FROBISHER BAY: AMBIGUITY AND GOSSIP IN A COLONIAL SITUATION

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by

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I

The message of the North is that the area is a mirror to the nation and a place in which westerners see their follies in plain light.
Lotz, Northern Realities.

Actions become significant symbols when both the actor and those who are interacting with him attribute to them the same meanings. The existence of significant symbols allows the actor to adjust his activities to those of others by anticipating their responses to what he does and reorganizing his act so as to take account of what they are likely to do if he does that ... The actor, in short, inspects the meaning his actions will have for others, assesses its utility in the light of the actions that meaning will provoke in others, and may change the direction of his activity in such a way as to make the anticipated response more nearly what he would like. Each of the actors in a situation does the same. By doing so they arrive at mutually understood symbols and lines of collective action that mesh with one another and t hus make society, in the large and in the small, possible.
Becker, Sociological work.

Der Mensch erkennt sich nur im Menschen,
Nur das Leben lehret jedem was er sei.
Goethe, Tasso.

Abstract

This thesis reports on five months anthropological fieldwork conducted in Frobisher Bay, Baffin Island, from August till the end of September, 1971. It is divided into two parts. The first four chapters are mainly descriptive with the exception of the theoretical orientation presented in Chapter I. The remaining chapters are analytical.

Chronologically, the researcher's first impressions of Frobisher Bay, the field strategy and the theoretical perspective for the analysis of the data is presented in Chapter I. The professional, transient Euro-Canadians, and in particular the elementary school teachers, are the focus of the researcher's attention. Their view of their social reality, the ways in which they define their social and educational situation, and the manner in which they perceive the Eskimo community are presented as a case study of the broader phenomenon of civil servants in the Canadian Arctic. The data are presented within the framework of symbolic interactionist theory as developed by George Herbert Mead and other sociologists. Blumer's (1969) statement of the present position of this orientation on the study of human society and human

conduct is outlined.

In Chapters II and III the growth and development of Frobisher Bay from a small, American airbase in 1942 to the present major civilian, administrative center in the Eastern Arctic is described, as well as the history and present make-up of the Eskimo and Euro-Canadian population. This is set within the context of the historical process of culture-contact in the Baffin region from the time of the discovery of Frobisher Bay by Sir Martin Frobisher in 1576. The whaling and fur industries, the activities of the Church of England missionaries and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police are described. Life styles of the present Frobisher Bay population of approximately twenty-three hundred people are compared. Data are given regarding the socio-cultural background, employment, housing, recreation, and social interaction of the two sectors of the population.

In Chapter IV a short historical account of formal education in the Canadian Arctic and in Frobisher Bay specifically is presented. I outline the present educational structure and facilities and some of the

findings of recent anthropological research on cross-cultural education. Focussing on the Baffin region and Frobisher Bay respectively, the Northwest Territories' Department of Education policies and programs are investigated. Data on the 1970/71 school year are given in Tables 4 to 18. They contain information on the staff and pupils of the elementary schools: national background, age, sex and marital status, training and teaching experience of the teachers; pupil enrollment in Frobisher Bay from 1955 to 1971, grade and age distribution during the 1970/71 school year, as well as school attendance figures. This material is analyzed in comparison with Hobart's (1970) data on elementary education in ten Western Arctic communities.

Chapter V consists of a presentation of definitions of social situations, often perceived as "problems" by Euro-Canadian residents in Frobisher Bay. It appears that many of them are situational in nature, derived from or arising out of the ambiguous situation which the Canadian North presents to many of its Euro-Canadian residents, especially transient professionals. Much of this information is transmitted through gossip.

Although some of this may seem trivial and superficial at first glance, my argument is that much of the gossip is an expression of peoples' feelings about living in the North. Many feel that they have to justify their reasons for being in Frobisher Bay and the role they are playing. They also frequently evaluate and conjecture about other peoples' reasons. These reasons are described in three main categories: financial, professional, and personal reasons.

In this section of the thesis Euro-Canadians' perceptions of "Eskimo problems" are also discussed. These are often related to values and opinions regarding benefits or detrimental effects of the welfare system, including its influences on the Eskimo sense of identity, self-esteem, and responsibility. Such perceptions divide the Euro-Canadians into assimilationists and integrationists, with blatant racism and radical reformism at the extremes of the continuum. Distinctions are made between old-timers and newcomers. Local perceptions of "escapists" and "drifters," "idealists" or "Peace Corps types" are discussed. As an example of professional attitudes and affiliation with different service agencies, the

minutes of the Coordinating Committee on Social Problems are considered.

Chapter VI contains definitions of educational situations, also often perceived as "problems" by the teachers of the Sir Martin Frobisher elementary school. The heterogeneity of this group in terms of background, training, and experience in the North and elsewhere leads to conflicting opinions regarding definitions of the Frobisher Bay school situation. The physical spread of the school, the relative social isolation of some of the teachers, and the various types of classes taught by them (integrated, segregated, and token-integrated) adds to the overt and covert disagreement among the teachers about the appropriate philosophy and goals of education in the North and the desired daily classroom practices. Two professional occasions, the Teachers Orientation sessions, and the Curriculum Workshop brought out many of the teachers' feelings, particularly in relation to the New Northern Curriculum, which is being introduced by Yellowknife's Department of Education.

There seemed to be consensus, however, among

many of the teachers with regard to their general definition of the situation: a lack of relevant, useful information to help solve educational problems in the classroom. Many teachers relate this lack of information to a failure in communication: 1) little or no communication with and guidance from the regional education office; 2) a lack of informal help and interest from the Principal; 3) a lack of sharing of ideas among the teachers themselves; and 4) a complete lack of information regarding the community, especially the Eskimo residents. Since the teachers perceived official channels of communication on the local level as insufficiently open, and information received on the two professional occasions as ambiguous and contradictory to the social reality of Frobisher Bay as they perceived it, they were forced to rely on informal channels of communication: gossip with other Euro-Canadians in the settlement. I present the argument that most Euro-Canadians have only limited and professionally specialized knowledge of the Eskimo community and that therefore much of the information received by the teachers may well give them a distorted view of that community.

In Chapter VII I analyze the material of the two

preceding chapters in relation to the theoretical perspective on gossip provided by Allport and Postman (1947), Paine (1967) and Shibutani (1966; 1967). Giving specific examples, I present the thesis that gossip in Frobisher Bay is inherently different from that treated in most traditional anthropological literature. I note that Frobisher Bay gossip is a mechanism of informal communication used by small, local groups in crisis situations in an attempt to reduce perceived ambiguity. The situational necessity for gossip and its nature and function, arise out of the fluid character of the settlement's social structure. In such situations previously accepted norms of behavior become inadequate. Emergency action of some kind is required. Furthermore, the felt ambiguity in connection with the perceived lack of information requires special social mechanisms to provide incoming employees with the necessary information for the adequate fulfillment of their jobs and the arrangement of their social lives. At the same time, old-timers assert and protect their vested interests in occupational and social spheres. Gossip is one way of handling this type of situation.

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In Chapter VIII I attempt to pull together some of the main threads which run through the preceding discussion. The various observations and concepts presented are put in the context of the colonial situation existing in the Canadian North, which, as defined by Memmi (1967), is the most ambiguous situation possible for those confronted with its inherent contradictions. Local perceptions of insufficient and/or ambiguous information, isolation, stagnation, mediocrity and high turnover of personnel are treated with reference to this colonial situation. Memmi's distinction between colonials, colonizers, and colonialists draws attention to the ambiguity of the colonial situation and the kind of moral choices Euro-Canadians are forced to make when in the North. It is my view that many civil servants in the North, including teachers, because of their structural affiliation with the dominant social system, are unable to live in the North as colonials. Their ethical convictions as educated, middle-class professionals prevent them, on the whole, from becoming colonialists. As colonizers, then, they are required to cope with the frustrating, ambiguous situation as "reluctant imperialists" employed by institutions whose goals and practices often conflict and which they cannot fully support and condone.

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Aknowledgements

The research described in the following pages was conducted while I was a graduate student in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland, and a recipient of a University Fellowship from that institution. In addition, I received a research grant from its Institute of Social and Economic Research.

At the University I would especially like to thank Professors Milton Freeman and Robert Stebbins for their interest and kindness in helping me with the preparation of the fieldwork as well as the writing up of this report.

Special thanks are also due to many people in Frobisher Bay who extended their hospitality and friendship toward me. I appreciate the cooperation which the educational authorities and many of the teachers gave me. In singling out Mrs. Evelyn Strom and Mr. and Mrs. David Webster I am not forgetting all the others with whom I spent so many pleasant and instructive hours talking, eating and drinking.

I am also grateful to ex-Northern teachers, Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Eades, for their sincere interest and valuable suggestions before and after my stay in the North.

This report, whatever its merit, is dedicated with great fondness to Oreesee and her family who, with infinite kindness and tolerance, took me into their home. I hope that whatever I will say in the following pages will in no way be detrimental to their well-being and to the Eskimo cause in general.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

I went to Frobisher Bay, Baffin Island, on the second of August, 1971, for an approximately five month stay. On the Nordair plane from Montreal I was sitting next to an elderly, American couple. They told me that they were on the way to visit their married daughter. Her husband, a former missionary, had been in charge of a government department in Frobisher Bay for about a year. I heard that his territory consisted of the whole Baffin region and that he spent the first few months travelling to the different settlements to familiarize himself with local conditions. My acquaintances expressed the hope that he would not stay in the North too long but find a position closer to home and settle down there with his family.

I also talked with a young man who was sitting on the other side of the aisle. He intrigued me because he was reading Omar Khayyam's Rubaiyat. He also had several copies of Kahil Gibran's The Prophet in his flightbag. He explained that this was perfect literature to prepare one's mind for the enjoyment of the very special qualities of the Arctic, its people and its mysterious landscape. He planned to distribute

the copies of the book among several of his friends.

This man belonged to an ice reconnaissance crew which flew in and out of Frobisher Bay several times a month. He laughed when I told him that I was proposing to do anthropological research. He was actually quite disturbed about "another one of those people asking stupid questions," a reaction I was to encounter many times during the following months. He tried to impress on me not to believe too readily what the local Euro-Canadians would tell me about the Eskimos. "They are racist like hell," he said. When we left the plane he said goodbye with the following warning: "Don't forget, the Eskimos are what we made of them."

Arriving at Frobisher Bay airport I spoke with several people about possible accomodation. I also observed the greetings, introductions and back-slapping between people who met inside the airport hall. "Are you coming or going?" was a well-used phrase. This question was often answered with extensive itineraries about how many settlements had been or were to be visited in a certain number of days. New arrivals were quickly whisked away in private cars to the hotel or the homes of residents. One recognized the old-timers by the fact that they greeted some of the Eskimo

people standing about. Exclamations about how nice it was to see them again were met with smiles but few words. Women's amauties were peeked into to admire the new baby, little children had their ears pulled in friendly fashion, and men were invited to "a beer sometime."

In the months to follow I often went to the airport to see new people come in or to see others off. The Ikaluit Eskimo Co-op., the craft shop located above the airport hall, did brisk business on the days that planes left for Montreal. It was fun to see people leave, clad in their beautiful parkas and sealskin boots, loaded up with carvings, Eskimo dolls, mittens, purses and the like. I could not help thinking that they were going back to a world where they would be recognized as "Arctic experts," regardless of how long or short their stay "up North" had been. They would show slides to relatives and friends and discuss life in the North as well as the Eskimos in normative terms, positively or negatively, depending on their outlook and experiences, so adding to the stereotypes current in Southern Canada.

My observations on the plane, at the airport and my first weeks in town led me gradually to the focus of my work. I paid visits to the Hudson's Bay Company

store (HBC, locally called the Commissary), the Public Library, the Anglican Church, a bingo game and had my first beers in the Royal Canadian Legion hall. Conversations with other Euro-Canadians reinforced my belief in the relevance of my interest in the readily observable, and quite obvious fact that so many people from various national, social and cultural backgrounds mingled in Frobisher Bay.

I became particularly fascinated by the professional newcomers in town. They were a highly mobile and transient group of people, who seemed to adapt very quickly to the new physical and social environment. They established relationships with each other; newcomers and oldtimers, Euro-Canadians and Eskimos. Certain mechanisms seemed to be at work to socialize the newcomers into the social fabric of this Arctic town. Gossip appeared to play a major role in this process. The newcomers' view of their social reality, the way in which they defined their situation and their perceptions of the Eskimo community became the major object of my attention. Parsons (1970:1) has stated that,

> A major assumption underlying the research is that the attitudes of "transient" whites and the definitions they hold of the native people

> with whom they come into contact, will affect the ways in which native people adapt themselves to a rapidly changing social environment. Accordingly, one of our main purposes is to examine the nature of the definitions.

