borough policy is that “subsistence users should be unrestricted in their hunting” so long as their use does not conflict with local goals to maintain the species. In 1979, the mayor urged the assembly to assume control over all regulation of this species on the North Slope, requiring state and federal game officials to register at the borough if they sought to enforce regulations. The assembly agreed, and now the borough Fish and Game Board does ask federal and state game enforcement officials to register, but it does not regulate caribou management exclusively.

A borough administrator commented on the difficulty of establishing policy in this area:

This area of municipal law is not yet clear, and we have difficulties in asserting local jurisdiction. Local areas can be more restrictive, but not less restrictive than the state and federal government. But there is more local jurisdiction in air and water quality regulation. In a traditional land use sense regarding state legislation, which applies to game management, local areas usually don’t want more restrictions, they want fewer. The borough has attempted to set things upside down, to invert the normal course.

In this area, too, it seems likely that the borough’s policy will be tested in the courts.

Whales. A virtually identical process characterized the borough’s response to the controversy over whaling. In 1977, the International Whaling Commission (IWC), responding to
pressures of environmentalist organizations and nations without subsistence whaling populations, called for a moratorium on the hunting of bowhead whales. The borough mayor protested the moratorium and mobilized the opinion of North Slope leaders. However, in this case the broader scope of the issue made necessary a coalition of leaders, representing all coastal Inupiat whaling villages. The mayor and other leaders made contact with state and federal officials and presented testimony in Washington and in Tokyo when the IWC met.

North Slope leaders again challenged statements of environmentalist organizations which asserted that the bowhead whale population had declined. Whaling captains presented personal observations of increased sightings. Most Native leaders, five-sixths of those who had opinions on the matter, felt the bowhead whale population had not declined.

Finally, in August 1977 the mayor and other leaders formed another new organization—the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission (AEWC). Whaling captains have maintained loose associations for several centuries, in order to divide whales equitably among crews and settle disputes; but the drafting of the AEWC's charter in late 1977 represents the first formal organization of subsistence whalers.

The Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission represented Inupiat whalers by protesting the IWC moratorium in 1977 and 1978. Friends of the Earth representatives supported Inupiat subsistence whaling rights, as did Alaska chapters of national environmentalist groups, and the borough retained a nationally prominent lawyer in Washington, D.C. as counsel for the whalers. These pressures, supported by state and federal officials, led to the lifting of the moratorium and its replacement by a quota system (which is itself the subject of continuing dispute).

Roles and Influence in Borough Decisionmaking

Returning to the questions we posed about the environment of the decisionmaking process in the borough, one point is obvious: the borough mayor is the major initiator of discussion. He has brought problems to the attention of other leaders, nonleaders, and superior governments. It is equally obvious that the mayor has not acted alone in this regard, for frequently he obtains information and suggestions from department administrators, aides and borough consultants. An analysis of different, more technical policy areas—taxation, or the CIP, for example—would perhaps reveal that the primary forces in initiating policy are consultants and specialized experts in the borough administration.

The mayor's role in the formulation of borough policy seems equally pivotal. Although the range of alternatives is limited to a great extent by superior governments and by powerful national corporations and interest groups, the mayor has been instrumental in preserving a certain freedom of action for the borough. In this respect, he has been assisted ably by creative aides and consultants. Administrative departments have been influential in drafting detailed ordinances, such as the interim zoning ordinance; and the capability of the administration has grown through the specialization of roles and differentiation of functions taking place as new departments are created and as expert assistance (notably, a resident lawyer) has been hired. To a more limited extent, other North Slope organizations, for example, village governments, corporations and the ASRC, have had some influence over the details of borough policy formulation. In some cases, they have checked borough initiatives, as shown in the difference between the OCS suit of Nuiqsut and Kaktovik and the borough.

Initiation and formulation of policy are stages where the influence of executives is customarily greater than that of assemblies. In the adoption of policy, however, one might
expect the borough assembly to be instrumental. The assembly has played a formal role, as it must under the home rule charter, but its overall behavior had been passive until 1978. What the mayor (or his advisors and department heads, with his consent) proposes the assembly disposes, a generalization that applies to most rural county governments in the U.S. 44

Considering policy adoption in this light, however, does not advance understanding of the assembly’s role. The future course of energy resource development and subsistence will not be determined by the North Slope Borough alone. OCS policy is adopted by the federal and state governments, subsistence hunting by state or federal government and, for some species, by international commissions. Viewed from this perspective, assembly action legitimates the mayor’s selection of a preferred policy alternative.

In developing support for its preferred alternatives, the borough has had success in integrating regional organizations (for example, the ASRC and ICAS in developing OCS policy). And it has formed alliances with national interest groups, particularly environmental organizations. Although the positions of the borough and Greenpeace are opposed with respect to whaling, the two organizations have shared information and joined common lawsuits on OCS issues. The state and borough are opposed on game management but the state has supported the borough on the whaling issue. The borough has developed support by forming tactical alliances with a variety of organizations.

Comparing the influence of actors in borough policymaking, the mayor’s position of primacy seems to have been challenged infrequently, if at all. Members of the borough administration rank second, with expert administrators (non-Natives, primarily) leading non-experts. The exact role of consultants is more difficult to gauge, for it varies by issue area, and not all borough leaders have enough information on consultants to evaluate them. In the opinion of borough leaders who were “inside dopesters,” consultants’ influence was greatest on borough tax policy (none thought consultants any less than “high” in influence). Approximately seven-tenths of the leaders thought consultants had considerable influence over both energy resource development policy and the borough CIP, but a greater number of the remainder thought consultants were moderately influential in the service delivery area than in energy development. Leaders perceived less influence of consultants on “Native issues.” Of the one-third who thought consultants had some influence in this area, all but one thought their influence was either moderate or slight.

Do leaders perceive consultants to have more influence over decisionmaking than the borough mayor? Not at all. They were almost unanimous in feeling that the mayor was on top: he directed consultants. And most leaders saw little cohesion among the various, relatively specialized consultants that the borough employs. A longstanding borough consultant had this to say about the overall influence and current role of consultants:

There’s reason to use consultants: there weren’t any Native doctors or lawyers, administrators; there was no previous government here. We had to set it up, establish the tax rolls. We needed people with management experience. We could compress consultant work now. But everyone uses consultants; it’s the same with the state and federal government. Also the borough couldn’t get the people it wanted to work as residents.45

We have argued that the major policy actors of the borough are mayor, non-Native administrators, and consultants, and that the borough does not operate in an autonomous policy sphere. What criteria do they use in deciding issues? One important standard employed to determine policy is the values of borough policymakers. The value themes
which emerged from a survey of statements, comments, and actions of Mayor Hopson included: self-determination for Alaska Inupiat, protection of traditional lifestyles, development of a North Slope economy benefiting Native residents, and providing residents the necessities and amenities of life available to most Americans. Consultants, non-Native administrators, Native leaders and non-leaders share these values.

A second criterion, influencing the timing of the policy process as well as its content, is crisis. Decisions on energy resource development have come about in response to triggering events occurring outside the borough—for example, the Dome blowout in 1976 which alerted the borough to the dangers of offshore exploration. State restrictions and international events have led to policy responses in subsistence protection. Oil company and state challenges, first to borough incorporation, then to the borough's taxing power, affected the borough's taxation strategy. Even the borough's most "domestic" project—the CIP—can be seen as a response to crises. People needed schools, housing, sanitary facilities. And if the borough social infrastructure were not developed during the lifetime of Prudhoe Bay reserves, borough residents would have to pay for them directly or indirectly (through taxation of Native lands).

