

and will remain so until there is increased economic development.

Eskimo associations

During recent years, Inuit have set up a number of special interest groups, which have been supported by federal funds since 1971. The most important are: Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC), the Eskimo Brotherhood; the Committee for Original Peoples' Entitlement (COPE), active in the western Arctic; the Northern Quebec Inuit Association (NQIA); and the Labrador Inuit Association (LIA). All these groups are dedicated to the retention and preservation of the culture and traditional values of the Inuit, to the promotion of social improvement, and to the securing of aboriginal rights and claims to lands and waters historically used by the Inuit. The native associations have initiated numerous projects involving land claims, the Inuit language, the law, education and game-management.

Cultural development

One of the main aims of the Eskimo associations is the preservation of Inuit culture. They encourage native artists, craftsmen and writers to seek national and international recognition and to take a leading part in the maintenance and development of the unique way of life of their people. This cultural program aims at the creation of a body of Inuit

literature and the encouragement of Inuit participation in the performing arts.

Since 1970, the federal government has been supporting these aims by means of national and international exhibitions and a program of public information and lectures. These activities reflect an ever-increasing demand for Inuit art.

In 1974, a contract was signed with Inuit Tapirisat of Canada to develop a Canada-wide acceptable spelling system. Regular cultural grants are now made to Inuit groups and individuals for such things as publication of literature and travel exchange programs. Inuit in the central Arctic use a syllabic system adapted in the nineteenth century from Cree syllabics. This system was developed by an English missionary, E. Peck. Others in Labrador and the western Arctic used the Roman orthography.

Since 1969, a number of Inuit writers have published their work and some Arctic communities have demonstrated their talent on film. Peter Piteolak, from the coast of Baffin Island, who was also a well-known photographer, portrayed with his camera the Inuit caught between the old and new ways of life. An exhibition of his work opened at the McCord Museum, Montreal in January 1980.

Cross-cultural conferences to promote Inuit understanding of southern conditions have been or-