Within the protective walls of the University my proposed research had been designed to deal with a theoretical aspect of cross-cultural education. As part of this assignment I conducted classroom observation in the Sir Martin Frobisher elementary school and interviewed many of its teachers. This was done with the permission of the Superintendent of Education in the Baffin region and the Principal of the school.

The Principal transmitted to the teachers my desire to be admitted to their classrooms. Of the twenty-five teachers eleven initially consented to this. Later, six other teachers co-operated with me, while I met most of the remaining ones socially. I spent a great deal of time in and around the school and with the teachers. I sat in during classes, listened to conversations in the staff room, attended the Teachers Orientation sessions, the Curriculum Workshop and went to the Parent-Teacher nights. For various reasons, however, my work in the classrooms was not systematic enough.[1] This was a second reason

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[1] I developed severe back trouble and could not

for my shift in focus.

My role in the fieldwork situation has been described by Gans (1968:302) as "the researcher-participant, who participates in a social situation but is personally only partially involved," as opposed to a total participant or a total researcher. I always told people in Frobisher Bay that I was interested in learning about the teachers and that this was the reason for my being there.

For four months, starting with my third day in town, I lived with an Eskimo family in Ikaluit (see map 1). Their small, three-bedroom house became in many ways my hide-out, from which I peeked outside to observe and talk to the other non-Eskimos in town from a physical as well as a mental distance. I identified strongly with my Eskimo hosts. They were very kind to me and although I could only communicate verbally with the children and some of the young adults who spoke English, I found myself observing the Euro-Canadians with great detachment. This will certainly color some

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get around as easily as I had hoped. Also the teachers were not always able to grant me an interview on the same day I had observed in their classrooms. Thus their and my own memory of classroom events and teacher-pupil interaction became a problem.

of the observations reported in the following pages. It will undoubtedly also have been the cause for omissions to see, hear and experience things which were happening to other newcomers. The fact that I was neither officially nor unofficially affiliated with any organization in town also excluded me from some social and professional events. Hopefully, my stay with a married Euro-Canadian couple, both teachers, in the highrise apartment building during the fifth month of my stay made up for some of this lack.

In many ways, what happens in Frobisher Bay is rapresentative of the whole of the Canadian Arctic. On the other hand, Frobisher Bay as the largest and most urban settlement in the Eastern Arctic is very unlike other settlements, just as the Eastern Arctic itself is very different from the Central and Western regions of Canada's North. Therefore, the following report does not pretend to be general in nature. Some of the observations may be applicable to other places and other people. Low-order generalizations are made, where possible, in comparison with data gleaned from the anthropological literature on the Canadian North. Most of the observations and the analysis, however, refer specifically to Frobisher Bay at a particular time in its development. The emphasis is on the teachers

in the elementary school during the fall of 1971.

While most of my informal interviews were conducted with the school teachers, I also talked with many other Euro-Canadian residents. I did no systematic data gathering among the Eskimos, but during my four month stay with the Eskimo family I could not help observing and discussing aspects of their way of life. Most of my interaction was with Eskimo women and children; many of the latter I knew, of course, from school. Although I told them that I was studying the teachers many thought that I was some kind of teacher myself, especially after I had done some substitute teaching in their school.

Theoretical orientation

In the following pages I concentrate on peoples' views and interpretations, their definitions of situations, rather than objective facts. The focus of my analysis will be on the situation. Attention will center upon certain situations, divided into two major parts: social situations and educational situations, perceived as key problems by teachers and other Euro-Canadians in Frobisher Bay.

In a cross-cultural situation, such as an Arctic town, the symbolic interactionist orientation can effectively guide the collection and analysis of the kinds of data a researcher is able to gather in a relatively short period of time. Middle-range theory emerges from the material to give one a coherent statement of the disconnected and disjointed bits of information presented by various informants, including the researcher's own experiences, in a situation characterized by an exceptional absence of objective information for residents and researcher alike.

McBain (1970:XXI) in a geographical study of Frobisher Bay mentioned that,

> Frobisher Bay is a government settlement. Little relevant information is available on many aspects except for that contained in government files.

While McBain's thesis is important because she had access to many such files, the present study does not make use of any governmental data, except for material collected from the personnel files on the school teachers in the Baffin region during the 1971/72 school year.

Early in this century George Herbert Mead developed

a theory of "Society" and the "Self" as interdependent parts of social interaction. His philosophy and theories became the cornerstone upon which a group of University of Chicago sociologists developed and refined the sociological approach which came to be known as symbolic interactionism. Blumer (1969:1-21) offered a clear statement of the present position of this orientation in the study of human society and human conduct.

Basic to the approach is the view that "Human society is to be seen as consisting of acting people, and the life of the society is to be seen as consisting of their actions" (Blumer, 1969:85). People are associating with one another, they are acting toward each other and are thus engaging in social interaction. This interaction is reciprocal in nature in that individuals act upon each other's actions. At the same time they interpret or "define" each other's actions instead of merely reacting to them. Social reality is seen as fluid and constantly changing while people, individuals as well as groups, adapt to changing situations.

> ... the life of any human society consists necessarily of an ongoing process of fitting together the activities of its members (Blumer, 1969:7).

Two levels of social interaction can be recognized. the non-symbolic and the symbolic. Non-symbolic interaction takes place directly, as by reflex, without reflection or interpretation. An example of this would be one's immediate reaction to a sudden noise, a fist in front of one's face or having one's arm pulled. The way in which one reacts may be verbal or non-verbal but in both cases little or no reflection will intervene. Much of the interaction between people, however, is conducted on the symbolic level, which means that people attempt to understand each other's actions and direct their own actions by this understanding.

Symbolic interactionism is based on three premises, which were set out by Blumer (1969:2) as follows:

1. that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them,
2. that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows,
3. that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters.

The key-word of this sociological approach is thus

meaning. Meanings are thought to arise out of interaction between people; they do not come from any inherent or intrinsic value in things themselves, or from any psychological factors (such as sensations, feelings, values, ideas, attitudes, memories, etc.) brought to the thing or event by the person for whom it has meaning.

> Thus, symbolic interactionism sees meaning as social products, as creations that are formed in and through the defining activities of people as they interact (Blumer, 1969:5).

The way in which individuals arrive at meanings is an involved, interpretative process. It is never only an application of established meanings, either personal or cultural, but a formative process in which new meanings are created or selected while old ones are checked, revised and transformed. According to Blumer it is important to understand this process since it implies that human behavior is carried on with regard to the situations one finds oneself in.

Interactionists have thus moved away from the emphasis on early socialization and cultural forces as the most crucial factors in human behavior. Instead of tracing behavior to personality traits established in early childhood which are maintained through culture,

it is related to adjustments which people make in later years to the social situations that confront them.

To an interactionist the actions of human beings, the actors, cannot be explained solely as resulting from various psychological conditions, nor as resulting from sociocultural factors such as social structure and function or collective values and attitudes. In consequence, social interaction is seen as more than the medium "through which sociological or psychological determinants move to bring about given forms of human behavior" (Blumer, 1969:7); in fact, it is the process that forms human behavior.

Symbolic interactionists give prime attention to the nature of interpersonal relations and the experiences and perceptions of individuals, or groups of individuals, as they arrive at meanings. Thus, this approach centers on the individual, or group of individuals, in specific recurring situations.

Obviously, different people arrive at different meanings. The manner in which different people, or groups of people, define their social reality and give it meaning, may be very dissimilar, even within the same spatial or temporal context. People can live side

by side in very diferent "worlds", since the meanings of these worlds are established from different personal backgrounds. The resulting behavior will also differ.

> ... there is no one-to-one correspondence between an objectively real world and people's perspectives of that world, but instead something intervenes when events and persons come together, an intervention that makes possible the variety of interpretations which Schultz calls "multiple realities." According to this view, the same events or objects can have different meanings for different people, and the degree of difference will produce comparable differences in behavior (McHugh, 1968:8).

People constantly attempt to read each other's meanings while indicating their own meanings to others. Social interaction may become awkward, or even impossible, when people, individuals and groups, cannot read one another's meanings or when they read them inaccurately. This is often true in cross-cultural situations.

That people are capable of symbolic interaction is due to their possession of a "Self", that is, human beings are capable of interacting with themselves as if they were objects. Selfhood, or self-consciousness, implies that an individual can experience himself. A person can look at himself as from the outside and be the object of his own actions; he can argue with himself, be angry with himself, and the like. Anything of which a person

is conscious is something which he is indicating to himself. In fact, the whole waking day of any person is filled with making indications to himself of things and events in his surroundings, within his perceptual field, which must be interpreted and given meaning.

> ... he enters his own experience not as a self or individual, not directly or immediately, not by becoming a subject to himself, but only in so far as he first becomes an object to himself just as other individuals are objects to him or in his experience; and he becomes an object to himself only by taking the attitudes of other individuals toward himself within a social environment or context of experience and behavior in which both he and they are involved (Mead, 1970:383).

Taking the attitudes of others is called "role-taking." We take the roles of others who view us and react to their definitions of the situation, including their definitions of ourselves. We also interact with ourselves, with our "Self," by indicating meanings to ourselves and reacting to these meanings. This interaction is also social, in that we address ourselves as persons, based on standpoints learned from others. For example: we reproach ourselves, remind ourselves; in short, we tell ourselves all the cues we are picking up from indications directed toward us.

Implied in the symbolic interactionist view of

human life and society is the belief that people are self-directive, action-oriented organisms who, in interplay with their environment, engage in actions which have meaning to them. The environment includes things, people as well as abstract concepts; in other words, physical, social and abstract objects.[2] This is a humanist's view of life. People are seen as flexible and capable of adjustments through a certain measure of free choice. At the very least, people are seen to react to situations which confront them in a manner significantly influenced by their own mental processes. Stebbins (MSS) has summed this up as follows:

> ... the social behavior of human beings is no automatic response, which merely follows from prior socialization. It is largely the result of decisions and choices made on the spot with reference to oneself and one's activities, or to put it in the language of theory, man's freedom in life lies in the choices he is able to make in selecting and constructing a definition of the situation.

In the following paper I will attempt to outline and analyze individual and group definitions of certain situations attributed to them by Euro-Canadian residents

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[2] Blumer (1969:11) has noted that, "An object is anything that can be indicated or referred to"..."the nature of the object...consists of the meaning that it has for the person for whom it is an object."

of Frobisher Bay. The most obvious differences in definitions of situations, or meanings, those between the Eskimos and the Euro-Canadians, will not be dealt with to any great extent. Differences among Euro-Canadians, individuals and groups, are analyzed in terms of the different situations they find themselves in. The teachers, specifically, find themselves in an ambiguous situation, which leads them to resort to gossip as a major tool of communication. I analyze the teachers' situation, and in general the situation of many transient Euro-Canadian professionals in Frobisher Bay, as a colonial situation, which, as Memmi (1965) has noted, is an ambiguous situation par excellence.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF FROBISHER BAY

Introduction

Frobisher Bay is the largest settlement in the Eastern Arctic and the administrative capital as well as the educational, medical, communication and transportation center for the region. The Eastern Arctic, or Baffin region, includes all of Baffin Island, Grise Fiord (Southern Ellesmere Island), Port Burwell (off Northern Quebec), the settlements of Hall Beach and Igloolik on Melville Peninsula, and Resolute Bay on Cornwallis Island.

All departments of the Northwest Territories Government have regional offices in Frobisher Bay: the government is the major employer of the population, Euro-Canadian as well as Eskimo. It is headed by the Regional Director. Below him are the Assistant Regional Director and the eight directors of the following departments: Education, Industry and Development, Local Government, Personnel, Public Works, Social Development, Supply, and the Treasury. The Area Service Officer (formerly called Settlement Manager) reports to the Regional Director on

all government activities in town. The Regional Director himself reports to the Commisioner of the Northwest Territories in Yellowknife, who in turn is accountable to the Government of Canada through the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. As of April 1, 1971, Frobisher Bay has Hamlet status, which means that the responsibilities for municipal services are in the hands of the elected Hamlet Council and its four-man staff.

Federal government agencies and Crown corporations maintaining offices in Frobisher Bay include the following: Bell Telephone of Canada, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), Canadian National Telecommunications, Department of Fisheries, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND), Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, Department of National Health and Welfare, Department of Transport (DOT), Fisheries Research Board, Northern Canadian Power Corporation (NCPC), and the federal Post Office. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) maintain local as well as regional ground- and air-borne detachments in town.

In 1972 Frobisher Bay is thirty years of age. Its development from a small, American airbase to the present-day urban town with a large civilian population is a

fascinating saga. McBain (1970) has described the peculiar history of this settlement. I have drawn on her thesis and various other historical sources for the following description of this development. The most unusual feature regarding the settlement of Frobisher Bay is the fact that it had no pre-history prior to 1941. There was never a trading post or a mission station. The Eskimos of Southern Baffin used the Sylvia Grinnell River, close to the present town site, only intermittently during the char fishing seasons but never established permanent camps until the arrival of the foreigners, which in this case were the American armed forces.

