EMERGENT MEDIA: THE NATIVE PRESS IN CANADA

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The native press is one of the few places where Canada's aboriginal peoples can find a reflection of their lived experience. Despite great advances since 1970, it is still beset with financial woes and other problems for which there are as yet no solutions.

La presse indigène est une des quelques places où les peuples aborigènes du Canada peuvent trouver une réflexion de leurs expériences vécues. En dépit de grands progrès depuis 1970, elle souffre de problèmes financiers et d'autres obstacles pour lesquels il n'y a jusqu'ici aucunes solutions.

Content analyses of the daily press have tended to confirm the marginal position of Native Canadians in mainstream society. Singer, for example, found that in eighty percent of the articles he surveyed, Indians were presented in "conflict-deviance" situations. "The image of the Indian," he concluded, "is apt to be that of an individual whose relationships to Canadian society are essentially mediated by dependence on government (Singer, 1983, 234).

A 1977 study by Sim reported that sixty percent of the news articles dealing with Indians depicted them as either having problems or causing them. In the majority of cases, she said, Indians are presented in the mainstream press primarily in terms of how they impinge on the non-native consciousness.

It seems where Indian issues involve non-Indian interests, news stories, columns and editorials are produced. As for issues generated within the Indian community, particularly socio-economic issues, there is only a secondary kind of coverage. Indeed some facts relating to the Indian situation seem to escape the observation of the press altogether. (Sim, 1977, 2)
While a subsequent study by Vogan (1978) suggested a slight improvement in the media image of Indians, it remains clear that Canada's Native peoples seldom can find a reflection of their lived experience in the mainstream press. For that they have to turn to their own media which, like other marginal media, are a forum where they can define their identities and legitimatize their values and goals. In short, the Native media provide the Native communities with the means by which they can work towards their own social construction of reality. "The Native press is mostly a vehicle for 'the cause,' not just a newspaper," as one longtime observer has said (Beeson, 1984).

Despite its sociological significance, virtually nothing has been written about the Native press. In the United States, the foundations for a scholarly appraisal were laid only in 1981 (153 years after the establishment of the first U.S. Indian newspaper), when James and Sharon Murphy issued their seminal work, Let My People Know.

In Canada, that kind of pioneering work remains to be done, particularly in tracing the historical origins of the Native press in the missionary publications of the late Nineteenth Century. (Strictly speaking, any definition of today's Native press would no longer include the missionary, government and academic publications which speak to and about, rather than for, the Native peoples. But their historical importance cannot be overlooked.)

According the most comprehensive list of Native publications available -- that of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs library in Ottawa -- almost three-quarters of the forty or so "Native" publications that predate 1970 were published by government agencies or other non-Native groups.

Since 1970, a further 191 "Native" publications have made an appearance on that list -- many only fleetingly. Of these, however, nearly half (91) originated with Natives, indicating a pronounced trend toward self-determination in the field of communication.

This thrust on the part of Native communities to define their communication needs and control their media outlets has been recognized by various government bodies, many of which have tried to reshape their policies in response. The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, for example, has virtually withdrawn from direct involvement in Native publications, many of which now are funded through Native communications societies. The Secretary of State's department assumed responsibility for Native communications in 1970 and has gradually increased its annual grants to Native communications societies to the 1983 - 1984 level of $3.1 million. The criteria for such funding stipulate that the communications societies "must be operated, managed and controlled by persons of Native origin and should aim at serving Native people in the organization's stated territory" (Northern Broadcasting, 1983, 203). At present, fifteen communications societies receive support,
but as the government itself admits, "large areas of the country remain without any Native communications services" (Dept. of Sec. of State, 1981, 9).

Nevertheless, what has emerged in the last decade and a half is a Native press that, though still beset by problems, has begun in a very real way to speak to and for its readers. A new generation of Native journalists, several of whom are graduates of the Native Journalism programs at Alberta's Grant MacEwan College and the University of Western Ontario, are poised to "decolonize" the Native press, which thus far has relied heavily on non-Native consultants and contract editors. As one Native assistant to a succession of non-Native editors has written: "I see many (Native journalism students) with the potential to soon become consultants, directors and experts in the field of Native communications. Circle the station wagons -- here come the Indians" (Poitras, 1982, 4).