ENDNOTES

Chapter Four

1. Professor Thomas A. Morehouse conducted thirteen of these interviews, and I conducted twenty-seven.

2. This set of questions was identical to that used on the North Slope survey.

3. In the following sections describing North Slope leaders, we use data from 1980 interviews only when there appeared to be a clear difference from patterns evident in 1977-78.

4. Equivalent to leave-without-pay, subsistence leave permits Natives to engage in subsistence hunting or whaling without losing their seniority or accumulated benefits.

5. Of ten land claims leaders active in North Slope borough politics, one had held a position primarily in the ASRC, five in the borough, and four leaders held positions in both (three were corporate officers of ASRC and borough assembly members, one a borough administrator who served on the ASRC board of directors).


7. The fifth department headed by a Native is Public Utilities. In fact, this director is an American Indian from the eastern part of the U.S.


10. There are few comparable jobs in the region, and borough government salaries and benefits are competitive with those of the regional corporation, and better than those in the school district.


12. North Slope Borough, Mayor’s office files, “Monthly Activity Reports.” Since 1978, staff meetings of borough department heads have been held frequently.


16. This concern underlies opinions and perceptions of most North Slope Natives. Obviously, if permanent white communities developed at Prudhoe Bay or elsewhere on the North Slope, white residents could become a potent force in borough politics—electing assemblymen, for example. Such communities could also demand new services comparable to those in villages. A borough consultant commented on this possibility:

   Prudhoe Bay workers could vote now; they can do that if registered in the borough. Prudhoe Bay companies hold a sword over the borough. This is important. But to get services, schools they would have to incorporate a city there. . . . This would have an adverse statewide reaction, however. But there is no such attitude of the oil companies now. (Personal interview, Barrow, Alaska, July 30, 1980.)

17. Personal interviews with Mayor Hopson and borough administration officials, Barrow, Alaska, December 16 and 17, 1977; borough files on Service Area No. 10, 1976-1980.

18. There have been a few disturbances at Prudhoe Bay that may have brought about this concern—public drunkenness, vandalism, and illegal hunting.

19. The mayor took this position to support his allies statewide. Personal interviews with borough assemblymembers, Barrow, Alaska, October 1977; personal communication to the author from borough advisor, January 1981.


22. Personal interview with borough administration official, Barrow, Alaska, July 31, 1980.
23. Personal interviews with officials of the Alaska Fish and Game Department, Division of Lands, and federal Fish and Wildlife Service, Fairbanks, Alaska, February 13-14, 1978.


32. See, for example, letter to Mayor Hopson from W.J. Saint, Vice President and General Manager, Sojio Alaska Petroleum Co., February 22, 1980. Saint raises the issue of future conflict: “One problem we are concerned with, though, involves the other State and Federal agencies that we deal with on the same permit applications. These agencies have direct and indirect responsibilities which at times may lead to overlapping or conflicting jurisdictions.”

33. Personal communication to the author, January 1981.


35. Personal interview with borough advisor, Barrow, Alaska, July 29, 1980; see also letter of Jacob Adams, Acting President of ASRC, to Governor Hammond, October 11, 1979, supporting the borough’s position.

36. Telex from Jon Buchholdt (special assistant to the mayor) to Mayor Hopson, November 16, 1979.

37. Personal interview with borough administration official, July 29, 1980.


40. ACZMN, No. 25 (December 1979).
41. Personal interview with borough administration official, Barrow, Alaska, July 29, 1980.

42. *ACZMN*, No. 6 (September 1977).

43. Personal interview, Barrow, Alaska, December 17, 1977.


45. Personal interview with borough consultant, Barrow, Alaska, July 30, 1980.
CHAPTER 5
THE PERFORMANCE OF BOROUGH GOVERNMENT ON THE NORTH SLOPE

What does the borough produce out of its policy mill of participants, institutions, goals and values? It creates ordinances with the force of law for North Slope residents and non-residents of the borough who do business there. Among the ordinances are those pertaining to the borough’s operating budget and CIP projects, especially tax levies. These matters have an impact extending beyond the North Slope.

The borough produces a variety of policies which lack the force of law but which are influential nonetheless. These include resolutions of the borough assembly on issues, the borough mayor’s testimony at Congressional or state legislative hearings, his press releases, and his unsolicited comments to influential listeners.

Too, borough activity has a far-ranging effect—even though not all activities result in policy statements or ordinances. For example, when the borough goes to court, it commits resources and it changes relationships of power. Court decisions, of course, are among the most important outputs of the borough (though, strictly speaking, they are not borough outputs).

Economically, the borough produces jobs: the school district has 204 classified and 149 certified employees; the borough employs over 450 general government, health and public works employees (see Table 2). It employs an additional 200 CIP construction workers (estimated annual employment, with a peak construction season employment of over 350). Employment through the borough of 1,246 persons in July 1980 made up more than half of the resident civilian labor force of the North Slope.

The borough produces benefits through its control over education on the North Slope, which has influenced each family and most individuals living there. Other benefits are the provision of homes for many families, police services, health services beyond those offered Natives by the Public Health Service, and the like. But the borough provides these benefits to Natives and other borough residents at some cost to them—which is also a borough product. We not only mean the taxes paid by residents and user fees for some services—which are slight indeed at present—but we also refer to the inflation of wages, prices and expectations (considered apart from benefits in wages and improved access to goods and services) which has resulted from borough operations.

And the borough provides a range of social and symbolic benefits. It enhances the status and prestige of residents to be members of the only Native-controlled, regional government in North America. A Native borough enriches Native pride and contributes to a strengthening of cultural traditions in the community.

We turn now to an analysis of these borough outputs.

The Borough’s Investment in Public Goods on the North Slope

The borough budget ordinances, financial statements, CIP plan and amendments dem
Table 2

Borough Employment, July 1980

North Slope Borough Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department, Unit</th>
<th>No. of Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Safety</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Barrow Office of Environmental Health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(reimbursable [fed.] construction labor)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Area No. 10</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrow Roads</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrow Sanitation</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinators, Management &amp; Operations</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembly &amp; Utility Board (excluded from total)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor’s Office</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration/Finance</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing-Physical Plant</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Nuiqsut</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Anaktuvuk Pass</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Wainwright School</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Wainwright EDA</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Atkasook</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Protection</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Kaktovik Housing</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Agency</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Barrow Housing</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Barrow Sewage Treatment Plant</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Point Lay</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>823</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* CIP employees, totaling 356 in this pay period.

Source: Pay check register, pay period ending July 12, 1980.

North Slope Borough School District

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certified</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CETA (summer only)</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>423</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Business office, NSB school district, and interview, school superintendent. (May 1980 payroll checked against current payroll.)
onstrate that there has been an accelerating social investment by the borough since 1972 (see Tables 3 and 4).

Borough expenditures from 1972 to 1980 show a dramatic growth, from $788,000 in 1972/73 to a projected $90 million in FY 1981—an increase of over 1,000 percent; during this period the borough population grew from 3,172 to 4,061, an increase of 28 percent. Using FY 1974 as the baseline (by which time the borough had assumed control of school operations), and selecting FY 1980 as the cut-off year, the growth of the borough budget still staggers the imagination. The growth of expenditures was from $5,845,000 to $74,280,000—more than a ten-fold increase in just over six years.