Due to various factors (see Dziuban, 1959; Jenness, 1964; McBain, 1970; Phillips, 1967) the founding of the settlement and its development during the first decade of its existence did not reflect any planning on the part of the Canadian government. Nor did the Americans and the Canadians have much knowledge with regard to the surrounding area. McBain (1970:43), for example, reported that maps drawn up in the previous century by the explorer Charles F. Hall were utilized by the American surveying crews in 1941.

The rapid and haphazard evolution of the settlement

indicates the changing interests of the American and Canadian governments in the Arctic Northlands, interests that spring from the political and military needs and priorities of these nations. While the rationale for many Northern settlements was economic - whaling and the fur trade - the raison d'être for Frobisher Bay was strictly military. Knowledge of the history of the settlement is necessary in order to understand many of today's events as well as the make-up of its present population, both Eskimo and Euro-Canadian.

Until the beginning of the Second World War interest in and knowledge of the Canadian North was primarily guided by the commercial interests of non-Canadians, mainly Europeans and Americans. The centuries'-long search for the trade routes to the Orient via the North-west Passage, the pursuit of commercial whaling and the fur trade determined much of what happened on Baffin Island, and particularly along its coasts.

Frobisher Bay was discovered by Sir Martin Frobisher in 1576. His contact with the Eskimos was slight. After he mounted two more expeditions to the area in search of gold, the immediate vicinity of Frobisher Bay was by-passed by most explorers, except for the American Charles F. Hall, who, searching for Sir John Franklin,

spent two winters on Southern Baffin during the 1860's.

Other Baffin Island Eskimos came into contact with many more explorers during the centuries following Frobisher's initial discovery of the island. Some of these, such as Franz Boas, who travelled the island in 1883-4, attempted to make rough estimates of the existing Eskimo population. He calculated that there were between one thousand and eleven hundred Eskimos distributed over the whole of Baffin Island at that time. The Eskimos of the Frobisher Bay area, located in small, kin-based hunting groups along the coast of the Bay, he thought to number about eighty people. These were the Nugumiut, one of four groups he identified on Southern Baffin Island (see Boas, 1964:13-18).

By that time the traditional settlement, migration and hunting practices of many Eskimos had already been influenced drastically by the influx of the whalers. Also traditional trade relationships between the various groups had been altered and disrupted by incoming trade goods, which the whalers used as barter or payment of goods and services provided by the Eskimos. From the beginning most of the whalers obtained furs from the Eskimos although this was not their primary purpose. To this end they supplied the Eskimos with guns,

ammunition, steel knives and steel traps and similar, more efficient equipment. Thus, some Eskimos started to hunt and trap for the foreigners in addition to supplying their own subsistence needs.

The European whalers, mainly from Scotland, operated in the upper part of Melville Bay and the channels that lead into it. They traded polar bear and fox skins with the Eskimos but rarely hired Eskimos as crew members. They usually returned to Scotland at the end of each navigation season. Far greater was the impact of the American whalers, mainly from New England ports, who sailed the upper waters of Hudson Bay. Instead of using steamers as the Scots did, they had large sailing vessels, which they provisioned for two years and used as shore stations. They pursued the whales in small boats, many of which were manned by Eskimo crews. The American whalers did not go home until their ships were full of oil and baleen. This might take two or three years. In addition to employing the Eskimos as crew members during the summer months the Americans employed them during the winter also, to hunt and trap and to make fur clothing. They also were known to move whole groups of Eskimos to especially abundant whaling sites for one or more years.

Through contact with the whalers the Eskimos learned new skills and became dependent on new hunting equipment and techniques, as well as new food stuffs and forms of entertainment. Whalers taught them, for example, Scottish dances and songs and the making of "home-brew". The most devastating aspect of this contact period was the transmission of many diseases, such as influenza, smallpox, tuberculosis and syphilis. Boas (1964:19), while describing the harsh way of life and the small families, related the decreased population and high death rate to the newly introduced diseases. He noted that cannibalism, resorted to in times of crisis, was spoken of with great horror by the Eskimos. The author argued that the famines and periods of great starvation were mainly caused by the inability to reach game in periods of bad weather, rather than insufficient resources. Rowley (n.d.:6), however, has stated that,

> ...the resources on which they depended were greatly depleted. Whales were virtually wiped out; many walrus were slaughtered and they became scarce where they had been plentiful.

The following figures reported by Fairfield (1967: 18) give an idea of the number of people affected.

> At the beginning of the eighteenth century the total Canadian Eskimo population was estimated

> to be about 22,000. The white man brought smallpox, influenza and typhus along with his trade goods and by 1921 the Eskimo were reduced to about 7,000.

At the end of the nineteenth century commercial whaling declined in importance and the invention of a synthetic substitute for whale-bone in 1906 made it uneconomical. Whalers had already introduced trapping to many Eskimos and some of the former whaling captains now started to exploit the new resource in earnest. Some former whaling stations became clearing houses for the fur trade or were taken over by incoming traders, particularly the HBC.

This company was founded in England in 1670 when Canada was still a British colony. It was legal owner and administrator of much of the Canadian North until the time of Canada's confederation in 1867. Canada then bought so-called Rupert's Land from the HBC, an area surrounding the Hudson Bay and including much of what is now known as the Northwest Territories.

During the first centuries of its existence the company traded with the Indians. In 1909 it opened its first all-Eskimo post at Eric Cove near Cape Wolstenholme in Ungava. From there it extended its operations to the North, establishing posts in Lake Harbour in 1911,

Chesterfield in 1912, Cape Dorset in 1913, Port Burwell in 1916, Coats Island and Repulse Bay in 1918 and Port Harrison in 1920. During that period several of the small and/or independent traders withdrew or were bought out by the HBC (see Innes, 1962 and Usher, 1971 for a complete history of the posts).

The end of the nineteenth century also saw the arrival of the Anglican missionaries from the Church of England. The Eskimos of Baffin Island first came into contact with these missionaries in 1853 when a hunting party visited Fort George on the East coast of Hudson Bay. During the second half of the nineteenth century Anglican missionaries were stationed, off and on, at Little Whale River, Great Whale River and Fort George.

The famous Reverend E.J.Peck taught Eskimos at these stations from 1876 till 1894, at which time he opened the Blacklead Mission on the site of an old Scottish whaling station. This was the forerunner of the later Pangnirtung mission. There were 171 Eskimos on the island when Peck arrived. From this point he ministered to the population throughout the Cumberland Sound area.

As described by Fleming (1957), Lewis (1904) and Marsh (n.d.) these missions were often located at whaling stations and trading posts. "Trade, when it is thus the handmaiden of Christ, is an unmitigated blessing" (Lewis, 1904:76). Missions, trading posts and whaling stations were outfitted with material and supplies from the mother countries. Regular one or two year contact was maintained for new supplies, personnel and furloughs.

When the missionaries did not follow the whalers or traders they nevertheless often depended on them for transportation, information regarding the location of Eskimo camps as well as knowledge about the customs of the people. The relationship between the original foreigners was particularly close, if only for strategic purposes, although their reasons for being in the North was dissimilar.

In 1914 the HBC opened the post closest to the present site of Frobisher Bay, namely at Ward Inlet, thirty-five miles to the South. McBain (1970:34.) said that, "This post seems to have been of little interest to anyone but local Eskimos." They did not settle near the post, however, but remained in their coastal camps from where they made trading visits to the post. The first mission closest to Frobisher Bay

was established by the Reverend A.L.Fleming in 1909 in Lake Harbour. The HBC followed two years later, while two years after that the initial whaling station closed down.

Marsh (n.d.) gave a listing of all the missions in the Baffin region, including dates of establishment and duration of their existence. A few examples are: the Port Burwell mission was opened in 1887, Chesterfield in 1898, Pangnirtung in 1926 and the two missions in Frobisher Bay in 1957 and 1965. The most recent missions were established as late as 1966 in places like Broughton Island, Hall Lake and Resolute Bay. In that year the Lake Harbour mission was also reopened after having been closed while many Lake Harbour people were living in Frobisher Bay. The Anglican missionaries trained several Eskimos as catechists who accompanied them on the trail to the various camps. These catechists did much of the teaching and preaching to their own people and sometimes founded missions on their own. The Reverend Peck introduced the syllabic script to the Eskimos and distributed, as did other missionaries, religious reading material.

The presence of the Canadian government in the Eastern Arctic is relatively recent. Between the 1880's

and 1930's various government expeditions were made, primarily to Southwestern Baffin and Cumberland Sound. These expeditions were in response to the presence of aliens within Canadian borders and claims to Arctic territory made by foreign nations. The discovery of oil on Southern Baffin Island in the 1860's and the Otto Sverdrup expedition of 1898, which hoisted a foreign flag on the Sverdrup Islands, were incidents which motivated the politicians to concern themselves with the North. According to Jenness (1968:24),

> Down to the twentieth century...Canada deliberately turned her eyes away from the Arctic and allowed events there to run their course unhindered. Only a threat to her sovereignty over the islands fringing her far-northern mainland could rouse her from her lethargy. It was that threat and not, as in Greenland, any concern for the Eskimos, which in 1903 provoked her to set up an arctic administration.

Initially this administration consisted of two police posts in the Eastern Arctic, one on the Northern coast of Hudson Bay at Fullerton Harbour and another one at Cape Herschel on Ellesmere Island. From 1905 on the Canadian government also patrolled the Eastern Arctic coast yearly; first in chartered whaling or HBC ships but since 1947 in government-owned patrol and supply vessels. These ships collected custom dues, administered relief and justice, provided medical and dental services,

and in general proclaimed Canadian sovereignty in the Northern regions. The last Arctic patrol ship, the C.D.HOWE, had been designed in 1950 especially for hospital work. It had facilities on board to develop X-rays on the spot which enabled the medical personnel to take diseased Eskimos on board immediately for treatment in hospitals in Southern Canada. The C.D.HOWE sailed until 1967 at which time the general hospital in Frobisher Bay and nursing stations in the settlements could take over the task, while people needing special medical treatment were flown South. Graburn (1969:143) described the combined feelings of pleasure and fear among the Eskimos connected with the yearly visits.

Furguson (1971:20) has noted that most governmental decisions regarding the administration of the North in those early years were based on the viewpoints put forward by the few foreign residents or were based on opinions formed during these yearly inspection tours, when the ship stayed in each settlement for a few days at the most. In connection with this it is interesting to reflect that few of the early non-Eskimo settlers came from Canada or had lived in Canada for any length before going North. As said before, the whalers came from the United States or Scotland. The Church of England and the HBC recruited in the United Kingdom. The influence of these foreigners

in the Eastern Arctic has been called conservative. According to Phillips (1967:126) these early settlements

> ...often became bastions of an old world point of view that both resisted Canadian attitudes and attracted others who were also unsympathetic with Canadian life. Perhaps this partly explains the high proportion of non-Canadians still found in the North. Canadians may be less anxious than Europeans to move from their comfortable living-rooms, and the early arrivals in the North had created the kind of atmosphere where Europeans could feel particularly at home.

The RCMP men, on the other hand, were always Canadian in upbringing, training and outlook. They were usually young men, inexperienced and early in their career. They officially took over many of the functions which the traders and the missionaries had fulfilled vis-a-vis the Eskimo population for decades. The police became the official guardian of the indigenous population and controllers of law and order in the settlements. They acted as postmasters, game officials, collected custom dues, administered relief and controlled law-breakers. The presence of the RCMP changed relations between the Euro-Canadians as well as the Eskimos' relations with them. The latter now became dependent on the RCMP for distribution of relief as they had before been dependent on help from the missionaries or "grub-staking" from traders.

Nevertheless, Wilkinson (1959:26-7) described the atmosphere in the early settlements in terms of camaraderie.

> ...a certain camaraderie existed among the inhabitants of the settlements in the early days and information was freely exchanged... All agencies concerned themselves with the health of the people. Any welfare problems were given rough and ready handling, each problem reduced to the bare essentials which could be understood by all.

The author also mentioned that most of the decisions were made by the Euro-Canadians and orders were passed down to the Eskimos which made them dependent on the idiosyncratic behavior of whatever "white man" they had to deal with, even in cases where the order or advice given was in essence good.

