



The Hill Times Policy Briefing, November 15, 2010

CANADA'S NORTH

Photograph by Corporal Rick Ayer, Formation Imaging Services, Halifax, Nova Scotia

The *HMCS Montréal* pictured Aug. 20, 2010, off the coast of Grise Fiord, Canada's most northern community, in Jones Sounds during Operation Nanook.

THE ISSUES AND MORE

The latest on the \$16.2-billion Mackenzie Valley Gas Pipeline and the latest on defence, security and sovereignty in Canada's North. **INSIDE.**

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CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: MACKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE



Photographs by Jake Wright, The Hill Times

Mackenzie Valley Pipeline and politics: Natural Resources Minister Christian Paradis and Government House Leader and acting Environment Minister John Baird. The MacKenzie Valley pipeline is 'dead,' says Stephen Hazell.

Observers split on reality of \$16.2-billion Mackenzie Valley pipeline project

Doomed or destined for development in the near future, it's not likely the Mackenzie Valley pipeline will be off the federal government's radar any time soon.

By KRISTEN SHANE

Observers and actors involved in the Mackenzie Valley pipeline project are split about whether the \$16.2-billion scheme is a pipedream that market conditions won't support or a plan that has all the support and potential to create jobs and allow cash to flow North.

Since large natural gas deposits were first discovered in the Beaufort Sea area more than 30 years ago, plans have been in development to run a pipeline from nearby Inuvik, N.W.T. through the territory along the Mackenzie River Valley to northwestern Alberta. It would tap underground resources in Canada's North and flow the gas to its fuel-hungry south. A 1970s royal commission put plans on ice for a decade. With several land claims settled and better market conditions, the idea resurfaced in the early 2000s. It was hatched by petroleum companies ConocoPhillips, Shell Canada, Exxon-Mobil and group leader Imperial Oil Ltd., which have interests in three natural gas fields around Inuvik.

They began working in partnership with the Aboriginal Pipeline Group, a consortium of territorial aboriginal groups that has secured one-third ownership right of the proposed pipeline. They proposed a 1,200-kilometre natural gas pipeline. As much as 1.2 billion

cubic feet per day of natural gas could be available to move through the pipeline in its infancy.

In 2004, an independent joint review panel began to study potential environmental, socio-economic effects of the project, and a parallel study by the National Energy Board, an arm's-length federal regulator, began dealing with engineering, safety and other issues. The panel released its concluding report with 176 recommendations in December 2009, only a fraction of which were initially fully accepted by the federal and Northwest Territories governments.

National Energy Board spokesperson Sarah Kiley said last week she expects to receive the governments' final report on the recommendations within the next two weeks.

Then, the NEB will take about 30 days to review it and release its own decision on whether the project should go ahead. If these timelines are kept, proponents expect to see an NEB decision before Christmas.

Aboriginal Pipeline Group chair Fred Carmichael said the project would bring jobs, business development and support for aboriginal self-sufficiency.

But he said he's frustrated its development has been so slow. People living along pipeline hubs, who have been preparing for its arrival for years by expanding their businesses, for instance, are feeling the delays, he said. "It brought a lot of excitement

and hope for the people and they invested, they got trained. And here we are three years late, four years late, and these people are having a hard time surviving."

Barrie Robb, vice-president of the Mackenzie Aboriginal Corporation, an aboriginal-owned construction company, said he believes his company is well-positioned to work on the pipeline. But since it's on the back burner, he said his corporation is instead focusing on building a road along the same corridor that could also prompt economic generation and help lower the cost of transporting supplies to build a pipeline, eventually.

"Those of us who work and live or have lived in the North, I think we see that it's something that should happen. We'd love to see it happen, but who knows," he said.

Depending on who you ask, the regulatory process has been bogged down by proponent mismanagement, southern environmental groups erecting obstacles or red tape.

And even with the green light from the NEB, construction isn't an automatic next step. The companies involved would need to do fieldwork, develop agreements with First Nations not part of the Aboriginal Pipeline Group, and get thousands of permits for everything from creek crossings to barge landings, said Pius Rolheiser, Imperial Oil spokesperson. If nothing is derailed, they may be in a place to decide by 2014 whether it's worth the cost to proceed with construction. And if they do press ahead, the first hammer likely won't hit a nail until 2017.

Given the delays, independent oil industry analyst Ian Doig said he's

not optimistic. "What started out, say, a decade ago as being a project with a lot of purpose, now is very questionable," he said last week.

"Five, seven years of regulatory delays later, suddenly we indeed recognize that there was indeed a window for this project, and it may not have closed, but it's quickly closing," said Brendan Bell, a consultant who covered the pipeline file when he was minister responsible for energy and mining in the Northwest Territories government the mid-2000s.

Stephen Hazell, a lawyer with the environmental law group Ecojustice, is even less optimistic: "The Mackenzie gas project is dead," he said.

He noted that the groups pushing for the pipeline are in closed-door talks with the federal government over financial aspects of the project such as royalties and taxes. He said Imperial had asked for up to \$2-billion in fiscal incentives such as deferred royalties and loan guarantees. Mr. Rolheiser did not confirm or deny the number because he said the talks are confidential.

"There's just no way that even a government dominated by MPs from oil country, from Alberta, is going to hand out that kind of money," said Mr. Hazell. "Especially when there's international pressure to eliminate subsidies to the fossil fuel industry."

The project requires risk sharing, said Mr. Bell, who is also a former federal Conservative candidate.

"Clearly, there's a government role... But that doesn't mean that government is going to absorb all the risk. And I can tell you my opinion: the Prime Minister is not going to put the country in a position like that, where this is all on the backs of the taxpayers. That means that there are going to be some very difficult negotiations."

If the project moves through the end of the regulatory process and it comes time for the companies to decide whether it's worth it to build, "We would need to see sufficient progress on a fiscal framework that would give us confidence to re-staff the project," said Mr. Rolheiser.

Observers said the federal government had largely supported the project so far. It set aside \$500-million over 10 years to help communities along the pipeline route deal with planning and construction impacts.

Last year, *The Globe and Mail* indicated that Conservative MP Jim Prentice (Calgary Centre-North, Alta.), the now-former minister who had stick-handled the file since 2006, met with companies involved and outlined a financial package to provide infrastructure support for the project and some level of risk-sharing.

"In a lot of ways Jim Prentice was too close to this file. There was always the possibility of somewhere along the line him being challenged as being biased. There has been cases before, I mean, he's been out at times championing this project. At the same time he's supposed to be the head referee," said Mr. Doig.

The new minister in charge, John Baird (Ottawa West-Nepean, Ont.), will have to catch up on the file, but will also bring a fresh outlook, he said.

If the NEB decides the project is in the public interest and gives it the go-ahead, it's up to Natural

Resources Minister Christian Paradis (Mégantic-L'Érable, Que.) to apply to Cabinet for final approval.

Even with all the necessary approvals, the companies may still decide the pipeline isn't worth it because of current market conditions or because it can't compete with cheaper alternatives.

Gas prices are extremely low. Global energy adviser Ziff Energy Group estimated in a June report that the 2010 year average gas to oil price ratio so far has been 1:17, whereas it has historically sat between 1:8 and 1:10.

New technologies mean industry is finding easier ways to get at shale gas, trapped within cracks of sedimentary rock. That's opened up new extraction sites in the south that are more accessible.

The Mackenzie Valley pipeline also faces competition from another that is being developed in Alaska.

While the Mackenzie Valley pipeline would only draw from onshore deposits, the historic environmental damage done by the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico has put pressure on companies operating offshore. Canada currently has no deep-sea offshore Arctic drilling happening and it won't until at least 2014. The NEB is undergoing a review of offshore Arctic drilling, which it expects to continue with public meetings in the North through this spring. Canadian regulators are also closely watching the results of American inquiries into the Gulf disaster and say they'll apply the lessons learned to Canada's oil and gas industry.

"It depends upon what the NEB says and the conditions they place upon [the Mackenzie Valley pipeline project], but it would be hard to imagine that the four companies that are involved in it are still going to be involved in it after they've read the decision," said Mr. Doig. Those with a smaller stake may quit, he said.

"We continue to believe that despite the current economic downturn and other conditions that the North American energy and particularly natural gas demand will continue to grow," said Mr. Rolheiser. "Combined with natural declines in existing conventional natural gas production, we believe [that] positions the Mackenzie gas project as a significant new supply source for the longer-term American market."

Mr. Rolheiser could only speak for his own company in explaining that Imperial remains committed to the project, but said he hadn't heard differently from the other companies involved.

But Mr. Doig also noted the project's \$16.2-billion cost hasn't budged for years, and may not reflect today's prices. The companies published that number in March 2007, said Mr. Rolheiser, and there is no published update yet. "We said, to see a figure of \$20-billion wouldn't be out of the realm of possibility," said Mr. Doig last week.

Mr. Carmichael said he thought the proponents' price tag was still roughly in the right range.

Doomed or destined for development in the near future, it's not likely the Mackenzie Valley pipeline will be off the federal government's radar any time soon.

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CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: POLITICAL LEADERSHIP & THE NORTH

Arctic leaders call for bigger investments in communities, job creation

By KRISTEN SHANE

Security and sovereignty in Canada's North should be protected not just through patrol ships and boots on the ground, but through empowering people by investing in infrastructure in communities and job creation, say Arctic leaders.

"The first and highest priority of our northern strategy is the protection of our Arctic sovereignty," Prime Minister Stephen Harper (Calgary Southwest, Alta.) told reporters during his most recent tour of Canada's North, which has become his summertime ritual since he came into office.

Mr. Harper has promoted sovereignty in the North through several defence-related announcements including the purchase of an icebreaker and six to eight new patrol ships.

National Inuit leader Mary Simon said the best way to assert sovereignty in the Arctic is with healthy communities. "Our communities need better infrastructure, more housing, better health care, and better education," she said in an email to *The Hill Times* last week.

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty (Whitby-Oshawa, Ont.) announced \$200-million over two years for social housing support for the North in his 2009 budget.