Whether they will have the opportunity to do that remains to be seen, for as the following survey indicates, very few Native papers have the financial strength to exist on their own. Advertising support is pitifully inadequate and circulations tend to be small, leaving the financial burden almost exclusively on the government, which so far has preferred to make short-term extensions to the existing programs rather than a long-term commitment. The current review of these policies should, however, help to clarify the situation.

[The Treasury Board authorized the Secretary of State to assume responsibility for Native communications in 1970, and after evaluations of several pilot projects involving Native communications societies, the Native Communications Programme was given a five-year mandate in 1974. The mandate was renewed on a yearly basis from 1979 to 1981, when a further extension of three years was granted, with the provision that a thorough review of the programme be conducted in 1983 - 1984.]

As the foregoing comments suggest, it is almost impossible to fix with any precision the present parameters of the Native press in Canada. No one has kept accurate records and there have been no prior studies to serve as a foundation for the present one. Furthermore, the ephemeral nature of the press adds greatly to the problem. Publications often appear on an ad hoc basis, make a brief impact and quietly disappear. Of the approximately 245 titles on the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs list, only 72 appeared to be extant as of the Spring of 1983. Questionnaires were mailed to all seventy-two, despite indications that many had only spurious claims to be "Native" publications. (For example, The Beaver, a publication of the Hudson's Bay Company, or a number of irregularly issued government newsletters are to be found on the list.) For the purposes of this study, only publications whose primary circulation is among Status and Non-status Indians, Metis or Inuit are considered Native publications. The Department of
Indian and Northern Affairs list was also checked against other available lists from the Secretary of State and The Aboriginal Institute, as well as against holdings in the Library of the Northern Studies and Research Centre of McGill University.

Nine questionnaires were returned "address unknown"; five were returned with a note indicating the publication had become defunct; and there was no response whatsoever from twenty-one, despite a second mailing four months later. Thus, it may be assumed that the number of operating publications probably is closer to thirty-seven (the number of completed questionnaires returned) than to the seventy-two on the original list.

Furthermore, seven of the completed questionnaires were from peripheral publications (academic journals, friendship centre newsletters, etc.) These were omitted from the study, so that the final sample consisted of nineteen Indian publications (including Status, non-Status and Metis) and eleven Inuit publications, representing both the Territories and all of the provinces except Prince Edward Island. (See Appendix A for the list of participating publications.) It should be noted that all of the editors did not respond to all of the questions, so that totals in some cases do not add up to one hundred percent.

**THE INDIAN PRESS**

The nineteen publications in the sample represent nine provinces and the two territories. [Since the survey was taken two of the publications have become dormant: The Ontario Indian (now Sweetgrass Arts Publishing, Inc.) and The Nation's Ensign. Both, ironically, had announced plans to establish an independent Native newspaper with a national constituency, but have not been able to overcome financing difficulties.] None is independent. Seventeen originate from within Native communities and are linked by mandate or funding to a communications society or tribal council. One is government sponsored and one is published by a religious order. Eight serve specific bands or reserves; five are addressed to Metis and non-Status Indians, and six are aimed at all Native people within the circulation area.

The oldest of these publications (leaving aside that of the religious order, which dates to 1938) was founded in 1963. Three others date from the late 1960s, nine from the 1970s and five from the 1980s.

The majority of the publications (13) take the form of tabloid newspapers. Four are magazines and there are two broadsheet newspapers. The tabloids range from 12 to 32 pages; magazines from 24 to 50 pages; and broadsheets from 16 to 20 pages. Eight of the publications appear monthly, with only seven appearing more frequently: three of the tabloids are weeklies and four appear fortnightly. Two publications appear every two months and two are quarterlies. Circulations
range from 1,000 to 10,000, with most at the lower end of the spectrum. Six have less than 2,000 circulation and seven are below 4,000. Only three have a circulation above 5,000.

Ncne is published in an Indian language exclusively, but ten appear in English only. Seven publish in English and one or more Indian languages, and two are published in English, French and an Indian language.