The few Euro-Canadians affected the Eskimo way of life in yet another way as Vallee (1971b) has pointed out. They all, for purposes of their own, restructured Eskimo group relations. Firstly, because of the greater individualization on the trapline, and secondly, because many Euro-Canadians preferred to deal with one or a few Eskimo men whom they perceived as "leaders," "spokesmen for the tribe" or "camp bosses". This manner of social interaction was normal

in their own culture and precedents had been set in dealing with Indian "chiefs". Vallee (1971b:78) argued that, in doing so, they changed traditional, situational leadership into something more permanent and less flexible, "so creating the forerunners of a kind of elite of native settlement dwellers". Often these men and their families became intermediaries between Eskimos and Euro-Canadians and were among the first to receive wage-employment. They also often moved from post to post with a trader or travelled with the missionaries to outlying camps and isolated settlements, "in some cases ending up in regions far distant from their original homeland" (Vallee, 1971b:78). Washburne's (1940) life history of the Eskimo woman Anauta and members of her family presents a good description of this situation.

Elsewhere Vallee (1967) has pointed out that the Euro-Canadians also tended to hire good hunters for employment, rather than less successful men who might have been more in need of wage-employment.

> In fact, Kabloona, tend to regard a man's incompetence at and lack of motivation for land living as evidence that he will not make a good employee...To some extent this...is based, not on demonstrable ability to carry out settlement jobs, but on character. The Kabloona wants employees of sterling character,

> people who are highly regarded by their fellow-Eskimos (Vallee, 1967:45).

By the time the fur trade reached its peak in the 1920's the demand for white fox was very high. Small settlements could afford traders. Many of the Eskimos had adapted to the far-reaching changes that had occurred in their land; they had become trappers rather than hunters and also, to a certain extent, men of property, which hampered their movements to favorable hunting areas. Many changed to a sedentary way of life, congregating around trading posts and missions. Révillon Frères and other independent traders competed with the HBC for the furs which the Eskimos brought into the stores.

Thus, when the depression hit the world in the 1930's the Eskimos were harshly affected. Wilkinson (1959:27) reported that the price of fox furs - the mainstay of the fur trade - dropped from a high of $35.00 to a low of $3.75. Many trading posts were forced to close, while at those that remained open, food prices increased rapidly. Small traders left and by 1936 the HBC had succeeded in buying out all independent traders, including Révillon Frères. The resulting period has been described in terms of

exploitation as well as benevolence. Since the HBC monopolized the Eskimo trade they were able to keep prices for skins low and food high. On the other hand, as Jenness (1964:54) mentioned,

> The real heavy burden of supporting the Eskimos fell on the traders since the Department [of the Interior] stipulated that the applicants of trading licences must assume full responsibility for the welfare of the natives who trade with them and the destitute natives must be maintained without expense to the Department.

According to Jenness such an understanding was reached between the Department of the Interior and the HBC in 1934. Graburn (1969:120) has described this period as follows:

> At the few remaining posts prices of furs were low, supplies were low, and the company could no longer afford to grub-stake the Eskimo trappers. ...World War II kept conditions at the level of destitution. Even the best hunters were only marginally well off, often because the supply ships either did not arrive or brought too little ammunition to go around. By this time the Eskimos could no longer go back completely to their old hunting methods...U.S. Army Air bases were opened... and for the Eskimos...the Americans are heroes who saved them from certain starvation. There were considerable migrations from other places to the environs of these generous newcomers who offered gifts and employment.

The number of Eskimos affected in this way is uncertain. McBain (1970:36-7) reported that the 1931

Census of Canada - the first official census to include Eskimos - presented approximate figures only: a total of 790 Eskimos and 23 Euro-Canadians for Southern Baffin between Foxe Peninsula and Frobisher Bay, and another 541 Eskimos and 14 Euro-Canadians living in the region between Cumberland Sound and Coutts Inlet.

Frobisher Bay

The present settlement of Frobisher Bay had its beginnings as an American airbase in 1942 as part of the Crimson Air Staging Route. When in 1941 the United States became actively involved in World War II the American armed forces surveyed large parts of the Canadian North and began the construction of weather stations in various locations in the Eastern Arctic. Phillips (1967:109) described how Canada's control and knowledge of the area and of these actions were so limited that some of these stations were constructed before the Canadian government knew anything about it. Some short-lived stations were built that Canada never knew about.

During the summer of 1942 the Frobisher Bay airstrip and affiliated buildings were constructed by the United States Army Air Force. They were designed

to ferry short-range aircraft from the United States across Canada to Greenland and the United Kingdom as an alternative form of transportation at the time when German submarines were ravaging the sea lanes of the North Atlantic. Topographical features were decisive in the choice of the location since a large level expanse of land suitable for an airstrip was needed in close proximity to a good natural harbor. There is some controversy as to whether the chosen site was indeed the best one available because of the bad local weather conditions (see McBain, 1970:45-47; Stefansson, 1964:347).

Nevertheless, the airport was operational in 1943. That year was also the peak year of its operation during which 323 aircraft arrivals were recorded. As aircraft technology rapidly developed longer-range planes and when the submarine threat subsided, the base declined in importance. At the end of the war the existing facilities were sold to the Canadian government and the Royal Canadian Air Force assumed control.

Although Eskimos started to migrate to the site from 1941 on, according to McBain (1970:55-57) very few of them were employed by the Americans. During this time the Eskimos were mainly attracted by the incredible amounts of waste material, food and entertainment

provided by the American soldiers. The base was exclusively staffed by American forces while a single RCMP man provided the liaison between the United States forces, the Canadian government and the Eskimo population. Prior to World War II the area had been patrolled by RCMP constables stationed in Pangnirtung and Lake Harbour. McBain (1970:58) listed five hundred men in Frobisher Bay for the year 1942.

Following World War II the airport became relatively inactive until the commencement of the Korean War and the Cold War. American military eyes once again turned to the Canadian North. In 1951 the United States Armed Forces returned to Frobisher Bay. At this point in time the United States Air Force was preparing to construct major air bases and a chain of radar stations throughout the Canadian Arctic and Greenland. Frobisher Bay became an alternate airport of the North East Air Command, which had its headquarters in St. John's, Newfoundland. It was used by airplanes proceeding to and from Thule's airbase in Northern Greenland.

In 1955 construction of the Distant Early Warning line (DEW line) was begun, which provided some employment for Eskimo men. The old Upper Base became the Eastern anchor for the DEW line and the distribution

center for the supply of men and materials used in the construction and maintenance of the line in the Eastern Arctic.

Frobisher Bay experienced its boom years between 1955 and 1957, at the end of which the DEW line was completed. The community expanded and, in addition to a major military station, developed into the largest civilian settlement in the Eastern Arctic. Even at this time the Americans made up the largest proportion of the non-Eskimo population.

> Frobisher Bay must have had the appearance of a mining town during a gold rush. Hundreds of men passed through the community on their way to various DEW-line sites. The town itself was expanding rapidly to accommodate its growing population. Eskimos migrated to the base. Policing was inadequate and the restrictions concerning interracial contacts were often impossible to enforce (Allen, n.d.:19-20).

The increasing Eskimo population had settled down in a tent city and shanty town called Ikaluit. During the Second World War Ikaluit was something like the town dump, as Jenness (1964:75) described.

> From purely charitable motives the Officer in charge of the U.S. Air Force at Frobisher made the Eskimo village a dump for old boxes, beds, springs and other discarded objects that might be used by them.

While in 1951 only about 50 Eskimos of the 304 listed by the Census of Canada lived permanently in the settlement, 258 Eskimos had settled down in Ikaluit by 1956 (McBain, 1970:56-58). This village is located close to the shore of the Bay and near the airbase. In the early days of Ikaluit its population was composed nearly exclusively of Eskimos from the coastal camps East and South of Frobisher Bay. They were seal hunters who went up the Bay yearly to fish for char and in early autumn went inland to hunt for caribou near Amadjuak Lake. In the mid 1950's people from all over Baffin migrated to Frobisher Bay; a high percentage came from Cape Dorset, Lake Harbour and Pangnirtung. In 1958 there were 650 Eskimos in Frobisher Bay (McBain, 1970:58).

During the 1950's Canadian government authorities became aware of the needs and problems of the Eskimos. They started to consider seriously what the future of Frobisher Bay was to be. By this time the Canadian government had also gained more control over what happened in the North. It had specific contracts with the United States regarding the present and future use of the existing facilities. It also stipulated that all contact with the local Eskimo population had to be channelled through the offices of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources (later to be

called the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, DIAND). This Department was created in 1953 by Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent, who, at that time, coined the phrase "absent mindedness" to describe the federal government's past performance in the Arctic. The Department, organized on the basis of the former Department of Resources and Development, was designed to include research, policy making and program development for Canada's Northern regions. The total staff of its Northern Administration Branch included 376 people; 150 of these were employed in Ottawa and the remaining ones thinly scattered among the various settlements. The first Northern Service Officer arrived in Frobisher Bay in 1953. Regional headquarters were established in Apex, about three miles from Frobisher Bay proper, in 1954. Its main responsibility was the welfare of the Eskimo inhabitants of the region.

In 1950 the HBC had already moved its Ward Inlet post to Apex and it was here that the government decided to locate its services. In addition to the Department of Northern Affairs, DOT established its headquarters here. A nursing station, a school, an Eskimo rehabilitation center and houses for government personnel were also located in Apex. The Anglican church opened its St. Simon's mission there in 1957 and two years

later its St. Jude's mission in Frobisher Bay itself.

It is interesting to consider that the government located the services, designed to benefit the Eskimos, in Apex (three miles by road and one mile by boat from Ikaluit where the majority of the Eskimos lived). McBain (1970:62) explained this as a deliberate policy on the part of the government, followed in many Northern settlements, designed "to be far removed from the demoralizing and unhealthy effects of contact with military personnel".

In Apex the government, mainly because of the rehabilitation center, which started in 1956, attracted yet another group of Eskimos. The center drew people from all over the Eastern Arctic, Fort Chimo and other settlements in Northern Quebec as well as the Western Arctic. Honigmann (1965:93-95) described the goals and inhabitants of the center. Physically, socially or psychologically mal-adjusted people were among the residents. Some came from or where on the way to hospitals in Southern Canada. Various training and upgrading programs were conducted "to provide former hunters and their families with technical and social skills through which they could create new roles for themselves in a changing society (Honigmann, 1965:93).

When the center closed in 1964 many of the people remained in Apex, creating a very heterogeneous community.

Honigmann (1965:8) has reported that in 1957, at the end period of the DEW line, the settlement of Frobisher Bay contained about 1200 people, including about 500 Eskimos. Apex had about 225 Eskimo inhabitants and 40 Euro-Canadians. In fact, Frobisher Bay had attracted the largest group of Eskimos living in any place in Canada. McBain (1970) has pointed out that during this period Frobisher Bay had two dissimilar functions.

> Frobisher Bay served a dual-purpose role, a military side not concerned with the settlement itself or even with Canada, and a civilian administration side concerned directly with the settlement itself and with Canada's national purpose in the North (McBain, 1970:X).

When the United States Air Force withdrew in 1958 the whole of Frobisher Bay came under Canadian federal jurisdiction. Only a small crew of liaison personnel from the Strategic Air Command remained. The airport was used for transatlantic passenger planes flying the polar route. In 1960 the United States Army returned for a short period. A twenty million dollar Strategic Air Command composite building was constructed.

This building was, until 1969, the largest structure in the region. The base was used as refueling stop for heavy bombers until 1963, at which time the Americans finally withdrew from Frobisher Bay completely.

The Strategic Air Command building and associated facilities were sold to the Canadian government. The building itself became the new administrative headquarters for the Eastern Arctic and received its new name: the Federal Building. Government personnel occupied its residences while others lived in renovated army barracks, the so-called Butler buildings.

While the Americans were still in Frobisher Bay, planners in Ottawa had begun to assess the possible future role and function of the town. It was believed that the American forces would not remain indefinitely and contingency plans for the future had to be prepared, both with regard to the use of the existing facilities and the needs of the growing Eskimo population.

McBain (1970) described in detail the various plans with regard to Frobisher Bay's future; the plans which were made, revised or rejected. I will only deal with the final plan and its implementation. This was a modified version of former ones, designed by the Town

planning Section of the Engineering Division of DIAND. It was adopted after the turn-over of the Strategic Air Command buildings to the federal government.

According to Stairs (1968:4-5) the government wished to achieve the following objectives with the final proposal:

a) The construction, operation and maintenance of real estate by private enterprise rather than by the Federal Government.
b) The attraction of private capital into the North.
c) The establishment of service industries supporting the construction program which might subsequently become full time businesses offering permanent employment for the local population.
d) The attraction of commercial undertakings to the North.
e) The provisions of development which would tie together the existing scattered settlements and permit the existence of municipal service into the new subdivision South of Astro Hill.
f) The creation of a prominent central business district which would serve as the focal point for commercial, administrative, entertainment and recreational functions in the community, and at the same time introduce contemporary architecture to Frobisher Bay.
g) The creation of a firm basis for predicting the government's financial commitments for accomodation.
h) The complete integration of population within the new residential development.

