

CLARIFYING AMBIGUITIES: THE RAPIDLY CHANGING LIFE OF THE CANADIAN ABORIGINAL PRINT MEDIA¹

Jöel Demay

Department of Communications
University of Ottawa
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada, K1N 6N5

Abstract/Resume

In 1990 the Canadian government decided to discontinue its financial support for the Native Communications Program. A six-month grace period provided an opportunity to make other funding and staffing arrangements. This article examines the evolution of Canadian Aboriginal print media since the cancellation of their main public support system and questions the future of the Aboriginal media in Canada.

En 1990, le gouvernement canadien a décidé de cesser son soutien financier pour le programme des communications autochtones. Une période de répit de six mois a fourni l'occasion de prendre d'autres mesures à l'égard des fonds et du personnel. L'article examine l'évolution de la presse écrite autochtone canadienne depuis l'annulation du principal système du soutien public de cette presse et met en question l'avenir des médias autochtones au Canada.

In the 1990/1991 Federal budget, the Canadian government decided to discontinue its financial support (\$3.45 million) to the Native Communications Program it had created 16 years before (NCP - note: a list of acronyms can be found at the end of this paper). Secretary of State Gerry Weiner had informed the publishing managers of the Native Communications Societies the previous month that the program would die. A six-month grace period would be provided until *September* 1990 to allow for transition and other arrangements, but the truth of the matter remained: when the summer was over, the NCP would be no longer.

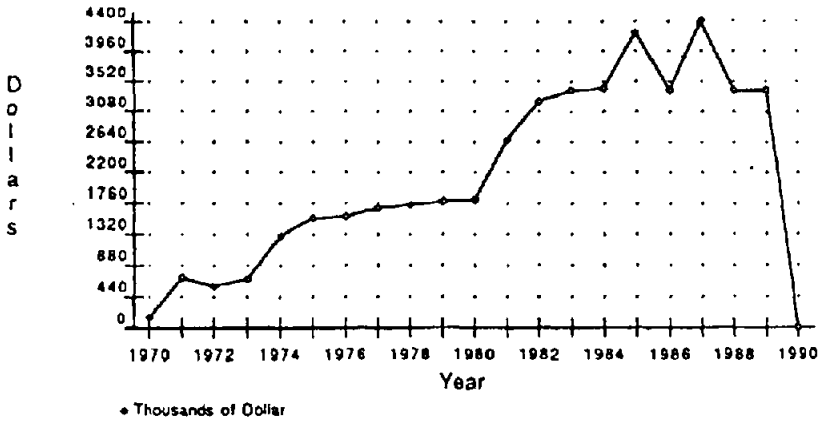
The ax fell, and in its sweeping blow it made visible some ambiguities which were there long before anyone had sharpened the ax, and which the program had not minded. Today, however, they should be addressed and solved should Aboriginal print media still stand once the dust of that political exercise in extermination settles. This article identifies and describes these three areas which remained ambiguous throughout the life of the NCP - economic, journalistic, and political - and which the Aboriginal print media should consider crucial in any future development.

The NCP sustained 15 Aboriginal newspapers. The NCP's self-professed objective was "to enable Aboriginal peoples to develop and control modern communications media, systems, networks and newspapers." Allowable expenditures included operational expenditures, training expenditures, media workshop expenditures and community radio expenditures related to equipment maintenance (Secretary of State, 1989:8- 9). At the time of its death, the NCP was supporting Aboriginal communications societies' activities from sea to sea.

The first and most obvious ambiguity which the 1990 budget cuts revealed was a financial instability which any person who has ever been involved with an Aboriginal communications society in Canada knows well. A systematic overview of recent history shows how the financial base of the Aboriginal print media of Canada has been kept shaking - one would think on purpose - thereby preventing those media from finding a firm economic footing in their respective communities.²

The summary on Table 1 examines the Federal support of Aboriginal print media development since 1970. If the evolution of funding levels is thus documented, the growth of the funding should not be viewed in absolute terms, however, a comparison with the consumer price index, for example, would show an evolution consistently inferior to the variations of that index (Lougheed, 1986:1-7). The length of the government's commitment to those developments is shown in Table 2. The bars representing years of commitment graphically demonstrate the financial instability with which the managers of those media had to contend.