A total of 67 full-time and 22 part-time salaried employees work at the 19 publications. However, six publications are put out by the editor alone. Only three publications have more than five employees. The largest staff numbers ten.

Eleven of the nineteen editors are Natives. Leaving aside the non-Native priest who has edited the religious magazine for forty-three years, the longest any editor has been on the job is five years. Five of the editors have held their position for one year or less.

Of the eleven Native editors, seven had no prior professional training or experience outside the Native press. Three had diplomas from Native journalism training programs and one had outside professional experience. Of the non-Native editors, two had university degrees in journalism and six had prior professional experience.

Virtually all of the publications depend heavily on subsidies and grants. In four cases, 100 percent of the funding is provided by grants. Only one publication gets more than fifty percent of its funds from a combination of advertising and subscription fees.

Circulation revenue tends to be limited because virtually all of the publications are distributed free to Native readers in their constituency. Only the religious magazine (48 percent) and three other publications (about twenty percent each) receive any substantial circulation revenue. For all others, circulation brings in at best from two to eight percent of revenues.

Advertising revenues are similarly limited—below five percent of total revenues for eleven of the nineteen periodicals. Three of the publications get about forty percent of revenues from advertising; three others get from fifteen to twenty percent and two from five to ten percent.

Nine of the editors defined the primary aim of their publication as providing news of relevance to Native people. Five said it was to serve the communications needs of their tribal council or association. Five said it was either to promote a positive image of Natives or to raise their political or cultural awareness.
Those who listed news and information services as their first aim tended to stress an advocacy role as their second aim (and vice versa). Often the two aims were listed together, as in the following comments:

"to promote awareness and the presentation of Indian culture; to keep readers informed on relevant news."

"to keep people aware of the issues that affect them; to enhance the image of the community as a whole."

"to inform, educate and stimulate thought and action by the Native population."

The advocacy role of the Native press was even more pronounced, however, when editors described their editorial philosophy. For fifteen of the nineteen editors, the criteria for news selection emphasized: a) relevancy to Natives, b) positive values, and c) educational or consciousness-raising values.

Only four editors mentioned traditional journalistic considerations such as balance, fairness or objectivity.

Among some of the comments were the following:

"to raise political consciousness of Native people; to preserve Native culture, to serve as a tool in the struggle for the decolonization of the Native people."

"Promote awareness of problems and solutions in daily life. Also cultural identity."

"interest, educate and concern readers."

"build an informed constituency, to ask questions and protect their rights."

"present a positive image of the Indian people."

Four of the editors said they were solely responsible for all editorial decisions. Six said decisions were made together with the rest of the staff. Six said they frequently consulted their advisory board or tribal council, especially on controversial issues.

Virtually all the content in all the publications is locally written, with the vast majority of articles produced by the staff and some by freelance contributors. Since none of the publications has access to wire services, the stories from outside the publication area are taken from press releases and clippings from other publications.

Seven of the editors said they regularly exchange copies of their papers and all but three said they keep up informal contacts with other
Native editors in their region. There is no nationwide organization of Native journalists, but attempts are being made in at least three provinces to set up regional associations.

Seven editors said they had difficulty getting articles for their publications, largely because of the lack of experienced staff and capable contributors. Two referred specifically to a general reticence on the part of Indians to submit articles. As one editor said, "Some people are reluctant to be quoted because of fear or embarrassment."

All the editors indicated that the main strength of their publication lay in their readers' trust and appreciation. This was seen as due to the fact that their publications provided the only source of "truth" or relevant news for most readers. However, three expressed concern about lack of readership support. As one put it, "Many people are apathetic to the issues."

Most of the weaknesses of their publications pinpointed by the editors were attributed to lack of adequate funding or staff. Specific problems mentioned included inadequate news coverage, infrequency of publication, stale news, non-observance of deadlines and lack of equipment, especially photographic equipment.

Virtually all the editors complained about inadequate funding. As one editor put it:

"As always, our biggest problem has been finances, and there is always the yearly threat by funding agencies that 'This will be the last year.'"