Just last week, health minister and minister responsible for the North Leona Aglukkaq (Nunavut) announced that the permanent headquarters of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) would be built in Iqaluit, Nunavut. The agency, whose mandate is to deliver federal economic development programs tailored to Canada's North, was created by the Harper government last year.

Having Ms. Aglukkaq, an Inuk born in the North, at the Cabinet table, is another first.

"This is the first time in our history that we have dealt with a fellow Inuk in the Cabinet. So Leona Aglukkaq does stand out for us on that front," said Ms. Simon.

Other Cabinet ministers that have been influential on Canada's northern issues include former Indian Affairs ministers Jim Prentice (Calgary Centre-North, Alta.) and Chuck Strahl (Chilliwack-Fraser Canyon, B.C.).

Mr. Prentice was the federal government's minister in charge of the Mackenzie Valley pipeline project, which is meant to transport natural gas from Northwest Territories to southern markets. It's currently winding its way through the federal regulatory process.

Barrie Robb, vice-president of the Mackenzie Aboriginal Corporation, credits Mr. Strahl with helping to secure \$3-million in federal funding through CanNor for a feasibility study to determine the potential for an all-season road along the Mackenzie Valley in the same corridor as the pipeline.

"That's the first time we've seen the feds do that: put money in for prescreening reports," said Mr. Robb. "Strahl certainly displayed that much leadership, vision and willingness to at least explore what might be possible."

He couldn't speak yet about Mr. Stahl's successor, John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, B.C.), who only started in August.

Generating economic opportunities through ventures such as the Mackenzie Valley pipeline or road is key to prompting job growth, which spurs other social benefits such as increased education, said Brendan Bell, a

former Northwest Territories Cabinet minister and former federal Conservative candidate.

But NDP MP Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, N.W.T.) has noted that the government can be too focused on big capital-intensive wealth-generating projects such as the pipeline, when it really needs to be working on sustainable growth through tourism, and renewable energy, for instance.

"Where they really haven't done the work is by reducing the cost of living for people in the North by investing in clean energy," said Mr. Bevington. "The government of Northwest Territories right now is probably leading Canada in terms of conversion of biomass energy for heating

buildings. And yet the federal government hasn't engaged in that one at all," he said.

The federal government has neglected simple ways of reducing the high cost of living in the North such as through investing in biomass heating from wood pellets, said Mr. Bevington, which he said is about half the cost of fuel oil.

"It's very easy to stand on your soap box and say we need new defence equipment to stand up for sovereignty. It's another thing to work with the governments to change the situation when it comes to the importance of housing and education and a whole range of things that can change peoples' lives and make them more sustainable," he said.

Former Nunavut premier Paul Okalik says northern residents need actual infrastructure they can use, that people in the South take for granted. He decried the Conservative decision to fortify a deep-sea port in Nanisivik, more than 1,100 nautical miles north of Iqaluit, the capital of Nunavut, while Iqaluit has no port.

"We get quite a few sea vessels that offload. But it takes them a week to offload, whereas it could take less than a day down south," he said.

The government has worked to improve broadband internet access in the North, said Mr. Bevington, but it's another

bread-and-butter infrastructure project that could be funded further. The internet is key to facilitating social benefits through telemedicine and tele-education.

Mr. Bell said sometimes people get the false impression that this government is stationing swaths of troops and tanks in the North, which is not at all the case. It is, however, modernizing the Canadian Rangers program, for instance.

"We're not talking about stationing troops and building garrisons here at this point. These rangers are local people in communities who provide search and rescue in communities, making life safer. [People] that are getting the skills and providing the expertise and traditional knowledge that, quite honestly, people need if they're going to be doing business in the North."

Mr. Okalik said he's looking for more than just, "Use it or lose it" rhetoric from the Prime Minister.

"We actually use it. And we don't plan to lose it. He can say all he wants but we will continue to use it, as we need to. But it would be nice to get some support for infrastructure, like ports and facilities, that we can actually use to offset our high costs of living."

The Hill Times



The polar bear barometer



Peter de Groot with students Michelle Viengkone, Georgia Meban-de Groot, Chris Harris, Candace Scott and Kim McClelland.

Combining traditional Inuit hunter knowledge and modern science, biologist Peter de Groot has developed a non-invasive method he hopes will help monitor the impact of climate change on our country's polar bears.

Partnering with the Hunters and Trappers Association of Gjoa Haven, Queen's researchers Dr. Peter Boag and Dr. Roel Vertegaal, and collaborators at the University of Saskatchewan, Cornell University, the Center for Research in Endangered Species in San Diego, and the Centre de Biologie pour la Gestion des Populations in France, Dr. de Groot's research uses non-invasive techniques such as DNA analysis of polar bear hair and fecal samples along with hunters' track assessments to determine the number, sex, age, and size of the bears, and to track their health, movement, and mating patterns to better understand how this species is affected by our changing planet.

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CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: DEFENCE & SECURITY

Harper should fulfill Arctic equipment purchases sooner than later, say critics

By KRISTEN SHANE

Prime Minister Stephen Harper stands upon an ice floe with the chief of the defence staff of the Canadian Forces by his side. Metres away, hooked on to another ice floe, black-clad military divers sit on a Zodiac watching as an Airbus 320 refuelling tanker thunders above, flanked by two CF-18s. A Canadian Coast Guard Ship floats in the background.

To Mr. Harper's team, it's what the military has done every year since 2007 through its Operation Nanook sovereignty exercise: showing the strength of Canadian military muscle in the North.

To some media commentators and opposition politicians, it's "political stagecraft," and a contrived photo-op.

Indeed, opposition critics and experts alike have noted that despite Mr. Harper's promises of military equipment and infrastructure during annual high-profile summer Arctic trips since becoming Prime Minister, his government has little to show for it.

Experts are concerned two of the northern strategy's centerpiece purchases—"the largest and most powerful icebreaker Canada has ever owned" and six to eight patrol ships—do not seem to have been put up for tender yet. An expansion of the Canadian Rangers program and facility upgrades are progressing, albeit slowly, say they.

"The lack of action indicates that the Prime Minister is all hat and no boots when it comes to Arctic sovereignty," said

Michael Byers, a University of British Columbia expert on Arctic issues.

Rob Huebert, associate director of the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary agrees: "We're definitely taking better steps than what [Conservative former prime minister Brian] Mulroney did when he went through all this, and I would say most definitely more than what you saw the [Jean] Chrétien Liberals doing. Is it everything that's being promised? No, not by a long shot," he told *The Hill Times*.

With climate change making Arctic waters more navigable in recent years, several countries are jockeying for control of the Arctic's big natural resources finds and strategic transportation routes through what some have said is a new arms race. With 40 per cent of Canada's landmass in the territories and 162,000 kilometres of Arctic coastline, the Harper government has made exercising Canada's sovereignty in the Far North its first priority of a four-pronged northern strategy.

But of the half-dozen promises Mr. Harper has made during his summer Arctic tours, few are progressing as quickly as many commentators would like.

"I'm glad that Mr. Harper goes north, I'm glad that he shows an interest in the Arctic. But after five years, I'm starting to doubt the veracity of his promises," said Prof. Byers, who also ran for the NDP in Vancouver Centre, B.C., in the last federal election.

Liberal MP Larry Bagnell (Yukon), his party's Arctic issues critic said the government's promises are empty. "You don't promise the northerners to get their vote

you're going to do all these things and then don't deliver," he said.

There are two areas where progress seems to be lagging that Prof. Huebert said concern him the most: the procurement of a new icebreaker and patrol ships.

Mr. Harper announced in July 2007 that the Canadian Forces would be designing and buying six to eight new Arctic and off-shore patrol ships. The government's been less clear in articulating a delivery timeline and costs. Documents on the Department of National Defence's project website indicate it hopes to award the ship-building contract in 2012 and see the first ship arrive in 2015. It suggests the department would consider awarding a \$2.1-billion contract to design and build the ships and give logistics support and another up to \$3.2-billion contract to maintain the ship in operation for up to 25 years.

While the government has listed on the project homepage detailed specifications and computer-made images of the proposed design, it seems it has only asked potential bidders to start forming teams to say they're interested, but not yet tendered the project.

A year after the patrol ship announcement, Mr. Harper said the government would spend \$720-million to build a new polar icebreaker, the Canadian Coast Guard Ship John G. Diefenbaker, named after the former Conservative prime minister, to replace the aging Louis S. St-Laurent icebreaker, which is supposed to be decommissioned in 2017. At the time of the announcement, the government said it expected to tender for a company to do detailed design work by late 2010. But the Coast Guard website now says mid-2011, with construction beginning in 2013 and anticipated delivery in late 2017.

Profs. Huebert and Byers said they were not aware that it had been put to tender either. DND is closer to tendering the patrol ships than the Coast Guard is the icebreaker, said Prof. Huebert.

"The Louis St-Laurent is already 41 years old; she ain't going to last much longer. We're going to need something like the Arctic patrol vessels, if nothing else, just for law and order and reactive capability," he said. "Is there any major detrimental impact right now of more talk and less action? Probably not. But that will change the first time someone deliberately comes in to challenge our sovereignty, or some [ship] grounding does not happen as nicely and as fortunately enough as we have been able to see for the last few years. When a cruise ship ran aground this summer in the Canadian Arctic, an icebreaker was luckily close by to help, he said.

As for the hold-ups, Prof. Huebert said the Arctic patrol vessels are completely new and so there might be some extended talk about how much to spend and what they should look like.

Prof. Byers said the glacial pace could be because the recession has caused the projects to be bumped down the government's priority list, DND procurement incompetence (he cites the auditor general's recent criticisms of its helicopter purchase) or just plain politicking with no hope for a real result.

The government's icebreaker announcement referred to it as "a major national project" that takes time to design and build.

"In three years during the Second World War, we built one of the largest navies," responded Prof. Byers. "If there is sufficient political will and urgency, things happen."

But, said Prof. Huebert, "When you're not in a war, your mind tends to wander."

Mr. Harper takes a political risk every year he zips up his parka for the northern trip, said Prof. Huebert. Whereas past Canadian leaders have stayed away, preferring not to remind Canadians of the little

action they were taking in the North, Mr. Harper risks reminding Mr. Bagnell and other critics of his promises unfulfilled.