Table 1: Native Communications Program Dollars



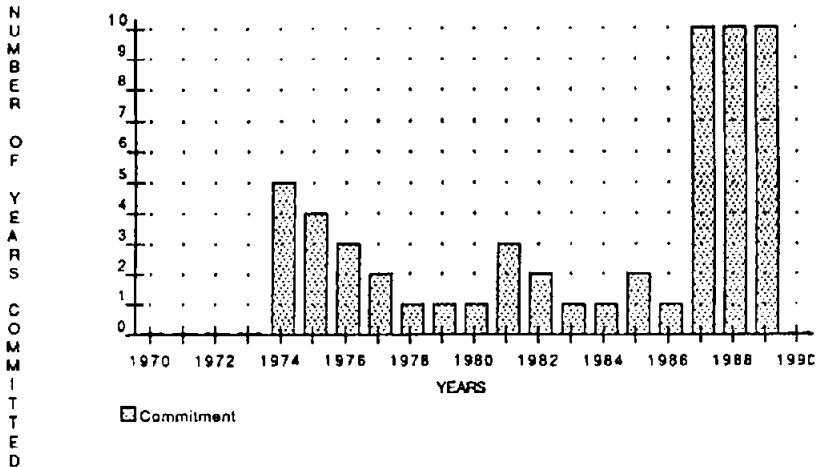
Figures for 1970 - 1973 represent Federal support of First Nations print media development, not NCP budget levels (NCP was established in 1974).

Those figures cannot yield information about the funding of individual Aboriginal communication societies. As different societies were funded at different levels, only a society-by-society study could yield data of that kind. For example, in 1985, the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society of Alberta (AMMSA) received more than 10% of the total program funding while the Société de Communication Atikamekw-Montagnais (SOCAM) in Quebec was granted 1.2% of the same budget (Lougheed, 1986:1-9).

The development of First Nations print media began in western Canada in the late 1960s, when federal and provincial governments joined forces in yet another attempt at rural economic development. The Edmonton-based Alberta Native Communications Society (ANCS) was born in that context. ANCS produced *The Native People* which died a dozen years later and yielded today's *Windspeaker*.

1970 As a side effect of an infamous white paper on Indian policy, the Department of the Secretary of State inherited the responsibility of funding a number of Aboriginal organizations, including the Alberta Native Commu-

Table 2: Department of the Secretary of State Funding Commitment to the Native Communications Program



Note that the "permanent" character of the program funding after 1987 was indicated by a tenfold increase in dollars available.

nications Society (ANCS). ANCS received \$139,012 in financing. ANCS was to be used as a model for Aboriginal communications activity in Canada.

1971 \$701,003 was spent by the federal government in two provinces only: BC (7%) and Alberta (93%).

1972 \$581,000 was spent through the Secretary of State on Aboriginal communications, mainly in Alberta, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories. Treasury Board underlined, however, that **this did not represent a commitment for future years.**

1973 The Secretary of State again spent \$691,109 on Aboriginal communications, more than 50% in Alberta.

1974 The end of what was finally identified as the experimental phase of Aboriginal communications funding. Cabinet approved for **one year** a Native communications policy (which did not cover the north of the country). A Native Communications Program (NCP), on the other hand, was granted a **five-year mandate** and its expenditures were set and approved at \$1,300,000.

As briefly mentioned above, the NCP provided financial support for the basic operational costs of the Aboriginal communications societies (core

support); for special communications projects; for training; for community radio maintenance; for media workshops; and for a capital assets fund.

A **two-year** funding agreement was passed with the ANCS and the Indian News Media (of Alberta).

1975 The Treasury Board approved the **extension** of the Native communications policy. Twenty grants were made to societies across the country for a total expenditure of \$1,546,000.

1976 As a result of the programme plan approved by Treasury Board, most of the NCP was decentralized. From then on, Secretary of State regional offices managed a good part (roughly 3/4 of the monies) of the NCP: the core funding, training, special projects and the community radio components.

1977 Before it could get funded (or funded again) by the NCP (\$1,695,000), an Aboriginal communications society had to push its funding request through 19 administrative stages.³

1978 Ten Aboriginal communications societies were funded by the NCP.

1979 and **1980** The NCP operated on a **series of short extensions** intended to keep the communications societies operating until new recommendations regarding the future of the program could be placed before the government (Memorandum from Jim Lanigan to Douglas Bowie, 1984).

