

consider imported meat a poor substitute, and much prefer the food they obtain for themselves from the land.

Because hunting, trapping and fishing are household activities, there is no clear separation between subsistence and commercial production. The same equipment and skills are generally required for both, and both may occur at the same time. For example, people hunt for food when they are on the trapline, or indeed travelling for any purpose on the land.

Seals in particular are a source of both food and cash: one adult ringed seal might yield 30 kg of meat for home consumption as well as a skin for sale. Consequently, hunting and fishing continue without reference to the commercial market. However, for those families and communities which have little access to wage employment, the cash from commercial production is essential to continue hunting and fishing for food.

It is for this reason that the drastic fall in seal prices because of consumer boycotts in Europe has had such a devastating effect on the Inuit communities of the Eastern Arctic, which are especially dependent on seals. Many families have been forced onto welfare, and many are unable any longer to afford even the gasoline and ammunition necessary to hunt for their own food. It is ironic and unfortunate that Inuit, who hunt adult seals and kill them instantly with high-powered rifles, were no less affected by these boycotts than were the commercial, industrial sealers in the North Atlantic.

### **Wage employment**

Although wage employment has assumed great importance, opportunities for it are still not always available in small communities. Labour force participation rates are significantly lower among Inuit than nationally, and unemployment in the small communities is often as high as 30 to 50 per cent. These indicators are of course designed for industrialized economies, and are not entirely applicable to an economy in which subsistence production and self-employment are very high as a matter of both circumstance and preference. Many Inuit prefer part-time or seasonal wage employment, which is more compatible with hunting, fishing and trapping.

The fact remains, however, that the Inuit would like more wage employment opportunities in a greater diversity of occupations, and they would like them in their home communities. Although in the past 20 years there have been numerous government programs for Inuit training and employment outside the Arctic, Inuit have been largely unwilling to go.

Many jobs have been created in the smaller communities through government capital and operating expenditures, through the development