"They're doing it because I guess they think they will be seen as being a positive policy changer," said Prof. Huebert of the Conservative government.

"I do see improvements," he stressed.

For instance, while critics have continually noted the lack of search and rescue capabilities in the North, the Harper government's purchase of the C-17 Globemaster aircraft intended to move heavy tanks to Afghanistan, for instance, has had great Arctic spinoff benefits. The Canadian Forces can deploy the C-17, capable of carrying a helicopter inside, faster than other options. The transport aircraft can land on gravel and ice runways, and in bad weather. And it was tested in the North during the Nanook exercise this summer.

The military's Chinook helicopters currently used in Afghanistan could also bolster search and rescue capabilities in the North once Canada's combat role in Afghanistan ends, added Prof. Huebert.

Moreover, Canada has made some progress toward fixing up facilities Mr. Harper promised.

Prof. Huebert said he had heard good progress had been made this year in reclaiming soil that could have been contaminated at an old mine site at Nanisivik, 1,100 nautical miles north of Iqaluit, Nunavut, where the government wants to establish a deep-water port.

DND awarded a design contract for the project to a British Columbia company in November 2009, but it indicated it had pushed back the start of construction from its originally anticipated date in the summer of 2010 to "possibly...in 2011."

The Canadian Forces began the project in August 2007 and expected it to be ready by 2015. Initial estimates set the capital cost at \$100-million and 20-year maintenance and operation costs to be about \$200-million.

Progress on an army training centre in Resolute Bay, Nunavut, announced at the same time is not as well known, but looks to still be in the planning stages. The government has started using stimulus money to expand a scientific research facility there. Prof. Huebert expected the winter warfare training centre to be piggybacked on the other \$11-million project, due to finish in March 2011.

The army training centre would cost an estimated initial \$4-million to create and \$2-million yearly to run. The multipurpose facility is meant to accommodate up to 100 people, including a dozen permanent staff.

The government is also slowly increasing the size of its Canadian Rangers program, said Prof. Huebert. The Canadian Forces announced in 2007 it would expand the territorial contingent of the part-time reservists from 1,500 to 2,000 members. They act as a military presence in remote northern communities, train southern troops in northern-specific skills, and do some search and rescue activities.

"But when it comes right down to it, the Rangers aren't equipped to intercept ocean-going vessels in the Northwest Passage, nor are they trained or equipped to do major search and rescue activities that would result in, say, a jumbo jet crash-landing in Canada's High Arctic," said Prof. Byers.

He added that he's happy to see Foreign Minister Lawrence Cannon (Pontiac, Que.) acting on a northern foreign policy statement he released this summer that highlighted the need to work together with Canada's Arctic neighbours to solve boundary disputes. In turn, it's been reported that Canadian diplomats were talking to American, Danish and Russian diplomats, he said.

"These meetings were not happening until this year," he said.

But Prof. Huebert said he worried that the Canadian government was believing its own propaganda attesting to the low Arctic sovereignty threat. Other countries are re-arming their navies, while Canada isn't pushing its combat capability, he said. That's why it's so important for Mr. Harper to fulfill his promised equipment purchases, sooner rather than later, he said.

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CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change in Canada's North should not be exploited by feds

Prime Minister Stephen Harper has focused the government's attention on Canada's Northern sovereignty in an unprecedented way, but paradoxically is not addressing climate change.



BY LIBERAL SENATOR
GRANT MITCHELL

Climate change in Canada's North should not be exploited by this government as just some opportune excuse to buy new military equipment; it will fundamentally change communities and ecosystems, and it is raising issues of Arctic sovereignty.

To be sure, the Prime Minister has focused the government's attention on Canada's Northern sovereignty in an

unprecedented way. The paradox, however, is that the North has become an issue requiring this attention to sovereignty because of climate change, an issue Harper all but denies and has systematically failed to address in any meaningful way.

The North has proven particularly vulnerable to climate change with temperatures rising even more quickly in northern areas than in much of the rest of the world. This has meant that the ice cap has melted at an unprecedented rate opening up sea passages that themselves are subject to sovereign ownership challenges. It has also meant opening access and the promise of access to land and subsea resources that once were simply out of the realm of sovereignty assertion by other countries because of their inaccessibility.

It has affected the traditional lifestyle and livelihood of aboriginal and Inuit groups. It has reduced the annual lifespan of ice roads, thereby limiting easier access by northern communities to supplies. Melting permafrost will begin to damage and destroy structures and roads. In short, climate change is reducing the ability of the people of the north to assert sovereignty by demonstrating regular use of the land, sea and resources.

While climate change is at the root of the problem, Harper's response to this has been to do nothing about climate change. It is simply beyond belief that the Arctic Foreign Policy Statement delivered by his minister of Foreign Affairs this summer failed to even include the phrase "climate change." It seems increasingly unlikely

that we will have any sort of meaningful commitment to climate change action any time soon either. The government's climate change policy is predicated on mimicking U.S. action and, with the Republicans winning in the U.S. midterms, the government's proposed cap and trade system and its 2020 GHG reduction objectives seem "dead in the water." (We can reasonably ask the question: since it is this government's policy to do on climate change whatever the U.S. government will do, and since the U.S. government will now be driven to do what a Tea Party driven Republican Congress tells it to do; can it be that Canada's climate change policy will actually be determined by the U.S. Tea Party?)

Any of the government's climate change programs have been little more than announcements with very little action taken and no effort to relate their potential impact to reduction targets. In a note of tragic comedy, the website of the government's Northern Strategy features the 'Turning the Corner' plan as one of its key accomplishments and initiatives. On the other hand, the 'Turning the Corner' plan, which would have included a cap and trade system, has in reality been dead for so long that the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy took it out of its review of the government's climate change programs and progress because nothing has been done to implement it. How the government plans to come even remotely close to meeting its 2020 emissions target would be at best an open question if they had made any real effort at all to begin to meet it. As it is, there is no doubt but that they have no real intention of trying at all.

There are two ways in particular to establish our sovereignty in the North. One is to buy equipment for the military and perhaps the coast guard. Clearly, this is the government's preference. They use Arctic sovereignty as one of the justifications for spending \$16-billion on jets when we have a \$56-billion deficit. Harper has announced numerous times a special ice breaker, to be built no sooner than within the decade, several specialized patrol ships which are not yet under construction and a new port worth several billion dollars which has yet to be started. These might be of some use in establishing sovereignty.

But, the stronger argument for sovereignty in cases before international courts is based upon use by the people who live there rather than military activity. Climate change is limiting the ability of people in the North to do so. Canada's sovereign claim to its Arctic regions will be evaluated by the UN in 2013. They will be looking to assess the "use it or lose it" philosophy espoused by Harper himself. A government intent on establishing Canada's Northern sovereignty needs to support our Northern peoples where and how they live. Saving our North cannot be just a military exercise or a question of ice breakers, as appealing as that is to Conservative sensibilities. It requires comprehensive, climate change mitigation and adaptation measures and social and economic supports so that our Northern peoples can use the North broadly in their daily lives.

We need to reframe this debate. If we really want to defend the North (to use the Conservative militaristic terminology), we don't need jets as much as we need to fight climate change and the social and economic issues that plague the North.

Alberta Liberal Sen. Grant Mitchell is chair of the Senate's Natural Resources Committee.

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CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: NATURAL RESOURCES

We need to increase our visible presence using the Coast Guard, and Canadian Forces

We must ensure an adequate surveillance capability. We must be able to closely monitor and have the capability to intervene in any situation developing within our borders.



BY LIBERAL MP
DOMINIC LEBLANC

The Great Canadian North is a land of opportunity, where opportunities present themselves in many faces. Whether it is the great people who inhabit the region, the natural resources which can be found at the bottom of the sea or under the soil, its unique natural habitat or its pristine waterways, there are many reasons inciting people to discov-

er and travel the land and the sea north of the 60th parallel.

Unfortunately, not all the people who wish to go to this region have noble reasons to do so. For example, our natural resources located in the Arctic region are the envy of the world. Although important, the mismanagement of these resources could create an ecological disaster in the Arctic. We need to be able to apply Canadian standards and practices in regards to operations wanting to extract these resources.

Additionally, our internal waterways are becoming navigable for longer periods of time because of global warming. This is already leading to and will

continue to lead to diplomatic conflicts, as more and more foreign countries are interested in the economic advantage of using Canada's waterways to travel between the Pacific and the Atlantic oceans. Because of these debates and negotiations, Canada must assert its sovereignty on our northern Territories.

To do so, we need to work hand-in-hand with the Innu people who inhabit the area and have done so for generations. Their experience, their traditions and their knowledge of the area, of the climate and of the land are invaluable. No plan to increase Canada's presence in the Arctic can go without collaborating with the people who have made the Arctic their home.

We also need to increase our visible presence using the Coast Guard, as well as the Canadian Forces. We must ensure an ade-

quate surveillance capability. We must be able to closely monitor and have the capability to intervene in any situation developing within our borders.

Being visibly present also implies having the means to determine who has the right to enter Canada's internal waterways, and who has to be turned back. It is our people and our environment which will have to deal with any catastrophe taking place inside our borders. It is therefore our responsibility to ensure that any vessel navigating through Canadian waters has the permission to do so and is not a threat to the environment or to our security. We need to be able to coerce any vessel that refuses to obey Canadian orders and Canadian laws into halting its operations.

Life in the Great North can be treacherous. We need to have the capability to help people in dis-

tress in sometimes hard to reach locations. We need ships which can navigate through thick ice and clear a path for smaller vessels which might get stuck. We need proper Search and Rescue aircraft for the most remote areas of our country.

I am very thankful for the men and women who actively participate in asserting Canada's sovereignty in this great land of ours. It is a wonderful area, inhabited by wonderful people.

We must ensure that we are able to protect our northern sovereignty Territories and that Canada will forever be able to defend our people, our fragile northern ecosystem, and our northern borders.

Liberal MP Dominic LeBlanc, who represents Beauséjour, N.B., is his party's national defence critic.
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The Hill Times

CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: CLIMATE CHANGE & MILITARY

New reality in Arctic: need to rethink approach

We are concerned about the essentially military approach being pursued by the Conservatives, which is quite likely to help increase tension in the Arctic.



