

Consensus Decision Making And
Governing

Aajiiqatigiingniq

A look into Inuit History

- ***To survive*** is
- ***to rely on knowledge of Elders in community***,
which is to consent and follow natural leaders
- “ The leaders where normally older people, as they where known to have more experience with their surroundings”*

Jim Kilabuk, Uqqurmiut, Nookiguak

**Uqalurait, An Oral History of Nunavut*. Compiled and edited by John Bennett and Susan Rowley (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004)96.

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ)

***“Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is
a guiding principle of public government.
IQ embodies Inuit traditional knowledge and values,
and guides the government in framing decisions,
policies and laws that reflect the key
philosophies, attitudes and practices of Nunavut’s
Inuit majority.”****

* Government of Nunavut - <http://www.gov.nu.ca/Nunavut/English/about/cg.pdf> - Feb. 14, 07

Consensus government

Consensus government is
the system that blends the principles of
parliamentary democracy
with the
Aboriginal value.*

- A C.G. requires majority support to pass any legislation.

*<http://www.gov.nu.ca/Nunavut/English/about/cg.pdf> - Feb. 14, 07

Governmental structure in Nunavut

- ***Nunavut government*** is
not self government,

it is public government

(46% of population works for the government)

- There are 19 ***Members of Legislation Assembly*** that are being elected by the people of the Nunavut
- MLA's elect ***8 ministers*** among themselves and the ***Premier*** who assigns portfolios to the ministers
- There are also ***Commissioners*** in every ministerial departments
- Group of ***Elders*** within the parliament who advices the government of Nunavut on the matters of traditional knowledge/(IQ)

Role of Elders in government

Elders

have always been held in high respect in Inuit society, because their **knowledge** and **experience** was supposed to guide the younger generations *

- **Elders** provide an advise on **traditional accord** to the legislation in order for the government to adhere to its mandate with traditional values in mind on every law.

“Modern Western law has had a strong impact on Inuit society and Inuit Elders are not too impressed by its efficacy. They feel that the many social problems in modern Inuit society should be dealt with within the community itself ” *

- <http://www.nac.nu.ca/publication/vol1/introduction.html> - Feb. 22, 07
- <http://www.nac.nu.ca/publication/vol2/introduction.html> - Feb. 22, 07

Guiding principles of Elders

- **Inuuqatigiitsiarniq:** respecting others, relationships and caring for people
- **Tunnganarniq:** fostering good spirit by being open, welcoming and inclusive
- **Pijitsirniq:** serving and providing for family and/or community
- **Aajiqatigiinni:** decision making through discussion and consensus

CLEY/Culture, Language, Elders, and Youth

- Innovative

Department of Nunavut's government that was designed to create a political approach and bureaucratic framework more directly with Inuit culture*

* *Canada: The state of the Federation 2003 Reconfiguring Aboriginal State Relations* edited by Michael Murphy (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005)221.

Principals and values of **CLEY** as a department

- Reflects Inuit Societal Values through **IQ**
- Promotes **decision-making** through consultation and a commitment to **consensus building**
- Open **to participation and input**, and respects the views of others
- Promotes life-long **learning**

Consensus Decision-making: **Aajiqatigiinniq**

“Living well in the arctic environment depended on a high level of expertise, to obtain food, clothing and shelter”*

- Only by ***sharing individual expertise through interdependency and following knowledge of the Elders through consensus, would provide the best interest for everyone.***

*Uqalurait, An Oral History of Nunavut. Compiled and edited by John Bennett and Susan Rowley (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004)95.

Why is consensus so important?

- If everyone has an interest in the outcome, it is important that

***everyone participates in making decisions,
since traditional knowledge/IQ proves the
effectiveness of it***

***Everyone has different skills and interests that
can be used together to solve a problem*** in a
way that addresses many different concerns

Only by integrating ***the traditional knowledge*** accumulated from generations before, into contemporary well observed issues, will there be a success in the governing of people by the representatives that are commonly elected.