Another editor, whose paper lost a major provincial grant, commented:

"I am the only one left of 11 staff members. It hurts to see our proud paper crippled like this."

The strings that are sometimes attached to funding were another major area of concern. Only three editors referred to "political interference" as a problem at their own publication, but six others said it was one of the biggest problems affecting the Native press as a whole. Among the comments:

"Having independent control, free of government and band influence."

"they're generally owned by an organization which limits their freedom."

"In general, I think the problem faced by the Native press is too much political control. I have seen papers go under because of the control."
Another area of concern for at least three of the editors was the lack of experienced administrators. As one of them put it: "There is a lack of knowledge in operating from a business point of view rather than being solely dependent on government grants."

In the area of training for Native journalists, the editors were almost evenly split in their opinions, with nine advocating formal courses such as are offered at the University of Western Ontario and Grant MacEwan College, and eight advocating workshops on the job. All stressed the need for more education in Indian languages, history and culture, with two-thirds of the editors saying that such heritage courses are at least as important as purely journalistic ones.

Five of the editors said their relations with the non-Native press and community were good and four said they were not good. Six would like closer contacts with non-Natives and two said, as one put it, "each to his own."

Two-thirds of the editors tended to regard the future of the Native press optimistically. One-third were rather pessimistic. But even the optimistic comments were couched in ambiguous terms or made conditional by fears about continued funding. Some of the comments:

"It can't help but improve."

"Good potential; the need is there."

"Barring termination of funding, the future still looks good."

"If proper funding isn't set aside for Native press, the system as it is is little better than a joke."

"Bright prospects for Native broadcasting."

"I am not optimistic....I suspect the Native press will soon be cut from government support and told to sink or swim on its own."

"It is here to stay forever. It must work toward financial and economic independence for survival."

**DISCUSSION**

The picture that emerges from the foregoing data is basically that of a press still very much undergoing birthpangs, still facing an uncertain future that may be determined by forces largely outside its control.
At the heart of the matter is the issue of finances. Often tribal and mostly rural, with widely-scattered readerships and catering to a small market at the lower end of the socio-economic scale, the Indian press faces almost insurmountable odds in trying to build up a viable advertising base. In an age when the mainstream daily press takes in up to 80 percent of its revenue from advertising and many community weeklies are 100 percent advertising supported, the overall average of about 10 percent of total funding that the Native press gets from advertising is hardly inspiring for would-be entrepreneurs. The other major source of outside revenue, circulation, has never been fully tested over an extended period, but seems even less promising given the scattered markets and socio-economic considerations.

This is not to say, however, that a strong financial base cannot be built, especially if the way is paved by more research and marketing studies and more extensive training in management.

Even now, at least five of the publications have combined advertising and circulation revenues in excess of forty percent of their budgets and, on paper at least, have a fair crack at achieving financial independence. Their advantage seems to stem from the fact that their readerships are more geographically focused or because they are the main media, rather than an alternative, in their regions. Furthermore, some of these publications are beginning to explore new avenues, such as acquisition of their own printing presses in order to do job printing, and one has applied for membership in its province's Weekly Press Association (which could lead to more advertising).

For the rest of the Indian press, however, the future is contingent on continued government funding. And because up to now, such funding has been granted on a temporary basis and according to a formula of "de-escalating" grants (which de-escalate faster than alternative funding can be found) the press has not been able to make longterm plans, or build up staff and equipment. According to the mandate of the Native Communications Programme, individual Native communication societies can receive up to 25 percent of their total budget in the first year, which then de-escalates to a maximum of 45 percent in the fifth year. Provincial support is not included in the formula, but only Alberta, Ontario and Manitoba have made significant contributions to Native communications (1981 Discussion Paper).

To give the federal government its due, however, it has shouldered the burden of such financing in the absence of much interest on the part of all but three of the provinces. Without its contributions the Native press would largely cease to exist. According to the 1981 discussion paper, termination of funding by the Secretary of State would probably result in the closing down of all but two of the Native communications societies.
The potential for political interference by those who administer the funds is an issue raised by several respondents.