BY BLOC MP
PIERRE PAQUETTE

Because the Bloc Québécois recognizes how important the North and the Arctic are, it is worried about the military approach and the mid- and long-term directions the Conservative government has adopted since coming to power in 2006.

Accelerating climate change and melting polar ice caps have led circumpolar countries to cast covetous glances at the Arctic. This development is understandable. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, the Arctic appears to harbour one-quarter of the planet's undiscovered energy resources. Thus there is a risk that the race to control this abundant wealth may lead to disputes, particularly since circumpolar countries can hardly ignore the advantages of a strategic Northwest Passage. In this geographical and political context, the development of this part of the world must take place in an orderly manner. It must also respect the following principles:

- firstly, climate change, which has a significant impact on the Arctic, must be combated, and the extremely fragile Arctic

ecosystems must be adequately protected;

- secondly, any border dispute must be resolved peacefully and diplomatically, with respect for international law and the principles of multilateralism;

- thirdly, resource development in the north must be closely monitored and supervised, so that Arctic resources are not plundered;

- lastly, any action in the Arctic must take into account the populations, particularly the Inuit, who live there.

In his most recent statement on foreign policy in the Arctic, Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon acknowledged that climate change has a disproportionate impact on the Arctic. If sincere, this acknowledgement would be a great leap forward for the present government, whose leader, Stephen Harper, was still declaring not long ago that the *Kyoto Protocol* was a socialist plot!

The Bloc Québécois has long pointed out that taking action to protect the Arctic ecosystem is urgent, particularly because increased marine traffic, made possible by the melting ice cap, will eventually have an impact on the fragile Arctic ecosystem.

In light of the minister's most recent statements, can we trust the Conservatives to take the necessary steps to deal with climate change and its impact on

the aboriginal populations who, regrettably, have to live with the consequences? If the government really wants to help protect the Arctic ecosystem, it must address the causes of climate change, by presenting a credible plan for reducing greenhouse gases with non-negotiable targets based on 1990 as a reference year. This necessary remedial work is important, because Canada is still very far from respecting international standards.

The Conservatives' military approach

From a political standpoint, the Bloc Québécois has consistently favoured a fluid approach grounded in diplomacy and multilateralism rather than a muscled stance. We are concerned about the essentially military approach being pursued by the Conservatives, which is quite likely to help increase tension in the Arctic.

Instead, the Canadian government should invest its energy in promoting fluid, constructive relationships with other circumpolar countries. We therefore encourage Canada to take steps in the context of international law to ensure a sound basis for its sovereignty. In this regard, the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf Beyond 200 Nautical Miles, an agency established under the United Nations Convention on the



Photograph by Jake Wright, The Hill Times

Foreign Minister Lawrence Cannon has shown a new openness to multilateralism. His most recent statement promotes cooperation, diplomacy and respect for international law, all values that we support. That said, while taking a reassuring stance on the risk of military confrontation in the Arctic, Canada intends to continue to take a military approach, which may actually increase tension.

Law of the Sea, is unquestionably the forum to which Canada must contribute.

Lately, Minister Cannon has shown a new openness to multilateralism. His most recent statement promotes co-operation, diplomacy and respect for international law, all values that we support. That said, we point out that, while taking a reassuring stance on the risk of military confrontation in the Arctic, Canada intends to continue to take a military approach, which may actually increase tension.

As a last point we note that, in the view of the Inuit Circumpolar Council, it is of the utmost importance to include the Inuit as active partners in national and international deliberations on the Arctic. In this regard, the Bloc Québécois approves of the "permanent participant" status granted to the five aboriginal organizations that sit on the Arctic Council. As permanent participants, these aboriginal organizations directly influence the Arctic Council's work and the resulting programs. If this consultative approach with aboriginal organizations has been adopted by the Arctic Council, it should followed by national governments as well. The Bloc Québécois therefore

calls on Canada to ratify the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and recommends that the non-signatory circumpolar countries (the United States and Russia) follow suit.

At the same time, Canada must develop its own mechanisms for consulting the people of the Arctic, while encouraging Arctic Council member countries to do the same. An example for Canada and other circumpolar countries in this regard is what was done in Quebec when *La Paix des Braves* was signed.

Similarly, as has been recommended in the reports by the Standing Committees on Defence and Aboriginal Affairs, the federal government must provide access to Arctic socio-economic support programs, not only to Canada's three territories, but also to Nunavik. Canada must also transfer its share of the corresponding budgets to Quebec, so that Quebec can implement its northern Quebec development strategy in close cooperation with the Inuit residents of Nunavik.

Bloc Québécois MP Pierre Paquette, who represents Joliette, Que., is his party's House leader.
The Hill Times

CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: NATURAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

AIP to transfer control to N.W.T. over lands, resources great, but needs aboriginal governments in northern political future



Photograph by Cynthia Münster, The Hill Times

Natural resources in the North: Perhaps a starting point can be the 2007 agreement worked out between the N.W.T. government and four aboriginal governments. Bringing the sides together would be an excellent place for the new INAC Minister John Duncan, pictured, to show some leadership on this file.

The Inuvialuit, Gwich'in, Sahtu Dene, Akaitcho First Nations, Tlicho, Dehcho First Nations, and the Métis all have constitutionally protected rights which must be respected in any devolution agreement.



BY NDP MP
DENNIS BEVINGTON

When one takes an objective view of natural resource development in the Northwest Territories, the southern media have the story wrong. The important development is not the wrangling over secrecy between the Harper government and the Joint Review Panel on a natural gas pipeline that is years away, nor is it the discovery of oil off the west coast of Greenland. Rather that honour should belong to the recently negotiated agreement-in-principle on the transfer of administration and control over lands and resources.

The AIP became public on Oct. 15, 2010. It sets out process for transferring the Government of Canada's legislative powers and responsibilities respecting public lands, water, and resources administered by the Northern Affairs Program of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to the Northwest Territories. The AIP also sets out the process for transferring the legislative powers and responsibilities respecting the regulation of oil and gas operations in the N.W.T. currently administered by the National Energy Board under the Canada Oil and Gas Operations Act.

While this AIP has flaws and is only an AIP, it is the closest the people of the Northwest Territories, in many years of trying, have come to being able to control the pace and direction for development on their lands. Devolution of the control of lands, water, and resources and a bigger share of the rewards has been the territorial dream for decades. This transfer is a logical next step in the de-colonization of the North.

A serious problem with this AIP lies with the importance of aboriginal governments in the northern political future. A lack of active participation by the aboriginal governments in the N.W.T. has created some political problems with an agreement that most want to see in place. The Inuvialuit, Gwich'in, Sahtu Dene, Akaitcho First Nations, Tlicho, Dehcho First Nations, and the Métis all have constitutionally protected rights which must be respected in any devolution agreement.

Additionally, these governments have a direct, treaty-backed relationship with the federal government which cannot be ignored.

"The government of Canada, in their own wisdom, has decided that it's not important to listen to the aboriginal people.... They have no fiduciary responsibility to protect them," Richard Nerysoo, president of the Gwich'in Tribal Council told CBC North.

"There is no constitutional basis for any respect for the land claims and treaties that exist," Ethel Blondin-Andrew, chair of the Sahtu Secretariat Inc told CBC North.

"We're not happy about the process because it's a bilateral process — they'll do it with or without us," Dehcho Grand Chief Sam Gargan, whose First Nation is still negotiating a self-government, land and resources claim with the federal and territorial governments, in the same news report said, "We are discussing province-like powers too. We want to be able to con-

trol development of our own resources, on our own land."

N.W.T. Premier Floyd Roland has begun a process of trying to get the aboriginal governments on side. However, one might argue that this is really the role of the minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development as it is Canada and not the N.W.T. which has the direct fiduciary responsibility for aboriginal people. Treaties 8 and 11 were signed between Canada and the aboriginal peoples of the Northwest Territories.

The Harper government has really given up on this responsibility, and has left it up to the N.W.T. to settle its own deal. This abrogation of responsibility shows clearly this Conservative government's lack of ability to work effectively with aboriginal governments.

Other than the lack of participation by the aboriginal peoples in drafting the agreement, the AIP is not a bad deal. The N.W.T. would gain administration and control, but not ownership, of all internal waters and surface and subsurface lands under the federal crown. This would provide the N.W.T. with the ability to control the pace and location of all mineral and oil and gas development. It would allow the N.W.T. to set its own environmental regulations and create its own management system.

The AIP also keeps the door open to negotiating the N.W.T. taking on a measure of administration and control of offshore resources such as oil and natural gas development in the Beaufort Sea. Quite simply, this agreement would allow the N.W.T. to benefit from its immense storehouse of resources.

The potential value of such a devolution of authority is too great to pass up. It would be in the best interests of all the people of the N.W.T. if a way can be found for the Aboriginal governments in the territory to become part of this agreement.

Perhaps a starting point can be the 2007 agreement worked out between the N.W.T. government and four aboriginal governments. Bringing the sides together would be an excellent place for the new INAC Minister John Duncan to show some leadership on this file.

There are many steps along the road to the Northwest Territories taking its equal place in Confederation. This draft AIP is one of the main components. When it comes to independent fiscal capacity for the N.W.T., my Bill C-530 is another. My bill, just through its first hour of debate in the House of Commons, would allow the N.W.T. to borrow the money it needs to build the infrastructure necessary for better resource development. Choices on infrastructure can mean that resource development works for our real future, not just for our exploitation.

It is time the N.W.T. was allowed to stand on its own. Northerners are no longer willing to remain under the control of Ottawa. We want our government to have the same ability to make decisions as other governments have across the country. For a devolution deal to work as it should, the ability of the N.W.T. government and the aboriginal governments to agree remains the main hurdle to overcome.

NDP MP Dennis Bevington, who represents the Western Arctic, N.W.T., is his party's critic for northern development and sovereignty.

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The key to global climate change may lie deep within Arctic ice. Now, the University of Manitoba has been recognized with one of the country's most prestigious awards – the Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC) in Geomicrobiology and Climate Change – to help uncover these secrets.