Table 3
Comparison of Borough Revenues and Expenditures, FY1973-1981

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Revenues (in thousands of dollars)</td>
<td>$528</td>
<td>$6,143</td>
<td>$11,719</td>
<td>$16,634</td>
<td>$29,999</td>
<td>$46,259</td>
<td>$59,392</td>
<td>$74,280</td>
<td>$90,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of Revenue (% of total revenue)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property taxes</td>
<td>79.0%</td>
<td>57.8%</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
<td>44.5%</td>
<td>63.9%</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>71.1%</td>
<td>65.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales taxes</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergovernmental transfers</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| EXPENDITURES | | | | | | | | | |
| Total Expenditures (in thousands of dollars) | $788 | $5,845 | $16,404 | $40,904 | $35,861 | $64,771 | $117,208 | $74,280 | $90,230 |
| Areas of Expenditures (% of total expenditures) | | | | | | | | | |
| General government | 96.0% | 42.7% | 20.2% | 13.5% | 22.5% | 20.0% | 14.3% | 33.0% | 20.9% |
| Education | 4.0 | 37.3 | 35.8 | 16.8 | 27.9 | 19.1 | 11.4 | 22.4 | 33.5 |
| Capital projects | – | 20.0 | 44.0 | 65.0 | 39.2 | 53.4 | 61.4 | 5.4 | 9.1 |
| Debt service | – | – | – | 4.7 | 10.4 | 7.5 | 12.9 | 39.2 | 36.5 |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Sources: Annual Financial Reports of the North Slope Borough, years ended: June 30, 1973 to June 30, 1979; and NSB Budget Document, Ordinance 80-3.

An average 24 percent of borough outlays is for education, a lower proportion of the budget than for any other borough statewide. However, the borough has recently spent an average of $15,000 per student (including state/federal contributions) annually, the highest amount statewide and one of the largest amounts nationally. This annual investment in
## Table 4
Capital Improvements Program, FY1975 to FY1985

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Area</th>
<th>NSB G.O. Bonds (authorized &amp; to be authorized; in thousands)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Community education and service centers(^a)</td>
<td>$131,669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Roads, beach erosion, and drainage</td>
<td>43,708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Housing(^b)</td>
<td>111,706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Water facilities</td>
<td>46,531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sewer facilities</td>
<td>60,078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Airport and airport terminals</td>
<td>15,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Urban development</td>
<td>3,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Light, power, heating systems</td>
<td>34,177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Public safety</td>
<td>13,136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Communications</td>
<td>1,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Sanitary facilities (Prudhoe Bay, minor amount for Barrow)(^c)</td>
<td>38,915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Health facilities</td>
<td>9,388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Library/cultural facilities</td>
<td>1,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$511,028</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total projected debt service:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$630,536,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)A total of $121,662,000 in state aid for school construction is expected.

\(^b\)The borough has planned to sell all borough housing to HUD, but HUD's support of construction costs has not included all actual costs; thus, housing bond issues will not be self-liquidating.

\(^c\)Originally, these bonds were designed to be self-liquidating. However, increases in construction costs due to inflation and construction interruptions has meant that user charges assessed Prudhoe Bay companies will not be sufficient to cover costs.

Source: Table A-2, Appendix A, North Slope Borough Ordinance 80-10B, "North Slope Borough Capital Improvements Program and Financial Plan 1980/81."
education in the borough’s operating budget is paired with a massive borough effort to build new educational facilities—new schools in each of the eight villages of the borough at a total projected cost of $131 million.

General governmental expenditures have taken, on the average, 24 percent of borough dollars. As indicated above, the borough administration has grown steadily, and each new function or area of borough power has been lodged in a department with its attendant staff, facilities, supplies, and logistical support.

Capital projects are the most massive outlay of the borough. Table 4 shows that investment is greatest in education, followed by housing, sewer and water facilities, roads, sanitary facilities, and utilities. The capital improvements program is designed to create a social and economic infrastructure on the North Slope. The CIP is funded by the sale of general obligation bonds, a package of over $511 million, with a projected debt service of $630 million. Capital projects have also been financed out of the general operating revenues of the borough. An average of 41 percent of operating funds has been allocated to CIP projects.

A final and rapidly accelerating expenditure of the borough, an average of 11 percent (but more than one-third of borough expenditures in recent years), is debt service to retire the bonds sold to finance CIP projects. Under state law (as specified through the Sohio case), municipal governments may tax beyond the per capita tax limits in order to pay debt service.

Funds generated by oil companies and the general tax revenues of the state and federal government pay for these investments in social and economic infrastructure and general government services. Nearly two-thirds of borough revenues come from taxes on the real property of owner companies at Prudhoe Bay. Their assessed valuation of almost $6 billion also provides the collateral for the borough’s municipal bonds which have financed the CIP.

Sales taxes account for a small part of borough revenues, on the average approximately 6 percent. In FY 1974 and 1975, when sales taxes were a larger part of borough revenue, they were paid by Prudhoe Bay owner companies. Slightly over one-fourth (28 percent) of borough revenues derive from federal and state intergovernmental transfers in a ratio of 1:3 federal/state. State transfers are primarily for the purpose of education, under the state’s foundation grant program.

As we consider reactions and responses to the borough’s social investment program, it is very important that these aspects of finance and budget be kept in mind. Those who benefit indirectly from public goods on the North Slope pay the direct costs. Those who benefit directly from public goods, pay for them indirectly. Thus, there is no clear relationship between cost and benefit, cause and effect, on the North Slope, which clouds our evaluation of public policy.

Evaluation of the Borough’s Social Investment Program

We use two sources of data on the impact of the borough’s social investment program—comments, observations and responses of leaders, and responses of some 332 North Slope residents to the North Slope Survey (see appendix for description). We asked leaders their impressions of the borough’s effectiveness in distributing goods to the residents of the North Slope. Specifically, we asked them to indicate the areas in which the borough had been most
and least successful, and to explain their evaluations in terms of the efficiency of implementa-
tion and satisfaction of Native goals.

Borough Successes

Leaders were not unanimous in their evaluation of borough successes. As shown in
Table 5, a plurality of borough leaders selected “jobs” as the borough’s most successful
social investment policy. Borough leaders ranked education—the formation of an indepen-
dent school district and the building of new schools—as the borough’s next greatest success.
Fewer leaders felt the borough’s greatest strides had been in the area of Native self-determi-
ation or housing. To leaders, then, the borough’s success story begins with jobs and edu-
cation.

Table 5
North Slope Borough Successes, Failures, and Problems
(as seen by Borough leaders)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Area</th>
<th>Success* No.</th>
<th>Success* %</th>
<th>Failure* No.</th>
<th>Failure* %</th>
<th>Problem* No.</th>
<th>Problem* %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education-schools</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobs</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-determination</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inupiat values protected</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water and sanitation</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Number and percentage of respondents identifying a specific area of success, failure or
problem as most important or second most important.

Source: North Slope leader interviews, 1977-78.

There were pronounced differences among leaders in evaluation of borough successes.
The “success” ranking of administration officers was self-determination, housing, and jobs.
Assembly members, however, thought education was the greatest success, followed (in equal
numbers) by housing, jobs, and self-determination.

Natives felt education was an area of somewhat greater success than housing and jobs,
followed by self-determination. Non-Natives thought the borough most successful in the
areas of jobs and self-determination.
Borough Failures

Nor were leaders unanimous in their evaluation of failures of the borough (see Table 5). More leaders thought the borough had failed in the area of safe water and sanitation than in any other area. (North Slope homes lack piped-in water for drinking and cooking; few homes are equipped with the standard flush toilet.) The next largest group of leaders thought the borough housing program was a failure. (At the time of interviews, the heralded housing program had made little progress. Too, leaders and non-leaders, expecting to have homes they would own, found they had to rent the new housing units.) Fewer leaders thought the borough had failed in its educational mission, and only one in seven leaders was dissatisfied with health care. Thus, leaders saw borough failures in the order of: sanitation, housing, education, and health care.