In 1968 the government called for tenders from private companies for the construction of a major new town center on Astro Hill. Construction began in 1969

by Frobisher Developments Limited (FDL), an Edmonton-based consortium. Since all land in the Territories belongs to the Crown, FDL received land leases.[1] The buildings will belong to the company for twenty years. After that they will revert back to the government for one dollar.

This complex of buildings did indeed bring contemporary architecture to Frobisher Bay; it is built of steel and reinforced concrete with precast concrete panelling on the exterior. It consists of: an eight-story apartment building; a three-story hotel with bar, dining room and coffee shop; a two-story office building, a single-story shopping and recreational area, and the town housing. The different parts are interconnected with covered walkways and a mall. Once again Frobisher Bay can boast of the largest structure in the Eastern Arctic. The imposing complex overlooks the town and Koojesse Inlet as it is located on the rocky, slightly levelled Astro Hill.

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[1] Land in the Territories belongs to the federal government except in those settlements which have been incorporated (Frobisher Bay, Inuvik, Rae-Edzo, Tuktoyaktuk and Yellowknife). Control of mineral resources remains vested in the Resources Branch of the DIAND (see Annual Report of the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, 1970). Land in Frobisher Bay may be purchased up to six to eight miles from the center of town, if the land has been surveyed. If not surveyed, short-term leases can be taken out.

During 1971 a second apartment building was finished and the RCMP building completed, both on Astro Hill. The latter contains offices for the local and regional detachments, living quarters for the personnel and the jail. Frobisher Bay is now also the correctional center for the region. Prisoners will be kept there for terms up to two years, although rehabilitation facilities are not provided for yet.

In 1969 work also began on the construction of the new academic and vocational high school. This building, the Gordon Robertson Educational Center, is constructed with steel and precast, reinforced fibreglass panels. Located close to the new town center, it started to provide academic education and vocational training (the so-called "life-skills program") to students from the Baffin region and the Keewatin district in the fall of 1971. The high school and pre-vocational center in Churchill, Manitoba, is to be phased out in the near future. Out-of-town students live in the old Federal Building, which has, once again, been renovated and refurnished for its most recent function. Since it is situated about two and one half miles from the school, students are bussed back and forth, having their lunch in the school cafeteria.

The construction of low-cost Eskimo housing continues at a much slower pace. Ten new units were constructed in 1971. Unfortunately, some of the necessary building materials were not unloaded before freeze-up and the houses will not be ready for occupancy before summer 1972.[2]

The future of Apex is undetermined at present but its importance has declined steadily in recent years because the government transferred most of its services to Frobisher Bay proper. The HBC still has its post there but is planning to split the operation; it will move the food department to the new shopping mall. The

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[2]In 1965 the DIAND set up the Low Rental Housing Program for Eskimos. Houses which had been made available under earlier purchase plans were bought back from the owners for the purchase price minus a certain percentage to cover depreciation. By April, 1970, a total of 1,910 units were available throughout the Territories (see Annual Report of the Commisioner of the Northwest Territories, 1970). The units are three-bedroom houses of about 700 square feet in area. Rentals are based on the following formula: twenty percent of the family income to a maximum of $804.00 a year. Those receiving social assistance, old-age pensions and those who are unemployed are charged a minimum of $2.00 a month. 115 new units were constructed in 1971, including: 10 units in Frobisher Bay (uncompleted); 10 in Pangnirtung (which had lost about the same number in a huricane the winter before); 5 in Cape Dorset; 5 in Igloolik; 5 in Pond Inlet; and 5 in Resolute Bay. It is generally recognized that the housing scarcity in the Territories is critical; a Housing Task Force, consisting of 7 Territorial Councillors and 3 members of the Administration in Yellowknife, was created in the fall of 1971, "to study the situation."

Apex store would then most probably continue to sell general merchandise, such as clothing, boats, skidoos and hunting equipment. It would also remain as clearing house for furs.

There is still a community hall in Apex, occasionally used for meetings, bingo games and movie showings. The school still operates for the Apex children. Few Euro-Canadians presently live there. Since DIAND has encouraged the movement of people from Apex to Ikaluit and Lower Base, including a new sub-section called Happy Valley, no new houses have been built in Apex. On the contrary many have been closed up and others have been mounted on skids and transported to Frobisher Bay. Regardless of this, all the old shacks in Ikaluit have not yet been discarded and some of the Eskimo families still live under substandard conditions.

On the first of April, 1971, the Northwest Territories Government took over the administration from the Federal Government. With this transfer the new government now has the responsibility for providing and maintaining many of the services which were formerly a federal concern. One of these, education, will be discussed in chapter IV of this report.

The presence of the military is insignificant at present but this is likely to change in the near future. The Canadian Armed Forces maintain a small aircraft servicing detachment in Frobisher Bay to service Argus patrol aircraft from bases in the Maritime Provinces. However, because of increasing concern regarding Canadian control in Arctic waters in connection with oil exploration, transportation, and possibilities of pollution, it is believed that the military is once again turning its attention to the North (McNeil, 1970). In January 1972 the Canadian army conducted large-scale training exercises, involving more than two thousand men, in the area between Frobisher Bay and Lake Harbour. The Rangers of Frobisher Bay took part in these exercises. Both military and paramilitary organizations have, in recent years, been actively recruiting among the young, male population. Opinions concerning the desirability of these trends are divided among the Euro-Canadian residents.[3]

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[3]Conflicting opinions seem to be related to the political views of the residents. It is my impression that many of the old-timers, who are politically conservative, would welcome the return of the military, American as well as Canadian. The Territorial Councillor for the Baffin region mentioned in a speech that "the Americans will spend money and provide jobs; they had good relations with the Inuit and always provided a roaring social life." Many of the newcomers with more liberal, and sometimes radical, political orientations are against the return of the military. They are also ambivalent about the relevance of organizations like the cadets, the rangers, and the boy-scouts, whose military or paramilitary philosophies and emphasis on discipline are felt to be inappropriate to Eskimo cultural values.

Summary

After thirty years, twenty of which under military control, Frobisher Bay is now a government town. The traditional triumvirate, the HBC, the Missions, and the RCMP, is still present; it has played a major role in the lives of many of the Eskimos who migrated to Frobisher Bay. In the last decade it has been forced to hand over some of its former control and influence over the people to governmental bureaucracies, each with its own area of jurisdiction.

In a broad perspective, borrowed from Fried (1963) but with changed dates appropriate to Frobisher Bay, three major contact periods between Eskimos and Euro-Canadians can be recognized.

1. before 1941,
2. 1941 to 1954,
3. 1954 to the present.

All three periods can be characterized as periods of directed culture change (Spicer, 1960). The intensity and the nature of the impact, however, was different in each period. Also, some Eskimo groups were contacted earlier and more intensely than others, depending on the

distribution of their traditional camps in relation to the locations of the foreign establishments: whaling stations, trading posts and missions, as well as the routes of the explorers.

In the period before 1941 many Baffin Eskimos came into contact with whalers, explorers, traders, missionaries and RCMP men. Except for the latter, nearly all of these were non-Canadian, while most of them were single. Relations were face-to-face and personal. Many of the foreign men were dependent, especially when on the trail, on Eskimo men and women for their knowledge, skills and companionship. Many HBC and RCMP men married, lived with or had casual sexual contact with Eskimo women. When the men did not marry the women legally, the resulting off-spring were incorporated into the Eskimo families. All these foreigners, except possibly the explorers, attempted to influence and change the Eskimos' customs and conduct for their own purposes and in harmony with their cultural values regarding "civilizing the natives." Many of the men had roles beyond those of their nominal calling; all at times acted as doctors, engineers, mechanics, census takers, while some of the missionaries acted as traders, having received trading licences when there was no trading post nearby. But during this first period the Eskimos had

a certain measure of control over the situation in that they could, for longer or shorter periods, withdraw from the contact.

During the second contact period the Eskimos associated with a much larger number of men. These were also mainly single and many of them had direct and intimate relationships with the Eskimos. Fried (1963:64) has described this period as follows:

> This contact period introduced young natives, especially those brought in to work and live among these whites, to peculiar or specialized aspects of Southern civilization such as would be displayed by transient workers or single men away from home (these include language, drinking and gratification patterns in general, attitudes towards spending money, treating women, etc.).

Also during this time the Eskimos saw large and luxurious defence installations being built at an incredible tempo with a staggering wealth of materials. In many cases these installations, which often included movie theaters, facilities for sports and recreation, bars and the like, were utilized by the new foreigners only for very short periods of time. The contrast between the former Euro-Canadians, who often lived in relatively primitive circumstances, and the riches of the newcomers must have appeared overwhelming to many Eskimos.

While many of the earlier foreigners stayed in the North for decades (Nichols, 1954), these newcomers were transients, who signed up for one- or two-year contracts and received a bonus if they stayed out their time. As Peterson (1958:51) has mentioned "Here was a good way to make a stake. Men could leave after two years with as much as ten or twelve thousand dollars."

In addition, improved communication and transportation made the whole country far more accessible to the Eskimos than ever before. While whaling and the fur trade maintained a certain decentralization of the people, World War II developments countered this and concentrated large groups of people in fewer major settlements, independent of the economic subsistance base of the immediate areas. These factors combined, plus the depleted resources and the collapse of the fur trade, made the Eskimos completely dependent on the foreigners. This time they could no longer afford to withdraw from the contact.

The third period, which is still going on, saw an increase of Southern Canadians into the North. A new type of person, namely the civil servant, usually accompanied by wife and children, brought bureaucratization and professionalism. They started to take over control and assert influence in areas which formerly had

been dealt with by whatever "white" happened to be in a position to do so.

The influx of civil servants and their families changed the nature and frequency of interaction between Eskimos and Euro-Canadians. Leadership became increasingly more complex, specialized and impersonal. In many cases, it was the wives who came to determine the social relations between the two cultural groups. During this period much of the individual discrimination of former years has become institutionalized. Increasing housing segregation and the great numbers of well-paid civil servants has resulted in a growing social and economic polarization. Fried (1963:64) has noted that,

> This new influx of whites was more equipped to carry on a more "normal" southern style of life and they began to form excluive social in-groups ...The social, cultural, and economic distances are today so painfully apparent to whites and natives that the drawing apart into two social worlds could hardly be prevented.

Conclusion

The net effect of Frobisher Bay's unique history has been the congregation of a large number of Eskimos (about 1300) in an area which can not support them via traditional means. There is an insufficient resource

base for both traditional subsistence and industrial pursuits. Adequate and satisfying employment is not yet available to many Eskimos because the large, bureaucratic superstructure erected by the government, demands knowledge, skills and attitudes toward work which the Eskimos have not sufficiently mastered. At present the Euro-Canadians provide most of the administration and supervision; the Eskimos provide the manual labor or are unemployed, while some still hunt and trap on a part-time basis.

Education and other "tutelage" (Honigmann, 1965) have eroded many of the traditional skills and much of the former independence and self-sufficiency. The "zest" for the harsh, traditional way of life has, in many cases, also been lost in the context of affluent Euro-Canadian institutions and individuals. Physical segregation is increasing through present-day building practices - such as the new town center - while social segregation is maintained by certain socializing mechanisms among the Euro-Canadians and withdrawal and avoidance mechanisms on the part of a large section of the Eskimo population. In a very real way, thus, Frobisher Bay is "a mirror to the nation and a place in which westerners see their follies in plain light" (Lotz, 1970:17).

CHAPTER III

POPULATION

Introduction

As a result of its unique history Frobisher Bay presently has a heterogeneous population. While school attendance sheets in the Territories divide pupils into Eskimo, Indian and Other, Fried (1963:60) has provided a more useful model with which to differentiate between the various population components in the larger Northern settlements:

1) government civil servants, and other private agency sponsored, Southern Canadians,
2) non-government Northern whites,
3) native Indian, Eskimo and Metis groups.

Frobisher Bay has a large proportion of category one, who, however, are by no means all Southern Canadian in origin. It has a small percentage of category two, since this group includes the independent businessmen, miners, prospectors, trappers and "bush-living" whites characteristic of Western Arctic communities. There are no Indians or Métis. Thus, the only native group in Frobisher Bay is Eskimo. Most of the off-spring of

interracial unions are assimilated into it. Physical features of the Frobisher Bay Eskimos reflect the long and varied history of such contact, going back to the multi-racial crews of American whaling ships and include the multi-racial forces at the defence installations.

The following population table for Frobisher Bay, prepared from two different publications, shows data obtained since 1942 by people working from different sources. Although they are not complete, it is interesting to note the different figures collected by the census takers. Rather than inferring the professional incompetence of these people, I prefer to explain the discrepancies by two factors: firstly, the nomadic way of life of the Eskimos (even at present some Eskimos go for longer and shorter hunting trips), and secondly, the high turnover of the Euro-Canadian personnel. Both factors make crucial the month during which a particular census is taken, so that population figures might differ greatly for any one year.

