

“Commend me the Yak”: The Colombo Plan, the Inuit of Ungava, and ‘Developing’ Canada’s North

DAVID MEREN*

This article engages with the entangled histories of Canadian foreign aid and relations between Indigenous peoples and Canada. Specifically, it traces a proposal in the early 1950s to use the Colombo Plan, the Commonwealth development program in which Canada was a participant, to transfer yaks from India for use in the “development” of the Inuit population in northern Quebec. While the relocation was ultimately never realized, the episode reveals how questions of race and empire, not least the environmental dimension of these, along with the priority accorded to promoting a liberal-capitalist version of “modernization,” informed the imaginary underpinning the Canadian state’s engagement with Indigenous populations and the Global South. More broadly, the subject matter highlights how the history of Indigenous-settler encounters informed Canadian attitudes regarding development assistance, and vice versa.

Le présent article aborde l’histoire enchevêtrée de l’aide canadienne internationale et des relations du Canada avec ses peuples autochtones. Il retrace en particulier la proposition formulée au début des années 1950 d’utiliser le « plan Colombo », programme de développement du Commonwealth auquel participait le Canada, pour importer d’Inde des yacks destinés à servir au « développement » des populations inuit du Nord du Québec. Bien que cette idée ne se soit finalement jamais concrétisée, cet épisode révèle la façon dont les questions de race et d’empire, y compris dans leurs dimensions environnementales, ainsi que la priorité donnée à l’avancement d’une version libérale-capitaliste de la « modernisation », ont façonné l’imaginaire qui sous-tend l’engagement de l’État canadien envers les populations autochtones et les pays de l’hémisphère sud. Plus largement, ce sujet éclaire la façon dont les rencontres entre Autochtones et colons ont influencé la position du Canada vis-à-vis de l’aide au développement, et vice versa.

* David Meren is Associate Professor in the Département d’histoire at Université de Montréal. This research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. It benefited from feedback obtained during presentations to the Department of History at Johns Hopkins University and the annual meeting of the Canadian Historical Association, and from the research assistance of Bora Plumpré. The author wishes to thank Allan Downey, Shanon Fitzpatrick, François Furstenberg, Liz Kirkland, Tina Loo, Don Nerbas, and Anya Zilberstein for their comments and suggestions. He also expresses gratitude to the two anonymous reviewers, as well as the editors of *Histoire sociale / Social History*.

*As a friend to the children, commend me the Yak
 You will find it exactly the thing.
 It can carry and fetch, you can ride on its back
 Or lead it about with a string.*

*The Tartar who lives in the plains of Tibet,
 A desolate region of snow,
 Has for centuries made it a nursery pet,
 And surely the Tartar must know.*

*So ask your Papa where the Yak may be got,
 And if he is awfully rich,
 He will buy you the creature, or else he will not,
 I cannot be positive which.*

Hillaire Belloc, "The Yak" (1896)

AS 1953 DREW to a close, ambitious plans were afoot in Ottawa. With development assistance having emerged as a global phenomenon, officials in the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources (DNANR) had grand visions of importing yaks from India to transform the lives of Inuit living in Quebec's Ungava region (Nunavik). Senior officials hoped to harness the Commonwealth Programme for Economic Assistance to South and Southeast Asia created three years prior—the Colombo Plan—to realize the scheme. Notions of developmental reciprocity informed bureaucratic discussions: Third World recipients of Canadian aid were to help Canada's Indigenous peoples, all under Ottawa's benevolent gaze. Engaging in some playful humour, Marjorie C. Findlay, a doctoral researcher involved in the project, sent Hillaire Belloc's "The Yak" as a New Year's greeting to her DNANR contacts. W.T. Larmour, of the department's Arctic Services branch, was not amused. Findlay's "levity" was "not helpful"; mindful of public opinion, Larmour felt Findlay "ought to be reminded" that if staff members engaged in ridicule "they can hardly expect ... support where it will be most needed."¹

The attempt to see yaks imported from India to Ungava can certainly appear ridiculous, and at times turned downright farcical. Yet the ultimately fruitless effort was significant. Beyond being indicative of an advancing colonialism, as a settler society targeted Indigenous peoples and their lands,² the episode points to

1 Library and Archives Canada (LAC), RG 85, Northern Affairs Program (NAP), 93/251-3-7/1, Memorandum from Larmour for Cantley, Stevenson, Houston, Johnson, Jan. 7, 1954 (attached letter from Findlay).

2 For the theoretical literatures on 'colonialism,' 'settler colonialism,' and 'internal colonization' regarding Canadian actions in the Arctic, see Joan Sangster, *The Iconic North: Cultural Constructions of Aboriginal Life in Postwar Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016), pp. 11-16. Also, Peter Kulchyski and Frank James Tester, *Kiumajut (Talking Back), Game Management and Inuit Rights, 1900-70* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), p. 276. They speak of a "particular colonialism." Especially pertinent because of the environmental dimension is Liza Piper and John Sandlos, "A Broken Frontier: Ecological Imperialism in the Canadian

the entanglement of Canadian aid and Indian policy in the decades following the Second World War.³ Canada, a country founded upon a logic of empire and white supremacy, had emerged from the war as a global industrial power and sought to bestow the blessings of ‘technical assistance’ on ‘under-developed’ populations abroad and at home. Although Canada’s technical assistance efforts fit into a much longer history of imperialism and settler colonialism, they also highlight evolving attitudes and an enduring Euro-Canadian racial paternalism regarding the Global South and those relegated to the bottom of Canada’s racial pyramid.

Notwithstanding the extensive literature on Canadian international history, development assistance has until recently suffered from relative neglect, a trend consistent with the field’s marginalizing of the Global South.⁴ This lacuna is all the more glaring in contrast to the dynamic interrogations of Indigenous-settler relations in Canada.⁵ Postcolonial studies have made a contribution to this efflorescence, apparent in efforts to put Indigenous history into conversation with various aspects of Canadian history, ranging from citizenship and immigration, through the history of medicine, to Arctic militarization.⁶ Building on these historiographical trends, this article explores the points of convergence between

North,” *Environmental History* vol. 12 (Oct. 2007), pp. 759-795.

- 3 Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, “Beyond Comparison: *Histoire croisée* and the Challenge of Reflexivity,” *History and Theory*, vol. 45 (2006), pp. 30-50; Jürgen Kocka, “Comparison and Beyond,” *History & Theory*, vol. 42, no. 1 (2003), pp. 39-44.
- 4 Only two monographs exist in English: David R. Morrison, *Aid and Ebb Tide: A History of CIDA and Canadian Development Assistance* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press in association with the North-South Institute/L’Institut Nord-Sud, 1998), and Bruce Muirhead and Ronald N. Harpelle, *IDRC: 40 Years of Ideas, Innovation, and Impact* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2013). Growing interest in Canadian relations with the Global South is adding rapidly to this historiography: Tamara Myers, “Local Action and Global Imagining: Youth, International Development, and the Walkathon Phenomenon in Sixties’ and Seventies’ Canada,” *Diplomatic History*, vol. 38, no. 2 (2014), p. 282-293; Ruth Compton Brouwer, *Canada’s Global Villagers: CUSO in Development, 1961-86* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013); David Webster, *Fire and the Full Moon: Canada and Indonesia in a Decolonizing World* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009). Broader studies of Canadian encounters with the Global South, as well as the question of race in Canadian international history, can be found in Karen Dubinsky, Sean Mills, and Scott Rutherford, eds., *Canada and the Third World, Overlapping Histories* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), and Laura Madokoro, Francine McKenzie, and David Meren, eds., *Dominion of Race: Rethinking Canada’s International History* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017).
- 5 Allan Downey, *The Creator’s Game, Lacrosse, Identity and Indigenous Nationhood* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2018); Emilie Cameron, *Far Off Metal River, Inuit Lands, Settler Stories, and the Making of the Contemporary Arctic* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015); Mary Jane Logan McCallum, *Indigenous Women, Work, and History 1940-1980* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2014); John S. Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008); Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia, 1849-1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001). Also, Michelle Desveaux, Patrick Chassé, Glenn Icton, Anne Janhunen, and Omeasoo Wähpāsiw, “Twenty-first Century Indigenous Historiography: Twenty-two Must-Read Books,” *Canadian Journal of History*, vol. 50, no. 3 (2015), pp. 524-548.
- 6 Heidi Bohaker and Franca Iacovetta, “Making Indigenous People ‘Immigrants Too’: A Comparison of Citizenship Programs for Newcomers and Indigenous Peoples in Postwar Canada, 1940s-1960s,” *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 90, no. 3 (2009), pp. 427-461; Mary-Ellen Kelm, *Colonizing Bodies: Indigenous Health and Healing in British Columbia, 1900-50* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998); P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Matthew Farish, “The Cold War on Canadian Soil: Militarizing an Arctic Environment,” *Environmental History*, vol. 12, no. 4 (2007), pp. 920-950. Especially relevant to this article is Dominique Marshall and Julia Sterparn, “Oxfam Aid to Canada’s First Nations, 1962-1975: Eating Lynx, Starving for Jobs, and Flying a Talking Bird,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, vol. 23, no. 2 (2012), pp. 298-343.

Canadian aid and Indian policies, highlighting how intersecting notions of ‘modernization,’ liberal-capitalist preoccupations, and racialized understandings of development informed Canadian efforts in both fields. This exploration is in service to my larger research project exploring how the history of relations between Indigenous peoples and Canada informed the early years of Canadian foreign aid, and conversely, how Canadian encounters with the Global South shaped Indigenous-Canadian relations after 1945. One of the goals is to obtain different perspectives on Canada’s international history and the Canadian dimension of an emerging global history of development by paying greater attention to the so-called domestic context.⁷ Another aim is to seek new insight on Indigenous-settler relations in Canada by refracting these through the prism of international history.⁸

The Development Gaze in Canada and Abroad after 1945

As Canadian officials looked toward the country’s northern reaches after the Second World War, they did so through the era’s lenses of “development,” “modernization,” and a belief in government’s capacity, by drawing on scientific and social-science expertise, to effect meaningful and beneficial change. The origins of “technical assistance”—the providing of non-financial assistance in the form of experts and expertise—lay in a long history of colonial development, missionary work, and growing state involvement in the economy. More immediately, technical assistance emerged under the broader rubric of foreign aid in response to the challenge of post-war reconstruction and the perceived necessity of improving the social and economic conditions of the world’s peoples, not least those in the colonized or semi-colonized world. Building on pre-war precedents, the United Nations at its creation in October 1945 launched a number of technical-assistance initiatives. U.S. President Harry S. Truman’s second inaugural address, in 1949, which called for “a bold new program for ... the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas” helped make the idea a global phenomenon. The following year, a UN conference heralded the birth of the organization’s Expanded Technical Assistance Program and the UN Technical Assistance Administration (UNTA).⁹

Canada’s Hugh Keenleyside (1898-1992), inaugural head of the UNTAA, painted UN technical-assistance efforts in near-messianic terms, “a revolution in human affairs” through “a universal mechanism [enabling] all people to draw upon the whole body of human knowledge.”¹⁰ Keenleyside already boasted an

7 Amanda Kay McVety, *Enlightened Aid: U.S. Development as Foreign Aid Policy in Ethiopia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Michael E. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and U.S. Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011); David C. Engerman and Corinna R. Unger, “Introduction: Towards a Global History of Modernization,” *Diplomatic History*, vol. 33, no. 3 (2009), pp. 375-385. Also, see the forum on Native Americans and American international history in *Diplomatic History*, vol. 39, no. 5 (Nov. 2015), pp. 926–966. For a useful demonstration of the transnational turn in the Canadian context, see Karen Dubinsky, Adele Perry, and Henry Yu, eds., *Within and Without the Nation: Canadian History as Transnational History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015).