There were few differences among leaders in evaluation of borough failures. Administrators were somewhat more dissatisfied with sanitation than assemblymen. Non-Natives expressed no dissatisfaction with educational services (few had children in borough schools), but some Native leaders were dissatisfied.

Borough Problems

We gain a different evaluation of borough social services when we consider leaders’ perceptions of what the borough’s priorities should be—its major future problems (see Table 5). Only one out of ten leaders thought that providing sanitation and safe water should top the borough’s agenda. Health care, transportation, and employment also received little attention. Equal numbers of leaders thought the borough should direct its attention to the area’s housing, education, and self-determination. But, if we group self-determination with protection of Inupiat values (including protection of subsistence and Inupiat language and culture), we find that one of three leaders was concerned with the future of “Native issues.”

It is difficult to compare relatively abstract concepts, such as self-determination with such concrete programs as housing. Yet we found that leaders did make such comparisons, and there were differences between administrators and assemblymen and between Natives and non-Natives with respect to their evaluations. Twice as many administrators saw housing and self-determination as more important problems than sanitation or health care. Assembly members, on the other hand, felt education was the most important concern, followed by jobs, housing, and self-determination. Non-Native leaders thought self-determination somewhat more of a problem than housing, and none felt that sanitation was a major future problem. Native leaders also thought self-determination somewhat more important than any other problem; but, as we have noted above, education was a more important future concern to them than housing.

Specific Evaluations of Housing, Education, and Health Care

With these differences in mind, we turn to an examination of leaders’ comments on borough housing, education, and health care. The first two areas are clearly among the most important topics of concern for borough leaders.

When borough leaders discussed housing, they were concerned with instrumental and efficiency considerations: had the borough created an effective program of public housing? Could it deal with the inadequate housing situation in the North Slope villages? Leaders were divided on these questions. Half thought the borough was succeeding, one-fourth were convinced it had failed, and the remainder were ambivalent. Almost all leaders were satisfied with the amount of local (Native) hire in housing construction. (The borough housing pro-
gram is a major actor behind the expansion of employment opportunities on the North Slope.) Yet leaders were concerned about the training received by workers. One-half felt local workers had not received training sufficient to make them employable in other jobs. Some of the leaders attributed this failure to the system devised to manage CIP projects—the construction management system (under this system, the borough engages construction managers who hire locally and, to the extent specified in their contract, are responsible for training workers). Only one in five leaders regarded this system as efficient; most found it inefficient and opposed its continued use.

Borough leaders were more satisfied with education, and there was little disagreement about school district objectives. Three-fourths of the leaders thought the district should follow traditional academic goals, while the remainder thought the borough was responsible for teaching students Native values as well. While few leaders thought the school system had failed to implement its objectives, one-third of the leaders questioned whether the educational policies of the borough had been administered effectively. Other leaders were concerned about the speed and efficiency of school construction. Some felt more Native teachers should be hired as aides and eventually certified as teachers in the schools, although a larger number had positive attitudes concerning Native hire in the school system. Finally, several leaders expressed the concern that non-Native teachers had not adapted well to the communities in which they taught, and that the schools were not well-integrated in the community.

Leaders were much less likely to have opinions on health care (less than half commented on this without a stimulus). Of those with opinions, a somewhat greater number were satisfied with health care access than were dissatisfied. Again, leaders expressed concerns about the success of the health agency in hiring locally and about the amount of training given Native health aides.

Residents' Views of Borough Programs

A sample of borough residents was also asked questions on the borough’s effectiveness in service delivery. Their responses are reported in Table 6. Slightly over half of the respond-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Area</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All borough programs</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean water</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitation services</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: North Slope Survey, 1977-78.
ents were satisfied with the borough’s overall efforts, compared to 17 percent who were dissatisfied. More residents were satisfied with health care than with any other program area. A majority of residents thought the borough was doing a “good job” in schools. Survey results suggest that residents were clearly divided on borough efforts to provide clean water. The borough received low marks on its efforts to develop roads and sanitation.

Quality of Life on the North Slope, 1970-1977

Our final evaluation of borough social investment is more indirect. We consider responses of residents and leaders to a series of quality-of-life measures, comparing respondents’ recollections of 1970 with their appraisals in 1977. Fifteen leaders did not complete the scale; they were mostly non-resident consultants of the borough and former borough administrators. The smaller size of the leader group makes the response pattern susceptible to a higher rate of error and sharper swings. These defects notwithstanding, juxtaposing the responses of leaders with residents provides an interesting and very informative comment on borough performance (see Table 7).

Table 7
Perceptions of Quality of Life, 1970-1977, Borough Residents and Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SAT* AMB* DIS</td>
<td>SAT AMB DIS</td>
<td>SAT AMB DIS</td>
<td>SAT AMB DIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borough has direct effect on:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of jobs available</td>
<td>12% 24% 64%</td>
<td>31% 36% 32%</td>
<td>92% 8% 65% 23% 12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of housing space</td>
<td>24 40 36</td>
<td>42 24 34</td>
<td>64 32 4 54 24 22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>13 38 49</td>
<td>56 27 17</td>
<td>42 50 8 61 22 17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing prices</td>
<td>50 46 4</td>
<td>75 17 8</td>
<td>50 17 33 61 21 18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water supplies</td>
<td>24 16 60</td>
<td>60 20 20</td>
<td>24 28 48 60 18 22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borough as one factor:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air service</td>
<td>20 44 36</td>
<td>42 39 19</td>
<td>52 28 20 64 23 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>12 36 52</td>
<td>47 36 17</td>
<td>92 8 54 27 19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and clothing prices</td>
<td>32 48 20</td>
<td>56 34 10</td>
<td>-- 24 76 3 24 73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS as place to live</td>
<td>32 40 28</td>
<td>87 10 3</td>
<td>36 56 8 73 18 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs, alcohol, etc.</td>
<td>28 64 8</td>
<td>41 40 19</td>
<td>8 28 64 4 15 81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of fish/game</td>
<td>92 8 --</td>
<td>83 13 4</td>
<td>9 61 30 28 36 36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural areas:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing</td>
<td>76 20 4</td>
<td>91 9 --</td>
<td>36 40 24 67 27 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic relations</td>
<td>44 48 8</td>
<td>74 22 4</td>
<td>36 56 8 52 33 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Taken from a 5-point Likert scale. Satisfied = good and very good; ambivalent = not good or bad; and dissatisfied = bad or very bad.

Source: North Slope Survey and North Slope leader interviews, 1977-78.
Five items related to areas of social life over which the borough government has had a direct impact—jobs, housing space and costs, water supply, and educational quality. Residents and leaders alike perceived improvements between 1970 and 1977 in jobs, housing space, and education. Residents and leaders saw the greatest improvement in jobs. Residents felt there had been modest improvements in the amount of living space from 1970 to 1977, while leaders were much more positive about improvements in this area. Residents were much happier than leaders with the quality of education offered in 1977. Leaders felt that education had improved, but that there was still room for improvement.

Neither residents nor leaders thought there had been any improvement in the prices of housing since 1970. Regarding water supplies, residents perceived a slight improvement while leaders felt no change had taken place. In several other areas where the borough was only one of several influencing factors, opinion was mixed. Residents and leaders alike felt air service into the North Slope had improved, although more residents felt there had been improvement than leaders. All felt that more things could be found in village stores—shopping was better; but leaders perceived a greater degree of improvement than did residents.

