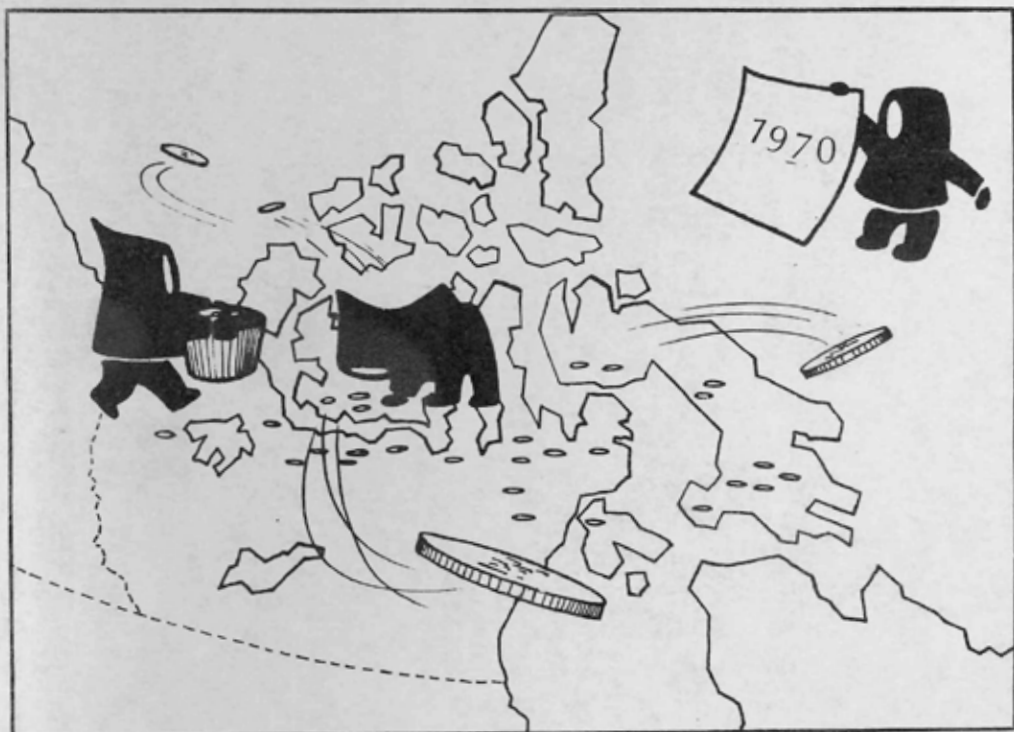


# PROJECT SURNAME



*by*

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YELLOWKNIFE, N.W.T.



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The Territorial Secretary*



OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
CANADA

Greetings:

I am writing to you about a matter that has concerned the Territorial Council and myself for some time. I speak of the disc numbers the Government originally felt necessary to give most of our people.

In other parts of Canada, everybody has a family name they are known by. They do not need numbers to say who they are. We would like to know you by a name and give you a birth certificate identifying you like every other Canadian. If you have a family name, we will not need to issue numbers any more.

I have asked Abe Okpik to write this little booklet and to visit all of you in the settlements to explain this project which will be called "Project Surname". He will tell you a great deal more about the project and answer any questions you have.

It appears to me very fitting that this project should be started as we approach our Centennial Year 1970 and for this reason I have designated it as an important Centennial project. I hope that all Community Centennial Committees will assist Abe Okpik in making this project a success.

  
Stuart M. Hodgson

# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS A SURNAME?

A surname is what is commonly known as the last name. Commissioner Stuart M. Hodgson, for example, is known by his last name - Hodgson, which is his surname. Most people are called by their first names by their friends but it is the last name, the surname, that they are identified by. You may call the Commissioner any name you like but you have to say his surname before anyone knows who you are talking about.

## WHY ARE SURNAMES CHANGED?

Many people of Canada have changed their names in the past. They continue to do so for many reasons. Names that are hard to pronounce, names that are too long and names that are too similar in the same families all add to confusion in daily

living.

People have and will continue to change their names, and provided it is done legally and officially, there are no problems.

IS IT A CRIME TO CHANGE YOUR NAME UN-OFFICIALLY?

It is not a crime in Canada to use a name other than your real name unless you do so to cheat someone. It is, quite acceptable to change a name in our country. The trouble occurs when official documents are required or official business takes place.

The problem of keeping track of the name registered at birth is one's own responsibility not the responsibility of the Government, but it is wise to register all births as soon as possible.

The correct spelling of your name is very important to you when money is left to you,

property is exchanged, or in marriage and even in death. A legal will, with the correct spelling of your name, will make it easier for your family to collect the benefits.

#### WHAT ADVANTAGES ARE THERE IN CHANGING YOUR SURNAME?

There are advantages to changing one's surname, provided it is agreed by you and your family. It is important that you have the proper Native given name truly from your cultural background. If you feel your name is not properly written, spelled or pronounced in your own tongue, you should have the proper spelling legalized. Some names should be changed for legal purposes but people with satisfactory names already should keep them.

#### WHY SHOULD YOU CHANGE YOUR NAME?

There are two basic reasons why this is of advantage to you:

- It will lead, at age 14, to a Social

Insurance number which entitles all Canadians to equal treatment in educational advantages, private negotiations and Government legislation, for example:

Old Age Pensions, Family allowance, Widows Allowance, Disabled Pension Allowance and other benefits.

- It will give you and your generations to come the same type of identification as all other Canadian citizens according to the Bill of Rights.
- Once you have chosen your surname it is yours, and yours only, for all time.



For these two basic reasons we Canadians of Innuit origin will find great advantage in being identified, and having our children identified, as all other Canadians.