8 Hayden King, “The Erasure of Indigenous Thought in Foreign Policy,” OpenCanada.org, July 31, 2017. <https://www.opencanada.org/features/erasure-indigenous-thought-foreign-policy/>; [accessed Oct. 2, 2017].

9 Latham, *Right Kind of Revolution*, 10; Gilbert Rist, *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith*, 4th ed. (London and New York: Zed Books, 2014), pp. 47-79.

10 LAC, MG 31-E102, Hugh L. Keenleyside fonds (HLK)/28/20, Historical Background of the Idea of

impressive career by the time he took up the reins at the UNTAA; in addition to diplomatic postings to Japan and Mexico, by the early 1940s he had risen to the senior ranks of the Department of External Affairs (DEA). He had served on the council of the Northwest Territories and as commissioner (1947-50), as well as deputy minister of the federal Department of Mines and Resources, which housed the Department of Indian Affairs and also had responsibility for the Inuit. Just before heading up the UNTAA, he led a UN technical-assistance mission to Bolivia. Here was someone who in effect personified the convergence of Canada’s Indian and aid policies.¹¹

Keenleyside was just one example of Canada’s contribution to the technical assistance phenomenon. In addition to the country’s wartime and post-war aid, its participation in UN organs, and the involvement of individuals in the transnational bureaucratic, religious, academic, and intellectual networks producing the discourse and ideas associated with technical assistance, Canadians worked all over the world under UN auspices.¹² During the 1950 conference that launched the UN’s Expanded Technical Assistance Program, Canada’s representative, John W. Holmes, declared that Canada’s most valuable contribution would be its ability to “[share] the experience [it had] gained in taming [its] own vast territories.” The high-ranking diplomat emphasized Canadian expertise in hydroelectricity, irrigation, and forestry as invaluable to “countries which, like ourselves, are seeking to develop their natural resources.”¹³ Jean Lesage, as parliamentary assistant to the secretary of state for external affairs, chaired a follow-up conference in Paris in 1952.¹⁴

Consistent with the broader history of technical assistance, a logic of empire influenced Canadian aid efforts. After all, the knowledge transfer that Keenleyside lauded was to occur largely along circuits forged by Western imperialism, with the beneficiaries summoned to assist the victims. Canadians had participated in the diverse array of missionary networks—a crucial precursor—and many administrators of Canada’s aid were ‘mish kids’ who grew up in that milieu.¹⁵ In a UN debate on colonial development, Canada’s representative declared it a “sacred trust” and “solemn responsibility” to ensure the “well-being of the inhabitants of all non-self-governing territories.”¹⁶ Canadian deference to the colonial powers

International Aid, speech delivered at Duke University, Durham, NC, 29-30 Sept. 1955 (hereafter Historical Background).

11 David Webster, “Modern Missionaries: Canadian Postwar Technical Assistance Advisors in Southeast Asia,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, vol. 20, no. 2 (2009), pp. 86-111.

12 LAC, RG 25, Department of External Affairs (DEA)/6441/5475-DU-3-40/1, Telegram from Acting Canadian Permanent Delegate to the United Nations to SSEA, June 13, 1950; Morrison, *Aid and Ebb Tide*, 30; Webster, “Modern Missionaries”; Brouwer, *Canada’s Global Villagers*.

13 LAC/DEA/6441/5475-DU-3-40/1, Telegram from Acting Canadian Permanent Delegate to the United Nations to SSEA, June 13, 1950.

14 LAC/DEA/8148/5475-DU-18-40/1, Memorandum for Reid from Léger, Jan. 23, 1952; LAC/DEA/8148/5475-DU-18-40/1, Telegram from Chairman, Canadian Delegation, UN Assembly, Paris, to SSEA, Feb. 3, 1952.

15 John Hilliker, *Canada’s Department of External Affairs, Vol. 1, The Early Years, 1909-1946* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1990), pp. 191-192.

16 LAC/DEA/2569/5475-AT-40/1, Annex I—Canadian Delegation to the General Assembly, Address by the Honourable W. McL. Robertson in Committee IV on 14 November 1946.

in this regard (notably Britain) included a tendency to conflate Canada—and its gradual emergence as an independent actor on the world stage—with colonial territories.¹⁷ No thought was given to the idea Canada was itself a practitioner of empire, not least in terms of its relationship with the Indigenous peoples within its borders.¹⁸

Empire (and its afterlife) sat at the heart of what proved to be the primary vehicle for Canadian technical assistance: the Colombo Plan. Humanitarian and developmental justifications would loom large after the fact, but Ottawa's initial motivations for helping establish it were economic and geopolitical. Also significant was a desire among certain members of the diplomatic establishment to forge a special relationship with post-independence India. Jill Campbell-Miller has shown how monetary relations between Britain and India shaped Canada's aid relationship with South and Southeast Asia.¹⁹ An additional and increasing concern, especially following the advent of the People's Republic of China in 1949, was checking communist influence. Cold War calculations intersected with preoccupations over poverty in India, Pakistan, and Ceylon. All of these considerations gave rise to a proposal during a Commonwealth foreign ministers conference in Colombo in January 1950 for a plan to offer capital investment and technical assistance in South and Southeast Asia. Paralleling the UN's expanding technical assistance activities and emerging U.S. aid, follow-up meetings in Sydney and London over the ensuing year produced a program for technical assistance within the broader Colombo Plan. This program consisted of an array of bilateral aid agreements between donor and recipient countries.²⁰

In the early going, official Canadian attitudes to technical assistance tended to be cautious, if not parsimonious. Rather than “grandiose projects [that] will wither away,” Ottawa preferred initiatives that would “contribute to increasing food supplies, improving health and social standards, efficient administration, and developing essential natural resources.”²¹ Similarly, Canada only gradually became an enthusiastic participant in the Colombo Plan. Intense debate within the government over the scope of Canadian participation in the Commonwealth scheme ended in February 1951 with a compromise: Canada's initial contribution

17 LAC/DEA/2569/5475-AT-40/1, Annex I—Canadian Delegation to the General Assembly, Address by the Honourable W. McL. Robertson in Committee IV on 14 November 1946. Thus Liberal Senator Wishart McLea Robertson, government leader in the Senate, could tell the UN General Assembly's Fourth Committee he had “never been in Africa,” but was the “citizen of a country ... once a non-self-governing territory under the administration of the United Kingdom and I can testify ... no nation on earth has a prouder record in the field of human relations than has the United Kingdom.”

18 For example, when the UN secretary-general asked Ottawa about the potential applicability of article 73 of the UN Charter—the declaration regarding “non-self-governing territories,” it dismissed the idea that Canada's Indian reserves or northern territories could be considered to be such; the very suggestion was “nonsensical,” if not “absurd.” LAC/DEA/2569/5475-AT-40/1, Memorandum for Hopkins from M.W. (likely Wershof), Aug. 14, 1946.

19 Jill Campbell-Miller, “The Mind of Modernity: Canadian Bilateral Foreign Assistance to India, 1950-1960” (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Waterloo, 2014), p. 78.

20 Campbell-Miller, “Mind of Modernity,” pp. 56-57; LAC/DEA/6574/11038-40/2, Cabinet Minute, June 15, 1950.

21 LAC/DEA/6441/5475-DU-3-40/1, Telegram from Acting Canadian Permanent Delegate to the United Nations to the SSEA, June 13, 1950.

of C\$25 million—including \$400,000 earmarked for technical assistance—was predicated on India using \$10-15 million of it to purchase Canadian wheat.²²

The place of wheat sales in Ottawa’s Colombo Plan calculations highlights agriculture’s central place in early Canadian aid—perhaps not surprising, given the country’s vast farming resources and the launch of the UN’s Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) in Quebec City in October 1945. A more practical concern also informed the importance attached to agriculture; DEA officials felt that Canada’s rapidly expanding manufacturing sector had prior claim on the country’s industrial experts.²³ Moreover, Ottawa’s emphasizing of agriculture reflected the widespread belief that increased food production was crucial to stability and the longer-term viability of development efforts.²⁴

Accordingly, the boosting of food supplies topped Canadian priorities at the UN Technical Assistance conference in 1950.²⁵ Similarly, a DEA preliminary assessment of Canadian facilities available for the Colombo Plan put agriculture at the top of those areas where Canada’s public service, universities, and private industry could contribute.²⁶ Barely a year into the plan’s operations, DEA officials, disappointed at the slow progress opined that they had “probably” been concentrating too much on “technical assistance of a too highly advanced and specialized type.” They recommended “get[ting] back to the principles”—starting with efforts to increase food supplies—that had informed Canada’s original decision to participate.²⁷

Such a recommendation draws attention to how, beyond practical considerations, an idea of “modernization” informed the Canadian interest in agriculture. Modernization theory—the product of a teleological and racialized logic that shaped Western attitudes about the Global South and post-war aid—drew on the social sciences to posit a dichotomous relationship between the ‘traditional’ and the ‘modern,’ working from a Eurocentric and linear understanding of societal development from pre-agricultural to consumer society.²⁸ Grounded in earlier ideas about social evolution that were a by-product of European imperialism and the

22 Sales of the wheat generated funds that New Delhi devoted to capital projects. More immediately, the move responded to an acute grain shortage in the country. LAC/DEA/6575/11038-40/5.2, Memorandum from Plumtre to the Under-Secretary, Jan. 29, 1951; Greg Donaghy, “Coming off the Gold Standard, Re-assessing the ‘Golden Age’ of Canadian Diplomacy,” Johnson-Shoyama School of Public Policy, University of Saskatchewan, pp. 9-10. http://www.schoolofpublicpolicy.sk.ca/_documents/outreach_event_announcements/DFAIT_symposium/Coming_off_the_Gold_Standard.pdf; [accessed June 6, 2013].

23 LAC/DEA/6591/11038-A-40/1, Draft, Appraisal of Facilities Available in Canada for Technical Assistance in the Economic Development of South and South East Asia, July 14, 1950.

24 Latham, *Right Kind of Revolution*, pp. 110-111.

25 LAC/DEA/6441/5475-DU-3-40/1, Telegram from Acting Canadian Permanent Delegate to the United Nations, to the SSEA, June 13, 1950.

26 LAC/DEA/6591/11038-A-40/1, Appraisal of Facilities Available in Canada for Technical Assistance in the Economic Development of South and South East Asia, July 14, 1950.