Overall, leaders felt their area had improved as a “place to live.” Residents, however, did not think there had been any improvement: approximately three-fourths of the respondents were satisfied in 1977 and recalled also being satisfied before oil and gas development began and the borough was formed.

Respondents sounded a strongly negative note regarding food and clothing prices. Three-quarters of the residents and leaders were unhappy with these prices in 1977, whereas only one-tenth of the residents and two-tenths of the leaders recalled being dissatisfied in 1970. National responses to inflation are comparable to these findings, suggesting that not all of the discontent can be attributed to North Slope causes.

Comparing responses of leaders and residents overall, it seems that leaders are more critical, less positive in their evaluations than residents in both 1970 and 1977 (a pattern found generally in studies of elite and non-elites). However, there is general agreement in the direction of change from 1970 to 1977.

Evaluation of the Borough’s Regulative and Protective Functions

The borough government has an important regulatory and protective role on the North Slope. It is now responsible for the protection of life and property and the enforcement of state statutes regarding public behavior. Although the borough’s authority to regulate use of fish and game species is ambiguous, the borough has assumed a protective role regarding Native subsistence and an adversary role against state and federal agencies attempting to curb hunting of depleted species. The borough has also expanded its protective role vis-a-vis Native culture—the preservation of historic sites and the Inupiat language.

Two departments and commissions have engaged primarily in regulatory and protective functions. The public safety department began as a law enforcement agency. It gained a new mandate in 1977 when the mayor and assembly amended the CIP to emphasize provision of “life support” services boroughwide,² (for example, police and fire protection). State troopers left their last station on the North Slope (Prudhoe Bay) in 1978, making the borough solely responsible for protection of property and life on a regional basis.

Within one year of the formation of the environmental protection department, village advisory fish and game management boards were established. The purpose of these boards
was to regulate the taking of game on the North Slope. In the fall of 1979, the borough assembly sought to create the authority for borough management of subsistence: it enacted an ordinance requiring federal and state wildlife officials to register with the environmental protection department upon entry into borough territory for the purpose of enforcing state and federal regulations.

A history and culture commission has been active in the borough's planning process. The planning department has used the commission's documentation of traditional Native sites in village master plans and ultimately made it part of the coastal zone management plan of the borough. The Inupiat language commission has worked on the development of an orthography for the Inupiat language and bilingual educational materials for the borough schools.

Thus, the borough has not only established its authority to regulate public activity of residents, but it has also begun to assume functions protective of Native culture. It has established itself as an "intercessor institution"—capable of intervening on behalf of Natives in matters of subsistence and Native culture.

Evaluating Regulation of Social Behavior

In this critical area of borough performance, unfortunately, we lack systematic data. The survey of residents, however, included one item on the quality-of-life index that provides inferential information on changes in social behavior—perceptions of the amount of "drugs, alcohol, stealing and fighting" in the respondent's community in 1970 and 1977. Only 19 percent of residents recalled that these conditions were "bad" or "very bad" in 1970, but 81 percent perceived them to be bad in 1977. Leaders' perceptions were only slightly less exaggerated: 8 percent remembered conditions as being bad in 1970, but 64 percent found them bad in 1977. The rate of drug and alcohol use in communities statewide has been and remains a matter of great controversy. The issues became inflamed in 1979 when the borough public safety department commissioned a study of alcohol use, the conclusion to which suggested that three of four adults were alcoholics. Borough officials challenged the report's findings, and Mayor Hopson dismissed the director of public safety for having published an unsubstantiated and politically embarrassing report. Finally, interviews with leaders indicate that the borough has had no success in meliorating violence and alcoholism or reducing crime.

Evaluation of Subsistence Protection

Borough leaders have contested federal and state estimates of a decline in caribou and whale populations. Yet, in response to another item on the quality-of-life index, borough residents and leaders perceived that the amount of fish and game had declined over seven years. Whereas 82 percent of the sample of residents recalled being satisfied with the amount of fish and game available in 1970, only 27 percent were satisfied in 1977. Of the leaders, 91 percent recalled sufficient amounts in 1970 compared to 9 percent in 1977.

What explains this apparent contradiction? Possibly, respondents were referring to declines of species other than caribou and whales when they thought of "fish and game"—walrus, seal, oogruk, and the like. It seems more likely that it represents increased awareness of threats to Native subsistence: opinion was mobilized against outside enforcement agencies that sought to restrict Native subsistence pursuits, when Natives thought the amount of decline did not justify new restrictions. Other data from the studies support this view.
A minority of the leaders interviewed (nineteen) had opinions on the enforcement of caribou hunting restrictions (see Table 8). Of these, twice as many thought the restrictions effective as ineffective. And six of ten leaders thought there had been a decline in caribou taken in the previous year before the restrictions went into effect, despite their general perception that caribou herds had not declined in size. These leaders felt borough protests against state fish and game board policy had been effective. Leaders supported local management of caribou herds (see Table 9). Half of the leaders felt either the borough or the borough's game commission should manage the taking of caribou. There was scattered support for management by village boards for the ASRC. Only one-fifth of the leaders felt the state or federal governments should retain this game management function. In the area of caribou

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceptions</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Neutral, DK</th>
<th>Total Answers</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Decline in caribou</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline in caribou taken</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caribou hunting restrictions</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effective?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borough protests effective?</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline in whales</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline in whaling</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IWC ban effective?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borough protests effective?</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal interest in whale</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>management</td>
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<tr>
<td>State interest in whale</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>management</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Source: North Slope leader interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Management Agency</th>
<th>Number Answering</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caribou</td>
<td>AEWC</td>
<td>Villages</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whales</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: North Slope leader interviews.
regulation, the leaders thought the state's restrictions had been effective. It was perhaps opposition to this effectiveness that motivated support for a strong borough role in regulation.

Most borough leaders perceived no decline in the population of bowhead whales. Leaders were almost unanimous in feeling that the IWC's moratorium had been ineffective. No leader thought there had been a decline in whaling by North Slope Natives. Again, most leaders thought the borough's protests on the whaling issue had been effective, and leaders thought the borough was a better protest agency than the ASRC or Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission. However, one-half of the leaders preferred the AEWC as management agency for whaling to the borough, villages, or the National Marine Fisheries Service of the federal government (see Table 9). A final comment on the effectiveness of borough intercession comes from residents' perceptions of the borough's role in protecting hunting areas. Forty-five percent thought the borough had done a "good job," compared to 25 percent who felt it had not.

**Evaluating Protection of Native Culture**

In the area of cultural protection, available data again support little more than inferences with respect to the effectiveness of borough programs. Most residents and leaders perceived a decline in "sharing" and in Native-white amity (Table 7). Ninety percent of the residents recalled that sharing was widespread in 1970, and 68 percent perceived it to be general in 1977. Leaders too noted a decline in this value, and they thought the problem was more serious than did residents. Residents perceived a decline in inter-ethnic relations between 1970 and 1977. Leaders felt there was less of a decline, but their overall impression was that tensions were high.

Obviously, several factors influence sharing and inter-ethnic amity. Sharing tends to decline during modernization, and inter-ethnic relations tend to become more tense during periods of rapid economic development. Moreover, the borough's emphasis on Native programs and issues has doubtless increased the sensitivity of inter-ethnic relations and increased, rather than depressed, their salience.

Yet most leaders did support cultural programs sponsored or initiated by the borough. Seven-tenths had favorable attitudes toward the bilingual education program in borough schools. More than half supported Inupiat University, and only 15 percent of the leaders opposed borough funding of its programs. Four-tenths of the leaders thought the "Inupiat cultural renaissance"—the revival of interest in language, history, and culture—was important personally; but three-tenths were ambivalent, and remaining leaders were disinterested.