As Murphy and Murphy have said about the Indian press in the United States, "there is a tendency among Indian leaders to consider the Indian newspaper more as a house organ for the tribes than as a medium for exchange and analysis" (Murphy and Murphy, 1981, 78). As the comments by nine of the editors suggest, this tendency exists in Canada as well, and is likely to continue to exist as long as funding is controlled by "political" groups. In these circumstances, self-censorship is as great a danger as overt political pressure, especially since many editors are committed to enhancing the image of the Native people. Further studies about the credibility of the Native press with its readers would help to clarify this point.

The issue of credibility, furthermore, is exacerbated by the high turnovers in staff and the lack of professional training and experience on the part of the majority of Native editors. According to veteran U.S. Indian journalist Jeannette Henry, "The need for experienced editorial personnel...overshadows all other matters....The shortage of trained personnel is critical, perhaps desperate" (Murphy and Murphy, 1981, ix).

In Canada, three Native journalism training programs have been established since 1974 to address this problem. The newest, The Indian Communication Arts program of the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, at the University of Regina, like the other two provides a certificate, rather than a degree. The programs at the University of Western Ontario and Alberta's Grant MacEwan College have between them graduated eighty-two Native Journalists (as of 1983). They claim a job placement rate of about ten percent in "direct media" and about seventy percent in "communications" areas in general. Both of the directors of these programs say the prospects for their graduates are excellent, because, as one put it: "Indians are just beginning to realize the need for effective communications."

THE INUIT PRESS

The eleven publications in the sample include all Native publications north of the tree line. Seven are attached to Native corporations or communications societies; three are government sponsored and one is independent. (Since the survey was taken, one of the newspapers, Igalaq, has ceased publication due to the withdrawal of support by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs.) Four are published in Ottawa, two in the Western Arctic, one in the Central Arctic and four in the Eastern Arctic, covering all six regions of Inuktitut dialect variation. The majority of the publications are of recent origin, seven having been started since 1976. The oldest, founded in 1959, is published by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs in Ottawa.
Four are tabloid newspapers, four are newsletters and three are magazines. The tabloids range from sixteen to twenty-four pages with circulations from 3,000 to 3,500. One is a weekly, two are bi-monthlies and one is semi-annual. The newsletters range from two to fourteen pages with circulations from 320 to 2,100. One appears weekly, two bi-monthly and one monthly. The magazines range from twenty-four to ninety pages with circulations from 1,000 to 6,300. One appears monthly and two are quarterly.

One of the government publications is issued in two editions, one in Inuktitut and the other in English and French. All the others are published in English and a combination of one, two or three Inuit dialects. Two of these also include some content in French and one uses an Indian language as well.

A total of twenty full-time and six part-time employees work at these publications. However, one of the editors worked on three publications and another was responsible for two publications. Thus, there were eight respondents for the eleven publications. Six publications are put out solely by the editors who, in two cases, work only part-time at the job. The largest staff numbers six.

Two editors are Inuit. The other six respondents are non-Natives. The longest period that any editor had held his or her job was two and one-half years. Four had served for one year or less.

Neither of the Native editors had any prior journalistic training. One of the six non-Native editors (who worked on three papers) had a Bachelor of Journalism degree. One had a B.A. in communication, one had a journalism diploma from a community college and one had prior professional experience. Two of the contract editors had no prior professional training or experience.

Except for the independent tabloid (which receives 95 percent of its revenues from advertising largely from Nordair, which distributes copies on its flights), all of the publications rely on subsidies for at least ninety percent of their funding. The three government-sponsored publications and two Inuit-controlled publications are 100 percent subsidized.

The editors of six publications said their primary aim was to provide news of relevance to the Inuit people in their area. Three said it was to provide information about their parent corporation and two said it was to provide information about government policies and programs affecting the Inuit. As secondary aims, three mentioned dissemination of corporation news and three mentioned propagation and preservation of the Inuit language and cultural heritage.
In reference to the Inuit press in general, editors were much more inclined to stress an advocacy role, either in terms of political and social development or the preservation of cultural and linguistic heritage. Some typical comments:

"provide a base of literature for historical, language, education and informational purposes -- and recreation."