27 LAC/DEA/6598/11038-E-40/1, Memorandum for the Interdepartmental Committee on External Trade Policy, June 14, 1951.

28 Michael E. Latham, «Introduction: ‘Modernization, International History, and the Cold War World,» in David C. Engerman, Nils Gilman, Mark H. Haefele, Michael E. Latham, eds., *Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), p. 4; Nick Cullather, “Modernization Theory,” in Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson, eds., *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 218.

rise of modernity, modernization theory was an expression of ‘high modernism.’ James C. Scott describes this as flowing from a “self-confidence about scientific and technical progress, the expansion of production, the growing satisfaction of human needs, the mastery of nature (including human nature), and, above all, the rational design of social order commensurate with the scientific understanding of natural laws.” Pluralistic and transnational in their origin and scope, notions of modernization and high modernism harnessed to state power found appeal and expression across the political spectrum.²⁹

Modernization theory, not least its race and gender thinking, permeated the diverse facets of Canada’s technical assistance. After all, modernization theory was a phenomenon and discourse to which Canadians—overwhelmingly white and male ones—actively contributed. The logic of modernization was apparent in the rise of the social sciences in Canadian public policy, including the aid sector. Official documents from the period are replete with references to “underdeveloped” or “backward” areas and peoples.³⁰ A linear understanding of progress was apparent as DEA officials expressed relief that the programs emerging from the London follow-up conference in 1950 fleshing out the Colombo Plan emphasized the improving of agriculture, health, education, public utilities, and transportation, rather than rapid industrialization. Consistent with more incrementalist understandings of modernization theory, officials argued that industrialization would result gradually at a later stage.³¹

It was a decidedly liberal-capitalist version of modernization that informed Canadian aid efforts. As a constituent of the “liberal core,” Canada participated actively in a post-war capitalist international system with the U.S. as the “fulcrum.”³² In addition to Ottawa’s keenness to secure American involvement in the Colombo Plan, this liberal-capitalist worldview was apparent as Canadian officials evinced a North America-centrism in which Canada and the U.S. occupied the apex of the developmental pyramid.³³ Lauding technical assistance at a Duke University conference in 1955, Hugh Keenleyside cited the role of American investment in Canada’s industrial development and enthused that if the dynamic could be replicated “during the next fifty years in even a small part of the

29 James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 4. On the impact of Scott’s work on Canadian historiography, as well as for examples of high modernism in the Canadian context, see Tina Loo, “High Modernism, Conflict, and the Nature of Change in Canada: A Look at *Seeing Like a State*,” *Canadian Historical Review* vol. 97, no. 1 (March 2016), pp. 34-58. Also, see Matthew Farish and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, “High Modernism in the Arctic: Planning Frobisher Bay and Inuvik,” *Journal of Historical Geography* vol. 35, no. 3 (July 2009), pp. 517-544.

30 LAC/DEA/6592/11038-A-40/1.2, Technical Assistance and the Colombo Plan, Dec. 29, 1950.

31 LAC/DEA/6592/11038-A-40/1.2, Telex from Acting High Commissioner to SSEA, Sept. 19, 1950.

32 Robert Latham, *The Liberal Moment: Modernity, Security, and the Making of Postwar International Order* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 40, 112; Robert D. Cuff and J. L. Granatstein, *Ties that Bind: Canadian-American Relations in Wartime, from the Great War to the Cold War*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Samuel Stevens Hakkert, 1977), pp. 69-92; Bruce Muirhead, *The Development of Postwar Canadian Trade Policy: The Failure of the Anglo-European Option* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1992), pp. 16-46.

33 LAC/DEA/6592/11038-A-40/1.2, Technical Assistance and the Colombo Plan, Dec. 29, 1950.

underdeveloped areas of the world, the commercial results in the United States and in other industrial countries would be of fantastic proportions."³⁴

In addition to the desire to incorporate more and more of the globe into the liberal-capitalist order, Canadian aid efforts bespoke an abiding concern to inculcate a capitalist work ethic based on patriarchal notions of the male wage earner and individual responsibility. DEA officials anticipated, after all, that Canada's aid would be short term, as recipient countries would "make such profitable use of this aid that they would soon be free from the need of outside assistance."³⁵ The concern to avoid fostering dependence and the related notion of the 'deserving poor' were apparent as the minister of agriculture, James Gardiner, claimed that "India's poverty could be solved by a sale of the pooled jewellery of the Maharajahs."³⁶

Beyond racial condescension and the abject refusal to acknowledge imperialism's devastating socioeconomic impact, Gardiner's expressing such sentiments highlights how Canadian aid efforts were emerging in parallel to Ottawa's embrace of a moderate Keynesianism to ensure the smooth functioning of the Canadian economy, alongside the growth of the welfare state. As others have observed about the history of U.S. development assistance, Canadians' belief in the capacity and necessity of government action to effect what was viewed as positive change for the Global South represented the projection overseas of domestic public policy.³⁷

The Keynesianism impulse and the broader development phenomenon also informed the contemporaneous rethinking of Canada's approach to its Indigenous peoples. The push for change to an Indian policy that sought assimilation yet produced utter marginalization had grown between the wars, stoked by a growing Indigenous activism and demographic revival. The racially charged horrors of the Second World War, the creation of the UN system, and Canada's growing international profile further spurred this critique, as did the growing influence of the social sciences on a government focusing on post-war reconstruction. The pressure for reform led to the creation in 1946 of a joint (Commons and Senate) parliamentary committee that reviewed Canada's Indian policy.³⁸ Typical of the reformist yet paternalistic impetus were the calls from the Vancouver Civil Liberties Union (VCLU) for a "more humanistic, realistic, and democratic awareness of both the potentialities and welfare of the Indians," especially since their education, as well as their social, economic and health conditions were "in grave need of radical improvement," as they had been "forced into the position of

34 LAC/HLK/28/20, Historical Background.

35 LAC/DEA/6592/11038-A-40/1.2, Technical Assistance and the Colombo Plan, Dec. 29, 1950. On the interplay between capitalism and development efforts, see Tania Murray Li, *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 21.

36 Morrison, *Aid and Ebb Tide*, p. 29.

37 David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 40-76.

38 J. R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), pp. 311-327.

a lower or a degraded race.”³⁹ The tone was symptomatic of broader trends; the drive for reform culminated in amendments to the Indian Act in 1951 that ignored Indigenous input and left intact an infantilizing, assimilationist regime.⁴⁰

Indigenous peoples also had to contend with ongoing encroachments on their territories and assaults on their ways of life as a new wave of resource extraction fuelled the post-war economic boom. Brittany Luby has explored, for example, how hydroelectric development on the Winnipeg River in the 1950s affected the foodways of Anishinabek women and their infants, underscoring high modernism’s dramatic impact on Indigenous bodies, lives, and sociocultural realities.⁴¹ Paralleling this Keynesian-era economic activity, Canada’s Indigenous peoples were swept up in the ambitions of an increasingly interventionist Canadian welfare state determined to slot them into the liberal capitalist order.⁴² As Hugh Shewell has argued, “Indians collectively represented a social problem that could be solved through the application of scientific knowledge ... [T]he solution to the problem lay in finding ways to help them adjust as individuals to the ‘natural forces’ of modern society.”⁴³ Hence, the ‘Indian problem’ to be solved through expert knowledge was how to most effectively encourage Indigenous people to abandon their identity and assimilate into the Canadian liberal-capitalist mainstream as self-reliant individuals.⁴⁴

The logic of modernization and the high modernist ethos informing Canadian Indian policy after 1945 was obvious as the VCLU advocated a policy of “cultural forcing,” that would come from “modern ‘improvement’ techniques,” that “psychologists, sociologists and educationists” would endorse.⁴⁵ The dynamic was similarly apparent in the federal Indian Placement and Relocation Program

39 LAC, MG32-B34, J.W. Pickersgill Fonds (henceforth JWP)/24/11-IA 12, “Help the Indians Help Themselves,” Brief by Vancouver Branch, Canadian Civil Liberties Union, February 1951 (henceforth “Help the Indians”), pp. 3, 5, 42.

40 Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens*, pp. 325-327.

41 Brittany Luby, “From Milk-Medicine to Public (Re)Education Programs: An Examination of Anishinabek Mothers’ Responses to Hydroelectric Flooding in the Treaty #3 District, 1900-1975,” *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History* vol. 32, no. 2 (2015), pp. 363-389.

42 In some cases, literally swept up: Raven Sinclair, “Identity Lost and Found: Lessons from the Sixties Scoop,” *First Peoples Child & Family Review*, vol. 3, no. 1 (2007), pp. 65-82. Other useful discussions of Indigenous-Canadian encounters in the Keynesian era include McCallum, *Indigenous Women, Work, and History 1940-1980*, especially her account of the Department of National Health and Welfare’s Community Health Representatives (CHR) program [pp. 120-166]. McCallum emphasizes how the precepts of ‘community development,’ linked closely to international development, informed the program, which envisioned Indigenous individuals acting as “liaisons between First Nations and Inuit communities and non-local health professionals” employed by Ottawa. Moreover, the CHR program’s founder and director, Ethel Martens, was subsequently very active in international development circles. Also, see Allyson Stevenson, “The Adoption of Frances T. Blood, Belonging, and Aboriginal Transracial Adoption in Twentieth-Century Canada,” *Canadian Journal of History*, vol. 50, no. 3 (2015), pp. 469-491; Kristin Burnett, Travis Hay, and Lori Chambers, “Settler Colonialism, Indigenous Peoples and Food: Federal Indian Policies and Nutrition Programs in the Canadian North since 1945,” *Journal of Colonialism & Colonial History*, vol. 17, no. 2 (2016); Will Langford, “Jean Lagassé, Community Development, and the ‘Indian and Métis Problem’ in Manitoba in the 1950s and 1960s,” *Canadian Historical Review* vol. 97, no. 3 (Sept.2016), pp. 346-376.

43 Hugh Shewell, “‘What Makes the Indian Tick?’ The Influence of Social Sciences on Canada’s Indian Policy, 1947-1964,” *Histoire sociale / Social History* vol. 34, no. 67 (2001), pp. 138, 146.

44 Shewell, “What Makes the Indian Tick?,” p. 140.

45 LAC/JWP/24/11-IA12, “Help the Indians,” pp. 11, 15.

(1957), which Mary Jane Logan McCallum has explored. The program was framed by "three oft-repeated, circular, and interconnected narratives about Indigenous modernity": industrial capitalism's inevitable eclipse of "traditional" Indian economies (and thus the need to avoid Indigenous dependence on the taxpayer); full-time wage employment as the surest route to Indigenous equality in Canada; and a belief that the country's Indigenous population had obtained the levels of education and training required for employment and equality.⁴⁶

Canadian Colonialism and the Inuit: The Logic of Development

The situation differed somewhat for the Inuit. No provision had been made for the Inuit in the British North America Act (1867), because Britain retained possession of the Arctic. Nothing changed when London transferred the region to Canadian control in 1880. The federal government only assumed some measure of administrative obligation in 1924, giving the responsibility to the Department of Indian Affairs. Yet, parliament did not apply the Indian Act to the Inuit; there was no 'Inuit status' or an 'Inuit Act', and before the 1920s had ended Ottawa had transferred responsibility for Inuit affairs to the commissioner of the Northwest Territories. This administrative evolution stemmed partly from a concern to avoid reproducing the dynamic marking Canada's relations with the First Nations, notably the creation of reserves and government guardianship. Far from being an acknowledgement of the ravages of settler colonialism, this attitude was informed by the priority accorded to facilitating Canadian dominion over the Arctic with a view to resource extraction. The extraction imperative, visible throughout the history of Euro-Canadian visions of the region, was apparent as Ottawa transferred responsibility for the Inuit to the Department of Mines and Resources in the 1930s.⁴⁷

All told, a conservative imperial dynamic informed a policy of neglect summed up by the slogan 'Leave the Eskimo alone.' It was a measure of official indifference that Inuit affairs became a subject of constitutional dispute when the federal and Quebec governments each sought to displace onto the other the responsibility for the Inuit of northern Quebec.⁴⁸ Notwithstanding the Supreme Court of Canada decision in 1939 that the Inuit were 'Indians' under the law and thus a federal responsibility, Ottawa maintained a laissez-faire policy well into the 1940s, justifying this by saying that maintaining 'traditional' ways would avoid fostering dependence. The concern to keep costs low and avoid encouraging dependency translated into a putative concern to maintain the Inuit in their traditional way of life, but meant ultimately an approach Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent famously summed up in 1953 by declaring that "We have administered these vast territories of the north in an almost continuing state of absence of mind."⁴⁹

46 McCallum, *Indigenous Women, Work, and History*, p. 73.

47 Cameron, *Far Off Metal River*, pp. 90-92; Frank J. Tester and Peter Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1994), pp. 14-34.