**Evaluation of Self-Determination and Participation**

Before 1972, public participation was limited to voting in local council, state, and federal elections and involvement in voluntary community gatherings; the limited opportunities for representation of regional interests were available to a small elite that was not made responsible to nonleaders. Forming a borough government has resulted in the addition of offices and elections, expanding markedly the opportunities for participation in public life. However, since the formation of the borough, there has not been a major increase in electoral participation.

The number of individuals registered to vote has increased slightly, as indicated in Table 10. Voting in state and federal elections has declined, however (see Table 11). In
Table 10

1970-1980 Voter Registration, North Slope Precincts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration Date</th>
<th>Anaktuvuk Pass</th>
<th>Atkasook</th>
<th>Barrow</th>
<th>Browerville</th>
<th>Barter Island</th>
<th>Nuiqsut</th>
<th>Point Hope</th>
<th>Point Lay</th>
<th>Wainwright</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>120</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>1,016</td>
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<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>—</td>
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<td>—</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>1,123</td>
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<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1,440</td>
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<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1,475</td>
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<td>1974</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1,542</td>
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<td>1975</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>782</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>1976</td>
<td>234*</td>
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<td>841</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1,801</td>
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<td>1977</td>
<td>266*</td>
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<td>743</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1,692</td>
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<td>1978</td>
<td>259*</td>
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<td>879</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1,905</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>262*</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>887</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1,963</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>262*</td>
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<td>820</td>
<td>175</td>
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<td>92</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1,854</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes pipeline workers registered in Anaktuvuk Pass precinct. The average number of residents registered during this period was 77. Totals in Barrow and other precincts are inflated by the registration of nonresident workers.


---

Table 11

Participation in State and Federal Elections, North Slope Precincts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total No. Slope Precinct</th>
<th>Percent Eligible Voters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>68.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>1,004</td>
<td>66.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>855</td>
<td>49.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1970, 60 percent of eligible voters turned out for the congressional mid-term elections, but in 1978, only 50 percent voted. Yet these rates of turnout are considerably higher than the nationwide average: 43.5 percent voted in the 1970 mid-term elections, and only 35.1 percent in 1978.6

Presidential elections customarily draw the greatest turnout of any U.S. election, and based on their self-report in the North Slope survey, the 1976 race seemed one of great interest: 75 percent reported that they had voted. The actual rate of voting in the November 1976 elections was 67 percent of eligible voters, which still compares favorably with the national rate of 54 percent.6 (Mayor Hopson was a candidate for the Alaska seat in the House of Representatives, and this may have increased participation on the North Slope.)

Local elections in the U.S. customarily draw less participation than state or federal races, and the average turnout infrequently rises above 40 percent of the eligible voters.7 In their responses to participation questions on the North Slope survey, respondents claimed a high level of participation in local races: 67 percent reported having voted in village corporation elections, and 69 percent in the 1977 ASRC elections. The highest level of local participation was in the 1977 borough election, in which 73 percent reported having voted.

In fact, as shown in Table 12, less than 40 percent voted in the general election of 1977. However, over 50 percent of the eligible voters on the North Slope voted in 1975 and 1978, the two recent mayoral elections. This suggests a greater degree of involvement in regional government than found in most areas of the United States.

Table 12
Participation in Borough Elections, 1974-1980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total No. Slope Precinct</th>
<th>Percent Eligible Voters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>52.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>872</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Participation by voting requires little investment of time. A better index of the changes in involvement is provided in reports of respondents on organizational involvement. Half of the respondents had attended meetings of groups, and 21 percent were members of groups and associations and could be called community activists. Clearly, the number of organi-
organizations has increased dramatically and public activities initiated by these organizations have intensified. Without data from the 1960s on group membership and participation, we cannot state precisely the degree to which participation has increased, but it has clearly grown.

Has some measure of control over government programs and local offices and elections resulted in feelings of efficacy of North Slope peoples? Yes, say borough residents. Six of ten respondents to the survey felt they had either a "great deal" or "some" say over things happening in their villages; 38 percent did not feel they could influence events closest to home. Higher percentages of borough residents, we noted above, are satisfied with the products delivered to them by local government.

Finally, residents and leaders perceive the borough to be the best government at meeting their needs. In comparing the federal and state governments with the borough and the ASRC, respondents were twice as likely to think regional governments were doing a good job (see Table 13). Only 9 percent of the respondents thought either the borough or ASRC was doing a poor job, compared to 25 percent who thought state government, and 35 percent who felt federal government, were doing poor jobs.

Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Residents</th>
<th>Leaders²</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No/</td>
<td>DK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village councils</td>
<td>54%/46%</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSB</td>
<td>83/17</td>
<td>97%/3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASRC</td>
<td>79/21</td>
<td>53/47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village corporation</td>
<td>76/24</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State government</td>
<td>47/53</td>
<td>39/35</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal government</td>
<td>50/50</td>
<td>22/48</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² A different series of questions was used for borough leaders.

² Percentage of those stating NSB benefitted a majority of the North Slope people.

Source: North Slope Survey and North Slope leader interviews.

Whereas only 47 percent thought the state government was meeting their needs (and 50 percent the federal government), 83 percent felt the borough was addressing their concerns. Finally, 46 percent thought the borough met their needs best of all government and quasi-government agencies, twice as many as opted for the next agency (village corporations). Over half of the leaders, when questioned on this point, felt the borough was the best of all governments for North Slope peoples (see Table 14).
Table 14

Best Government for North Slope People

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government Level</th>
<th>Borough Leaders*</th>
<th>Borough Residents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Slope Borough</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State government</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal government</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village corporation</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional corporation</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Borough leaders were asked their opinion of the "best government for the North Slope people," without mentioning any specific government or quasi-government; residents were asked to indicate which of a list of governments and quasi-governments was "best meeting" their needs.

Source: North Slope Survey and North Slope leader interviews.

Summary Evaluation of Borough Performance

From 1972 to 1980, the North Slope Borough has engaged in a massive program of social investment and public employment. It has taxed the petroleum resources of Prudhoe Bay and received transfer funds from the state and federal government which it has distributed to North Slope residents.

The borough's greatest success in distributing resources has been in creating employment opportunities for Native residents. We also found considerable support for the borough's construction of new schools and its management of education, the development of a borough housing and health care program and some, much more limited support for other social services—water, sanitation, roads and the like. Borough residents did not pay the direct costs of these endeavors; the cost most directly related to the distribution of new social goods was perhaps the increase in prices, the general inflation to which respondents of the North Slope survey objected (this is not to imply that respondents thought inflation was caused by the borough's CIP, or that they would have objected to it if it were). In the eyes of residents, the villages of the North Slope have not become better places to live, a point with which leaders disagree. But residents have not "voted with their feet" and left the borough. Population has increased, not declined, and there would most likely have been a migration of Natives from the North Slope had there been no borough social investment and public employment programs.

The borough seems to have been much less effective in regulating the social behavior of borough residents, but this has not been a consistent objective of borough leaders. And there are insufficient data to establish that the borough has been a contributing factor in the process of social disintegration hinted at in the perceptions of borough residents. However, the borough has had some success in protecting Native interests—as revealed in opinion data, at least.
It came as no surprise that North Slope people supported the borough, finding it the best of all governments for North Slope peoples. Basically, the borough provides jobs and services for almost all residents and does not charge them taxes; given these conditions, we would perhaps have expected support for the borough to be even much higher than it is.