1981 NCP was renewed for **three years**.

1983 The Northern Native Broadcast Access Program (NNBAP) was established to provide funds to 13 Aboriginal communications societies to undertake television and radio broadcasting in the territories and the northern portions of seven provinces. NNBAP's budget was set at \$9.3 million; the NCP budget (its financial "poor cousin") was kept at \$3.4 million until its death, seven years later.

"Together, these two programs (NCP and NNBAP) are central to federal government policies aimed at the protection and preservation of aboriginal languages and cultures in Canada" (Secretary of State, 1987a:3).

1984 The Treasury Board approved the extension of the NCP for **one year**.

1985 New NCP approved for **two years**. A National Native Communications Group (National Native Communications or NNATCOM which soon became the National Aboriginal Communication Society or NACS) was included in the NCP and approved in principle. The total cost of the program increased to \$4.2 million, which included the establishment of a Capital Assets Fund in the amount of \$560,000.

With the mandate of both NNBAP and NCP expiring in March 1987, a merger was considered but never realized.

1987 The NCP was made "**permanent**". It funded 13 societies. "**This year only,**" \$1 million was added to the \$3.4 million NCP regular budget mainly for capital expenses (Secretary of State, 1987b).

April 1990 The 1990-1991 budget **cancelled** the NCR A **six-month** grace period made that cancellation effective on October 1, 1990.

The various Federal governments were consistent in their funding of Aboriginal communication societies: they were consistently ambivalent. Indeed, if the past twenty years have shown anything to Aboriginal communication professionals in Canada, it is the Federal government's lack of determination to commit itself unequivocally *vis-a-vis* the Aboriginal communications societies. This financial uncertainty was a regular source of grave concern as the fate of the societies often teetered in the balance. Witness Bert Crowfoot who, on behalf of all the societies, asked the Minister of the day Walter McLean in 1984. "Funding is the main concern: are we facing cutbacks or termination?" (Letter from Bert Crowfoot, 1984).

In spite of what could be considered a twenty-year training in roller coaster finance and politics, the 1990 total shut-down caught the Aboriginal media by surprise. Clifford Paul of the *Micmac News* summed it up by stating that "To say it was a shock is an understatement!" (Paul, 1991) "Newspaper employees' lives were profoundly affected... (we had a) 50% cut in personnel (...) no new capital purchases, no ongoing maintenance, therefore frequent breakdown of equipment" reported Barry Zellen, the editor of *Tusaayaksat* in Inuvik, NWT, (1991). "Shock and dismay" recalled Doug Cuthand, the former editor of the *Saskatchewan Indian* magazine which closed down at the end of that "summer of our discontent" (*Saskatchewan Indian*, 1990:1).

It seems that the once-normal attitude of always fearing the worst had somewhat relaxed after the NCP had been made "permanent" in 1987. That proved to be unwise, however. The government's meaning of the word "permanent" was revealed to be conditional. In a discussion paper prepared by the Departmen[of the Secretary of State for the 1988 annual consultation meeting between the Department of the Secretary of State and the Aboriginal communications societies, "permanent" was defined accordingly-

"permanent": (...) *until the federal Cabinet wants to make changes* (emphasis added) it is not necessary for Cabinet or Treasury Board to approve funding to the program on a regular basis (Canadian Centre, 1991:10).

This situation still exists today in the case of the Native Northern Broadcast Access Program.

That financial instability came to an abrupt end in 1990 when the NCP was shut-down. *Kahtou's* managing editor, Ron Barbour, described it as "an

atrocious...ruthless...reckless" (1991) and denounced the absence of preparation made to deal with the severe financial consequences of the program's cancellation. Hank Shade, the general manager of *Kainai News*, underlined the shock which that organization felt at the NCP's cancellation. The organization was used to receiving grants and therefore "had not developed a business attitude". On the contrary, it had developed a 'dependency on federal funding'. The paper was not prepared to become financially self-sufficient (Shade, 1991). For Cuthand, the cuts could not have happened at a worst time, forcing the Saskatchewan Indian Media Corporation to shut down and the magazine to fold "when it was needed most, the whole country being in turmoil" (Cuthand, 1991).