48 Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, pp. 14-34.

49 Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, p. 56.

Yet, consistent with broader trends in Canadian Indian policy and the Keynesian moment, pressure for reform and a more interventionist approach grew in the 1940s. R.A. Gibson, deputy commissioner of the Northwest Territories, declared that “the condition of the Eskimo is not at all satisfactory” and that the Inuit population was “undoubtedly ... the worst off of any natives for whom the Dominion has accepted responsibility.”⁵⁰ The social and economic disruptions provoked by the fur trade, the negative consequences flowing from the North’s wartime militarization, along with growing disquiet over the medical condition of the Inuit—in short, the consequences of colonialism—combined to make the policy of neglect increasingly untenable, even while serving as justification for a new wave of internal colonization.

The deepening Cold War also spurred official interest in the Inuit. The Arctic’s enhanced geopolitical importance encouraged Ottawa to view and portray the Inuit as a vital part of Canada’s first line of defence.⁵¹ Here was another ‘underdeveloped’ population that was to be accorded aid in order to safeguard against the Soviet menace. Interwoven with such Cold War motivations were sovereignty concerns; the northward extension of the Canadian welfare state and heightened federal interest in the Inuit allowed Canada to assert its authority amid an expanding U.S. military presence in a region promoted as a new frontier essential to future Canadian prosperity.⁵²

The Arctic and its Indigenous populations were thus increasingly the objects of internal colonization by the Canadian State. The era of “Leave the Eskimo alone” was over; henceforth, the Inuit and their lands were to be absorbed into the Canadian body politic. As Ottawa, spurred by a host of motivations, sought to project its authority and action northward, federal bureaucrats strove to refashion the lives and practices of the Inuit and First Nations of the region.⁵³ The dynamic was apparent amid the northward extension of the ‘family allowance’ program. Beyond not respecting traditional Inuit child-rearing practices, not least given the priority accorded to male-headed nuclear families, Inuit suffered discrimination by being obliged to accept payments in kind, having to select goods from a government-approved list.⁵⁴ Similarly indicative was the Department of Mines and Resources publication, *The Book of Wisdom for Eskimo*, which presupposed the inferiority of Indigenous knowledge regarding every aspect of daily life, including hunting and wildlife conservation. Emilie Cameron sees the booklet as signalling “the beginning of an intensified interest in the production of Inuit as a healthy, compliant, ‘modern’, wage-earning population.”⁵⁵ Inuit readers were chided that “the white man brought you the rifle which enable you to secure your food with

50 LAC/DEA/3306/9059-A-40/1, Letter from Gibson to Keenleyside, Dec. 14, 1945 (attached report dated Nov. 11, 1943).

51 Lackenbauer and Farish, “The Cold War on Canadian Soil”; Matthew S. Wiseman, “Unlocking the ‘Eskimo Secret’: Defence Science in the Cold War Canadian Arctic, 1947-1954,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* vol. 26, no. 1 (2015), pp. 191-223.

52 Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, pp. 116-119; Sangster, *Iconic North*, p. 7.

53 On the relevance of Michel Foucault’s concept of ‘governmentality,’ see Cameron, *Far Off Metal River*, pp. 118-121; Li, *Will to Improve*, pp. 6-8.

54 Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, pp. 71-94.

55 Cameron, *Far Off Metal River*, p. 118.

greater ease than your fathers did. But you did not use your rifle wisely. You killed the caribou in much greater numbers than you needed ... Today there are many areas where no caribou can be found and the walrus too have disappeared from many parts.”⁵⁶ Here was another chapter in Canadian colonialism’s lengthy history of instrumentalizing food as it sought to control Indigenous peoples and their lands.⁵⁷

Indeed, the question of food security became a barometer of increasing official interest in the Inuit. Already on the government’s radar in the interwar period, such concerns grew in the late 1940s as the price of white fox fur pelts collapsed with deleterious effects on those Inuit who participated in the trapping economy. Even more significant, however, was what government scientists perceived, constructed, and promoted as a ‘caribou crisis.’ Inchoate concerns over wildlife conservation between about 1900 and 1930 gave rise to a federal belief in the necessity of game management. This shift strengthened the intervention impetus, and Ottawa heightened surveillance and regulation of Indigenous hunting and trapping.⁵⁸

In 1948, A.W.F. Banfield, chief mammalogist of the fledgling Dominion Wildlife Service, warned publicly that the loss of barren-ground caribou herds was harming Inuit in the eastern Arctic, particularly Ungava. Blaming the situation on Indigenous overhunting, he called for more conservation.⁵⁹ Such claims were by no means innocent with regard to settler colonialism. Banfield’s declarations and the broader ‘caribou crisis’ he warned of are part of a much larger history of dispossession predicated on the idea of the incapacity of Indigenous peoples to recognize the importance of their environment and manage it wisely. Such notions were used to justify settler domination (and sovereignty); paternalistic claims to ensuring Indigenous food security usefully cloaked the broader ambition of resource extraction.⁶⁰

Reports of starvation reinforced federal worries over Inuit living conditions. Especially significant was the controversy that Farley Mowat’s *People of the Deer* (1952) sparked. Serialized in the American magazine *The Atlantic* and prompting questions in the House of Commons to Jean Lesage, by then minister

56 Canada, Department of Mines and Resources, Bureau of Northwest Territories and Yukon Affairs, Lands, Parks and Forests Branch, *The Book of Wisdom for Eskimo*, trans. Samuel G. Ford, sketches by Betty Kosior (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 1947), p. 23.

57 Burnett, Hay, and Chambers, “Settler Colonialism, Indigenous Peoples and Food,” surveys this history and the literature. Also, see Ian Mosby, “Administering Colonial Science: Nutrition Research and Human Biomedical Experimentation in Aboriginal Communities and Residential Schools, 1942-1952,” *Histoire sociale/Social History* vol. 46, no. 91 (2013), pp. 145-172; James Daschuk, *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life* (Regina: University of Regina Press, 2013); Luby, “From Milk-Medicine to Public (Re)Education Programs,” p. 382 She recounts how hydroelectric development caused food shortages, which compelled some Anishinabek parents to send their children to residential schools and saw other children targeted in the Sixties Scoop.

58 Kulchyski and Tester, *Kiumajut (Talking Back)*, pp. 23-81; Tina Loo, *States of Nature: Conserving Canada’s Wildlife in the Twentieth Century* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), pp. 131-137; Craig Campbell, “A Genealogy of the Concept of ‘Wanton Slaughter’ in Canadian Wildlife Biology,” in David G. Anderson and Mark Nuttall, eds., *Cultivating Arctic Landscapes, Knowing and Managing Animals in the Circumpolar North* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2004), pp. 154-171.

59 LAC/DEA/3306/9059-A-40/1, “Migration of Eskimos,” *St. John’s Evening Telegram*, Aug. 28, 1948.

60 Li, *Will to Improve*, p. 21.

of northern affairs and national resources, the book told a tale of criminal neglect by a government facing the starvation of the Ahlarmiut in the interior of the Northwest Territories. Government discomfort was all the more acute given that the international embarrassment over Canada's treatment of the Ahlarmiut came amid the expansion of its foreign aid.⁶¹

The *People of the Deer* controversy erupted just as the Canadian state was adopting a more interventionist approach regarding the Inuit that would facilitate the country's northward expansion. In May 1952, a government conference had been held to "consider and recommend action on the problems of Canada's Eskimo population."⁶² Consistent with broader trends, the official response remained informed by an assimilationist ethos and racial paternalism. H.A. Proctor, assistant director of Indian Health Services in the Department of National Health and Welfare, declared that the Inuit, as "citizens of an enlightened and moderately prosperous Canada ... deserve[d] greater attention," before pronouncing that "[t]heir civilization, because it is without hope of advancement, should be ruthlessly discouraged." He saw no "future for a discrete civilization in the Canadian Arctic" and thought it "moronic to support and encourage the Eskimo in his paleolithic crusade."⁶³ Reflecting the patriarchal attitudes associated with Canada's post-war order, Proctor prescribed technical training for Inuit men and the development of a needlecraft cottage industry for Inuit women.⁶⁴

Government observers considered Inuit assimilation into the liberal-capitalist mainstream all the more inevitable given that the anticipated resource extraction, predicated on the dismissal of Indigenous land rights, would bring the Inuit into increasing contact with the Euro-Canadian majority. It was no accident, for example, that excepting health care, the Department of Mines and Resources retained responsibility for Inuit affairs. Following a rejigging of the bureaucracy in 1953, all of this fell to the new DNANR. While still deputy minister of the former, Hugh Keenleyside depicted a Canadian Arctic in which

the contacts between the Eskimo and Indian people and their white neighbours will multiply in number and increase in intimacy. The dynamic qualities of modern civilization will not indefinitely permit of compromise with backward modes of life ... Inevitably ... the greater ease and enlarged comfort that can be provided by the use of the equipment and technique of the outside world will become apparent to the Indian and the Eskimo ... Along with the material arts of civilized life, the northern natives will tend to adopt the social and intellectual standards and concepts of their new neighbours.⁶⁵

61 Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, p. 56; Kulchyski and Tester, *Kiumajut (Talking Back)*, p. 50; Canada, House of Commons, *Debates of the House of Commons, Session 1953-1954, Volume 2* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1954), pp. 1244-1245; Farley Mowat, *People of the Deer* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1952).

62 LAC/NAP/1234/251-1/2, News Release, Department of Resources and Development, Editorial and Information Division, May 22, 1952.

63 LAC/NAP/1234/251-1/3, "The Future of the Canadian Eskimo," H.A. Proctor, March 28, 1952.

64 LAC/NAP/1234/251-1/3, "The Future of the Canadian Eskimo," H.A. Proctor, March 28, 1952.

65 LAC/HLK/28/3, "The Human Resources Problem of the Canadian North," Symposium on the Arctic, from the *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada*, Third Series, vol. 44, 1950 (henceforth "The Human Resources Problem").