One generalization does follow from this review. The borough is more effective at tax collection, intergovernmental transfers, and the distribution of these revenues to residents, than it is at changing the social behavior of Natives in those areas—such as alcoholism—where most leaders feel change is necessary. In this respect, of course, the borough government is like most other government institutions: it achieves most readily those objectives for which it has resources.8

Second, in comparing elite and nonelite evaluations of the borough, we have noted few sharp cleavages of opinion. Leaders' perceptions seem somewhat more defined, as we would expect from a group that is better educated, informed, and more fully participant in policy-making. But notwithstanding the errors attendant on an analysis of a small number of individuals, we see goals and values that match fairly closely those of nonleaders.

Our overall assessment of borough performance is then guardedly positive.

ENDNOTES

Chapter Five

1. Only univariate frequency distributions are presented from the North Slope Survey in the discussion that follows.


4. The decline in sharing as a consequence of the modernization process is reported on in several anthropological case studies, and is discussed at length in the modernization literature. For an early study, see Daniel Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1958).


Our conclusions regarding North Slope Borough government and policymaking will first take the form of a survey of the overall effectiveness of the borough in the three areas covered above: welfare, security, and participation. Then we will examine the legitimacy of the borough as a Native government, and the borough as a model of government in Alaska, the United States, and the developing world. Our purpose is to raise questions and carry discussion beyond the data we have collected, making some estimates on the borough’s future course, and the value of borough case.

Effectiveness of Borough Government

Welfare

The leading question of borough government on the North Slope is whether residents, as a consequence of government programs funded by oil and gas development, will become healthier, richer, and more educated. The progress the borough health agency has made to date, and CIP plans for future construction of clinics, indicate that North Slope residents will continue to have improved access to medical care. This, of course, does not mean they will be healthier, but it does suggest that the limits of governmental action will soon be reached, at least under the constraints of current national, state, and local norms and laws.

At the completion of housing construction, the living space available to North Slope residents will be equal to that of other Alaska citizens. Borough water and waste removal services will also make the lives of borough residents more comfortable.

A further, much more important effect is continued employment opportunities, guaranteed to borough residents until at least 1985 by construction of capital improvement projects. These employment opportunities have reduced unemployment among residents to less than 5 percent of the work force—a lower rate than that found anywhere else in the state. Future employment opportunities, however, depend either on residents’ gaining jobs in the private sector (at Prudhoe Bay or through employment with the ASRC or its subsidiaries in petroleum development) or on a continuation of public employment through the borough. Two factors influence Native employment in private industrial occupations: skill and interest. Leaders commented that job training in CIP employment has not been adequate to make workers fully competitive in the private marketplace, and Native residents find the cycle of work at Prudhoe Bay and the requirements of living away from home unattractive. Regarding public employment opportunities, it is hazardous to project the likelihood of the borough’s mounting another large CIP after completion of the current projects in 1985. Future wealth of borough residents, at least wealth generated from employment on the North Slope, is not guaranteed.

The largest part of the borough’s CIP has been construction of educational facilities—in most cases, building new secondary schools in all large villages and either upgrading or constructing new primary schools. The effects of borough policy will be to ensure that there are established places where schooling can take place. Because the state, through the foundation program, provides support to pay salaries of teachers and administrators, and this support
seems more likely to increase than decrease as pressures on the state mount to fund education totally, the borough’s financial responsibility for education may lessen. Thus, the long-term effect of borough policy is to guarantee access to education.

Prospects for the financial stability of the borough over time are still clouded. The elaborate social service system now being created on the North Slope will require repair and maintenance—costs that increase with each new improvement. The borough is retiring bonds that finance the CIP, on a schedule matching the prime oil production years of Prudhoe Bay. The maturity schedule is designed to pay off all debts by 1993—which is between five to ten years before the end of the expected economic life of the presently known oil and gas reserves at Prudhoe Bay. Most of these costs will be paid off before Native lands are subject to federal corporation taxes. However, unless new oil and gas resources are exploited by the late 1990s, the sunk costs of general government and social welfare programs will comprise an increasing part of a shrinking borough budget. Moreover, consumers must pay the user fees—housing rentals, water, waste disposal charges, utility costs and the like—in cash, not kind, making it necessary for borough residents to earn (or be granted) money regularly.1 These long-term costs will thus have the effect of continuing the borough’s (and borough residents’) participation in and dependence on an unstable nonrenewable resource economy—without the cushion that the state has in its permanent fund or development of renewable resources. A further obstacle to the borough’s future financial stability is the rising power of urban areas in the state legislature, particularly after reapportionment.

Security

What are the long-term prospects for the borough’s capability to protect life and property on the North Slope? Placing a public safety officer in each village has given the appearance of order, though we lack evidence of the extent to which this has or will continue to improve security of village residents. The technical improvements of centralized police administration—a police communications grid in Barrow, capability to move the seriously ill to hospitals, criminals to holding facilities—seem likely to bring about some further improvement in personal security of residents (which is not the same as suggesting that crime rates will decline).

The efforts of the borough to protect Native rights to subsistence promise long-term benefits to the maintenance of a Native culture on the North Slope. The borough now plays an intercessor role, standing between Native subsistence users and state and federal agencies that regulate species populations. Increased recognition of the borough’s role by all participants of course will not guarantee that fish and game species will remain at current or improved levels, or that subsistence hunting restrictions imposed by international, federal, and state agencies will not increase.

The borough’s role in the process of cultural change on the North Slope is more complex: it is a change agent as well as an intercessor. The development of a borough has brought about cultural change by spreading the western educational system on the North Slope and by pursuing regional socioeconomic development. On the other hand, the borough has sought to protect and expand the language and culture of the Inupiat. The net effect seems to have been a softening of assimilationist pressures on North Slope Inupiat that originate outside the region.

As the borough has assumed responsibility for security of persons and the North Slope environment, it has increased long-term costs, both direct and indirect. For example, assumption of police powers in 1976 made the borough responsible for security at Prudhoe Bay, which borough officials would have preferred to leave under state trooper auspices.2

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The borough public safety department, as the areawide police agency, will also be primarily responsible for security of the Haul Road within borough boundaries in the event it becomes open to public use. This would double this department’s work load.\textsuperscript{3}

The long-term indirect consequences are of greater importance, for presently and in the future, the borough is accountable for environmental security to superior governmental agencies. The borough has asserted its authority to manage caribou and, with the AEWCS, whales, contending that subsistence users should be permitted to take species consistent with need and compatible with local use. To the extent state and federal agencies recognize borough authority, however (and the extent of borough authority in this area is still unclear), the borough and its residents will become more tightly involved in the web of governmental regulations. One effect of borough action in the field of security seems to have been to increase generally the amount of government regulation in the lives of North Slope people.

Participation

We began this report by noting that since contact, North Slope Natives had little to say about government programs influencing them. After the borough formed, it gained influence over state and federal programs on the North Slope. Borough confrontations over taxation and resource developments, including its recent OCS suits against the state, have connected it more tightly to superior governments. Thus the participation and involvement that the borough has gained have come at the cost of increasing dependence on state and federal political and legal processes. This has had the effect of lessening concern over parochial issues on the North Slope. As one borough administrator remarked: “The level at which I deal is from village to state, federal, even international—it’s challenging.”\textsuperscript{4}

Have individual residents of the borough gained power and influence to determine their own affairs? To the extent they participate, and one-fifth of borough residents do participate actively in public affairs, individual self-determination has apparently improved and seems likely to grow. For four-fifths of the borough residents, political involvement is as subjects, not active participants. But even for them, the borough’s developing strength as an institution has resulted in their improved treatment as subjects of government.