As can be seen from table 1 the Euro-Canadian population has fluctuated greatly from year to year, depending on the presence of the military and the need for laborers for construction projects. This was still

Table 1. POPULATION OF FROBISHER BAY, 1942 - 1969.

	Esk.	Euro-Can.	Total	Source
1942	N/A	500		IAND 1000/169
1950	25	66	91	IAND 1000/169
1956	258	93		IAND 1000/169, Honigmann, 1965
1957				
1958	650	441		IAND 1000/169
1959	654	437	1091	IAND 1000/169
1960	770	983	1753	IAND 1000/169
1961	761	1040	1801	Honigmann, 1965
1962				
1963	906	713	1619	Honigmann, 1965
1965				
1966	1036	566	1602	McBain, 1966, RCMP 1966
1969	1174	530	1704	RCMP 1969

(Source: McBain, 1970)

Esk.	Euro-Can.	Total	Source
258			Honigmann, 1965
494			Hongimann, 1965
612			Yatsushiro, 1958
700			Yatsushiro, 1962
750	700	1450	Frob.Bay,RCMP 61
761	1040	1801	Honigmann, 1965
800	700	1500	Sands, 1962
906	713	1619	Honigmann, 1965
1000	400	1400	Canada, Advisory Comm., 1966
1144	593	1737	Personal communication

(Source: Allen, n.d.)

true in the summer of 1971, when about 150 men from Southern Canada, including many French Canadians, worked on the construction of the new town center and the high school.[1]

In May, 1972 the Registrar General of Vital Statistics for the Northwest Territories in Yellowknife reported the total population of Frobisher Bay to be 2100 people, including 1200 Eskimos and 900 Euro-Canadians (personal communication). At that time Statistics Canada in Ottawa gave the following population figures based on the June, 1971 Census of Canada: total population 2050, including 1040 males and 1010 females (personal communication).

During the fall of 1971, when I was in Frobisher Bay, the total population might have increased to about 2300 people due to natural increase in the population, an increase in Eskimo transients including 156 high school students from the settlements, additional government personnel such as the 31 high school teachers and

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[1]There was much resentment among the Eskimos about the high proportion of labor imported by the construction companies. I was told that no Eskimos were employed at all in the construction of the new high school; even the two men who cleaned the outside of the school shortly before the opening had been flown in from the South. At the same time reports reached Frobisher Bay about the Portuguese laborers (including an interpreter) who were building the addition to the elementary school in Igloolik.

the approximately 10 hostel supervisors. The unofficial figure quoted locally usually was 2400.

Euro-Canadians

Presently most of the Euro-Canadians in Frobisher Bay are employed by the government; there are but a few people engaged in private business. Private companies, such as FDL, Maurice Carrière, Ritchie Mechanical and Versafood, which are in Frobisher Bay supply services under government contracts. They thus supplement government programs and services and have to be included in Fried's first category. Some firms with branches in Frobisher Bay include The Royal Bank of Canada and Imperial Oil. The latter provides all gasoline and fuel oil in the Eastern Arctic. Nordair is the only airline making scheduled flights between Frobisher Bay and Montreal as well as to the outlying settlements. It expects to extend its services in the near future across the Arctic, via Rankin Inlet and Baker Lake, to Yellowknife.[2] All these companies maintain

[2]Presently the East-West connection between Frobisher Bay and Yellowknife - about 1400 miles - is maintained by the Gates-Lear jet, which the Northwest Territories government rents from the Mackenzie Air Limited of Edmonton, Alberta. The contract guarantees the company a certain number of flying hours a year. It is used by government personnel but, since its seating capacity is small (about 10 people), many have to fly via the long and expensive route through Montreal and Edmonton (air fare $600.00).

living quarters in town for their personnel.

There are only a small number of independent businesses in town. One of these is Arctic Ventures, a general merchandise store with a branch in Lake Harbour. It is owned by an old-timer who started his career in the North on the DEW line. Its central position close to Ikaluit ensures the owner of a brisk business, although the prices he charges compare unfavorably with the HBC prices. Another private enterprise is the janitorial service, Inook Limited, which employs a number of Eskimo men and women regularly. The fact that independent entrepreneurs are so few can be related to the high costs of maintaining premises, high freight charges and to the high personnel turnover, since some of these businesses are started either on a part-time basis as an addition to wage-employment, or by wives of government personnel.

There is a small, but growing, permanent Euro-Canadian section of the population. This includes some of the original foreigners, HBC and RCMP men and those who came North with the army or during periods of construction. Many of these men have worked in isolated posts, weather stations or DEW line sites. Some worked, or still do, for DOT, which was one of the first important federal

agencies in town. Many of these men have travelled the North extensively, often transferring from one place to another, as local residents say, either because "they got into trouble" or "to clean up a trouble spot." Many of them come originally from England or Scotland and have, in later years, settled in Frobisher Bay where they are now raising relatively young families. Some have married Eskimo women and speak Eskimo.

The Royal Canadian Legion and the F.A.R.A. club (originally a private club for DOT employees) are important focal points for these old-timers. Both feature regular weekly bingo-games and dance nights. For example, over 700 people attended the Legion's Remembrance Day ceremonies in 1971.

The majority of the Euro-Canadians, however, are only semi-permanent. In general they are young and early in their professional careers. They include the doctors, dentists, nurses, teachers, welfare workers, technicians, office clerks and skilled laborers. Their task is to establish and provide administration, communication, transportation, welfare and education services. This group has a high personnel turnover.[3] Many of these

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[3]A long-time resident of Frobisher Bay calculated the number of Regional Administrators (formerly called

people, especially among the higher administrative echelons, are highly mobile while in the North. They are also frequently transferred to other settlements and since Frobisher Bay is the regional headquarters, many trips to outlying settlements and to the capital, Yellowknife, are frequently made. Among this group one finds a large percentage of non-Canadians, especially Englishmen and Scots, but also Americans, Australians, Dutch, Germans, New Zealanders, Scandinavians and West Indians. The Canadians include both English and French Canadians.

Eskimos

The Eskimo population has increased gradually and

Northern Service Officers) since 1953: the new one, who started his employment in November, 1971, was the twenty-second. One of them stayed only six weeks while there were several Acting Administrators in between. Also, since 1964, Frobisher Bay has had seven Town Managers (presently called Area Service Officer), again not counting acting ones. The resulting discontinuity in policies and programs is obvious. The biography of the latest Regional Administrator is a good illustration regarding transfers in the North. This man came North in 1953 as an officer of the RCMP and was stationed in Frobisher Bay; he was tranferred to Craig Harbour in 1955; transferred to the South in 1957 where he was posted to Calgary, Alberta and Windsor, Ontario; he was transferred North again in 1961 and was stationed in Pond Inlet and Fort Providence; in 1965 he joined the DIAND as Northern Service Officer and was the first administrator in Broughton Island; during 1968/69 he was administrator in Pond Inlet; during 1969/71 Assistant Regional Director for the Fort Smith region; and in November, 1971 he became Regional Administrator of the Baffin region with headquarters in Frobisher Bay.

steadily due to in-migration and natural increase. The earliest settlers came from the Southern coastal camps and a high proportion of the present population originated in Cape Dorset, Lake Harbour and Pangnirtung. The initial attraction was the affluence of the American airbase and the desire for employment; more recently, medical, religious and educational services have been some of the migration-stimulating factors. Graburn (1963:23) noted that by 1960 over 150 Lake Harbour people lived in Frobisher Bay, while many others had visited the town and returned to their home community.

The push-and-pull factors inherent in urbanization are common and well-documented in many underdeveloped regions of the world. As it became clear that Frobisher Bay had limited opportunities for employment and insufficient housing facilities some families left again. Home sickness and social problems, such as drinking, gambling and prostitution, were also important reasons for dissatisfaction with town life. Another feature which up to this day makes Eskimos unhappy with Frobisher Bay are the limited game resources in the immediate area. Honigmann (1965) reported on Symonee Aligna's attempts to return to camp life at Wiswell Inlet, South of Frobisher Bay. Similar desires are still being voiced by some Eskimos in Frobisher Bay today.

That the many social problems of Frobisher Bay are well-known by Eskimos across the Arctic became clear with the opening of the new high school. Education authorities had expected a total enrollment of 400 students. Eskimo parents as well as some community councils refused to send their children to Frobisher Bay: only ten students arrived from the Keewatin district. The total enrollment of the school, including Eskimo and Euro-Canadian students from Frobisher Bay, is 275.

The Eskimos are engaged in many and varied occupations. McBain (1970:180-85) described the various jobs Eskimos were holding (drivers, mechanics, kitchen helpers, cooks, heavy equipment operators) and the incomes they derived from them. She noted that,

> In 1966 in Frobisher Bay, all the administrative, professional, skilled tradesmen, technical, clerical and administrative support positions were filled by non-Eskimos from Southern Canada (McBain, 1970:182).

She added, that when she returned to Frobisher Bay in 1969, permanent wage-employment had increased and she remarked especially

> ... the great increase in the number of Eskimos working in higher level jobs, e.g. clerks, clerk-

> typists, welfare administrators, bookkeepers (McBain, 1970:207).

McElroy (1971) confirmed this trend when she discussed the increased opportunities for Eskimos, especially females, to occupy white-collar positions.

> Eskimo graduates of vocational programs, as well as on-the-job trainees, had begun to assume more skilled labour positions, such as telephone and radio operators, secretaries and clerks, and business and office administrators (McElroy, 1971:4).

The heterogeneous Eskimo population of Frobisher Bay includes second-and third-generation settlement dwellers but also people who only in recent years have abandoned the traditional camp life. There is thus a wide spectrum of acculturation manifested in different life-styles, opportunities for and attitudes toward employment and aspirations for the future. Coming from different areas Eskimos in Frobisher Bay may speak different dialects and belong to different religious denominations, although the majority are Anglican.[4]

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[4]The Anglican church reported approximately 350 to 400 adult Eskimo members; the Roman Catholic church about 50 to 60 adult Eskimo members. The Pentecostal church and the Baha'i Faith, both recent in Frobisher Bay, have each less than 10 adult Eskimo members. The Euro-Canadian population is on the whole non-church going. Services of the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches are attended by about 20 to 30 people each, while the Pentecostal and Baha'i have even fewer members.

A locally recognized generation gap has been created, which generates much conflict and unhappiness within Eskimo families. The young people are increasingly literate in English - some even prefer to speak it among themselves, which also is related to the various dialects - while the older people write and read in Eskimo syllabics. Whereas the older generation clings to narrow kinship or regional affiliations, the younger people form groups based on interest, experience and present- and future-oriented aspirations and expectations.

In addition to this heterogeneous permanent Eskimo population there are usually many transients. These include the high school students already mentioned, some fifteen students at the Adult Education Center and people from outlying settlements looking for employment, visiting relatives or waiting for air transportation while travelling to and from other parts in the North.

Since the regional hospital is in Frobisher Bay many ill people have to be in town for shorter or longer periods, often on an out-patient basis. This includes many pregnant women who are required to be available for pre- and post-natal care. Many of these transients board with relatives, friends or strangers. The government pays Eskimo families six dollars a day for boarders who

are in town on legitimate business. A transient center, which used to house some of them, recently burned down. There are plans underway to construct a senior citizens home for low-income people to alleviate some of the overcrowding in the small Eskimo homes.

Comparison.

A generalized comparison between the two cultural groups illustrates some pertinent cultural and socio-economic differences and disparities.

The Euro-Canadians are largely transient, relatively young, trained or experienced for the particular jobs they hold. They are professionals. Fried (1963) called them "job-holders" rather than residents, and went on to say that,

> Depending on whether their positions are administrative, scientific or technical, skilled or unskilled, their educational attainments vary from advanced university training to simple grade school levels. They are mostly persons recruited from the existing agencies in the South to do the same or similar jobs in the North (Fried, 1963:60-61).

They are affiliated with different governmental or private agencies, each reporting to its own headquarters, be it in Ottawa, Yellowknife or elsewhere.

Their superiors may have varying or even conflicting definitions of priorities and different ideas on what the problems are and how they should be tackled on the macro- and micro-level.

Dunning (1959) made two important points with reference to the power structure in Northern communities and the high-status positions held by the various representatives of outside agencies on the local level. Firstly, that there often is no consensus about priority or superiority among the various agencies which results in unresolved power conflicts, "a continual struggle which is expressed by ad hoc prestige-getting decisions" (Dunning, 1959:1). Secondly, he found that the local representatives are at the extremity of their own social systems and thus released from some of their implicit social sanctions. He called these people "marginal" and helf the belief that they

> ... are playing their contact roles in a manner imcompatible with the social ethics of Canadian society, and consequently present to the ethnic population a nonrepresentative view of the larger culture to which they are adjusting (Dunning, 1959:1).