Ottawa accordingly wanted action "to see that these people are given a chance to survive and to become an asset instead of a liability."⁶⁶ Pushing a liberal-capitalist work ethic collided with long-standing racial tropes and gender attitudes. Thomas H. Manning, a British-Canadian explorer who had conducted research in the Arctic for Britain's Royal Geographical Survey, claimed that "once relief is given, the Eskimo, more than the white, prefer to get something for nothing, and it soon becomes a habit."⁶⁷ J.W. Mackinnon, superintendent of education in the Northwest Territories' Mackenzie District, declared it "a well-known fact that many of the Native people are lazy and lack initiative," and thus recommended they be compelled to work for relief rations, as this "would produce a more healthy type of people."⁶⁸ The assimilation of Canada's Indigenous peoples was thus understood as part of the broader modernization project; incorporation into the liberal-capitalist order would be a crucial and welcome contribution to Indigenous development. Keenleyside expressed such sentiment when he characterized the "human resources problem" in the Arctic as a "conflict between, but the gradual synthesis of, the ways and concepts of neolithic and atomic man."⁶⁹

To be sure, elements in Ottawa continued to believe that Inuit communities "should be encouraged and helped to live off the land and to follow their traditional way of life."⁷⁰ Yet, the growing development mania meant that high modernist schemes increasingly eclipsed such views. The trend was apparent as the bureaucracy and budget for northern administration expanded.⁷¹ Consistent with the linear and racialized logic underpinning modernization theory, as well as that of Canada as a settler society, officials aimed to encourage the Inuit to adopt a settled, agricultural way of life. H.A. Proctor declared that some might "shudder at the thought of the free and lordly Eskimo chained to the treadmill of an eight hour day and a forty hour week," but this was to be welcomed, since the hunting-nomadic lifestyle "chained [the Inuit] to the most inexorable and pitiless treadmill ever devised by God or Man."⁷² The emphasis on ending the migratory way of life informed calls for consolidating the Inuit population in new settlements so that Ottawa could deliver government services more rationally and effectively, and any remaining hunts "could be properly organized ... eliminat[ing] ... the present endless wanderings for game."⁷³

The logic of such high modernist thinking, when taken to its extreme, culminated in wholesale relocations of Inuit and other Indigenous communities, with tragic results. As with the proposed transplantation of yaks, Canadian officials reduced such populations to an element of an environmental landscape, one that the Canadian state believed it could manipulate and transfer with impunity to

66 LAC/DEA/3306/9059-A-40/1, Letter from Gibson to Keenleyside, Dec. 14, 1945 (attached report dated Nov. 11, 1943).

67 LAC/DEA/3306/9059-A-40/1, Letter from Parkin to Keenleyside, June 23, 1941 (attached report).

68 LAC/NAP/1069/251-1/1A, Letter from McKinnon to Gibson, Sept. 3, 1949.

69 LAC/HLK/28/3, "The Human Resources Problem."

70 LAC/NAP/1234/251-1/2, News Release, Department of Resources and Development, Editorial and Information Division, May 22, 1952.

71 Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, pp. 58-59.

72 LAC/NAP/1234/251-1/3, "The Future of the Canadian Eskimo," H.A. Proctor, March 28, 1952.

73 LAC/NAP/1234/251-1/3, Letter from RCMP, Office of the Commissioner, to Cunningham, Aug. 4, 1954.

realize broader policy objectives.⁷⁴ Indeed, ‘relocation’ in this context implied more than just geographical space; it also involved time, as the Canadian state strove to reposition Indigenous peoples on the spectrum of human development by severing them from a vanishing ‘traditional’ and inserting them into the Canadian liberal-capitalist ‘modern.’⁷⁵

All of this points to how the post-war development zeitgeist was shaping official discussion of Canada’s Indigenous peoples. Keenleyside, after all, deployed the same rhetoric and logic of social responsibility in explaining Canada’s new appreciation of the Arctic as he did in recounting the emergence of the UN Technical Assistance program.⁷⁶ According to J.W. McKinnon, it was “a self-evident truth that the white man’s way of life is going to prevail in the North,” making it crucial that the “Eskimo and Indian population should be educated by means of a slow process of adjustment (over a period of perhaps twenty-five years) into the Canadian way of life.”⁷⁷ The trend was equally apparent as the attention of Northern Affairs officials was drawn to a Pakistani government development program “to help villagers to help themselves.” The U.S.-funded project, positing the village as “the basic unit for development purposes,” aimed to transform village life by securing the voluntary services of the local unemployed.⁷⁸ It reminded James G. Wright, chief of the DNANR’s Northern Services division, of a scheme that Arctic Services had discussed to use “able-bodied relief recipients to improve Eskimo settlements,” prompting him to ask James Cantley of Arctic Services whether something similar could work in Canada. Cantley preferred to develop cottage industries among the Inuit, but acknowledged that this would “require time and patient effort,” since “[t]he average Eskimo is the least concerned about the precariousness of his present condition and it will take time to convince him that he must change his way of life greatly if he is to do more than survive.”⁷⁹

From India to Ungava ...

It was in this context that plans emerged to transplant yaks from India to Ungava. Flowing from the emphasis on wildlife management, Inuit food security, a settled life, and the logic of liberal-capitalist modernization, federal officials were keen

74 Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*; Rudolph Marcus, *Relocating Eden: The Image and Politics of Inuit Exile in the Canadian Arctic* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1995); Ila Bussidor and Üstun Bilgen-Reinart, *Night Spirits: The Story of the Relocation of the Sayisi Dene* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1997); Frédéric B. Laugrand, Jarich G. Oosten, and Üstün Bilgen-Reinart, “La ‘relocalisation’ des Dénés sayisis et des Ahiamriuts dans les années 1950,” *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec* vol. 41, nos. 2/3 (2011), pp. 99-116.

75 On this point, I am indebted to Allan Downey, who encouraged me to think through the theme of ‘relocation,’ and to Mary Jane Logan McCallum’s discussion of John Borrow’s essay, “Physical Philosophy: Mobility and the Future of Indigenous Rights,” in Benjamin J. Richardson, Shin Imai, and Kent McNeill, eds., *Indigenous Peoples and the Law: Comparative and Critical Perspectives* (Portland, OR: Hart Publishing, 2009), pp. 403-419. McCallum, *Indigenous Women, Work, and History*, p. 76.

76 LAC/HLK/28/3, “The Human Resources Problem”; LAC/HLK/28/20, Historical Background.

77 LAC/NAP/1069/251-1/1A, Letter from McKinnon to Gibson, Sept. 3, 1949.

78 LAC/NAP/1234/251-1/2, *Pakistan News & Views*, Issued by the Office of the High Commissioner for Pakistan, vol. IV, no. XVIII, Ottawa, Nov. 24, 1952.

79 LAC/NAP/1234/251-1/2, Note to Cantley from W[right] (referring to attached newsletter), undated; LAC/NAP/1234/251-1/2, Memorandum for Wright from Cantley, Dec. 18, 1952. Also, Kulchyski and Tester, *Kiumajut (Talking Back)*, p. 93.

to introduce agriculture, notably animal husbandry, into the Arctic. The post-war development phenomenon, it bears repeating, flowed from a much longer history of empire and social evolution theories; according to Loo, it was the “scale of the changes ... envisaged” that was the distinguishing feature of ‘high’ modernism.⁸⁰ Accordingly, as they sought to import yaks to Ungava, Canadian officialdom and experts built on the ideas and knowledge obtained from past instances of environmental imperialism in the Canadian north.⁸¹

When Hugh Keenleyside, then deputy minister of mines and resources, waxed enthusiastic in 1950 over agricultural production in the Arctic,⁸² he was encouraged partly by the lengthy (albeit decidedly mixed) record of efforts to introduce European plants into the region.⁸³ Nor was the introduction of new animal species into the arctic and sub-arctic unprecedented. Liza Piper and John Sandlos have chronicled efforts, dating to the 1880s, to introduce livestock into the western Arctic, and dominion officials’ interest in importing domesticated reindeer from northern Europe, which paralleled their ambition to domesticate northern wildlife. Anticipating the post-war discourse of modernization theory, and consistent with the transnational dimension of development (and settler colonialism), Ottawa noted an American initiative in Alaska that began in the 1890s to turn Inuit hunters into reindeer herders; the Alaskan Bureau of Education had trumpeted in 1917 that “within less than a generation, the Eskimos throughout northern and western Alaska have been advanced through one entire stage of civilization, from ... hunting and fishing to the pastoral stage.”⁸⁴ Following a series of dominion-led pilot projects that met with dubious results and a royal commission on developing reindeer and musk-ox industries, Canadian officials introduced reindeer into the Mackenzie Valley region in the 1930s, aiming to supplement diminishing game resources and provide an alternative means of livelihood for the region’s Indigenous population.⁸⁵ A decade later, with minds turning to post-war reconstruction, R.A. Gibson, deputy commissioner of the Northwest Territories, had proposed sending a herd of goats to Eskimo Point (Arviat, Nunavut), on Hudson Bay’s west coast.⁸⁶ The DNANR would couch its post-war efforts in a language of development and liberal humanitarianism and justify it via the precepts of modernization theory; however, they were equally predicated on numerous pre-1945 species transplantations, along with

80 Loo, “High Modernism, Conflict, and the Nature of Change,” p. 41.

81 Piper and Sandlos, “Broken Frontier,” pp. 759-795.

82 LAC/HLK/28/3, “The Human Resources Problem.”

83 Piper and Sandlos, “Broken Frontier,” pp. 778-780.

84 Piper and Sandlos, “Broken Frontier,” pp. 771-773. Also, Alan MacEachern, “Lost in Shipping: Canadian National Parks and the International Donation of Wildlife,” in William J. Turkel, ed., *Method and Meaning in Canadian Environmental History* (Toronto: Nelson, 2009), p. 199. MacEachern discusses how dominion officials felt the need to “fill [Canada’s first national parks] with wildlife” and thus imported animals, including non-indigenous species.

85 Loo, *States of Nature*, pp. 24, 130-131. Also, Kulchyski and Tester, *Kiumajut (Talking Back)*, p. 92. Settler colonialism has used such methods many times around the world to dispossess Indigenous peoples, including earlier in Canada. See Sarah Carter, *Lost Harvests: Prairie Indian Reserve Farmers and Government Policy* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993).

86 LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Letter from Muir to Gibson, March 7, 1944.

the underlying ideas and attitudes—not least the inherent superiority of European agricultural knowledge—that derived from imperialism and settler colonialism.⁸⁷

As it pursued its vision of northern development, Northern Affairs came to view Fort Chimo (Kuujuaq) on Ungava Bay as “the most promising area” to introduce animal husbandry.⁸⁸ The region was home to migratory Inuit when the Hudson’s Bay Company established a trading post in the mid-nineteenth century. Their gradual incorporation into the fur trade anticipated the construction of an American air base during the Second World War. Dorothy Mesher, born and raised in Fort Chimo, has recalled how “our lives immediately changed” from the moment the base was constructed.⁸⁹ By the mid-1950s, Fort Chimo’s population was about 400, mostly Inuit who had been attracted by wartime employment. Ottawa had taken control of the base at war’s end, but closed it by the late 1940s, replacing it with a Department of Transportation meteorological station.⁹⁰ Transport officials kept a few sheep at Fort Chimo as late as 1948, and prior to that, various Hudson’s Bay Company managers had kept some.⁹¹

Especially prominent in the plans for animal husbandry was the Montreal-based Arctic Institute of North America (AINA), a cross-border, ostensibly private research organization with strong ties to government that had emerged out of wartime discussions between Canadian and U.S. private and public figures.⁹² Emblematic of the Anglo-American milieu from which Canadian aid efforts sprang, Marjorie C. Findlay, a Cambridge-educated doctoral candidate at McGill University funded by a McGill-AINA-Carnegie scholarship, emerged as an important figure in the animal-husbandry project. In autumn 1953, the *Montreal Gazette* reported how, building on her studies of sheep farming in Greenland and

87 Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 171-194; Aaron Skabelund, “Animals and Imperialism: Recent Historiographical Trends,” *History Compass*, vol. 11, no. 10 (2013), pp. 801-807. See Harriet Ritvo, “Going Forth and Multiplying: Animal Acclimatization and Invasion,” *Environmental History* vol. 17, no. 2 (2012), pp. 1-11, and Warwick Anderson, “Climates of Opinion: Acclimatization in Nineteenth-Century France and England,” *Victorian Studies*, vol. 35, no. 2 (1992), pp. 135-157, on the nineteenth-century phenomenon of ‘acclimatization,’ including efforts to introduce camels in the American southwest and Australia. Such experiments were a crucial precursor to the events under study here. Also, Anya Zilberstein, “Inured to Empire: Wild Rice and Climate Change,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, vol. 72, no. 1 (2015), pp. 127-158, explores attempts to domesticate North American wild rice as a staple that could withstand any climatic condition and ensure abundant food for Britain and the empire—especially relevant given that Ottawa’s animal-husbandry scheme was accompanied by plans to introduce horticulture, along with plants for grazing.

