

# ***Inuit Tapirisat met in Canada***

Many Inuit from across Canada's Arctic met in Eskimo Point, N.W.T., March 9-14 to attend the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada's Annual General Meeting. Many issues of great concern to the Inuit of the N.W.T., Northern Quebec, and Labrador were on the agenda. Delegates discussed such subjects as political development, land claims, polar gas, oil and gas exploration, etc., and passed resolutions to give I.T.C. direction in working out these projects.

One of the major resolutions passed called for a General Election of I.T.C. officers next year. This will give all the Inuit of N.W.T., Northern Quebec, and Labrador an opportunity to vote for their president, vice-president and secretary-treasurer. The directors will still be elected at the General Assembly but voting for the officers will be conducted in the communities. For the first time in history Inuit will have their own nationally elected leaders running the National

Inuit organization.

The assembly pledged its support to the Land Claims Commission of the N.W.T. and supported the right of the Western Arctic Inuvialuit to a fair and just settlement of land claims.

There was discussion on the rights of Inuit to hunt, fish and trap on their lands and waters, and it was agreed that this tradition is still a very important part of the Inuit economy.

Inuit traditions, culture and rights to their lands have been threatened by all game ordinances. Therefore, the assembly resolved to reject all laws and regulations made by governments without regard to Inuit survival. It was further resolved that I.T.C. prepare a model game law for the Inuit Territorial lands and waters and that the Federal Government be asked to fund this work. For the time being, Inuit will have to continue following the game laws in existence.

Bill C-20 and Bill C-25, two bills dealing with resource development in the North are real threats to the Native people in the Arctic. These two bills encourage more exploration for oil and gas and promote pipeline construction in the north. These are the types of bills Inuit do not wish to see passed, especially when the land claims question is still unsettled. It was resolved to suggest amendments to the bills so that they do not prejudice the rights and interests of Inuit.