The cuts had some effects few could have foreseen (least of all the federal government which, if one is to believe some former staff of the NCR was surprised to see communications societies survive at all). In Vancouver, Barbour noted that *Kahtou* became more independent and improved its marketing skills after the cancellation of the NCP (Barbour, 1991). True, the paper was already in the process of improving its marketing skills and was able to use this head start after the cuts; however, one may wonder if indirectly and unwillingly, Ottawa has not pushed that society toward a financial independence which it had always sought.

Indeed, for the Native Communications Society of British Columbia which publishes the monthly tabloid, "to achieve financial independence" was always a fundamental goal. It was solemnly expressed as such and printed in its "Kahtou Policy" published in the August-September 1985 issue of the paper. Evaluating the paper in 1986, Carleton University School of Journalism professor Robert Rupert underlined that fact and made some perceptive observations on the financial future of the newspaper; six years and a dead NCP later, they would prove to be prophetic or at least an omen of sorts:

...financial independence may well be a greater-and earlier-possibility in British Columbia than in most Canadian provinces and territories. The Native consumer audience is far larger, and has much more purchasing power than in most other provinces and territories. There is also a much stronger entrepreneurial spirit...Kahtou has made a respectable beginning in selling this consumer audience to advertisers....the ad sales potential here is great (Secretary of State. 1986:25).

The past year (1990) was not an easy one at *Kahtou*. The paper was on the brink of death; "the bank balance was down to zero" stated Barbour. But because of the "financial viability of the organization," it was able to access

regular credit from the bank. There is no turning back for the Vancouver-based *Kahtou*; its future lies in commercial newspaper publishing.

At *Kainai News*, the cuts have forced the publishing society to face a long awaited dilemma: should they remain a non-profit organization or should they become a profit-oriented medium like most other print media of this country? It seems that here too the balance is tilting toward the profit orientation. Hank Shade indeed expressed the same hope as his British Columbia counterpart that the long-term effects of the cuts will have positive consequences, a more competitive attitude, better marketing, and greater self-reliance.

Micmac News did not publish from October 1990 to February 1991 and during that time reorganized its operations. Starting on February 22, 1991, a weekly newspaper was published with monies from subscriptions, advertising and a Bingo project. "We struggled to obtain funding from year to year and our struggle will continue to become self-sufficient" stated C. Paul in the spring (Paul, 1991). The *Micmac News* returned to its monthly publishing frequency in August 1991. The attempts at getting more advertising through a weekly schedule had failed and pressure on staff and mailing costs were taking an added toll on the publication. The paper is no longer delivered free of charge to its subscribers. Since August of 1991, the yearly subscription costs \$30. Despite all its troubles, the *Micmac News* is still functioning with a financial surplus worth \$100,000 (Carriere, 1991).

The cancellation of the NCP forced the Wawatay Native Communications Society to delay some expansion plans for its newspaper, *Wawatay*. One year later, however, through sacrifices and genuine marketing efforts, special communication projects from the provincial and the federal governments, translation contracts and some assistance from the broadcasting arm of the Society, the bimonthly paper followed the expansion plans of the previous year and entered the Thunder Bay market. It still publishes in both English and Oji-Cree syllabics. For the executive director of the Society, Lawrence Martin, the cancellation of the NCP only meant that everyone had to work harder to achieve the goals of the organization. The strong drive for commercial income from advertising in both the print and the broadcasting branches of the organization set the Sioux-Lookout group in a multi-media commercial venture league of its own. The cuts do not seem to have affected what Rupert had called "the most important communication vehicle, Native or non-Native, in the Treaty Nine (now Nishnawbe Aski) area of Northwestern Ontario" (Secretary of State, 1986:54).

As a consequence of the NCP cancellation, the *Native Press* was transferred from the Native Communications Society of the Western NWT to its corporate arm, DM Communications (Dene-Métis) Ltd., which now fully

controls the newspaper. The newspaper became a weekly in June of 1990 and changed its format and its name on November 1, 1990. According to Catherine Macquarrie, executive director of NCS, *The Press Independent* wants to be "every Northerner's comprehensive quality source for Northern issues" (Downes, 1991). To maximize its market penetration, the newspaper is trying to strike the right balance of Native and non-Native stories which will "both appeal to the Yellowknife market and respect its Native mission".