88 LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Memorandum for Deputy Minister from Cunningham, Feb. 18, 1954.

89 Dorothy Mesher (with Ray Woolam), *Kuujuaq—Memories and Musings* (Duncan, BC: Unica Publishing Co., Ltd., 1995), p. 39.

90 LAC/NAP/1416/251-3-7/3, Minutes of a Meeting of the Interdepartmental Committee on Northern Agriculture held at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, 12 January 1955; Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 138; Marjorie C. Findlay, “The Means of Improving the Economic Situation of the Ungava Bay Eskimos” (unpublished PhD thesis, McGill University, 1956), 81.

91 LAC/NAP/94/251-3-7/4, Memorandum for Sivertz from Walton, Nov. 4, 1955.

92 Raleigh Parkin, “The Origin of the Institute,” *Arctic* vol. 19, no. 1 (1966): pp. 5-18. Parkin, a central figure in the AINA, was the son of Canada’s Sir George Parkin, long-time secretary to the Rhodes Trust and one of the country’s foremost imperialists. One of Raleigh’s sisters, Marjorie, married Progressive Conservative parliamentarian James M. Macdonnell, who we encounter below as an advocate of foreign aid and DNANR development initiatives. This circle suggests the Anglo-Canadian elite’s close-knit nature and underscores the imperial aspect of Canada’s Arctic ambitions.

Iceland, Findlay hoped to ease the “sorry state of the Eskimos of the Ungava Bay region.”⁹³ Although the director of the federal Experimental Farms Service doubted “the wisdom of ... a woman going alone into that far northern region,”⁹⁴ the DNANR hoped to benefit from Findlay’s research. Officials were also in touch with the director of the Montreal Botanical Garden, Jacques Rousseau, who saw grazing possibilities “pretty near everywhere around 58° lat[itude].”⁹⁵ James Cantley, who believed that “it should [not] be too difficult to persuade some of the Eskimos ... to convert from a hunting to a producing economy,” met with Findlay and Rousseau to discuss introducing sheep, and talks were soon under way between Arctic Services and the federal Department of Agriculture.⁹⁶

These early discussions were infused with the ambition to incorporate Indigenous peoples into the Canadian liberal-capitalist order. Findlay, for example, emphasized that “these people must somehow be helped to stand on their own feet.”⁹⁷ The DNANR’s ambition was “to improve and diversify the economy” of the Inuit of Ungava by “developing an interest in animal husbandry among them,” that, beyond supplying food, would eventually earn them “a reasonable income” from selling surplus meat and other products.⁹⁸ Indeed, Ottawa was anxious to find a place for the Inuit in an economic landscape that resource extraction was poised to transform. B.G. Sivertz, head of the DNANR’s Arctic Division and a former DEA official, observed that mineral development in Ungava “would almost certainly result in an increased white population” that would happily create a market for locally-produced vegetables and meat.⁹⁹ The trope of the ‘lazy native’ was once again present in such discussions¹⁰⁰; amid talk of introducing sheep in Fort Chimo, one DNANR official recommended maintaining the flock away from the community, since the base offered “social activities in the form of dances and picture shows, which ... do not contribute to punctual attendance at work.” In his estimation, “if the agricultural programme is to develop, it cannot be hampered by an inconstant labour staff.”¹⁰¹

Such liberal-capitalist motivations, with their attending attitudes on race and gender, informed a larger modernization impulse, namely the plan to encourage the Inuit to embrace a settled, agricultural existence. This objective was evident in

93 LAC/NAP/1069/251-3-7/1, “Sheep Farming among Eskimos Project of English Geographer,” *Montreal Gazette*, Oct. 13, 1953.

94 LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/2, Memorandum dictated by Hopkins, March 19, 1954. Also, Sangster, *Iconic North*, pp. 33-68, on how gender attitudes constructed white women in the Arctic and sub-Arctic as potential victims, even as this increasingly present demographic group contributed, through their writings, to the reification of colonial discourses and attitudes.

95 LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Letter from Cunningham to Hopkins, Dec. 14, 1953; LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Letter from Rousseau to Cantley, 23 Oct. 1953.

96 LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Letter from Cantley to Rousseau, Nov. 2, 1953; LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Memorandum from Cantley for Fraser, Nov. 16, 1953; LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Letter from Cunningham to Hopkins, Dec. 14, 1953.

97 LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, “Sheep Farming among Eskimos Project”.

98 LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Memorandum for Deputy Minister from Cunningham, Jan. 25, 1954; LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Letter to Heslop from Cunningham, Dec. 14, 1953.

99 LAC/NAP/1416/251-3-7/3, Minutes of a Meeting of the Interdepartmental Committee on Northern Agriculture held at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, 12 January 1955.

100 See Lutz, *Makik*, 305, about this trope in the Canadian context.

101 LAC/NAP/94/251-3-7/4, Memorandum for Phillips from Walton, May 18, 1956.

official preoccupations with the Inuit's sled dogs, symbolic of the migratory, hunting life. F.J.G. Cunningham, director of the DNANR's Northern Administration and Lands Branch, expressed the hope that introducing sheep would provide a valid excuse to control the animals; moreover, he hoped the Inuit of Ungava would "come to accept further ideas of getting along without teams of dogs. They might then proceed to a more rational scheme than they have at present for [their use]."¹⁰² The sled-dog issue underscored the racial dynamic underpinning high modernism; although a plan to transfer the dogs out of Fort Chimo surfaced early on among the "white residents who seem to think it a good idea," no one consulted the Inuit, the excuse being that the plans to introduce sheep were not confirmed.¹⁰³

What started out in 1953 as a scheme to introduce sheep progressed quickly to yaks. Grant Carman, a research officer in animal husbandry at the Department of Agriculture's Experimental Farm in Ottawa, appears to have been the instigator.¹⁰⁴ Here again, there were precedents. In 1909, the Duke of Bedford had presented a small herd to the dominion government in the hope that yaks could crossbreed with domestic cattle to produce livestock more suitable for Canada's climate. Despite breeding experiments between the wars, and the Alaskan Agricultural Experiment Station's obtaining yaks from Canada for its own work, a lack of enthusiasm led to the animals' slaughter or distribution to North American zoos in the late 1930s.¹⁰⁵ Officials such as Carman were also echoing Arctic explorer Vihjalmur Stefansson, who decades before had promoted domestication of the muskox by Inuit as a source of meat and wool that they could also sell on world markets.¹⁰⁶ Spurred by Carman's suggestion that the yak best responded to the DNANR's vision, investigations gave rise to growing enthusiasm in Arctic Services. By early 1954, officials believed the yak to be overwhelmingly superior to sheep; it was a miraculous beast that could serve as both work animal and food supply, forage on its own, and better withstand the harsh climate.¹⁰⁷ Excitement only increased when the acting director of the FAO's agricultural division, Ralph W. Phillips, an American who had been a U.S. State Department consultant on animal breeding in China and India, responded positively to Ottawa's inquiries.¹⁰⁸

102 LAC/NAP/1069/251-3-7/2, Memorandum for Deputy Minister from Cunningham, Dec. 13, 1954. Also, Frank James Tester, "Mad Dogs and (Mostly) Englishmen: Colonial Relations, Commodities, and the Fate of Inuit Sled Dogs," *Études/Inuit/Studies*, vol. 34, no. 2 (2010), pp. 129-147; Tina Loo, "Dead Dogs and Living History," *Canada's History* vol. 90, no. 2 (2010), pp. 49-50.

103 LAC/NAP/1069/251-3-7/2, Memorandum to Walton from Sivertz, Dec. 8, 1954.

104 LAC/NAP/94/251-3-7/1, Memorandum for Cantley from Larmer, Dec. 10, 1953; LAC/NAP/94/251-3-7/1, Memorandum for Deputy Minister from Cunningham, Jan. 25, 1954.

105 LAC/NAP/97/251-3-19/1, Memorandum for Cunningham from Coleman, Nov. 5, 1957 (attached note); LAC/NAP/97/251-3-19/1, The Yak (*Bos Grunniens*), March 17, 1958 (note to file).

106 Murielle Nagy, "'We did not want the muskox to increase': Inuvialuit Knowledge about Muskox and Caribou Populations on Banks Island, Canada," in David G. Anderson and Mark Nuttall, eds., *Cultivating Arctic Landscapes, Knowing and Managing Animals in the Circumpolar North* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2004), p. 94. Also, Piper and Sandlos, "Broken Frontier," p. 773.

107 LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Memorandum for Cantley from Larmour, Dec. 23, 1953; LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Memorandum from Larmour to Cantley, Stevenson, Houston, Johnson, Jan. 7, 1954.

108 LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Memorandum for Deputy Minister from Cunningham, Jan. 25, 1954; also, Ralph Wesley Phillips, *Breeding Livestock Adapted to Unfavorable Environments: An FAO Study* (Washington, DC: Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, 1948).

'So ask your Papa where the Yak may be got'

Phillips' involvement points to how Canadian Indian and aid policy were converging. Indeed, in the wake of the high-ranking FAO official's expression of support, senior DNANR officials viewed Louis St Laurent's upcoming Asian tour as a timely opportunity to discuss the yak scheme with India's minister of food and agriculture.¹⁰⁹ It did not take long for Jean Lesage, the new federal minister of northern affairs and national resources, to become involved; two years after having chaired the UN's technical assistance conference in Paris, he asked St Laurent to inquire of Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru whether India could provide a herd of yaks for experimental purposes in northern Quebec. Lesage explained his department's efforts to "improve and diversify the economy of the Canadian Eskimos," as it was "a matter of very great importance if their lives are to be given stability and, particularly, if they are to be brought within the fabric of the Canadian nation, in an active sense." Noting that if the project went ahead, Canada would require some "'technical assistance' as well as 'capital assistance'" from the Indian government, Lesage ventured that

there might be some appeal to Mr. Nehru and to the people of India in the idea that it would be possible for them to reciprocate in some measure the assistance that Canada has been providing under the Colombo Plan. It might particularly appeal to them if they felt that their assistance to us could be in exactly the same character as our assistance to them—in the character of helping to improve the productivity of underdeveloped parts of Canada and to raise the standard of living of Canadian citizens whose lives are now subject to serious economic hazard.¹¹⁰

St Laurent, intent on cultivating a special relationship with India, agreed to raise the matter with Nehru if the opportunity arose.¹¹¹ Ultimately, however, the two men talked about other matters, so the question fell to Canada's diplomats. They presented the proposed project to the Indian Ministry of Finance in explicitly developmental terms; Klaus Goldschlag of Canada's high commission alluded to the project being conducted in the framework of the Colombo Plan, reiterating Lesage's earlier arguments.¹¹² According to the high commission, the official Indian reaction was positive: "[T]he Indians would very much like to provide assistance to Canada under the auspices of the Colombo Plan."¹¹³ Outside government circles, the *Hindustan Times* reported that in a "pleasant reversal of the Colombo Plan," Canada was "looking to India for help in solving the economic problems of

109 LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Memorandum for Deputy Minister from Cunningham, Jan. 25, 1954.

110 Note the (ironic) use of quotes around the terms technical assistance and capital assistance, suggesting that despite the use of the discourse and form of development, there was reluctance to accept the *substance* of Canada as a recipient of Indian aid. LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Letter from Lesage to St Laurent, Jan. 26, 1954.

111 LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Letter from St Laurent to Lesage, Jan. 27, 1954. Consistent with broader continuities between the pre- and post-1945 periods, the linking of the proposal to strengthening Indo-Canadian relations echoes the longer history of 'gifting' animals that MacEachern discusses in "Lost in Shipping."