"to inform its readers...to advocate its constituents' perspective and mirror Native cultural values.

"as a goad to action and to keep the Native populace informed."

"to report on events and developments within the area in which readers reside and on those occurring outside which may have a bearing on their lives; to encourage Native people to take complete control of their own lives and to manage themselves the institutions to which they turn for help; to promote the Native language and culture of the publication's readers; to encourage Native people to have respect for themselves and the others around them."

The main criterion for news selection at nine of the publications was an article's "relevance" for Inuit people, with four editors putting nearly equal emphasis on such journalistic standards as clarity, accuracy and fairness. Two editors stressed that their editorial policy was, as one said, "to inspire pride in Inuit culture."

Four of the editors said they were solely responsible for editorial decisions. Two said they consulted frequently with their staff and two said contents were largely decided by their publishers.

Editors at seven publications said they had difficulties getting sufficient good quality material, with the most frequent complaint being about the lack of freelance contributions and "lack of cooperation at the grassroots level."

Six editors said they had informal contacts with other editors and exchanged publications. Two had no outside contacts whatsoever.

Five editors said their contacts with non-Native news organizations were either non-existent or irrelevant. Three said they had good contacts with the non-Native media.

All of the editors agreed that the main strength of their publications was the "useful," "relevant," or "real" information they provided to their Native readership -- information which they felt was not readily available from any other source. Some listed secondary strengths such as "clarity," "consistency," "uniqueness," and "attractive format."
Similarly, all eight editors agreed that inadequate budgets are their main problem. Five also complained of a shortage of competent staff. Five said they were not able to publish frequently enough to keep up to date with the news. Four said they felt isolated. Three listed "political interference" as a problem. Three said they had problems translating material and two said the oral bias of the culture worked against them. Among the specific complaints:

"general literacy level in some areas."
"poor production facilities."
"being based in Ottawa, far from the readership."
"being financed almost, if not totally by the corporation, it is somehow difficult to criticize them although the occasions are numerous."
"cost of travel in the Arctic."

In regard to training of Inuit journalists, five editors agreed that on-site workshops would be best (to circumvent homesickness and culture shock, as three said). Two editors said the existing Journalism programs were sufficient.

Overall, the editors tended to view the future of the Inuit press rather pessimistically, with only two expressing the opinion that "things will improve." For the six others, comments ranged from "not promising" and "problems" to "very limited" or "dim." As one of the editors put it, the Inuit press simply faces too many problems, lacking "money, staff, equipment and encouragement." For three editors, another problem is "political interference." Their comments:

"Publications are affiliated with particular organizations and 'toe the party line' -- they seldom comment or criticize the activities of their respective sponsors."

"Freedom of the press. All publications are financed by government or by official organizations."

"Highly political nature of many subjects, which means people are reluctant to speak out because of repercussions."

Two editors said they foresaw grave difficulties for the press resulting from what one termed "cultural bias towards oral rather than written" communication. Compounding the problem, another editor said, is that "few Inuit see journalism as a career; it's just a job for a year or two before moving on to something else."
DISCUSSION

As the data suggest, all the problems of the Indian press are shared by the Inuit press as well, but to a greater extent. Partly this has to do with the fact that the Inuit press is even newer and less securely rooted in its community, relying even more on non-Native personnel. But mostly it has to do with geographical and cultural factors. The population base is smaller and the areas of circulation are larger, more scattered and more isolated. According to 1983 figures from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, there are approximately 24,000 Inuit and 174,000 Status and non-Status Indians and Metis living in the northern areas which constitute seventy percent of the land mass of Canada. In addition, the evidence seems to point to a stronger cultural resistance to print, a factor aggravated by the number of language variants and low literacy levels in some areas.

As Professor Valaskakis has pointed out, the introduction of print by missionaries in the late 1800s changed Inuit values and broke the continuity of Inuit leadership, but failed to develop any wider cultural foundations, in essence consigning the Inuit to a "cultural limbo" (Valaskakis, 1983, 240). Since the introduction of Inuit interactive experimental programs in the 1970s, a great deal of emphasis has been placed on developing a broadcast system that would be more in tune with the traditional oral culture. And of late, government departments have been stressing the urgency of this task, given the opening up of the North to Southern programming by the new satellite systems.