Dr. Søren Rysgaard, a distinguished geomicrobiologist from Greenland will join the 100-plus team from the University of Manitoba's Centre for Earth Observation Science in the Clayton H. Riddell Faculty of Environment, Earth, and Resources. This world-renowned team is the first to explore the Arctic on a micro scale.

With the CERC award and support from other partners totalling \$35 million in funding, the team's focus on the Arctic's role in global climate change cement's the University of Manitoba's position as a leader in environmental and climate change research.

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CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: NORTHERN VISION



Photograph by Corporal Jax Kennedy, Canadian Forces Combat Camera

Northern exposure: PM Stephen Harper, pictured in Resolute Bay, Nunavut, last August, taking part in a dive exercise conducted by the Fleet Diving Unit Atlantic during Operation NANOOK 10. Sen. Pamela Wallin says the PM has toured Canada's North each summer he's been in office, raising the region's profile, doing his bit to exercise Canada's sovereignty, and taking actions to enhance the region's security.

Harper plans to make 'northern vision' a reality

Prime Minister has made the Canadian North his personal priority.

BY CONSERVATIVE
SEN. PAMELA WALLIN

One can't talk about the North's future without recalling prime minister John Diefenbaker's vision of "a Canada of the North." It helped rocket the Prairie populist to the greatest Parliamentary triumph in Canadian history. Today, technology, shrinking distances, and climate change are creating new challenges and possibilities in the Arctic, and Stephen Harper will, he says, be making the "northern vision" a reality.

Canada already holds a big piece of real estate there. And we are asserting a claim to even more through a UN process—the right to

a further 1.7 million square kilometres of continental shelf, almost the size of the three prairie provinces.

The four other Arctic coastal states—Denmark, Norway, Russia, and the United States—are the only other ones with established and recognized sovereignty. But everyone wants in on the Arctic action, and so we're now seeing players like China claiming that because they have one-fifth of the world's population, they deserve one-fifth of the Arctic's resources—a claim dismissed by Canada's foreign minister at our recent Senate committee hearing.

And speaking of claims, as the lawyers advise us—we don't need to keep restating our ownership of something we own. We own our Arctic.

The question is, how do we effectively exercise our sovereignty? With the permanent sea ice in retreat, there is growing interest

in exploiting the potential bonanza of natural resources. And easier access is bringing more tourists to the once-remote region. All of this means more air and marine traffic, which is a concern since most of the area is not charted to modern standards. We all remember the grounding last August of the cruise ship *Clipper Adventurer*.

One way to exercise sovereignty is to make sure Canada has the right rules and regulations to control increased activity, and protect the environment. Adequate charts will ensure safer shipping. And of course we must be able to find and rescue people who get into trouble.

We can also exercise our sovereignty by ensuring the Arctic's security, protecting it from aggressive foreign nations, terrorists, drug and people smugglers, and the like. While some dismiss the significance of Russian bombers resuming Arctic fly-bys in our

far North, there is no question that these flights serve a Russian military purpose—to test whether and how we respond to potential airspace challenges.

The government is taking action on many fronts. A contract for new fixed wing search and rescue aircraft is in the offing. A new Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker, *The John G. Diefenbaker*, is slated for 2017. Six to eight Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships will enter service in 2015. A military deep water berth and refuelling station is being built at Nanisivik. There will be a Canadian Forces training base at Resolute. The Canadian Rangers, part of the army reserve, are being enlarged, and better trained and equipped. And in 2014-15, the new "RADARSAT Constellation" of three state-of-the-art satellites will be launched, to provide accurate, highly detailed radar imaging for the operational needs of many government departments and agencies.

There are a few outstanding disputes to be resolved—which are a priority for Canada. One is a disagreement with the United States over where our border lies in the Beaufort Sea, north of the Yukon-Alaska boundary. Both countries claim the same 21,000 square kilometre wedge of sea floor—in a region rich in oil and gas. Another is with Denmark. We both say we own tiny Hans

Island, between Ellesmere Island and Greenland, where there may also be resource riches.

The best-known dispute is over the Northwest Passage. Canada contends that its waters are internal to this country. No one really disputes this, but the United States believes the Passage should be treated as an international strait where all nations have the right to pass. When all is said and done, a senior executive with the world's largest shipping company told the committee that the Northwest Passage likely won't be usable before 2050, and even then will be hazardous and uneconomical compared to southern routes.

While diplomats continue to negotiate these legal disputes, the Arctic remains an important part of our Canadian identity—from sea to sea to sea. Importantly, the Prime Minister has made the Canadian North his personal priority. He has toured there each summer he's been in office, raising the region's profile, doing his bit to exercise our sovereignty, and taking actions to enhance the region's security. The "northern vision" is finally coming into focus.

Saskatchewan Conservative Senator Pamela Wallin is chair of the Senate National Security and Defence Committee.

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CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: LAST GREAT CANADIAN HIGHWAY

North needs all-weather road through Mackenzie Valley to Tuktoyaktuk on Arctic coast



BY N.W.T. MINISTER
MICHAEL MCLEOD

YELLOWKNIFE, N.W.T.—The history of Canada could be written as a tale of epic adventure, and the people of the Northwest Territories are ready to craft its newest chapters. We believe our part of this rich story can contribute to the solution of many of the challenges facing Canada today.

From the exercise of Canada's sovereignty over its Arctic regions to the creation of extraordinary opportunities for job creation and economic growth, Canada's Northwest Territories is poised to accomplish great things to help support a sustainable Canadian economy.

However, without appropriate policy action and further national investments in strategic areas of northern infrastructure, opportunities to develop these chapters of our collective story may be lost. If

we are to realize the potential of the Northwest Territories to greatly benefit all Canadians, strategic investments must be made.

A Necessary Strategic Investment

One such example of a necessary strategic investment is the long-proposed building of an all-weather road through the Mackenzie Valley to Tuktoyaktuk on the Arctic coast. This road will demonstrate Canada's commitment to the exercise of its Arctic sovereignty by providing year-round access for the movement of people and goods to the Arctic coast.

The construction of this highway will also provide access to vast storehouses of renewable and non-renewable resources—oil and gas, minerals, metals, rare earths, as well as enormous untapped potential for hydroelectric power development.

As important, it will strengthen connections among communities, reduce living costs, and make northern businesses more competitive.

A Vulnerable Winter Road System

The benefits to all Canadians of an all-weather highway down the Mackenzie Valley have been recognized for more than 50 years, since prime minister John Diefenbaker first proposed his "Roads to Resources" program. More than half a century of planning and preparation has followed.

The N.W.T.'s winter and ice road systems rely on continuous cold temperatures throughout the winter. They are therefore vulnerable to the effects of climate warming in the region, which are already significant.

In response, in partnership with the Government of Canada, the GNWT has constructed a number of bridges over the past decade along the all-weather highway alignment. These bridges have helped to preserve the winter road season despite the region's warming. Continued warming will pose additional challenges.

When constructed, an all-weather road down the Mackenzie Valley to Tuktoyaktuk will play a key role in the N.W.T.'s

adaptation to dramatic changes in northern climate.

Work Already Underway

A major milestone to help bring the Highway to reality occurred with the funding agreement between the GNWT and the federal government to complete Project Description Reports (PDRs) for each part of the project.

Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) have been signed with community and Aboriginal partners along the proposed alignment to complete the work required to move to the regulatory phase. They are working with us as full partners, taking a lead role on the PDR work.

This past summer, again with the assistance of the Government of Canada, an all-weather road was constructed from Tuktoyaktuk to a community gravel source. These 22 kilometres will eventually form the northernmost portion of the Mackenzie Valley to Tuktoyaktuk Highway project.

A Lot At Stake

A national railway uniting Canada from coast to coast once seemed nothing more than a dream. It took political leaders with the courage to move forward in the face of great challenges, but they made that dream a reality, setting the stage for Canada's success in the decades that followed.

The Mackenzie Valley Highway to Tuktoyaktuk is a vital infrastructure project for a sustainable northern and Canadian economy. It has the unanimous support of mem-

bers of the 16th NWT Legislative Assembly. Its strategic value has been detailed repeatedly, including in the planning document *Connecting Canada: Coast to Coast*, available at <http://bit.ly/MackenzieValleyHighway>.

There is a lot at stake, not only for the N.W.T. but for Canada as a whole. A recently completed economic analysis estimates that the construction of the Mackenzie Valley Highway to Tuktoyaktuk would generate 14,000 jobs during construction and 90 permanent jobs. The \$15.7-million in additional disposable income would be produced annually, and tourism, an important part of the Northwest Territories economy, would increase 20 per cent. The Highway will produce significant added economic activity from the energy and mining sectors by making exploration and development more cost-effective and efficient.

Like the dream of a national railway, the completion of the Mackenzie Valley Highway to Tuktoyaktuk will serve many generations of Canadians, offering benefits to both the people of the North and to all Canadians. The Northwest Territories is ready to move forward with our community, Aboriginal, and federal partners to make this dream a reality.

Michael McLeod is minister of Transportation and minister Responsible for Infrastructure Government of the Northwest Territories.

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The Hill Times*

CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: ARCTIC SOVEREIGNTY

It's time for a Canada-Russia Arctic partnership

Should Canada formally join forces with Russia to pursue our mutual national interests? In my view that makes a lot of sense.



BY LIBERAL SEN.
ROMEO DALLAIRE

Should Canada formally join forces with Russia to pursue our mutual national interests? In my view that makes a lot of sense.

After all, Canada and Russia have a lot in common and Russia could bring much value added. We share a similar geography in the northern parts of our countries. Russia extends from 30 to 170 degrees longitude East which represents about 40 per cent of the Arctic. Prior to the sale of Alaska to the United States we used to share a land border with Russia. We could continue to share Arctic science, technologies and best practices; we already do so to a large extent. Russia still has the largest icebreaker fleet in the world and could contribute both construction and operational experience. The Coast Guard officials have said in the past, "If there is more ice, we need more icebreakers. If there is less ice we need more icebreakers!" The latter is caused by more ice flows and multi-year ice floating around and causing impediments to maritime traffic.