The 1990 budget cuts underlined a second ambiguity of the First Nations' print media, that of their news content and the role they would play in the contemporary society from which they had sprung. Thus, *Kahtou* is supposed to "inform the people of British Columbia's First Nations" (as stated in its policy) who are very diverse and spread through a vast area. This means a very challenging population to cover and a most difficult area in which to distribute. Indeed, how can a medium begin to cover "all sides of the Native political spectrum provincially, nationally and internationally" (also as stated in the newspaper policy) when the ends are not matched by the means (Secretary of State, 1986:24)? A reorientation toward economic self-reliance and profits will undoubtedly affect the sort of goals the newspaper will be able to set for its content and its role. Not that it will represent what the Native Communications Society of BC would ideally want its newspaper to achieve, but who could blame it?

Kainai News has adapted by placing more emphasis on the local news and cutting down on the coverage of national issues. This does not seem to mean however that *Kainai News* wants to become a southern-Alberta-only-oriented newspaper. It is indeed acknowledged that the Aboriginal organization will have to market the paper through non-Aboriginal communities and "expand its distribution to Europe and the USA... This may have an effect on the choice of stories published by the organization and read by Indian and Native societies" (Shade, 1991).

After a fall and winter sleep of several months, the *Saskatchewan Indian* was resurrected by the owner of the title, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. Ironically, the publishing of the Treaty Indian paper was contracted out to the same editor as the Métis paper *New Breed*. This development is very recent and it is not known yet whether or not this new *Saskatchewan Indian* will match its predecessor in original Indian journalism, historical information or syllabics content, in short, the original human element which the award-winning *Saskatchewan Indian* had carried at various times of its varied life.

In a parallel manner, in Inuvik, NWT, *Tusaayaksat's* very structure was affected by the cancellation of the NCR. Even if the political context is not at play as in Saskatchewan, the impact on the content of the Inuvialuit Corn-

munications Society's printed organ-and therefore on the role of that newspaper-cannot be denied. Apart from the maintenance problems mentioned above, the editor, Barry Zellen reported that definite changes took place in the management and the content of *Tusaayaksat* (Zellen, 1991).

The paper is forced to operate on a shoestring budget...Travel to the communities we serve had to be eliminated. (The program cancellation) forces the newspaper to operate...in a state of reaction...like running a fire department (Zellen, 1991).

It may be early to determine exactly what role impact it has had, but the origin of that impact was not readers' wishes or local politics. It was plain economics, as defined by the dominant Canadian society and as decided by the distant federal government.

We had to increase our frequency of publication from monthly to biweekly to attract ads, thereby increasing stress and overworking existing staff to keep paper afloat. We improved quality and frequency of paper to attract customers...Yes, since October we have published biweekly without skipping a beat (Zellen, 1991).

Some could see this development as positive. More frequent publication and a different look may be seen indeed as signs of success. But finally, in whose eyes is the success?

Although it is too early to tell with certainty, it is likely that the Aboriginal newspapers will cover more systematically the non-Aboriginal society and will sell there to survive and flourish. They would then occupy a bridging position of choice between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal worlds. Of course, this is nothing new for many Aboriginal journalists and communications managers as they have been playing that role almost unnoticed for years. The 1990 budget cancellation of the NCP, however, vividly underlined this function which was never identified as an official goal of the NCP. Thus, Cuthand underlined that SIMC's *Saskatchewan Indian* was recommended as Native studies curriculum material by Saskatchewan Education, and was subscribed to by schools and libraries across the province. The magazine was making a real effort to "bring the barriers down" in that province where the racial tensions are very real (Cuthand, 1991). Furthermore, Cuthand underlined that, in Saskatchewan, a strong reaction and accompanying lobbying against the cuts came from unexpected corners: the administrations of Indian Affairs and of Health and Welfare which had been using the *Saskatchewan Indian* to get their messages to Indian homes (Cuthand, 1991). It is when the bridge has been taken away that you miss it the most.

The 1990 cuts also underlined a political malaise in Aboriginal communication circles as all politicians did not seem to view those cuts as attacking a fundamental element of Aboriginal life. This uneasiness did not come as a surprise to Aboriginal communicators as it has been part of the Aboriginal communication scene for a long time. As *Micmac News*' Clifford Paul noted, the moral and financial support received at such a time of crisis did not originate in the local Aboriginal communities.