112 LAC/DEA/8407/11038-Y-2-40, Letter from Goldschlag to Narain, April 23, 1954.

113 LAC/DEA/8407/11038-Y-2-40, Letter from Office of the High Commissioner for Canada, New Delhi, to the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Canada, April 27, 1954.

her undeveloped areas.” Addressing the ambitiousness of the proposed relocation, the *Times* acknowledged that Ungava was “a cold climate by reason of latitude rather than elevation,” but noted that Canadian officials believed “it should be sufficiently like the climate of the yaks’ native ‘high regions’ to prove suitable.”¹¹⁴

Canada’s high commissioner to India, Escott Reid, echoed such enthusiasm. An avowed advocate in the DEA for a special Indo-Canadian relationship, Reid latched on to the Colombo connection, declaring that “[R]egardless of the project’s prospects of success, a Canadian application for Colombo Plan aid is bound to be regarded here as a tangible corroboration of the concept of partnership between free Asia and the West.” Reid emphasized that the “Indians do not ... like to be merely recipients of aid from abroad,” and had consequently “already extended substantial aid under the Colombo Plan to their less developed Asian neighbours.” It thus seemed logical, in an analysis assuming a developmental hierarchy, for India to furnish technical assistance to Indigenous people in Canada. All told, Reid recommended a Canadian application for Colombo Plan aid, given this would “imply ... a reciprocity.”¹¹⁵

As for Inuit reactions regarding the proposed yak importation scheme, there is no mention of these in the Canadian government files. Although some Inuit women expressed a desire to see chickens introduced to Fort Chimo,¹¹⁶ V.B. Heslop, a welfare teacher at the federal day school in the community, relayed some local scepticism about the plan to introduce sheep. When the DNANR asked her to sound out the Inuit population, she reported that only one individual, Bill Saunders, merited being paid attention to, since he alone had any experience tending sheep. According to Veslop, Saunders was dismissive: the Inuit, he told her, would have to get rid of all their dogs, there was insufficient pasturage for summer grazing, and town residents would kill the sheep before their numbers increased substantially. Heslop declared “nothing could be gained [from] the other natives” since it was akin to “suddenly asking us how we would like to raise ostrich or something equally as foreign to us.”¹¹⁷ Her comments, along with the virtual absence of Inuit voices in the files, were consistent with a high-modernist approach privileging Euro-Canadian voices and knowledge. Notwithstanding the liberal-humanitarian language it employed, Ottawa continued to treat the Inuit as object rather than subject. In this sense, little differentiated Canada’s development efforts in the Arctic from those targeting populations in the Global South.¹¹⁸

114 LAC/DEA/8407/11038-Y-2-40, “Tibetan Yaks for Canada,” *Hindustan Times*, June 27, 1954.

115 LAC/DEA/8407/11038-Y-2-40, Letter from Office of the High Commissioner for Canada, New Delhi, to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, April 27, 1954. For more on Reid’s views of India, see Ryan Touhey, “Romanticism and Race: Escott Reid, the Department of External Affairs, and the Sundering of Canada-India Relations, 1952-57,” in Laura Madokoro, Francine McKenzie, and David Meren, eds., *Dominion of Race: Rethinking Canada’s International History* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017), pp. 183-205.

116 LAC/NAP/1416/251-3-7/3, Minutes of a Meeting of the Interdepartmental Committee on Northern Agriculture held at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, 12 January 1955.

117 LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Letter to Heslop from Cunningham, Dec. 14, 1953; LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, Letter from Heslop to Cunningham, March 4, 1954.

118 LAC/NAP/363/251-3-7/6, Memorandum for Hodgkinson from Stevenson, Oct. 10, 1958.

By February 1954, the Canadian press had caught wind of the yak scheme. The Montreal *Gazette* characterized the government’s animal husbandry initiative as “key to turning Ungava’s Eskimos and Indians from government wards into self-supporting citizens.”¹¹⁹ As time wore on, however, there were expressions of misgiving. The *Edmonton Journal* declared it better to concentrate on native species such as caribou and muskox, or to expand the interwar reindeer project, rather than embarking on dubious and perhaps costly ventures such as introducing yaks.¹²⁰

There was also doubt at External Affairs, where Escott Reid’s colleagues did not share his enthusiasm or that of their DNANR counterparts. By June 1954, the DEA “firmly opposed” importing yaks via the Colombo Plan.¹²¹ Ed Ritchie of the economic division claimed that such an initiative could “scarcely be justified” under the terms of a program “created exclusively to assist the development and raise the standard of living of the lesser developed free areas of South-Eastern Asia.”¹²² R. A. McKay, acting under-secretary of state for external affairs, went even further: “We have always considered that India, in turn, might be able to assist her neighbours, whose economies are less developed than her own, but there has never been a suggestion that she might assist more advanced areas in the west.”¹²³

McKay’s remarks highlighted the race thinking informing Canadian aid and Indian policy; consistent with modernization theory, there was a hierarchy of development and a top-down logic to aid relationships that meant although Canada could provide aid to India, and India could assist its ‘less-developed’ neighbours, the notion that India should provide aid to Canada was not to be entertained. Furthermore, it appears the logic of internal colonization and concomitant refusal to recognize the colonial dynamic between Canada and Indigenous peoples excluded the possibility of Canada’s Inuit receiving aid under the auspices of an international aid initiative; to the contrary, helping the Inuit cross the threshold into a new stage of development was a responsibility the Canadian state had to discharge if it and the settler society it governed were to retain legitimacy.

The DNANR faced another setback when C.S. Barry, chief of the Department of Agriculture’s livestock division, informed it that regulations prohibited the importing of yaks from India, since “it is known that foot-and-mouth and other contagious diseases are rampant among livestock there.”¹²⁴ J.G. Taggart, deputy minister of agriculture, later confirmed this and ruled out any importation under quarantine provisions, since the animals could still be carriers.¹²⁵ Despite the dispassionate scientific language employed, Agriculture’s opposition to importing yaks from India—and its subsequent suggestion that these could be more safely

119 LAC/NAP/93/251-3-7/1, “Reindeer, Sheep Ranching Key to Natives’ Security in Ungava,” *Montreal Gazette*, Feb. 25, 1954.

120 LAC/NAP/1069/251-3-7/2, Editorial, “Resources on the Hoof,” *Edmonton Journal*, June 24, 1954.

121 LAC/NAP/1069/251-3-7/2, Memorandum for Deputy Minister from R.A.J.P., June 3, 1954.

122 LAC/DEA/8407/11038-Y-2-40, Memorandum for Acting Under-Secretary from Ritchie, May 12, 1954.

123 LAC/DEA/8407/11038-Y-2-40, Letter from McKay to Robertson, May 12, 1954.

124 LAC/NAP/1069/251-3-7/2, Memorandum for Sivertz, Larmour, from Cantley, June 15, 1954.

125 LAC/NAP/1069/251-3-7/2, Letter from Taggart to Robertson, July 30, 1954.

obtained from a British zoo—is suggestive of the race thinking at play.¹²⁶ In a period during which Canada's exclusionist immigration policy remained largely intact and 'white' expert knowledge was heavily privileged over that of Indigenous or Third World populations, the global colour line applied as much to animals as it did to people.¹²⁷

Notwithstanding these obstacles, the DNANR pressed on in Ungava. By early 1955, it and the Department of Agriculture were collaborating on a number of development projects at Fort Chimo.¹²⁸ They tried again to introduce sheep, "more to try to interest the Eskimos in tending livestock than anything else."¹²⁹ The sheep arrived in mid-August 1955 and, consistent with the concern to inculcate a liberal-capitalist ethos, two Inuit families on relief cared for them. Two months later, the community's northern service officer—the DNANR equivalent of a development worker—was happily and paternalistically affirming that there was "no doubt that some of the Eskimos are capable of tending sheep."¹³⁰ In addition to this apparent success, experiments at Fort Chimo in growing clover and other grasses for grazing were going "exceedingly well."¹³¹

Such reports only fuelled hope for the animal-husbandry project, and by September 1956 yaks were back on the agenda. W.G. Brown, chief of the DNANR's Territorial Division, envisaged them as an "integral part of the future economy of the north," believing it necessary to "consider a possible alternative meat supply for the future when caribou are either not available or *do not fit into the northern pattern of living* [emphasis added]."¹³² Such comments underscore DNANR officials' high-modernist worldview. Indeed, Brown justified plans to introduce yak partly on the basis that the "history of civilization . . . reveals that the highest standard of culture were achieved by sedentary people. The culture of the nomads was usually of a much lower standard."¹³³ Also telling was the language

126 LAC/NAP/428/251-3-19/2, Letter to Cunningham from Wells, April 14, 1959.

127 The dynamic is consistent with Harriet Ritvo's observation that although transplanting European organisms abroad was easily contemplated, by the late nineteenth century there was growing unease about transferring 'exotic' animals or plants to the metropole (or, in this case, its settler society equivalent). Ritvo links this ambivalence to the rise of American exclusionist immigration policies. Ritvo, "Animal Acclimatization and Invasion," pp. 8-9. Also, Harriet Ritvo, "Race, Breed, and Myths of Origin: Chillingham Cattle as Ancient Britons," *Representations*, no. 39 (1992), pp. 14-18, for the way in which an animal could become 'raced'. On how race thinking intersected with medical quarantine in commercial and immigration policies, see Linda M. Ambrose, "Quarantine in Question: The 1913 Investigation at William Head, B.C.," *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History*, vol. 22, no. 1 (2005), pp. 139-153; Alan Mayne, "Guardians at the Gate: Quarantine and Racialism in Two Pacific Rim Port Cities, 1870-1914," *Urban History* vol. 35, no. 2 (2008), pp. 255-274; Sarah Isabel Wallace, *Not Fit to Stay, Public Health Panics and South Asian Exclusion* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017).

128 LAC/NAP/1069/251-3-7/2, Memorandum to Walton from Sivertz, Dec. 8, 1954; LAC/NAP/1416/251-3-7/3, Minutes of a Meeting of the Interdepartmental Committee on Northern Agriculture held at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, Jan. 12, 1955.

129 LAC/NAP/94/251-3-7/3, Letter to Trepanier from Robertson, March 1, 1955.

130 LAC/NAP/94/251-3-7/4, Memorandum for File, Aug. 3, 1955; LAC/NAP/94/251-3-7/4, Memorandum for Sivertz from Walton, Sept. 20, 1955; LAC/NAP/94/251-3-7/4, Memorandum for Sivertz from Walton, Nov. 4, 1955. See Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, pp. 326-332, on the Northern Service Officer program.