Much of the pessimism about the future of the Inuit press expressed by the editors thus has to do with what they see as a pronounced trend towards broadcasting programs, which they fear might be funded at the expense of the print media, and which would attract journalists and audiences away from print. The present Native Communications Programme does not provide funding for radio or television broadcasting, though it does provide some support for community radio and radio-telephone networks. The proposed Northern Native Broadcast Access program would be administered and funded by the Secretary of State (1983 Discussion Paper). As one former editor, who is now an official of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, said: "The future's in broadcasting. Because of distance and scattered audiences, newspapers are too slow and electronic news will more and more be the preferred medium."

CONCLUSION

The Native press in Canada remains in a precarious, and somewhat artificial, situation. It has demonstrated its value by helping to fill in the news and information gaps in the mainstream press and shows great potential as a force for the construction of a Native social reality. But it has been doing this largely from the top down. There is little evidence as yet that it can generate the kind of independent financial and management structures that would make it self-sustaining.
Its existence continues to be largely contingent on the willingness of governments to finance its operations. What is still missing is a sense of stability.

Nevertheless, much valuable work, especially in consciousness-raising and professional training, has been done in the past decade and a half. The shape of the structures that may rise from these foundations is slowly beginning to emerge. But more research needs to be done.

There is general agreement that "a special place in cultural policy should be reserved for peoples of Indian and Inuit ancestry" (1983 Discussion Paper), but what is not clear is how such a principle is best put into practice. The Native Communications Programme of the Department of Secretary of State has been implementing its ideas in this regard for several years now. Have these efforts borne fruit? Or are new directions necessary? Can government support be sustained in perpetuity or should funding be an interim measure while stronger infrastructures are developed? And how, indeed, are such cultural, financial and administrative structures to be developed?

The research and data base that would enable answers to be found for all such questions is still virtually non-existent. Such a scholarly lacuna needs filling, for even though, as the Murphys say of U.S. Indian journalists: "the odds for survival are with them" (Murphy and Murphy, 1981, 162), those odds could be shortened considerably if more detailed and precise information were available.

FOOTNOTE

This paper is being published simultaneously in the Canadian Journal of Communication and Saskatchewan Indian Federated College Journal.

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APPENDIX A

Publications Included in the Sample

Native Press

- Alliance Journal
- Bear Hills Native Voice
- The Caribou
- Denosa
- Ha-Shilth-Sa
- Indian Record
- Kainai News
- Kwandur
- Mal-I-Mic News
- Metis Newsletter
- Micmac News
- The Nation's Ensign
- Native Press
- New Breed Journal
- The Saskatchewan Indian Sweetgrass Arts
- Tekawennake
- Wawatay News
- Yukon Indian News

Inuit Press

- Akana
- Caribou News
- Igalaaq
- Inuit Okoheet
- Inuit Today
- Inuktut Magazine
- Inuvialuit
- Kinatuinamot Ilengajuk
- Nunatsiaq News
- Suvaguuq
- Taqralik
- Inuvik, N.W.T.
- Ottawa
- Cambridge Bay, N.W.T.
- Frobisher Bay, N.W.T.
- Ottawa
- Inuvik, N.W.T.
- Nain, Labrador
- Frobisher Bay, N.W.T.
- Ottawa
- Kuujjuaq, Quebec

- Hull, Quebec
- Hobbema, Alberta
- St. George's, Newfoundland
- La Ronge, Saskatchewan
- Port Alberni, British Columbia
- Winnipeg, Manitoba
- Standoff, Alberta
- Whitehorse, Yukon
- Fredericton, Nova Scotia
- Yellowknife, N.W.T.
- Sydney, Nova Scotia
- Edmonton, Alberta
- Yellowknife, N.W.T.
- Regina, Saskatchewan
- Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
- Toronto, Ontario
- Brantford, Ontario
- Sioux Lookout, Ontario
- Whitehorse, Yukon

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