Because of these factors the author concluded that,

> ... in spite of the most enlightened efforts of

> agencies, voluntary change and development may become negatively structured and highly particularized regarding the acceptance and rejection of external social and cultural institutions. The nature of the social and cultural change would appear to be directly related to paternalistic leadership which in isolated Northern communities is often capricious, authoritarian, and discriminatory (Dunning, 1959:10).

Although the author wrote about small settlements at the end of the 1950's I believe that even in the highly structured and bureaucratized Frobisher Bay of the 1970's his observations and conclusions are still pertinent, as data in the following chapters will confirm.

On another level of comparison with the Eskimos we see that most of the Euro-Canadians are physically healthy, well-housed and well-nourished. As public service personnel they had to pass medical examinations before being posted to their Northern positions. They receive high salaries (see Appendix A for a few examples) and many fringe benefits, such as subsidized housing in high-standard, furnished houses or apartments, settlement allowances (formerly called isolated post allowance), travelling and baggage expenses for all members of their families at the beginning and end of each posting, including a yearly paid trip to Montreal and back for holiday purposes.

Few Euro-Canadians in Frobisher Bay are unemployed. Indeed, the loss of employment for any reason, unually results in the loss of accomodation since most housing is staff-accomodation provided only for the personnel of the various agencies. In case of unemployment, people usually have to leave town. Residents told me that firing a person is a common maneuver to get rid of undesirables. These factors also imply that there are few pensioners in Frobisher Bay and an absence of old and/or disabled people.

The Euro-Canadians live in small, nuclear families, far removed from their kin. Their orientation is toward Southern Canada or another country of origin. Only one person in Frobisher Bay was known to have been born in the North, namely in the Mackenzie Delta. While "doing a stretch in the North" many people maintain close contact with the South; they make frequent phone calls and mail is eagerly awaited. Some subscribe to newspapers from their local community. Some keep their house, furniture and car there, usually subletting while they are away for a year or two. People take their holidays in the South (there are a few exceptions); some send their children to be educated there and some women go South to have their babies. In short: their past as well as their future lie outside the Territories.

Vallee (1962:98) has noted the most striking feature of Arctic towns to be

> ...the overall differentiation between the Kabloona and the Eskimo...The Kabloona... are part of non-Eskimo networks of relationships which are centered outside the community ...The Kabloona form a community rather like one formed by passengers of a long cruise; they are in intimate contact with one another for a period, but are always aware that this contact is likely to be broken once the fellow-passengers leave the ship.

While in many ways the Euro-Canadians belong to a closed social system, vis-a-vis the Eskimos, among themselves there are many divisions and conflicts. These include the various national and socioeconomic backgrounds, professional affiliations and goals already referred to. Some basic dichotomies exist also between old-timers and newcomers, married couples versus single people, private enterprise versus government personnel, while the latter are part of a large bureaucratic structure with its own ranks, status and role expectations. Various occupational in-groups and social cliques exist which divide people both on- and off-the-job.

As can be seen from the following table the Eskimo population is relatively young too, but it also includes the usual old and disabled persons of any natural

population.

Table 2. AGE BREAKDOWN OF ESKIMO POPULATION IN FROBISHER BAY, 1957 - 1969

	Age						
	Male 0-19	Female 0-19	Total	Male 20-65+	Female 20-65+	Total	Total Population whose age is known
1957	140	129	269	122	103	225	494
1963	255	258	513	214	178	392	905
1966	321	339	660	212	199	411	1071
1969	314	379	693	254	202	456	1149

(Calculated from McBain, 1970: Appendices D-G).

From the above we read that the age group 0 to 19 years of age comprised 54 percent of the total population in 1957; 56 percent in 1963; 61 percent in 1966; and 60 percent in 1969.

Compared with the Euro-Canadians many Eskimos live in sub-standard housing, which is often ill-furnished and overcrowded. Their health, diet and

educational standards are far below the national average and probably even further below the average standards of the Euro-Canadians in Frobisher Bay.

While some of the Eskimos permanently employed by some government agencies are recipients of the same high salaries and the fringe benefits accorded to the Euro-Canadians, not all Eskimos are in that position. Some of them are employed on a part-time basis, or as "casuals," while others are seasonally employed. Some are permanently unemployed. McElroy (1971:3) calculated the average annual income per Eskimo household in Frobisher Bay as $6,590 and the per capita annual income as $1,042. She described the disparity in income levels between families as follows:

> While 16 families have an annual income of over $10.000. (the highest income being $ 13.540.), 17 families have an income of less than $ 1.000. a year, including government assistance. Twenty families report an income of less than $ 2.000. a year... (N.W.T. Manpower Survey, 1971) (McElroy, 1971:3).

The author reported that eighty-seven percent of Eskimo men and thirty-one percent of Eskimo women between the ages of sixteen and sixty-five were employed, either full-or part-time (McElroy, 1971:3).

During the fall of 1971 unofficial reports and rumors on Eskimo unemployment revealed high figures. The Listening Post of November 22, 1971, a newspaper published by the Adult Education Center, reported that there were about 200 people unemployed in Frobisher Bay at that time. The article mentioned that unemployment in some of the Baffin region settlements was even worse and that the Principal of the Center had sent telex messages to various settlements to inform people not to come to Frobisher Bay in search of employment. The Center acts as an unofficial local employment agency. On December 10, 1971, I saw there a list with approximately forty names of men who had registered their desire to work; any type of work, on a part- or full-time basis. I was told that there was a similar list of women looking for jobs as secretaries, clerks, translators, interpreters or baby-sitters. It has to be noted that unemployment insurance benefits were instituted in Frobisher Bay only recently (April, 1971). Previous to that people who were unemployed had to rely completely on government relief measures of one kind or another.

In this chapter I have described the two cultural groups in Frobisher Bay as if they belonged to two different social systems. Vallee (1971a:149) has

stated that it is important to look at both groups as parts of one system if one wants to understand either group and in order to predict what is likely to happen to either one of them. Fully agreeing with that author, I attempt in the following chapters to describe some of the relationships between Euro-Canadians and Eskimos, but only from the former's point of view. This was my research objective and I do not have the knowledge to speak for the Eskimo view-point; I refer the reader to Honigmann's Eskimo townsmen.

CHAPTER IV

EDUCATION

Introduction

Formal education in the Canadian Arctic is of recent origin as compared to other regions inhabited by Eskimos, such as Alaska, Greenland and Labrador. The factors related to this are well-documented (see Hobart and Brant, 1966; Jenness, 1964; and Phillips, 1967). The earliest schools attended by Eskimo pupils were those established at mission stations, which were often combined with residences for children from camps or outlying settlements. Jenness (1964:123) has said of these schools that,

> Even in the Arctic, where the educational needs of the Eskimos were less than those in more temperate regions, the mission had failed to prepare the natives for their entry into the civilized world because they lacked the money, the staff, and more than all else, a clear perception of the objectives at which a secular education should aim.

Hobart and Brant (1966:47) argued that, on the positive side, these missionaries usually had a certain commitment to the region and the people, whom they knew well over extended periods of time.

Although the first federal day school was established in 1947 and several others followed in the next few years, the year 1955 is usually taken as the official starting point for formal, federal education in the Northwest Territories.

Phillips (1967:233) noted that in 1950 eight different agencies - governmental departments, Roman Catholic and Anglican missions, mining companies and the like - were involved with education in the North.

> The Department of Northern Affairs provided only three classrooms. Though it paid grants to other agencies to run classes, the classroom standards were uneven. Some schools operated only four hours a day, four days a week. One teacher in three held no teaching certificate of any kind. Only 117 of all the Eskimos got full-time schooling. There was no vocational education of any kind, no adult education, and no teaching for the growing ranks of hospital patients (Phillips, 1967:233).

Simpson, Wattie et al (1968) have reported that by 1955 in the eight federal day schools 451 Eskimo pupils attended, although some on a part-time basis only. The authors admitted that one still could not speak of an adequate, formal educational system because teaching qualifications were minimal, attendance patterns were irregular and curriculum materials were virtually non-existent.

Table 3. DATES OF ESTABLISHMENT OF FEDERAL SCHOOLS IN ESKIMO SETTLEMENTS

YEAR	SETTLEMENT	YEAR	SETTLEMENT
1947	Tuktoyaktuk	1959	Broughton Island
1949	Fort Chimo		Clyde River
1950	Aklavik		Eskimo Point
	Cape Dorset	1960	Belcher Islands
	Coppermine		Igloolik
	Port Harrison		Ivuyivik
	Coral Harbour		Koartak
1951	Chesterfield Inlet		Payne Bay
1955	Frobisher Bay		Pond Inlet
1956	Great Whale River		Wakeham Bay
	Inuvik	1961	Whale Cove
	Pangnirtung	1962	George River
	Reindeer Station		Gjoa Haven
1957	Baker Lake		Grise Fiord
	Cambridge Bay		Padloping
	Rankin Inlet		Pelly Bay
	Sugluk	1963	Lake Harbour
1958	Arctic Bay	1964	Port Burwell
	Povungnituk	1965	Holman Island
	Resolute Bay	1967	Hall Beach
	Spence Bay		

(Source: Simpson, Mattie et al, 1968: Appendix F).

The federal government had subsidized the churches and other agencies to continue their educational efforts whenever necessary. The year 1955 marked the completion of agreements which set up a basis for establishing a unified system of education for the Northwest Territories and those parts in Northern Quebec which were inhabited by Eskimos. According to the authors these agreements involved the following authorities:

1. The Government of the Northwest Territories.
2. Two components of the Federal government of Canada -
   (a) The Indian Affairs Branch of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration.
   (b) The Northern Administration Branch, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources.
3. The Roman Catholic and Anglican churches who had vested interest in education because of their earlier missionary activities primarily in the Mackenzie Valley but also in some of the coastal areas of the Arctic. (Simpson, Wattie et al, 1968:1).

Appendix E in the forementioned publication outlined the aims and objectives of the new federal, educational system. They can be summarized as follows:

1. to extend opportunities of elementary and secondary education to all school age children in the North,
2. to offer opportunities for university or other higher education through financial grants and loans,
3. to offer adult education programs which would be

based on the needs of the Eskimo people,

4. to provide vocational training and upgrading programs leading to wage-employment.

It was decided that to implement the system the following curricula would be used: the Alberta curriculum in the Mackenzie region; the Manitoba curriculum in the Keewatin region; the Ontario curriculum in the Baffin region; and the curriculum of the Quebec Protestant School Board in Arctic Quebec. The Yukon region had already a curriculum based on that of the Province of British Columbia.

Since its conception this educational system has been subjected to much, and often conflicting, criticism from various sources: government officials, social scientists and community members. Many of the pupils have registered their objections, their unwillingness or inabilities to cope with it, by being absent and attending irregularly, by dropping-out as soon as was possible and through apathy, avoidance and withdrawal mechanisms whilst in attendance. Officials and researchers alike agreed that success, however measured, was slow and that teachers as well as pupils were confronted with great problems.

The following quotation from Phillips (1967:237) illuminates much of the soul-searching and debating current during the first decades of formal education in the North:

> The problems of organization and construction are small in comparison with the questions of what to teach and how to teach it...Some held that education should be introduced slowly in order not to damage the family by separating educated children from their untutored parents. Pressure was sometimes put on parents to refuse permission for their children to go off to the residential schools. At the other extreme, some believed that teaching could be carried out effectively only with the complete integration of northern pupils into classrooms of Southern Canada. Some held that the northern curriculum should be based on the skills of the land, in order not to draw the children from their homes and make them unfit to return. Others thought in terms of a northern educational system almost identical to those in the South, so that the pupil could move easily into a competitive position anywhere in Canada. Many others questioned the purpose of education if there were no jobs on graduation.

The above described inability to formulate a coherent and consistent policy resulted in much experimentation with day schools in small communities, large residential schools and residences in growth centers aw well as small "home-like" hostels under the direction of Eskimo families who were to act as "pseudo parents." While government officials rationalized the developments in terms of democracy and integration, many of the social scientists used terms

like assimilation, cultural displacement and cultural genocide to describe what was happening. As the following quotation explains, an identical school system in the North is not necessarily democratic nor does it prepare Eskimo pupils to enter the mainstream of Canadian society since many other socioeconomic factors are involved in this integration process.

> Presenting to the Eskimo a school system and curriculum similar to that found "down South" is in no way necessarily democratic just because it "gives the Eskimo equal opportunities" and avoids segregated or "second class" education. Because the Eskimos have a completely different background, to present them with a school system modelled after that found in the South is unequal and undemocratic. To be truly democratic would be to give the Eskimos educational opportunities which enable them to fit their environment as the school system in the South is intended to enable the Southerners to fit theirs. (Graburn, 1969:21).