In sum, the borough has developed new programs in welfare, security, and participation that have brought great benefits to residents. The borough’s effectiveness is partly a product of the development and stabilization of formal government on the North Slope.

Legitimacy of Borough Government

Before contact with Western society, Inupiat on the North Slope had authority relationships that were close and personal. They lacked a government that could make binding decisions for all living on the North Slope, but they did have quasi-governments—the umealiiq, whaling crews, and karigí—which had decisive influence over individuals who participated in them. These quasi-governments appear to have been legitimate.

The period from early white contact in the 1850s up to the 1960s was one resembling alien conquest and colonialism. Inupiat quasi-governments were not eliminated in the process of Westernization that ensued, but they lost power to local councils, and state and federal governmental agencies. The new governments, however, lacked roots in the Inupiat community. As a result, there were two political cultures on the North Slope, each validating leadership by different means, but neither wholly legitimate for all North Slope residents.

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The Arctic Slope Native Association, and the borough government which grew out of ASNA, began the process of integrating the North Slope's two political cultures. Today, an effective borough has gained support of almost all North Slope residents and is considered legitimate by them. This has occurred through the development on the North Slope of a powerful, Western-style regional government that expresses and enforces the values of the Inupiat. An insightful borough official described the bases of borough legitimacy in these terms:

Some of the arguments we make are different because this is a Native-controlled municipality. We sometimes can use arguments unique to Native Americans. As a local government, we are neutral, but borough values are different. They are the values of local control, Native-control, subsistence...

The borough looks at issues as values concerning Natives. The borough can't restrict benefits to Natives. It can do so indirectly through federal programs that grant preferences to Natives... But in the area of values... we are like the New England town, in that our activity is different from that of most local government jurisdictions.5

This change in the nature of government, the "Native-ization" of Alaska's borough government system, is seen at the individual as well as the organizational level. Two Native leaders reflected on the changes that had taken place on the North Slope in the 1970s. To the first, the borough had been the agent of change:

Now there is a fast-changing transition to a cash economy. It is hard for those who've never been outside. The old people, they never wore watches or used clocks; they lived as the need arose. People never allocated time. This has a sharp impact on us. Few guys can sit in an office fifty-two weeks a year, eight hours a day, especially when the whales are running. On the tenth of August, the season starts and you won't find me here. But I know I will have to come back.6

To the second leader, the borough has bridged the gap between the Inupiat world and Western society:

The borough has had a great impact on people's lives: it has helped them get used to things that are new. They are not accustomed to the life style of people outside; (yet) they have to get used to it. This is a new system.7

The North Slope Borough has made the Western economy and polity proper and appropriate systems for Inupiat participation, by making these systems consonant with Inupiat values.

Lessons of Borough Government on the North Slope

The borough's history and operations have been unique, but they illustrate alternate possibilities for the development of other communities.

In the state of Alaska, the North Slope Borough is an extreme case of the empowering of a people. Insofar as it has taxed petroleum resources to provide benefits in education, housing, and other social services to a majority Native population, the North Slope Borough offers a lesson to Native areas of the state. No other region of rural Alaska possesses resources like those of the North Slope, but the oil (and in the future, the gas) pipeline covers Native regions, inspiring planning studies preparatory to the formation of a new borough in the Yukon Flats region. This interest is joined by the desire of the state administration and a growing number of legislators to organize the presently "unorganized borough" of Alaska, producing streamlined borough governments; and Native leaders in the Bethel area have responded to this interest. For notwithstanding the inconvenience of the North Slope Borough so far as the state is concerned, it has assumed state functions, executing them effectively.
The borough is perhaps a less useful model for American Indian communities. The North Slope is not “Indian Country” as one respondent remarked, and its development has proceeded through state constitutional provisions and statutes, not special Congressional Indian legislation. But in a less direct sense, the borough shows how a Native government can protect subsistence resources and regulate its environment.

This lesson is applicable to rural regions undergoing energy exploration and development—whether in the United States or other nations. Effective local government institutions, when they reflect and articulate local values, can meliorate change resulting from rapid resource development. They offer impacted peoples the chance to change at their own rate of speed (fast or slow) and in the direction they prefer. As the North Slope Borough’s new mayor argued, “I am a strong believer that we can make the best of two worlds. We can make them both work for us.”

ENDNOTES

Chapter Six

1. Borough leaders have attempted to reduce overhead costs in housing by taking advantage of federal aid under the various HUD programs. They have also tried to charge the necessary commercial rent to public employees and others to raise revenues and make the housing program self-sustaining.


4. Personal interview with borough administration official, Barrow, Alaska, July 31, 1980.

5. Ibid.


APPENDIX

DATA SOURCES

Data used in the preparation of this report were collected over a four-year period, 1977-1980, from multiple sources.

Leaders of the North Slope Borough were the most valuable source of information about the actual operation of the borough, its interrelations with other institutions, and its policymaking processes. In three field research trips to Barrow in 1977 and one trip to Point Hope and Kotzebue in 1978, I interviewed twenty-seven leaders of the North Slope political community. Respondents included Mayor Hopson, his major policy advisors, directors and deputy directors of borough departments, and borough assemblymen; Barrow city officials; leaders of ASRC and the ICAS; the Barrow magistrate; and members of the Point Hope village council and Tigara corporation. In Fairbanks, I interviewed state and federal agency officials in 1978 who had special knowledge of borough processes and activities.

Professor Thomas Morehouse, in his parallel research on local government in the Beaufort region, interviewed thirteen other leaders in Barrow and Anchorage in early 1978. Both Professor Morehouse and I interviewed additional individuals who were in a position to inform us of cases of borough policymaking and changes in borough administration and governance—even though they were not members of the borough leadership corps.

In July 1980, I returned to Barrow to update information on borough leadership and policy issues. I questioned eight of the leaders interviewed before, and asked questions of six new administrators and assemblymen who had recently assumed positions in borough government.

A second source of opinions and impressions on the borough was the North Slope Survey, developed and conducted by Professor Jack Kruse in 1977.

We added several questions on the borough’s performance to the survey, and have treated responses to the survey as the opinion of non-leaders.

Public documents and records were very important data sources. We made extensive use of the Home Rule Charter, North Slope Borough Code of Ordinances, resolutions, operating budget ordinances from 1972 to 1980 and CIP ordinances, annual financial management reports. We have also used the minutes of the North Slope Borough Assembly and of some borough commissions, and have made extensive use of the memoranda file of the Mayor’s Office, Borough Assembly, and the Administration and Finance department.

Borough public information reports were also useful sources of information. The most valuable of these was the Arctic Coastal Zone Management Newsletter, which reports the borough’s activities and positions on issues from 1974 to the present. Reports prepared for the borough by consulting agencies—on the CIP, OCS, coastal zone management, haul road, subsistence, ICC, and Inupiat culture—were valuable and often objective sources of data.

Observations of assembly meetings, public hearings (and available hearing transcripts) contributed impressions of borough processes, as did our opportunities to observe the bor-
ough in action by working in the borough administration building.

Finally, secondary sources provided some useful data. These included newspapers such as the *Fairbanks Daily New-Miner*, *Anchorage Daily News*, and the *Tundra Times*, and books and reports by journalists and scholars who had studied the North Slope Inupiat.

These varied sources were not without biases and inaccuracies. However, reliance on several sources, rather than one alone, has enabled us to present a comprehensive account of the borough's development and to balance differences in points of view.