We were very disappointed and discouraged that Native people in Atlantic Canada did not take a stronger stand regarding the elimination of Atlantic Canada's only Native newspaper. The only political organization that constantly spoke out about the cancellation of the national program was the Assembly of First Nations (Paul, 1991).

Focusing on Atlantic Canada's Native issues, *Micmac News* earned a deserved reputation for good and honest journalism. In his 1986 evaluation for the Secretary of State, Rupert had underlined that the *Micmac News* did not hesitate to tackle some difficult issues:

The *Micmac News* does not shy away from controversy nor is it afraid to criticize. When a chief was arrested by police in a violent confrontation, the *Micmac News* reporter-photographer was there. The outstanding news shots were prominently displayed in the newspaper. When the traditionally important Micmac Summer Games were a disappointment, the *Micmac News* took lethargic organizers to task. When a journalism educator criticized affirmative action journalism programs "because they set double standards of professionalism", the *Micmac News* reported it-all the way from Vancouver (Secretary of State, 1986).

It seems fair to assume that the Aboriginal leadership turned its political back on a financially troubled publication because that same publication had been a thorn in their side for many years. At the least, one wonders whether such dynamics could have existed between some Aboriginal leaderships and some Aboriginal papers. Even in areas which were not served for as long a time and as aggressively by Aboriginal reporters as Atlantic Canada, the relationship between politicians and journalists had not been easy. In most parts of the country, the Chiefs and the Elders had been instrumental in creating the Aboriginal communications societies. Many fought long and hard to ensure the existence of those papers. It took statesmanship and vision to accept the concept of independent media. Some have not accepted that notion even yet.

Saskatchewan is a case in point. The Saskatchewan Indian Media Corporation (SIMC) had come to life in the late 1980s as a belated recognition by the Secretary of State that the Treaty Indians of Saskatchewan were not served by the Saskatchewan Native Communications Corporation, itself controlled by the Métis and Non-status Indians (AMNSIS) who were publishing *New Breed*. From the day of its birth, the SIMC had defined itself as being at arms-length from the Indian political body of the province, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN). Since the early 70s the FSIN had been the publisher of the title. Speaking about the most recent (1987-1990) *Saskatchewan Indian*, Cuthand noted that in effect the politicians had "feared" the magazine and its relative freedom to criticize them. When the cuts were announced, the media corporation received no tangible support from the Indian politicians in the province. One could wonder if the cuts were not somehow welcomed by that province's Indian leadership as support came in fact only from the communities themselves, at the grass roots level (Cuthand, 1991). This thesis seems to be supported by the fact that, as was seen above, a few months after its last issue, the *Saskatchewan Indian* was back in the fold of the Indian politicians and revived by them, under their control. The 1990 falling of the axe cut deep into the fragile political freedom the Indian press had gained in that province. If there was any uncertainty on that score, it is now clear: the press is free under the guidance of Aboriginal politicians.

Canadian Aboriginal societies do not have a monopoly over this difficult relationship between the politicians and the press. The debate is most similar to that which daily affects the press in less developed countries where the political leadership insists it cannot afford criticism and negative coverage in such difficult times. What is needed on the contrary, they say, is support, help in mobilizing people and trust. In tune with governmental policies, the press practices then what some have called development-support journalism (Ogan, 1981). For others, more attuned with the libertarian philosophy of journalism for which cooperation with government is close to anathema, the press must keep its distances from the politicians and play its fourth estate role, no matter what the overall political or economic circumstances are.

Aboriginal publications have not been endowed by several centuries of an adversarial relationship with the government. On the contrary, they have inherited a traditionally respectful and supportive attitude *vis-à-vis* their political leaders, and have had to do some soul-searching in this debate. Furthermore, conscious of the crucial fact that their political leadership was engaged in a difficult struggle for Native self-government and therefore needed all the support they could get from every element of the Native

population, the Native press had often looked for a middle-of-the-road position in this debate. In effect the cuts may have speeded up a process of self-determination on the part of the Aboriginal media.