We both have claims to internal waters through the use of the strait base line method: Russia

with its "Northeast Passage" and Canada its Northwest Passage. Supporting each other's position might prove useful if challenges to our internal waters arise because of global warming. The Russians who have been managing the Northeast Passage for a number of years should be able to advise us with the management of our own passage. Russia and Canada have agreed at the Ilulissat, Greenland, meeting in May 2008 to abide by United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) for the delineation of the continental shelves. The Russians have offered their support to do so, their media-focused planting of a Russian flag at the North Pole aside.

The attention of the world has recently shifted to the Arctic where there are abundant natural resources that will be increasingly harvested in the future. This will present opportunities for cooperation between us. For example, there is a new interesting link between the Port of Churchill and Murmansk in Russia. This new route could lead to further economic exchanges. Mutual economic interests tend to improve relations between countries and reduce the likelihood of conflict.

We also share aboriginal peoples who bring a wealth of Arctic experience and knowledge. These long-term relationships help bridge gaps. Their participation in the Arctic Council maintains

those important relationships. Arctic aboriginal peoples tend to take the longer view of matters which is good for Canada's future.

We also face similar challenges. Global warming is affecting the Arctic at a faster pace than in southern locations. Our countries could help one another deal with the impact. We could cooperate to bring pressures to reduce human activities causing global warming. We could also share best practices to deal with the impact of global warming on infrastructure built on melting permafrost and on animal species that see their traditional environment literally disappear.

We may ultimately cooperate to deal with Chinese aspirations in the Arctic. Recently it was reported that China wanted to claim 20 per cent of the natural resources of the world based on population size. China has declared itself an Arctic nation despite the fact that its geography does not support such a claim. It has requested observer status on the Arctic Council. It has an extensive Arctic research capability. We know that China has been operating research vessels in the Canadian Arctic. Some will remember the unexpected arrival of the Xue Long in Tuktoyaktuk in 1999, one of the largest non-nuclear icebreakers in the world. It plans to build more icebreakers and it continues to modernise its armed forces. It is

already a world power of significance. One has to wonder about its aspirations in the Arctic.

Since the risk of state-to-state conflict has receded following the fall to the Warsaw Pact, the concept of human security has gained in importance. "Human security" encompasses all threats: military, illegal activity such as drug smuggling and human trafficking, and pollution. Pollution is a serious threat to the fragile ecosystem of the Arctic and more so with the warming of the globe which is opening up the Arctic as a travel route between markets and for natural resources harvesting. The U.S. Geological Survey has estimated that approximately 25 per cent of the undiscovered natural gas and oil is in the Arctic.

Sovereignty is not so much a problem in the Arctic as human security is. At present this requires more of a constabulary enforcement which is something an expanded, re-equipped and well-funded (including salaries) Canadian Rangers could easily perform on land as well as on the waters. They are there, they know the land and waters, they have vested interests in the stewardship of the Arctic and their loyalty to our nation is unquestionable! The fact that they are reservists negates the need to deploy regular armed forces and reduces potential tension.

Russia and Canada are both members of the Arctic Council which would give us an excellent

venue to pursue mutual interests. We may even want to propose an Arctic nuclear free zone as it would represent important savings for the Russian people and help greatly to reduce tensions in the Arctic."

It may be time therefore to develop a formal Arctic relationship with Russia. A relationship with a NATO and NORAD country may contribute to easing tension between Russia and NATO and provide another bridge for consultation and confidence building measures. It would help avoid a return to some of the current Cold War ideology or doctrine creeping back.

Such a relationship would support all of the new Canada's Northern Strategy four priorities: *Exercising of sovereignty*; by mutual respect and support of internal waters claims and reducing tension through partnership; *Promoting Social and Economic Development*: Arctic Council and aboriginal links and commercial links and exchange of science and technology; *Protecting our environmental heritage*: working jointly to reduce global warming and cooperating on mitigating measures and exchanging science; *Improving and Developing Northern Governance*: through the Arctic Council and aboriginal links and exchange of best practices.

Liberal Senator Romeo Dallaire is the vice-chair of the Senate National Security and Defence Committee

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CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: NORTHERN STRATEGY



Photo courtesy: Sgt. Marco Comisso, Army News

On guard for thee: Sgt. Jason Hanson, left, and Pte Peter Kalabic, both from the 48th Highlanders of Canada march during a sovereignty patrol in Resolute Bay, Nunavut, during Operation Nanook 10 last August.

Exercising our sovereignty in North must be a priority

To meet the challenges and opportunities of a changing North, the government has established a comprehensive strategy in four priority areas exercising Arctic sovereignty, protecting environmental heritage, promoting social and economic development, and improving and devolving northern governance.



BY HEALTH MINISTER
LEONA AGLUKKAQ

As the Member of Parliament for Nunavut, regional minister responsible for the North, and someone who was born and raised in Canada's largest region, I am honoured to be part of a government that understands and appreciates the importance of Canada's North.

Canada's North is a fundamental part of Canada—it is part of our heritage, our future, and our identity as a country. The government has a vision for a new North and is taking action to ensure this vision comes to life, for the benefit of all Canadians. To meet the challenges and oppor-

tunities of a changing North, the government has established a comprehensive "Northern Strategy" and is taking concrete action in four priority areas. These priority areas include exercising our Arctic sovereignty, protecting our environmental heritage, promoting social and economic development, and improving and devolving northern governance.

Since the focus of this "Canada's North" policy briefing seems to be sovereignty and security as well as natural resource exploration, I will highlight those two northern strategy priorities.

There is no question that exercising our sovereignty in the North must be a priority. With 40 per cent of our landmass in the territories, 162,000 kilometres of Arctic coastline and 25 per cent of the global Arctic, Canada is undeniably an Arctic nation. The government is firmly exercising our sovereignty over our Arctic

lands and waters—sovereignty that is long-standing, well-established and based on historic title, international law and the presence of Inuit and other aboriginal peoples for thousands of years.

We are strengthening our northern presence in many ways such as the procurement of a new Polar Icebreaker—*The CCGS John G. Diefenbaker*, new Arctic/offshore patrol ships, the establishment of a Canadian Forces Army training centre in Resolute Bay, and the expansion and modernization of the Canadian Rangers, among other things. In August 2007, the government of Canada announced an expansion of the Canadian Ranger program from approximately 1,500 to 2,000 members across the North, enabling the addition of new patrols and the strengthening of existing ones. It must be recognized that exercising our arctic sovereignty cannot be accomplished without incorporating Northerners.

The approach must include not only the federal government, but the territorial government, as well as local leaders. By working together we develop the capability to respond rapidly, exercise our sovereignty, all the while building positive and lasting partnerships.

There is much to protect across the vast northern territories that I'm honoured to represent, not the least of which is our rich natural resources. From the development of world-class diamond and iron ore mines to massive oil and gas reserves, the enormous economic potential of the North has yet to be fully realized. Most northern communities, especially those in Nunavut, have few economic development options other than responsible development of their natural resources. The government is taking action to encourage future exploration and development by improving northern regulatory systems and investing in critical infrastructure to attract investors and developers to the North.

At the same time, the government wants to ensure that development happens in a sustainable way and that Northerners benefit directly from economic growth. In Nunavut, the Inuit land claim agreement guarantees Inuit representation on management boards which review and recommend all aspects of mining proposals, including impacts on environment and water.

Furthermore, the land claim agreement guarantees a stream of resource revenue and equity

participation opportunities in mining ventures.

The government launched a new regional economic development agency for the North which will seek to provide the foundation for a prosperous economic future for those who live, work and support their families in the North. The government is also working with northerners to increase access to skills training and education in the mining sector. This past week, I was pleased to announce on behalf of the minister for Human Resources and Skills Development, significant funding to the Kivalliq Mine Training Society through the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership. This project will provide up to 300 Inuit with the training and workplace experience required to secure a wide range of long-term sustainable jobs.

Our government has a strong, clear vision for the North. A vision that will ensure Canada's Arctic continues to grow in a safe, sustainable and prosperous way. Whether it's in the areas of sovereignty and security or economic development, together with its partners, the government is helping to create a vibrant North. One that we can all proudly say is "Our True North, Strong and Free."

Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq, who represents Nunavut federally, is also the regional minister for the North.

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CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: INUIT

Getting on the right track sea ice, Inuit trails and importance of Arctic sovereignty

The historic depth of Canadian Inuit occupancy of the Arctic Archipelago and their systematic land and sea ice use of the Northwest Passage should be considered in Canada's positions in debates and policies regarding sovereignty, economic development and environmental impact.

By CLAUDIO APORTA

OTTAWA—The political and economic significance of the Arctic is rapidly increasing with potential implications for Canadian sovereignty. The potential opening of the Canadian Archipelago and the Northwest Passage for regular shipping has prompted interest from external actors regarding energy, mining and shipping.

While most international leaders prefer to approach Arctic issues from the standpoint of national sovereignty, economic issues or threats to biodiversity, changes to sea ice caused by climate change also pose

a significant challenge to Inuit traditional practices, including their well-established network of trails and access to key marine resources.

Inuit have always made comprehensive use of the Arctic environment, particularly evident in trail use of Arctic land and sea. My research on Inuit wayfinding, and land and sea ice use, mapped a vast network of well-established trails connecting most Inuit settlements and significant places across the Canadian Arctic. The project found Inuit trails have been, and still are, significant channels of communication and exchange across the vast entirety of the North American Arctic.

Inuit trails are not permanent features of the Arctic landscape. They disappear as sled tracks are covered by snow, or disappear entirely when the snow and ice melt each spring. Nevertheless, the spatial itineraries remain in people's memories and come to life again when individuals make the next trip.

By mapping Inuit trails with GIS and GPS, it was found that complex and intricate knowledge of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago has been precisely and accurately transmitted by the Inuit for generations. The continuity of these trails is due entirely to the oral transmission of location, place names and other environmental phenomena.

Rarely considered by westerners, sea ice exhibits regular topography. The Inuit tell us that in some locations the same cracks, ridges and leads of the sea ice are the same year after year. The Inuit have given these features names, similar to the way non-Inuit would name a lake or mountain. Aguiptiniq, an ice ridge located near the community of Igloodik has been known for at least 200 years. Its name, passed down through many generations, is only one example of the historic land use Inuit have exhibited throughout the Arctic seas.

