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# Job quality and labour relations

1. How is mobility related to labour market segmentation in Canada's north?
2. What is the role of unions and changing industrial relations in reproducing or helping Indigenous groups as they try to challenge longstanding labour market segmentation?

# Labour mobility, segmentation and labour relations

Burawoy (1976)

- Migrant labour is a system
- Regulated by institutions
- Connected to other systems (colonialism, apartheid)

Pratt (1999, Kelly 2010)

- Migration silos people into particular jobs
- Migration and place of origin is a proxy for *skilled/unskilled*

# Interregional migration and labour market segmentation

Resource-led expansion post WWII

South – north cyclic interregional migration of predominantly settlers/non-Indigenous workers (Keeling and Sandlos 2012, Desbiens 2004).

Indigenous workers under represented in industrial work (High 1996; Dunk 1991).



# Interregional migration and labour market segmentation

Two shifts:

1. Single industry towns to fly in, fly-out mines (Bradbury and St. Martin 1983; Storey 2001; Russell 1999; Dansereau 2006)
2. Indigenous institutions and governments influencing employment through IBAs



# Continuing cyclic migration and labour market segmentation

Employment programs often don't meet targets - over-representation of Indigenous people in low skilled positions (Kulchynski 2008)

Lower Mattagami River Project: 13.5% FN or Metis, 27% catering and housekeeping

Voisey's Bay: 40-50% Innu or Inuit, 95% of workforce in catering and housekeeping

Nunavik Nickel: 11% mine and concentrator, 25% general services, 21% exploration, 6% human resources, 0% other salaried workers

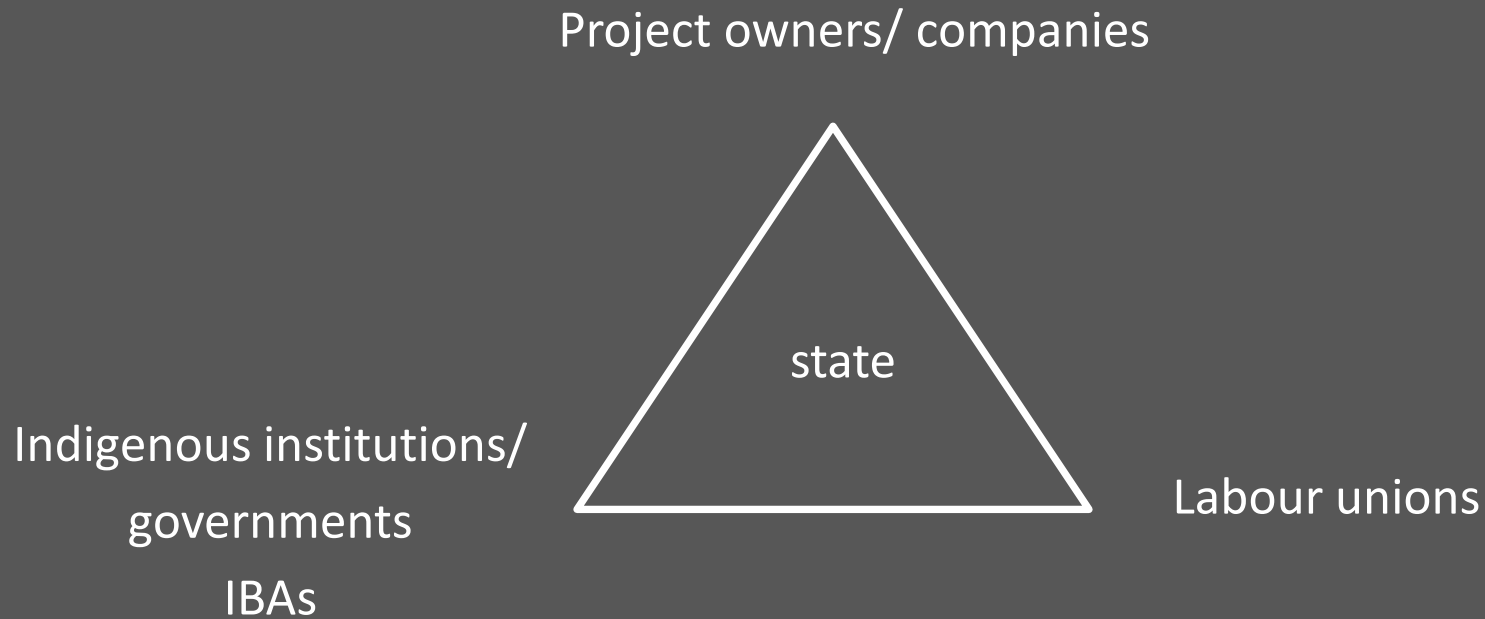
# Canadian Royalties – Unionized Employees

	\$25-\$29.99/hr	\$30-\$34.99/hr	\$35-\$39.99/hr	\$40-45/hr
<b>Non-Inuit</b>	0	118	85	1
<b>Inuit</b>	26	10	0	0
<b>Total</b>	26	125	85	1

*1. Data from employee information received 02.14.2018 and USW 9519 Collective Agreement 2015-2018.*

*2. Starting rate for Inuit training position is \$26.72. Lowest rate for position that are not Inuit trainees is \$30.*

# Institutions regulating the organization of work





# How do labour relations influence Inuit employment in the context of fly-in, fly out work?

1. Unions and quality of work
2. Declining union power
3. Everyday union practices (language, communication)
4. Unions supporting IBA provisions?

