

Major steps taken to divide Northwest Territories

The Nunavut Constitutional Forum, composed of eastern members of the Northwest Territories Legislature and leaders of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, an aboriginal-claim group representing 25 000 Inuit, have taken a major step in pursuit of a separate territory in the eastern Arctic, outlining the basis of a constitution and scheduling a convention a year from now to ratify it.

They have also established a quasi-governmental group to draft a detailed constitution, recommend a boundary, name a capital, define who can vote in elections, and propose limits to the role of a federal commissioner. Public opinion is expected to be solicited throughout the eastern Arctic on these and other matters beginning in October.

Founding of forum

"We've gone beyond talking about Nunavut," said the forum's chairman and member of the Legislature for Frobisher Bay and Northwest Territories education minister Dennis Patterson. "Now we are building it," he said.

The Nunavut forum, which held its first meeting in Frobisher Bay in August this year, was founded in response to three main political developments of the past year:

- Northern Affairs Minister John Munro maintained that talks on political development be separate from aboriginal-claim talks, even though Inuit claims overlap with their proposal for a separate territory;
- he also insisted all northern political groups get together on political development in presenting their case to the federal government. The Northwest Territories Legislature and all main native groups formed the Constitutional Alliance in July. (The Nunavut Forum is part of the alliance, but it has taken a somewhat independent stance and a western forum is scheduled to meet in September); and
- the Northwest Territories residents voted 56 per cent in favour of dividing the territories, last spring, in a referendum.

The federal government has not committed itself to splitting the Northwest

Territories and the forum's report urges that it do so soon. It asks that the minister responsible for political evolution in the North, Senator Jack Austin establish a "core group" of Cabinet ministers and senior civil servants to work with the forum on division of the territories.

The report asks the federal government to establish a boundary commission before next May and draw a boundary by next September.

The boundary is a problem because Inuit claims to rights on all land northeast of the treeline — an area they call Nunavut — overlap with claims of the Dene Indians to the west. In addition, the Inuit of the Mackenzie Delta are undecided about joining their cousins in the east or the Indians to whom they are linked by the Mackenzie Valley corridor.

Educational aid to Third World

An Ottawa-based organization is assisting developing countries in their educational efforts by providing books and services to teachers and students in those countries.

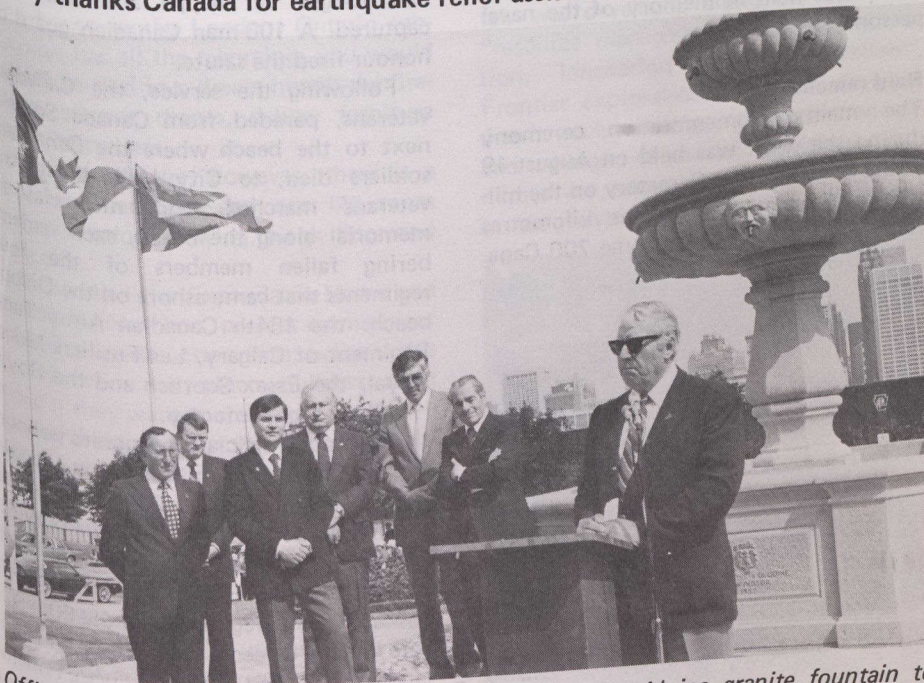
The Overseas Book Centre is a national, non-governmental organization that distributes books and provides funds and services donated by school boards, libraries, teachers' federations, hospitals, colleges, universities, publishers, businesses, service clubs, governments and individuals.

Among the activities of the centre's book program in 1980-81 were: the shipment of 70 tons of materials to the Ugandan school system; a 5.4-tonne airlift to St. Lucia, where educational materials in half the country's schools had been destroyed by Hurricane Allen; and English- and French-language training materials sent to boat people waiting to move to Canada from refugee camps in Malaysia. Books are most often supplied to vocational high schools, teacher training colleges, rural high schools and nurses training centres.

Other projects of the Overseas Book Centre include the funding of Third World organizations, groups and institutions involved in the promotion of new learning techniques, adult literacy programs and indigenous publishing of educational material.

Further information about the program may be obtained from: Overseas Book Centre, National Office, 321 Chapel Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7Z2.

Italy thanks Canada for earthquake relief assistance



Officials from the province of Udine, Italy, donate an Alpine granite fountain to Windsor, Ontario in appreciation of Canada's financial support during the 1976 earthquake in that country. The fountain was erected in Dieppe Park, one of several rose-garden parks maintained by the city along the Detroit River. The street adjacent to the garden parks has been renamed Viale Udine. Pictured above from left: Giancarlo Englaro, President of the province of Udine with members of his delegation, federal Minister of Agriculture Eugene Whelan (fourth from left) and Windsor Mayor Bert Weeks at the podium.

Office of Tourism of Canada