131 LAC/NAP/94, 251-3-7/4, Memorandum for File, Aug. 3, 1955.

132 LAC/NAP/97/251-3-19/1, Memorandum for Director from Brown, Sept. 14, 1956.

133 LAC/NAP/97/251-3-19/1, Memorandum for Director from Brown, Sept. 14, 1956.

the DNANR used to promote its development efforts to the public; depicting the hunting-based way of life as keeping humans at a level "not much more than animal," it argued that "the time ha[d] come when [the Inuit] ought to be induced to attempt" animal husbandry, especially since it was not "the white man's way to accept the precarious living afforded by the caribou herds."¹³⁴

With the DNANR and Department of Agriculture convinced that animals could be raised successfully in northern Canada wherever adequate winter-feed could be produced, DNANR eyes turned south. Although yaks from India were unacceptable, those from the U.S. could be imported.¹³⁵ By mid-1957, the Arctic Division was in touch with the operator of a game farm in Catskill, New York, about yaks on his farm that were progeny of the Canadian herd disposed of in the 1930s. With enthusiasm at the highest levels of the DNANR, Ottawa ended up purchasing three (!) yaks—one male, two females—that were delivered in February 1958.¹³⁶

Concern about introducing non-indigenous animals into the national-park system, along with the fact bovine diseases were already present in the parks, prompted the DNANR to keep the yaks on a family farm south of Ottawa.¹³⁷ The plan was to build up the herd and eventually ship it to the Arctic for the next stage of the experiment. Meanwhile, anticipating greater northern food production, there were parallel efforts to increase cold storage facilities in Ungava, including DNANR inquiries about a refrigeration project in Ceylon realized with Canada's Colombo Plan aid.¹³⁸

Yet, notwithstanding the DNANR's grand ambitions, problems persisted. By the autumn of 1958, it had become apparent that one of the yaks obtained—Matilda—was not fertile, and had to be exchanged. This was finally accomplished, but took some back-and-forth with the Catskill Game Farm, which claimed it had never offered a guarantee of the fertility of the yaks it provided.¹³⁹ Even more problematic was the dawning realization, amid the arrival of newborn yaks, that it was going to take two to three decades to build up a yak-only herd. Caught between the amount of time it would take to produce the numbers required, and Agriculture's continuing opposition to yaks from Asia, elements in the DNANR began mooted a cross-breeding program with Highland cattle to expedite

¹³⁴ LAC/NAP/94/251-3-7/4, Untitled—Draft of Minister's Address, March 10, 1956 (c. Feb. 1956).

¹³⁵ LAC/NAP/1416/251-3-7/5, Memorandum for Phillips from Larmour, Dec. 17, 1956; LAC/NAP/97/251-3-19/1, Letter from Wells to Sivertz, Sept. 17, 1957.

¹³⁶ LAC/NAP/97/251-3-19/1, Letter from Phillips to Lindemann, Aug. 12, 1957; LAC/NAP/97/251-3-19/1, Letter from Sivertz to Wells, Sept. 11, 1957; LAC/NAP/97/251-3-19/1, Memorandum for Sivertz from Cunningham, Oct. 8, 1957; LAC/NAP/97/251-3-19/1, Memorandum for Cunningham from Sivertz, Feb. 15, 1958.

¹³⁷ LAC/NAP/97/251-3-19/1, Note for File: Yak Project, L.B. Post, Nov. 7, 1957; LAC/NAP/97/251-3-19/1, Memorandum for Cunningham from Sivertz, Feb. 15, 1958.

¹³⁸ LAC/NAP/364/251-3-21/1, Letter from Alger to Edwards, Feb. 7, 1958.

¹³⁹ LAC/NAP/97/251-3-19/1, Memorandum for Sivertz from Bolger, Sept. 29, 1958; LAC/NAP/428/251-3-19/2, Letter from Thompson to Sivertz, July 10, 1959.

matters.¹⁴⁰ Gordon Robertson, the deputy minister, signed off on the purchase of a number of cattle.¹⁴¹

By April 1960, however, amid mounting cost overruns, pessimism had grown; suddenly, officials thought it “extremely doubtful that Yak herds [would] prove any more successful than Eskimo-operated reindeer herds,” which DNANR officials saw as revealing that “wage employment—even if only seasonal—offers greater attractions” and that the “lonely life of a subsistence herder is not compatible with the Eskimos’ gregarious instincts.”¹⁴² Despite the essentializing logic that echoed earlier culturalist excuses for the failure of federally sponsored agricultural programs targeting Indigenous peoples, the observation points to an Inuit agency in the face of Canadian state ambitions. After all, the period since 1945 had witnessed growing federal frustration over the reluctance of Inuit across the Arctic to respect the wildlife management regime Ottawa was striving to impose.¹⁴³ In February 1953, the Inuit of Coppermine (Kugluktuk, NWT) had petitioned Ottawa, asserting their rights regarding mineral resource extraction on their territory.¹⁴⁴ Four years later, Inuit at Baker Lake had used an Eskimo council to directly challenge visiting federal officials on a range of policies, not the least being federal wildlife and hunter-management regimes.¹⁴⁵

As for the yaks, keeping the animals in the Ottawa area was doing nothing to determine whether they could in fact live in the Arctic.¹⁴⁶ Officials were forced to re-examine the project’s purpose. In mid-1960, after determining that the yak no longer had “a significant place in the future plans of this administration,” the DNANR arranged to hand them over to a game farm in Alberta.¹⁴⁷

Lessons of the Yak: A Parallel History, An Entangled History

What is the significance of this curious episode? Two general observations may be made. First, despite the ultimately fruitless attempt to introduce yaks (notably yaks from India) into Ungava, what happened (or did not happen) in Ungava mattered. After all, one official described the DNANR effort as the “first and hesitant step towards the execution of much broader concepts, in the formulation of a policy

¹⁴⁰ LAC/NAP/97/251-3-19/1, Memorandum for Sivertz from Bolger, Sept. 29, 1958; LAC/NAP/428/251-3-19/2, Letter to Symington from Carman, April 10, 1959; LAC/NAP/428/251-3-19/2, Letter to Cunningham from Wells, April 14, 1959; LAC/NAP/428/251-3-19/2, Memorandum for Director from Snowden, April 19, 1960.

¹⁴¹ LAC/NAP/428, 251-3-19/2, Memorandum for Davidson from Symington, Jan. 5, 1960.

¹⁴² LAC/NAP/428/251-3-19/2, Memorandum for Director from Snowden, April 19, 1960. Despite the program’s initial apparent success with the introduction of reindeer into the Mackenzie Valley in the 1930s, the herds had declined by the mid-1950s because of social and ecological factors, prompting Ottawa to sell them to private interests in 1960. Piper and Sandlos, “Broken Frontier,” p. 774.

¹⁴³ Kulchyski and Tester, *Kiumajut (Talking Back)*, p. 95.

¹⁴⁴ Cameron, *Far Off Metal River*, p. 102.

¹⁴⁵ Kulchyski and Tester, *Kiumajut (Talking Back)*, pp. 204-238. The council was the initiative of a northern service officer who, between postings in the Arctic, had spent time at the UN in New York alongside veterans of development work in India, Africa, and South America (p. 207).

¹⁴⁶ LAC/NAP/428/251-3-19/2, Memorandum (unsent) to Steele from Robertson, May 2, 1960.

¹⁴⁷ LAC/NAP/428/251-3-19/2, Memorandum for Cunningham from Sivertz, June 7, 1960; LAC/NAP/428/251-3-19/2, Letter from Robertson to Secretary to the Treasury Board, Department of Finance, Dec. 14, 1960.

for the use of renewable resources throughout the whole North.”¹⁴⁸ This example of post-war northern development was of course in service to a settler society seeking to assert control over a territory as a precursor to resource extraction. In the years to follow, federal officials would continue attempting to redefine the relationship that the region’s Indigenous peoples had with their environment. Second, despite obvious differences between Canadian aid and Indian policy, the story reveals entanglements between what have usually been treated as discrete histories. Understanding the ‘Canadian’ contribution to the global history of development—and the impact of this transnational phenomenon in the Canadian context—requires an ongoing engagement with this entangled history.

Exploring entanglements between the evolution of Canadian policy regarding Indigenous peoples and the Global South enriches our understanding of each by bringing a number of common themes into greater relief. Wherever they took place, Canadian development efforts were a manifestation of high modernism. As the Canadian state and society embraced a moderate Keynesianism, an increasingly activist federal government drew upon ‘expert’ knowledge to deliver technical assistance, aiming to achieve an allegedly more rational and effective socioeconomic order and thereby improve the lives of populations they targeted for development. Such efforts were grounded in modernization theory, a body of knowledge derived from centuries of imperial encounter and colonial development, ranging from the Indian subcontinent to the Arctic. As such, modernization theory privileged and reinforced Euro-Canadian predominance, along with the liberal-capitalist order that Ottawa sought to extend abroad and at home. It was no accident, after all, that parliamentarian James M. Macdonnell sought information from the DNANR as he prepared a speech in which he cited the department’s efforts in the Arctic in order to make the case for Canadian foreign aid, and especially its economic benefit to Canada.¹⁴⁹

Placing the history of Canada’s aid and Indian policies into conversation also reveals how race and the logic of white supremacy were manifested within and beyond Canada. Despite the sincerity of the liberal humanitarianism motivating technical assistance—to the contrary, *because* of this—Canada could not so easily escape the legacy of empire and the hierarchies of race and gender associated with it. One could argue that Canada *had* to champion and participate in technical assistance, whether through the UN, the Commonwealth, or other international organizations. For one thing, advocates such as Hugh Keenleyside depicted such efforts as being consistent with Canada’s own socioeconomic evolution; to deny technical assistance was to challenge the progress/development narrative of Canadian history. Even more significantly, to not jump on the technical-assistance bandwagon and embrace the possibility of (and inherent value in) rapid socioeconomic change would have compelled Canada and Canadians to more directly confront difficult truths about the country’s treatment of Indigenous

¹⁴⁸ LAC/NAP/363/251-3-7/6, Memorandum for Symington from Larmour, Jan. 24, 1958.

¹⁴⁹ LAC/NAP/1069/251-1/7, Memorandum for Sivertz from Robertson, Dec. 23, 1960. The speech appears in Canada, House of Commons, *Debates of the House of Commons, Session 1960-1961, Volume 2* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1961), pp. 1385-1388.

peoples and the colonial dynamic in the northern half of North America. In short, it was far easier to project a nationalist-affirming paternalism abroad through a rapidly expanding aid effort, thereby leaving intact a nationalist-affirming paternalism at home toward the country's Indigenous population as Ottawa asserted its dominion over the northern environment and its peoples.

The story of plans to transplant yaks from India to Ungava was a microcosm of these larger themes. Here was a classic case of high modernism: Canadian officials, building on earlier species transplantations, as well as understandings of human evolution and Indigenous peoples dating back to the nineteenth century, drew on mid-twentieth-century expert scientific and social scientific knowledge in an attempt to manipulate nature and thereby impose a settled life on the Inuit of Ungava as part of a much more ambitious policy of Arctic development—all in conjunction with and in service to a program of technical assistance targeting people in the Global South. The effort to harness yaks from India to the cause of northern development was grounded in a universalist logic—not just in terms of what was assumed to be the 'normal' form of human development and societal organization, but in terms of the attributes and benefits of citizenship in a liberal-capitalist Canadian society giving primacy to the individual male bread-winner. Questions of race, gender, and the legacy of empire infused the DNANR's plans to bring a territory and its population under the watchful and paternalistic dominion of the Canadian state. Race and empire were especially visible amid the suggestion that this could be achieved through the Colombo Plan, and subsequently, in the dissent of the departments of Agriculture and External Affairs. Despite enduring Indigenous agency, they were also apparent in the ignoring of Inuit voices and knowledge.

The rather sudden abandonment of the yak project in 1960 by no means meant the end of DNANR development efforts in the Arctic. To the contrary, the department dropped the scheme at a time of growing awareness—in Canada and elsewhere—of the disappointing results from post-1945 technical assistance and the need to rethink the field of development. Added to such doubts was a growing recognition that Canada's 'Indian problem' remained acutely unresolved. In the decade that would follow, a growing Indigenous activism, including that of the Inuit, along with the Third World's impact as a political and ideological force, would compel a fundamental rethinking of Canadian policy and attitudes regarding both development assistance and Indian affairs, ensuring that these two histories would continue to influence one another, as Canadian encounters with the Global South provoked fundamental questions regarding the nature of relations between Indigenous peoples and Canada.