# 1. Unions and job quality

- Wages and benefits (particularly for low skilled workers)
- Protect against employer favouritism in promotion and layoffs
- Provide some protection against dismissal (formal processes and resisting strict workplace policies)
- Provide workers with a voice vis a vis employers – workplace democracy (worker health and safety, work conditions, ect...)
- Improve job quality and protection for Indigenous and settler members

## 2. Declining union power

Fly-in, fly-out work weakens union power (Russell 1999, Ellem 2016, Manky 2016)

- Organizing
  - Access to site & cost
  - Workers geographically dispersed
- Representation and servicing
  - Workers geographically dispersed on turnaround
  - Disconnected by rotations and shifts at work
- Use of subcontractors
  - Different units for subcontractors means fewer members in each unit, less power

## 2. Declining union power and Indigenous employment

Union less able to protect worker rights

- Replacement workers during 18 month strike (Inuit and Innu out of work)
- Not able to resolve grievances
- Subcontractors create challenges for enforcing IBA provisions (advancement)

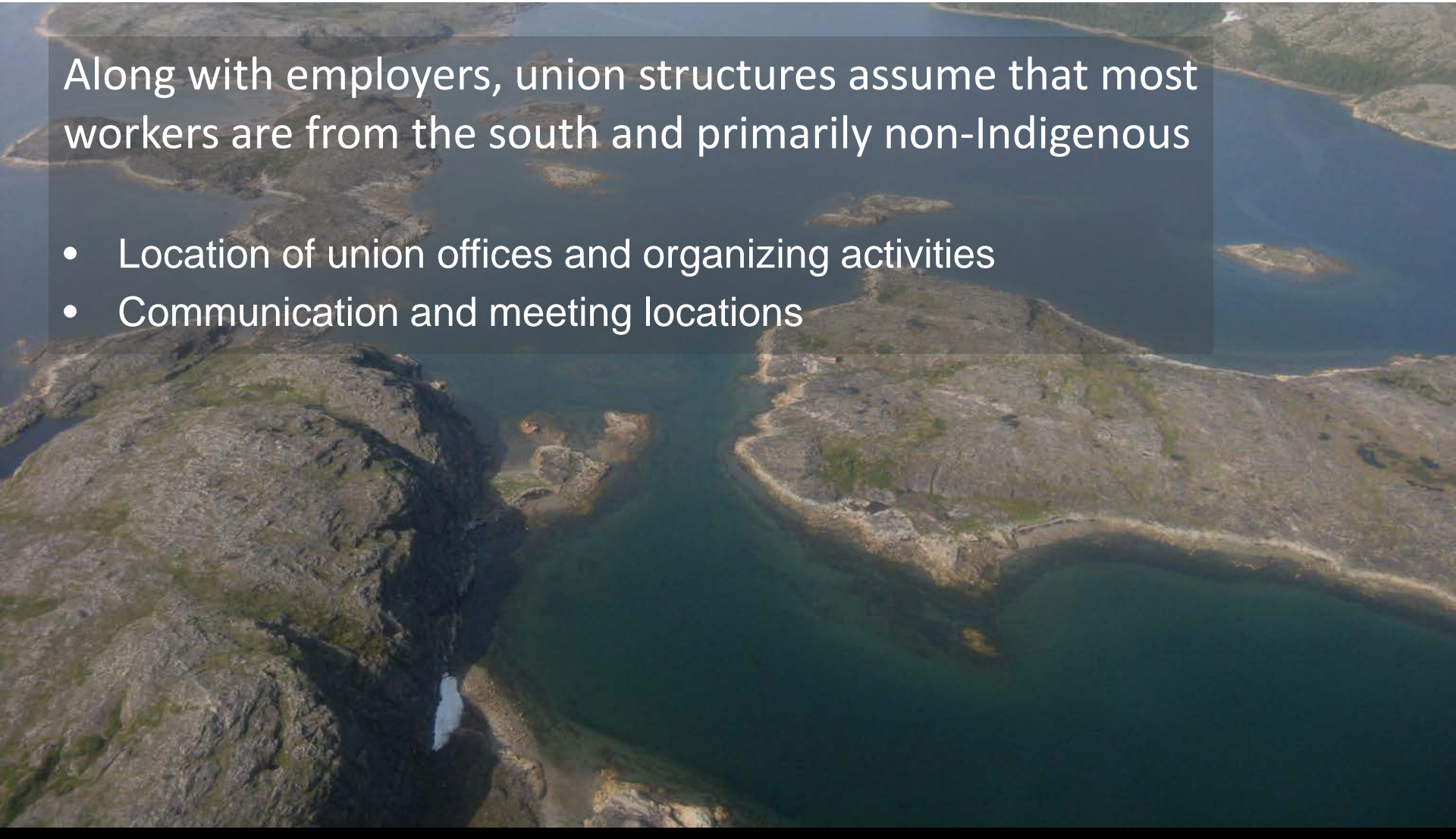
Vale strike August 2009-January 2011 – use of replacement workers