The Inuit Sea Ice Use and Occupancy Project (ISIUOP), that I lead, has confirmed the dynamics of sea ice trails in particular have been impacted, not only by climate change, but also through socio-cultural factors. Risks associated with sea ice travel and hunting are caused not only by shorter



The Inuit: Claudio Aporta, pictured in the Arctic.

sea ice seasons, but by the use of different modes of transportation (i.e. snowmobiles) and adapting Western socio-cultural lifestyles. Due to the new realities of living in permanent settlements, pursuing formal education and having jobs, the Inuit have less time to spend on the ice and land.

While the Canadian Arctic Archipelago has been perceived by non-Inuit as a contested geographic feature and water passage, this marine region and its shores is home for the Inuit. The sea ice is a place where their history unfolded. Trails have been recreated on the sea ice for generations, and many sea ice features have been named. After all,

in most of the Arctic the sea ice constitutes an extension of the land for much of the year.

The historic depth of Canadian Inuit occupancy of the Arctic Archipelago and their systematic land and sea ice use of the Northwest Passage should be considered in Canada's positions in debates and policies regarding sovereignty, economic development and environmental impact.

Claudio Aporta is an associate professor of sociology and anthropology and faculty member of the Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre at Carleton University.

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CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: ARCTIC SDI

Time to create cyber cooperation in Canadian Arctic

Effective management of the Arctic region requires combined information from all circumpolar nations in a form which can be easily used. An Arctic SDI would meet this requirement.

By D.R.F. TAYLOR

Whilst the Arctic is a key policy priority for Canada, the tendency for government and media to focus on competition between Arctic nations for sovereign control of the region obscures a critical need. Although the government has begun developing infrastructure such as deep water ports and physical facilities as part of its strategy for the North, there is a critical need for international cooperation on managing a wide variety of social, economic, and environmental information on the Arctic.

Cartography, the art and science of maps and mapping, has always been important in the Arctic. In the digital era, it is taking on new forms and functions as location or place becomes increasingly important in the management and use of all kinds of information, not just what's shown on a traditional map. Almost all computer databases, regardless of the type of

information they contain, can be accessed using location.

Canada, the birthplace of geographic information systems, is among the world's leaders in geographic information management. The Canadian government, in creating the GeoConnections program helps decision-makers use online location-based information such as maps and satellite images to tackle some of Canada's most pressing challenges. The program links partners' datasets to increase their utility by making them "interoperable."

A Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) is an online framework for the collection, organization and use of location-based digital information. An Arctic SDI, in which Canadians are playing an important role, is currently under construction.

This new cyberinfrastructure is just as important for the Arctic as other forms of infrastructure. There are myriad players involved in the development of the Canadian Arctic, including the private sector, almost all federal ministries, territorial and provincial govern-

ments, a variety of non-government organizations and, perhaps most importantly, the Inuit people who live there. Each player is creating a wealth of new information but this lacks a coordinated framework. This is where the planned Arctic SDI will be of great utility.

The creation of the Arctic SDI faces many challenges. The technologies to create such an integrating structure are in place, but major political, cultural, and administrative barriers still have to be overcome. It is relatively easy to technically link computer databases, but overcoming the human challenges of sharing information is much more difficult. For example, many federal government agencies live in their own "mandate silos." A strong mandate to co-ordinate data across agencies is not apparent. Physical infrastructures are both visible and tangible and provide photo opportunities for political leaders whereas cyberinfrastructures are invisible. Yet these are the key infrastructures of the 21st century, just as railways, roads and airports were critical in the 19th and 20th centuries.

It is vital that an information infrastructure for the Arctic be created to which all players can contribute to facilitate a more coordinated approach. In 2007, the Canadian federal government's Circumpolar Map illustrated that the Arctic is a shared environment. The circular form of the map illus-

trated dramatically the closeness of circumpolar nations. Were environmental disasters to occur, these would affect all polar nations, not just one, inhibiting any nation's ability to independently deal with the situation. Effective management of the Arctic region requires combined information from all circumpolar nations in a form which can be easily used. An Arctic SDI would meet this requirement.

The idea of an Arctic SDI involving all circumpolar nations was introduced at the International Polar Year GeoNorth 2007 conference. The Yellowknife Declaration called for its establishment. By 2010, all nations of the Arctic Council, including Canada, signed an agreement to participate. In October 2010, the National Mapping Agencies of the circumpolar nations unanimously agreed to establish an Arctic SDI and the implementation process has begun.

Canadians played an important role in initiating the concept of an Arctic SDI and it is important that the Government of Canada take a leadership role and provide the resources required to make an Arctic SDI a reality. This is a win-win proposition because it meets national priority needs while contributing to our international responsibilities.

There is, however, a need to rethink and redefine the concept of an SDI. The traditional knowledge of Inuit and other circumpo-

lar peoples should be incorporated. Existing approaches do not yet integrate this very well; nor do other forms of volunteered geographical information.

Research at the Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre at Carleton University to present Inuit geospatial knowledge in new forms is exploring ways in which this can be done (<http://gcr.ccarleton.ca>). This includes a software input program called Nunaliit, which means "community" in Inuktitut. (<http://nunaliit.org>) It allows easy entry of information in a variety of formats. The centre is also home to an interactive sound atlas of Inuit place names created by the community (<http://atlas.kitkitmeo-theritage.ca>). Inuit knowledge of place involves stories and narratives which are best captured in sound and video rather than text.

A major conceptual shift is also required from the narrow concept of managing spatial data to the much wider and inclusive concept of using location to manage data. This is not simply a matter of semantics. All data can be managed more effectively if a location-based approach is used, not just spatial data.

Prof. Fraser Taylor is director of the Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre at Carleton University in Ottawa.
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CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: NATURAL RESOURCES



Minding the North: Prime Minister Stephen Harper was joined on Tuk Point, by Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq, who's also the regional minister for the North, Tuktoyaktuk Mayor Mervyn Gruben, Indian and Northern Affairs Minister John Duncan, and Fisheries Minister Gail Shea on an Arctic expedition in August.

Photo courtesy of the PMO

Mining no longer a bad word in Canada's North

While I know that it is trite to say that jobs will cure all society's ills, I do believe that the enormous potential for mining in all three regions of Nunavut represents opportunities which can help ease this profound social problem and offer hope and opportunity to these young men, replacing low self-esteem with the confidence and rewards of good paying jobs in an Arctic environment well familiar to Inuit whose culture is based on affinity to the land.



BY CONSERVATIVE SEN.
DENNIS PATTERSON

As a new Member of the Senate for Nunavut, Canada's largest region and largest coast, I asked myself what themes I should pursue in representing this vast region with its small population, still suffering from high unemployment and leading negative health and social indicators.

I especially considered the alarmingly high numbers of our population, young men aged 18 to 25, who choose to end their own lives in numbers 11 times the national average—the victims typically alienated from their parent's traditional and reward-

ing lives on the land—succumbing to hopelessness and despair in remote communities. I also considered Nunavut's enormous and rich mineral potential.

While I know that it is trite and simplistic to say that jobs will cure all society's ills, I do believe that the enormous potential for mining in all three regions of Nunavut represents opportunities which can help ease this profound social problem and offer hope and opportunity to these young men, replacing low self-esteem with the confidence and rewards of good paying jobs in an Arctic environment well familiar to Inuit whose culture is based on affinity to the land.

Nunavut, often ignored in past mineral exploration, is turning out to have significant and exceptional mineral resources.

Take my home region of Baffin Island. Baffinland Iron Ore

corporation's project on Baffin Island has deposits of the purest iron ore in the world—so pure bulk samples have been sent and welcomed in smelters in Europe without processing beyond being crushed. A Chinese firm has just invested \$1-billion to gain a stake in another iron ore deposit at nearby Roche Bay on Melville Peninsula. Peregrine Diamonds found 50 kimberlite pipes on south Baffin Island this summer—an average of one new pipe every one and a half days—within 100 kilometres of the Nunavut capital of Iqaluit.

There are other equally spectacular mineral deposits in neighbouring regions: Agnico Eagle's \$1.5-billion Meadowbank mine near Baker Lake—Nunavut's only operating mine; the nearby Meliadine property now being developed by the same company; another nascent gold mine near the regional capital of

Rankin Inlet; the Hope Bay gold project near the western regional capital, Cambridge Bay, which has attracted significant investment from Newmont, one of the world's biggest gold mining companies along with other significant prospects for lead zinc (Izok Lake) and uranium (Areva).

Mining was once a bad word in Northern Canada. Companies marched into the North, took what they wanted, sometimes leaving behind a huge mess such as the 200,000 tonnes of arsenic trioxide which was left behind and underground in primitive containment after Giant Mine in Yellowknife closed in the 1990s.

Those days are gone in the North. In Nunavut, the Inuit land claim agreement guarantees aboriginal representation on management boards which review and recommend all aspects of mining proposals, including impacts on environment and water. Land claims agreements have given aboriginal people and their development corporations significant ownership of surface and sub surface lands, jobs, training, business and equity participation opportunities and a guaranteed (five per cent) stream of resource revenue

that even the Nunavut territorial government does not yet have—whether the development is on Inuit-owned land or not.

Mining executives who operate in Nunavut understand and respect the new era, where they are required to demonstrate and provide socio-economic benefits through impact and benefit agreements and participation and accountability in public hearings and technical reviews.

There is a new climate of mutual respect and openness to accommodation on the part of mining companies.

What is most encouraging to me, though, is that through exploration activities in the summer months and increasing year round employment opportunities, young Inuit women, but particularly young men are now seeing opportunities for well-paying jobs working on the land in Nunavut.

Mining training is being offered in several locations in the North and South, and efforts are underway to interest Northern students in careers in earth sciences—clearly an emerging and growing employment opportunity.

The academics and NGOs who regularly opine on Northern sovereignty sometimes bemoan the absence of the human factor in Northern sovereignty.

Sovereignty is more than military establishments and exercises, they say. And they are right.