WHAT ABOUT PEOPLE WHO WANT TO KEEP THEIR  
DISC NUMBERS?

All Inuit with disc numbers will be respected although we would like everyone concerned to be identified by their name only. It will not be up to me, or anyone else to influence you in your decision. It will be entirely up to you and your immediate family; only you can ask for the disappearance of the disc numbers.

If you do not have a first name you may want to counsel with family and relatives and ask for your Grandfather's or Grandmother's name. You can choose any relatives name provided you all agree on the name and spell it the way you agree upon. Your disc number will be respected if you wish to keep it especially in regard to Old Age Pensions, Family Allowance and Disabled Pensions, etc.

This surname project is not for the people

who live in the north for awhile and leave again for the south. It is for you, and your future generations; people who have lived in the north before other Innuits. Think of your identity, the loss of your true name, when you think back on the use of disc numbers.

WHY IS "PROJECT SURNAME" A CENTENNIAL PROJECT?

One hundred years has elapsed since the N.W.T. was recognized as part of Canada. For this reason we call 1970, the 100th birthday, or Centennial, for the N.W.T.

Centennial '70 will mark the start of a new period in the north wherein we, its citizens, will have an increasing voice in our own affairs. This can only be achieved if we work together. 1970 will be a year of unity among our peoples of the north, namely those of Innuits, Indian, White and all other backgrounds; a hope for

a better and brighter future for all our peoples.



"Project Surname" forms a big part in all this in that it is a step toward providing you with the same legal status as all other Canadians. I feel that this is therefore a very important Centennial project.

# PROJECT SURNAME<sup>9</sup>

## THE PROGRAM

### REQUIREMENTS

After a thorough briefing of all the aspects of "Project Surname" you will be asked to decide whether you want to take part and fill in the form at the back of this brochure

WITH YOUR NEWLY CHOSEN SURNAME  
and the other information necessary.

This must be completed and mailed to me:

Mr. Abe Okpik,  
Department of the  
Territorial Secretary,  
Yellowknife, N.W.T.

We will change the following records  
according to the information on the completed form you supply us with:

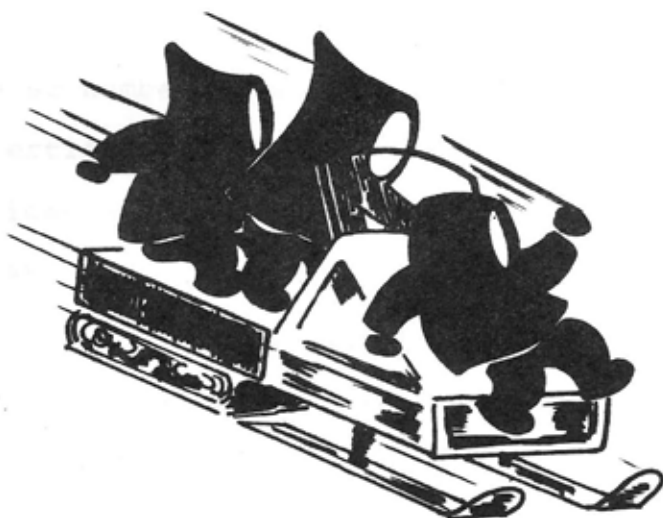
- Department of Vital Statistics
- Birth Records

- Marriage Records
- School Records

When choosing a surname it must be remembered that all people do not read syllabics; the name on the form must be one written in Roman Script or English letters.

It is planned that the issuing of disc numbers to Inuit children will stop and they will instead be registered on a birth certificate by name like all other citizens of Canada.

All Inuit over the age of 14 will be eligible for a Canadian Social Insurance number bearing the surname of the individual. The acquisition of the number will be the responsibility of the persons first employer after the age of 14. At that time the employer will not use a disc number, but a Canadian Social Insurance number, for the proper issuing of wages and cheques.



### COMMUNITY VISITS

I will personally visit all settlements to explain the surname project. Anyone wishing to fill in the forms may give them to me at that time or mail them to Yellowknife.


### BENEFITS

- All InnuIt concerned will be registered in Yellowknife and Ottawa in the same manner as all other Canadians and will receive a new birth certificate.
- Remember you will receive all government benefits you formerly received by using

disc numbers. However, the new birth certificate will be much better identification.

### LEGAL PROCEDURE

After your registration has been completed a Magistrate will visit your community and hold court to make your new names legal. He will at that time issue you with your new birth certificate which will be exactly like the one below.

	VITAL STATISTICS NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, CANADA	
	CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH	
NAME		
DATE OF BIRTH		
PLACE OF BIRTH		
DATE OF REGISTRATION		
REGISTRATION NUMBER		
ISSUED AT YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES		
ON THE	DAY OF	. 19
FORM E		REGISTRAR GENERAL

### CONCLUSION

"Project Surname" offers a wonderful example of all northern people living and working together for a better understanding

and brighter future for all citizens in the Canadian north.

It is the belief of the Commissioner, the Territorial Council, and myself personally, that through "Project Surname", all Inuit will be in a better position to keep pace with the progress of our time and to establish better understanding and communications. Our children will grow up with the same identification and legal status as all children in Canada.

This is a Centennial project of special interest to all Inuit, and everyone in the north; a project that deserves your sincere consideration.



Abe Okpik,  
Director,  
"Project Surname",  
Centennial '70.

Photo

Surname

Given Names

Address

# PROJECT SURNAME



BIRTH REGISTRATION NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Given Names \_\_\_\_\_

Father

Mother

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DISC LIST NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Given Names \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PROJECT SURNAME \_\_\_\_\_

Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Given Names \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_