### 3. Everyday union practices

Along with employers, union structures assume that most workers are from the south and primarily non-Indigenous

- Location of union offices and organizing activities
- Communication and meeting locations



# Organization of Building and Construction Trades Unions designed to move southern workers north



### 3. Everyday union practices: language

#### 5.3.6

#### Language

The Parties acknowledge that few Inuit Beneficiaries are fluent in all three of Inuktitut, English and French and that the number of positions at the Nunavik Nickel Project that would be suitable for a unilingual Inuk Beneficiary is limited. However, for positions that do not require a second language skill, the lack of a second language shall not be a barrier to employment of Inuit Beneficiaries. Canadian Royalties shall assist unilingual Inuit engaged at the Nunavik Nickel Project to improve their employment opportunities through appropriate language training programs. Pursuant to such language training and subject to job and safety requirements, unilingual Inuit Beneficiary Employees shall not be restricted in their ability to advance in the workforce. Moreover, Canadian Royalties shall hire bilingual (English and French) Southerners and shall use all efforts to ensure that supervisors, foremen and management personnel express themselves clearly (written and oral) in both French and English and any exception to this shall only be made in consultation with the Inuit Parties through the Nunavik Nickel Committee and on an interim basis.

All signs, bulletins and notices posted at the Nunavik Nickel Project site shall include an Inuktitut version.

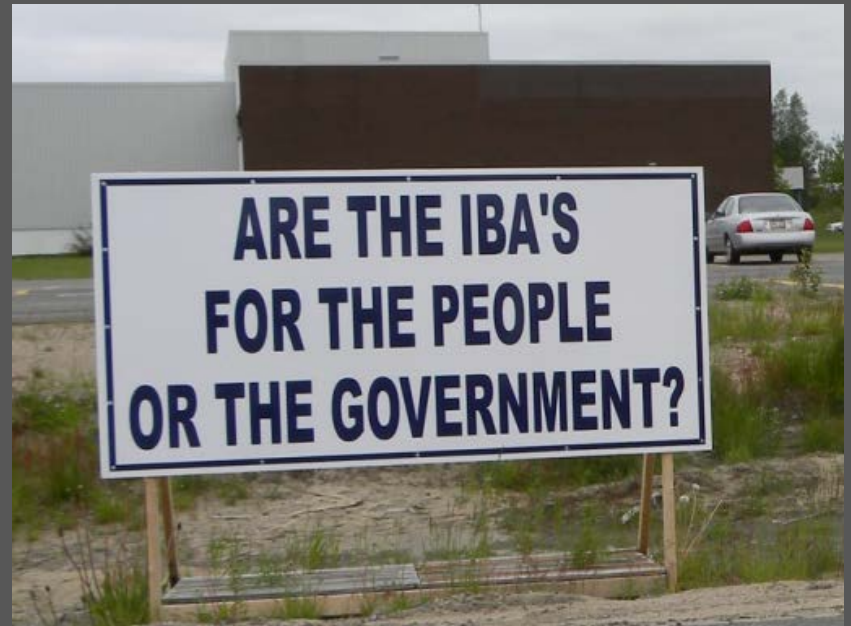
- Collective agreements (Raglan and Nunavik Nickel) only in French





## 4. Unions supporting IBA provisions

- Union held company and government to account when not following IBA – (promotion and advancement)



## 4. Unions supporting IBA provisions

### ARTICLE 34 – DIVERS

**34.02** Les frais d'impression de la convention collective en français, en anglais et en inuktitut sont assumés par l'Employeur. En plus d'en fournir un exemplaire à chaque salarie, l'Employeur en fournit des exemplaires au Syndicat sur demande.

La copie française de la convention collective sera la référence pour l'interprétation des textes.

*(Collective Agreement between Glencore Corporations Canada - Mine Raglan and Syndicat des Métallos, Section Locale 9449. May 1 2017 to 30 April 2022)*

- Union filed a grievance because employer refused to translate agreement into Inuktitut. *(Interview with union staff on 03.29.2018)*

# Conclusions

Declining union power linked to fly-in, fly-out = lower quality of work and less ability to improve Inuit incomes

Unions are part of an institutional framework designed to move southern commuters north

Need to question historical patterns of mobility and who is imagined as the 'typical' worker/ union member



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# Conclusions

**Unions implicated in the reproduction of colonial scales of labour mobility while simultaneously loosing ground relative to multinational mining corporations.**

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