A veteran Indian journalist and former politician himself, Cuthand credits less the cuts than the evolution of the Native press for such a change. Both the press and its journalists have matured in their self-perception, stepping firmly away from the "politicians' shadow" and moving clearly in the direction of independent journalist professionalism. This analysis is endorsed by Wawatay's Martin who sees that both camps have learned to keep their distances. Aware of the danger of too close relationships, Chiefs, Elders and journalists show mutual respect for each other.

Observing the evolution of Canadian Aboriginal print media since the cancellation of their main public support system, the Native Communications Program, this author notes that three main effects-economic, journalistic and political - have been induced by Ottawa's cuts in the 1990/1991 Federal budget. First, the Aboriginal print media seem to have become more entrepreneurial. For the sake of their own survival, they have had to reevaluate basic premises such as frequency of publication, formats, and long-term orientation. A drive toward self-sufficiency seems to animate most Aboriginal communication leaders. Second, these media have had to reevaluate their news content in light of their rapidly-changing financial reality. The matching of news and advertising market, a different public, a different area of news coverage, possibly a different staff, make for a quickly evolving Aboriginal print media scene. The final journalistic picture which the after-NCP Aboriginal print media will eventually compose is one that few can at the moment foretell. Third, a political evolution has marked this post-NCP time. More independence has been shown by some Aboriginal media vis-a-vis their own political leaders while the Saskatchewan Indian has reestablished closer political ties. This relationship is generally maturing after having been equivocal for many years.

To conclude, questions may be asked about the efforts of the Aboriginal communications societies to succeed, to develop or simply survive. In this apparent re-orientation away from public funding toward profit-seeking private enterprise, how much of a reaction against public funds are we witnessing and how much of it is genuine interest in this commercial mode of operation? How long can the Aboriginal media keep it up? How long will this post-NCP phase last? How Aboriginal are the Aboriginal newspapers going to be if the training dollars are no longer available? Staffed once at 85% with Aboriginal people (Lougheed, 1986:5-7), will the Societies have to resort to non-Aboriginal staff for lack of training dollars and for content reasons? In whose eyes will the Aboriginal papers' success or failure be

determined? The Aboriginal communicators? The Federal government (former funding agency)? The communities? The mainstream communication professionals? Others? What role should the Aboriginal communications societies play in a Canadian society of tomorrow? Could it be that this society cannot afford not to have healthy and solid bridges of communication between mainstream Canada and Aboriginal nations? These are not easy questions to answer; above all they will require time to be fitted with answers.

Notes

1. A short version of this article was presented at the Canadian Communication Association 1991 annual meeting in Kingston, Ontario and published in the November/December issue of *Content* (about Canadian Journalism). Most of the information is based on Summer and Fall 1991 phone/fax surveys of the management of Indian and Native print media. Many thanks go to the editors, journalists and managers of the Canadian Native media who, in spite of their very busy schedules, gave me the time I needed. The information was also drawn from the public files of the Native Citizens Directorate at the Secretary of State offices in Hull, Quebec. Special thanks go to the dedicated staff of that Directorate, especially Florence Woolner, Gordon Big Canoe and Terry Rudden for their support and guidance during the research.
2. It is an approximation to equate "NCP" with "Print media". Even if Aboriginal print media developments for most of the last two decades were funded mainly by the NCR this relationship is not absolute. Provinces like Saskatchewan and Alberta also supported those developments (although not by 1990). Some societies also raised money from advertising and from federal agencies other than the Department of Secretary of State (Employment and Immigration, for instance). Conversely, a few societies had a broadcasting component funded by the program. They were: Taqramiut Nipingat Inc. in Salluit, Quebec (radio and TV); Wawatay Native Communications Society in Sioux Lookout, Ontario (HF and trail network); Indian News Media in Standoff, Alberta (Radio); Inuit Broadcasting Corporation (TV) in Iqaluit; and Okalakatiget Society in Nain, Labrador (HF and trail network). Those broadcast components were also affected by the NCP cancellation.
3. The sequence of paper flow related to any funding request would be the following:
 1. Communication Societies;
 2. Social Development Officer, DSOS Regional Office;
 3. Regional Review Committee, DSOS Regional Office;

4. Regional Director, DSOS Regional Office;
5. Grants and Contributions Secretariat, DSOS Central Office;
6. Program Manager, DSOS Central Office;
7. Native Citizens Director, DSOS Central Office;
8. Grants and Contributions Secretariat, DSOS Central Office;
9. Sector Review Committee, DSOS Central Office;
10. Senior Management Committee, DSOS Central Office;
11. Grants and Contributions Secretariat, DSOS Central Office;
12. Minister's Office;
13. Letter of approval and memorandum of agreement sent to the Communication Society;
14. Signed memorandum of agreement sent by the Communication Society to the Social Development Officer, DSOS Regional Office;
15. Regional Director, DSOS Regional Office;
16. Grants and Contributions Secretariat, DSOS Central Office;
17. Department of Finance;
18. Department of Supply and Services;
19. The cheque is in the mail...