I believe that the respectful, orderly development of Nunavut's rich mineral resources in a new era where companies work with the duly elected territorial government and the original Inuit inhabitants of the regions while demonstrating respect of their rights as guardians of the land is another important way of enhancing and protecting Canada's Northern sovereignty, while giving hope and opportunity to our youth.

The northern mining industry also has the potential to help wean northerners from their current over-dependence on government and the Canadian taxpayer to a new era where wealth and leadership will come from the private sector. And because the steel and timber and machinery required for northern mines come from 'Southern Canada,' mining developments in the North also contribute significantly to Canada's GDP growth.

Canada's sovereignty initiatives must include the indigenous residents of the Arctic, and the dominion they have established for Canada by virtue of their continuous use and occupation of the Arctic for thousands of years. Sovereignty includes Canada's obligation to protect the Arctic from environmental or developmental degradation. And I believe asserting sovereignty includes seizing the opportunity to realize the potential of the renewable and non-renewable resources of the North, while increasing meaningful job opportunities and wealth in the North and in Canada.

Conservative Sen. Dennis Patterson, a former premier of the N.W.T., is a member of the Senate's National Security and Defence Committee.

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CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: YUKON

Yukon known for its growing economy, potential for future expansion



Look out below: Master Cpl. Billy Ternes jumps out of a CC-115 Buffalo during an Armed Forces search and rescue exercise last September.

Photo courtesy of Cpl. Darcy Lefebvre, Combat Camera

In the coming months, Canada's three territorial premiers will build on their vision for the North with the release of a pan-territorial strategy on climate change adaptation and an inventory of renewable energy initiatives.



BY YUKON PREMIER DENNIS FENTIE

WHITEHORSE, YUKON—Yukon is well-known as the Land of the Midnight Sun and the home of the Klondike Gold Rush of 1898. Today's Yukon is also known for its growing economy and potential for future expansion.

In 2009, Yukon posted the highest real growth in the country. In five of the last six years Yukon's GDP growth outperformed the national average. Our economy is forecast to grow three to four per cent in 2010, based on the continued strength of construction, and mineral exploration and production activity.

Yukon's population has been growing steadily since 2004, averaging an annual growth of 2.6 per cent, a trend that is expected to continue.

Our population is well-educated, with the highest percentage of citizens with post-secondary education in Canada according to the most recent Statistics Canada report.

Investments the Yukon government has made to support responsible economic development and in its communities and people are paying dividends in advancing our territory. Such investments are rooted in our belief that healthy, sustainable communities in the North are the building blocks of Canada's sovereignty and security.

With the transfer of natural resources responsibilities from the federal government in 2003, decisions about Yukon land, oil and gas, mining, forests and water have been made in Yukon by Yukoners.

Eleven of 14 Yukon First Nations are self-governing and have concluded modern-day treaties giving them the rights and responsibilities to manage and develop their lands and resources.

As a result of First Nation treaties, Yukon also has a unique environmental assessment regime, with a 'single-window' review process with fixed timelines to assess the environmental and socio-economic effects of projects and other activities in Yukon.

These advances in governance have placed decisions about responsible, balanced development in the hands of Yukoners. Local decision making along with our natural resource and other advantages has helped fuel strong economic performance.

Yukon's mineral endowment is large and varied, offering opportunities in base and precious metals. We are one of the best places in the world for mining investment, ranked fourth out of 51 jurisdictions in a 2010 survey of mining company executives. Mining expenditures in Yukon are expected to triple with new mines and activities.

With access to two ice-free deep water ports, Yukon mineral and other products can move quickly to market, as these ports are closer to major Asian centres than others in western Canadian.

Port access through our partnership with Alaska is only one example of how well-connected Yukon is to the rest of the world.

Yukon is home to an international airport with regular service from Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver, as well as seasonal service between Frankfurt, Germany and Alaska. Yukon communities are connected by all-weather roads and to Alberta, British Columbia and Alaska by modern highways.

We are improving the world-famous Alaska Highway through the Canada-U.S. Shaktwak project. This highway corridor enables year-round access from the southern states and Canada to Alaska. The Dempster Highway through Yukon provides Canada's only road access to the Arctic Ocean and the Northwest Passage.

Yukon also connects to the rest of the world through telecommunications infrastructure; more than 98 per cent of Yukon homes and businesses have broadband internet access.

A positive investment climate, natural resources, infrastructure, and our proximity to major economic centres have contributed to our strong economic performance and will continue to promote growth.

To further diversify our economy, Yukon is strengthening its trade, tourism and investment links with Asia and Europe, while continuing to enhance our economic links and intergovernmental cooperation within Canada and with our neighbours.

To support economic advancements, we are investing in our energy infrastructure; an enhanced hydroelectric development in central Yukon is planned to come on stream next year. Proposed pipelines along the Alaska Highway and down the Mackenzie Valley will also support growth in Yukon's own natural gas sector.

In the coming months, Canada's three territorial premiers will build on their vision for the North with the release of a pan-territorial strategy on climate change adaptation and an inventory of renewable energy initiatives.

These documents will complement the Yukon government's Energy Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan. Together, these initiatives support our belief in developing our economy responsibly, now and for generations to come.

We believe that research and innovation are essential components of our growing economy. Our government is working to build a northern-based knowledge sector.

Yukon College is a leader among northern institutions and is actively working in partnership with the Yukon government to enhance its research capacity. Currently, it houses a number of institutes focusing on cold climate research in addition to the Northern Technology Innovation Centre, the Northern Research Institute, and the Social Economy Research Network of Northern Canada.

The importance of understanding the North has never been greater. We are committed to working with industry, Yukon First Nations and with other governments to support business development, tourism, trade and investment opportunities. A stronger and more prosperous Yukon will ensure sovereignty and security in the North to the benefit of all Canadians.

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Anne Golden, President and Chief Executive Officer, The Conference Board of Canada, is proud to announce the 2010 CIBC Scholar-in-Residence Book Launch and Reception.

This year's CIBC Scholar-in-Residence Chairs—Thomas Berger, Steven Kennett, and Hayden King—assessed the effectiveness of land use planning in Canada's North from three very different perspectives: keep it up, fix it up, and give it up. This book is a result of their research.

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Canada's North—
What's the Plan?

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CANADA'S NORTH POLICY BRIEFING: ICE HIGHWAY

Canada's world-renowned 'ice superhighway' critical to N.W.T. economy

The seasonal ice road is critical to the economy of the region, contributing in excess of \$1-billion to the economy of the N.W.T. More than \$500-million a year in goods travel over the road to the diamond mines in Canada's remote North.

By TIM PATTERSON

OTTAWA—For remote Northern Canadian communities, ice roads and airstrips are critical supply links. Arctic communities and regional mining industries depend heavily on these links for the transportation of equipment, building supplies, oil, and essential goods necessary for survival.

The world-renowned "ice superhighway," Tibbitt to Contwoyto Winter Road (TCWR), is the only overland route that services mines and exploration camps in the Northern Territories, including the Diavik Diamond Mine, Ekati Diamond Mine and the Snap Lake Mine. Beginning 70 kilometres north of Yellowknife, it traverses 600 kilometres, mostly over frozen water.

As many as 11,000 truckloads of fuel, equipment, and supplies are hauled North each winter during a short two-month season over the frozen lakes of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut—some of the most forbidding landscape imaginable.

As one of the world's largest exporters of minerals and metals, Canada's mining sector is an essential economic pillar. The seasonal ice road is critical to the economy of the region, contributing in excess of \$1-billion to the economy of the Northwest Territories. More than \$500-million a year in goods travel over the road to the diamond mines in Canada's remote North.

As billions of dollars are involved in bringing diamonds out of existing mines and developing new ones, research determining the long-term viability of this route is imperative.

With 87 per cent of the road built over lakes, any change in ice stability, thickness, and duration of cover can impact its use. In 2006, the unusually mild and stormy El Niño-influenced winter shortened TCWR use by 26 days below average, resulting in only 6,841 loads going North. Consequently, substantial industry losses were incurred. With traffic on the ice road expected to increase to 14,000 loads a year, it is critical to provide data to policy-makers, planners and mine developers.

There are many different parties with a vested interest in the Ice Road. National Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), the Geoscience Office of the Northwest Territories, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, the North Slave Métis Alliance, Natural Resources Canada's Polar Continental Shelf Program, and a consortium of diamond mine companies which maintain the ice road have funded a research project to assess the influence of natural climate variability and the possible impact of human-induced climate change.

It is a particularly challenging task as the thermometer record only extends back to about 1950 in the central Northwest Territories. Many of the significant cycles influencing Arctic climate are controlled by a variety of factors with decades—even centuries—that are warmer and similar intervals that are cooler.

My research's objective is to provide high-resolution information on the effects of climate variability on aquatic and terrestrial environments in the central Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Coring takes place through the ice along the route of the TCWR during the winter trucking season. By coring and comparing lake sediment of the past 3,500 years, we are able to recognize cycles and trends impacting climate change and predict possible future trends in climate, ice cover and fire hazard.

There are many challenges in conducting research. Core samples are usually collected in tiny, nameless lakes off the beaten path because the sedimentary record of big lakes has many other disturbances, making it difficult to find useful climate information.

The harsh environment of the Arctic winter makes core sampling difficult. While the convenience of the TCWR allows researchers to drive to collection locations, nothing is simple with temperatures dropping to -50 C with the wind chill.

Even obtaining a supply of dry ice, required to collect frozen ice cores, is logistically challenging as this perishable item must travel hundreds of kilometres from Edmonton to Yellowknife before reaching the research site.

Information on the long-term viability of the ice road is worth these hardships as it is essential to find out how to cope with shortened winter seasons. If important materials cannot be brought into the North due to mild winters, companies may choose to cancel important projects before beginning the necessary groundwork. Should this occur the Canadian economy would stand to lose in one of its most important economic sectors.

On the other hand, if we head into a period of cooler winters and longer ice-road seasons, then some marginal projects could get the go-ahead. The importance in determining climate cycles and its impact on the TCWR is vital in making important policy decisions on northern economic development as well as creating and maintaining northern infrastructure.

Dr. Tim Patterson is a professor of geology at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ont.

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Publication Date:
Dec. 6, 2010

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