References

Barbour, Ron

- 1991 Telephone interview with Barbour, managing editor, *Kahtou*, Native Communication Society of British Columbia.

The Canadian Centre

- 1991 Silencing Native Tongues: International Law and the 1990/1991 Federal Budget's Restriction of Aboriginal Cultural Development. (A Report prepared by the International Human Rights Programme, Faculty of Law, University of Toronto and the Canadian Centre, /ntemationa/Pen.)

Carriere, Paul

- n.d. Unpublished student paper written for CMN 3156 (Press Studies) at the University of Ottawa. (Telephone interview with Paul Clifford, the *Micmac News* editor).

Clifford, Paul

- 1991 Editor, *Miema News*, Native Communications Society of Nova Scotia. (Faxed answer to questionnaire.)

Cuthand, Doug

- 1991 Telephone interview with Cuthand, former editor, *Saskatchewan Indian*; Saskatchewan Indian Media Corporation.

- Crowfoot, Bert
 1984 Letter from Bert Crowfoot, NNATCOM Information Services to Hon. Walter McLean, Minister of the Secretary of State, November 7.
- Downes, Daniel
 n.d. Unpublished student paper written for CMN 3156 (Press Studies) at the University of Ottawa. (Telephone interview with Catherine Macquarrie, Executive Director of the NCS of the Western NWT.)
- Longchap, John
 1991 Telephone interview with Longchap, production manager, James Bay Cree Communications Society (former publisher of *Cree Anjemon*).
- Lougheed and Associates
 1986 *Report on the Native Communications Program and the Northern Native Broadcast Access Program*. Department of the Secretary of State of Canada.
- Lanigan, Jim
 1984 Memorandum from Jim Lanigan, A/Director, Native Citizens Directorate to Douglas B. Bowie, Assistant Under Secretary of State. (Briefing notes for a meeting between D. Bowie and Walter McLean, MP.)
- Ogan, Christine L.
 1982 Development Journalism/Communication: The Status of the Concept. *Gazette* 29:3-13.
- Saskatchewan Indian
 1990 Final issue, July/August, p. 1.
- Secretary of State
 1986 Evaluation report by Robert Rupert on the state of journalism at the publications funded by the NCP (title unknown).
 1987a Memorandum to Cabinet. *Native Communications*, February 3.
 1987b News release/Communique, October 8.
 1989 Guide to *Native Citizens' Programs*.
- Shade, Hank
 1991 Telephone interview with Shade, general manager, *Kainai News*, Indian News Media.

Zellen, Barry

1991 Editor, *Tussayaksat*, Inuvialuit Communications Society. (Faxed answer to questionnaire.)

Appendix I

Here is the questionnaire administered in May 1991 to all Native Communications Societies which in 1990 were receiving funding from the Secretary of State through NCP. Some questionnaires were administered by telephone when the Society's fax number was not available.

How would you describe last year's cancellation of the Native Communication Program?

What were the most dramatic short term (within the year) effects of that cancellation on your organization?

Personnel:

Equipment:

Production:

Political support:

How did that affect your paper per se? Has it been published on a regular basis since April of last year? Since October of last year after the 6-month grace period had ended?

What are going to be, in your opinion, the long-term effects of the program cancellation?

On your organization?

On your paper?

On the other organizations?

On Indian and Native societies?

On the Canadian society as a whole?

Appendix II

Acronyms

AFN	Assembly of First Nations
AMNSIS	Association of Métis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan
ANCS	Alberta Native Communications Agency
DSOS	Department of the Secretary of State Canada
FSIN	Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations
NACS	National Aboriginal Communication Societies
NCP	Native Communications Program