An important factor to point out at this stage is the fact that eighty percent of all Canadian Eskimos were literate in their own language when, in the 1950's, the government assumed responsibility for education and imposed instruction in the English language (Marsh, n.d.: 10). Margery Hinds, one of the early teachers in the North, confirms this when she described how nearly all adults and most of the children wrote and read Eskimo syllabics when, in 1958, she arrived in Arctic Bay to set up the federal school (Hinds, 1959:16). Parents

had been teaching their children and also included in their teaching as much English as they themselves had been able to master. This teacher wrote in 1959 the following prophetic projection:

> It is possible, if the education of the Eskimo follows the general pattern of education elsewhere, that parents will be discouraged from trying to teach their children. Thus it is likely that in the near future Eskimos will be unable to read and write their own language (Hinds, 1959:16).

Graburn (1969:204) has noted that in the Ungava region ninety-nine percent of the Eskimo population was literate in Eskimo. Since the school took over functional illiteracy in Eskimo as well as English has been increasing.

It is unfortunate, as Jenness (1964:166 ff) pointed out that the acculturation of the Eskimos has been placed primarily in the hands of elementary education. While many other agencies have been concerned with administration, health and welfare, and especially economic solutions, the primary education system has to a large extent been forced to anticipate and prepare for the future. Southern-oriented curricula and teachers have been used throughout while adult education programs have been sporadic and have played, according

to that author, at best an auxiliary role.

Research

In recent years much research has been devoted to the problems of cross-cultural education, focussing on the pupils, teachers or administrators, or the system as a whole.[1] Many specific recommendations for improvements of teacher training and orientation, revisions of the curricula and modifications of classroom procedures have been made. The special difficulties which native pupils face, when confronted with an alien system, foreign teachers who do not speak their language and who are ignorant of regional and local culture have been outlined. The high turnover in teaching personnel has received much attention in the literature as has the "insensitivity" of the white, middle-class oriented teachers to the problems faced by the pupils and the underlying cultural, value differences between them and their pupils.

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[1]See for example: Born, 1969; Chance, 1965 and 1966; Eades, 1969; Fisher, 1966; Gourdeau, 1969; Graburn 1969 a and b; Hawthorn, 1967; Hobart, 1970; Hobart and Brant, 1966; Honigmann, 1965 and 1970; Jenness, 1964 and 1968; King, 1967; Ray, 1965; Renaud, 1968; Schalm, 1968; Simpson 1968; Simpson, Wattie et al.,1968; Sindell, 1968; Sindell and Wintrob, 1969; Vallee, 1967 and 1969; Wattie, 1968; Willmott, 1961; Wintrob, 1968; Wintrob and Sindell, 1968; Wolcott, 1967 and 1969.

Hobart (1970) in his report on education in ten Central and Western Arctic communities summed up many of the problems which have been described by other researchers. He painted a dark picture of teacher effectiveness in Northern schools. He described the teachers he met, their teaching methods and classroom procedures, the curriculum and the consequences of all this with regard to the Eskimo pupils in the schools. He found that,

> ...the great majority of teachers in arctic communities are extremely ill-equiped to cope with the many problems of cross-cultural education that they face. They are ill-equipped in terms of their preparation for understanding and making themselves understood by their pupils, in terms of curriculum materials now available, and in terms of varying their classroom approaches to fit the distinctive human nature of their students (Hobart, 1970:67).

The author attributed this situation to various factors: mainly, that the teachers received training preparation irrelevant to the Northern teaching experience, that many of them were transients with little or no commitment to the country and the people, and that a high percentage of them were non-Canadians. Consequently, he believed most of them to be unfamiliar (and possibly unconcerned) with the communities in which they taught. They did not know the parents of

the pupils and were incapable of communicating effectively and meaningfully with the children in the classrooms.

In the ten communities studied by Hobart in 1969, twenty-seven percent of the teachers were of non-Canadian origin. Of the forty-eight teachers sixty-three percent were in their first year in the North, while one-fourth of them had spent more than two years there. The author concluded:

> Clearly all this makes for very ineffective teaching. In any one year, most teachers in the arctic find themselves teaching Eskimo children whom they understand very little, both as people, and in terms of their verbal and non-verbal communication. They are unfamiliar with the community and the arctic region they are in and often with the grade level they are teaching. Not infrequently have they had little experience with the Canadian school system and with Canadian society. It is a common observation that teachers are able to accomplish little during their first six or eight months in the north because of their own state of culture shock, their lack of understanding and empathy for the children in their classes, and their unfamiliarity with the people, the community, and the region. Yet, in any one year, most of the teachers in the north are newcomers striving to come to terms with their situation (Hobart, 1970:60).

While testifying to the impressive professional credentials of Northern teachers, Hobart argued that those with fewer formal qualifications, especially

when of native origin, might be more appropriately used (see Jenness, 1964:127 for a similar argument). Hobart referred to research conducted on teacher personality characteristics which has shown that teachers who are "warm and nurturant" have the best results in Indian and Eskimo schools. It is empathy with the child, his situation and respect for his cultural and social background, rather than high formal qualifications which make a good teacher. This is especially true in lower grades where knowledge and the amount of training the teacher has received does not necessarily correlate with achievement results on the part of the pupils.

The Baffin region

I will now relate these observations on the Central and Western Arctic to the educational situation in the Baffin region.

The federal government transferred effective control over education in the Territories to the Northwest Territories Government on April 1, 1969, for the Mackenzie region and on April 1, 1971, for the rest of the Territories. The Territorial Department of Education maintains elementary and secondary schools in fifty-two communities and employs five hundred and

fifteen teachers in these schools during the 1971/72 school year. The school system is divided into five regions: Baffin region with headquarters in Frobisher Bay, Keewatin with headquarters in Churchill, Manitoba, Fort Smith, Inuvik and Yellowknife. The Department's headquarters are located in Yellowknife.

While under the former federal system all teachers were recruited by officials from Ottawa, presently the Superintendents of the five regions together with officials from Yellowknife are responsible for recruitment of new teachers. The official minimum requirements for a teaching position in the Territories are: a) a valid teaching certificate from a Canadian Province; b) at least one year of professional teaching training beyond Junior Matriculation; c) at least two years of successful teaching experience in Southern Canada or elsewhere. Teachers are public servants and, as such, have to sign the oath of allegiance upon arrival in the North. This prohibits them from criticizing the policies and programs of the government and disclosing any information which might come to their attention due to their employment.

As civil servants teachers receive all the fringe benefits outlined previously. Their salaries, according

to the salary agreement of 1970, lies within the range of $6,000 and $15,225 depending on qualifications and experience. Special allowances are paid to teachers with proficiency in a native language or other specialized qualifications. Principals and Assistant Principals receive extra allowances dependent on the number of classes they supervise. The average salary of the 118 Baffin teachers (the total is 119) on which I have data is close to $10,000. In addition they receive settlement allowances: from $75 to $150 per month for a single teacher and from $123.33 to $270.73 per month for a married teacher. These amounts are not paid during the two holiday months.

The Baffin region has schools in all thirteen settlements. Table 4 presents descriptive information on these schools. Tables 5 to 8 present data on the origin, sex, age, marital status, training and teaching experience of 118 teachers who were in Baffin schools during the 1971/72 school year. This material was collected by me from the teachers' personnel files with the permission of the Superintendent of Education for the Baffin region.

Table 4. SCHOOLS IN THE BAFFIN REGION, 1971/72

Settlement	Teaching positions	Grades taught
1. Arctic Bay	3	1 - 6
2. Broughton Island	5	1 - 6
3. Cape Dorset	9	K - 8
4. Clyde River	4	1 - 6
5. Frobisher Bay	60	K - 12, Adult Educ.
6. Grise Fiord	2	1 - 6
7. Hall Beach	3	1 - 6
8. Igloolik	9	K - 6
9. Lake Harbour	3	1 - 6
10. Pangnirtung	10	K - 6
11. Pond Inlet	6	K - 8
12. Port Burwell	2	K - 6
13. Resolute Bay	3	1 - 7

Table 5. COUNTRY OR PROVINCE OF ORIGIN OF TEACHERS IN THE BAFFIN REGION, 1971/72

Province in Canada	Teachers	
Alberta	2	
British Columbia	4	
Manitoba	4	
New Brunswick	5	
Newfoundland	3	
Nova Scotia	10	
Ontario	16	
Quebec	5	
Saskatchewan	22	
Total	71	
Country	**Teachers**	
Australia	3	
England	14	
Germany	1	
Ireland	3	
Netherlands	1	
New Zealand	2	
Scotland	2	
United States of America	3	
Total	29	
Unknown	18	(Mostly Canadian but provinces unknown)

Table 6. AGE, SEX AND MARITAL STATUS OF TEACHERS IN THE BAFFIN REGION, September 1971

	Male married	Male single	Female married	Female single	Unknown	Total
Year of birth						
1910-20	-	-	5	1	-	6
1921-30	-	-	-	3	-	3
1931-40	14	3	7	3	1	28
1941-50	27	9	19	23	-	78
Unknown	2	1	-	-	-	3
Total	43	13	31	30	1	118

Table 7. YEARS OF TRAINING BEYOND JUNIOR MATRICULATION AND YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE OF TEACHERS IN THE BAFFIN REGION, September 1971

Training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unknown	Total
Experience									
0	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	3
1	-	-	2	-	4	-	-	-	6
2	1	5	6	2	5	3	-	-	22
3	-	-	1	1	5	1	1	-	9
4	-	2	2	5	4	-	-	-	13
5	-	2	6	1	3	1	-	-	13
6	-	2	2	1	1	-	-	-	6
7	-	-	5	3	1	-	-	-	9
8	-	-	3	1	3	1	-	-	8
9	-	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	4
10	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	3
11-20	-	2	2	-	5	4	1	1	15
21-30	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
Maximum[a]	-	1	-	1	2	-	-	-	4
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total	1	14	35	17	35	11	3	2	118

[a] This means that the teacher had twelve or more years of teaching experience but that the exact number of years is not recorded.

Table 8. YEARS OF TRAINING BEYOND JUNIOR MATRICULATION AND YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES OF TEACHERS IN THE BAFFIN REGION, September 1971

Training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unknown	Total
Experience in the N.W.T.									
0	-	4	12	6	14	3	2	-	41
1	1	5	6	5	9	4	-	-	30
2	-	3	6	5	6	-	-	-	20
3	-	-	5	1	3	1	-	1	11
4	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	3
5	-	-	3	-	-	1	-	1	5
6	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
7	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2
8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
9	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
10	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	2
11	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Unknown	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	1	14	35	17	34	12	3	2	118

From the material presented in the previous tables we see that the percentage of foreign teachers in the Baffin region is also relatively high: twenty-four percent as compared to Hobart's figure of twenty-seven percent in the Central and Western Arctic. The majority of the Baffin teachers are young: sixty-five percent of them are between the ages of twenty and thirty years. The data confirms Hobart's recognition of the impressive professional creditentials of Northern teachers: teachers in the Baffin region have an average of Junior Matriculation plus four years of additional education and an average of five years teaching experience previous to coming to the North.

The data also shows that nearly one-third of the teachers were new to the North, while another one-fourth started their second year of teaching in the North in September, 1971. This compares favorably with Hobart's figure of sixty-three percent newcomers. On the average, the teachers in the Baffin region had two years of teaching experience in the Territories prior to September, 1971.

Not shown in the tables, but calculated from the same personnel records, is the fact that of the 118 teachers 72 received their training in their country or

province of origin, while 25 teachers received their training elsewhere. This included several foreign teachers who attended Canadian universities. There was no information on 21 teachers with regard to the place of their training.

Also not shown in the tables is the general high mobility of teachers; wherever previous postings were listed in the files, they showed that many teachers often transferred from one place to another or from one school to another in the same city. Another fact was revealed, namely that several teachers had taught only irregularly during their previous career. While, in case of the female teachers, this could often be related to child-bearing or child-rearing periods in their lives, several of the male teachers had held other positions for shorter or longer periods during their career as teachers.

The data confirms the policy of the Department of Education to employ the most experienced, fully accredited, teachers available for employment in Northern schools (see Hobart, 1970:59). This policy was explained to me in a personal interview with one of the education officials from the Department in Yellowknife. It is believed that highly trained and

experienced teachers are better able to cope with the problems of cross-cultural education. Since they are experienced and fully at ease in classroom situations additional problems confronting them, such as culture shock, language barriers and the like, are less traumatic to them. The data also reflect the Department's present policy to hire married couples who both teach or at least married teachers, in preference to single teachers. I was told that the former are more "stable" and less likely to become "frustrated" with school problems because their family life acts as a counter balance.

The same official told me that the ultimate goal of the Department is to staff the schools with native personnel, wherever and whenever they become available. A Northwest Territories Teacher Training Program began operation in 1960 in Yellowknife in conjunction with the University of Alberta Faculty of Education. In September, 1970, a new Teacher Training program was instituted in Fort Smith. The training period extends over a two-year period with each student spending approximately one and one half years in professional and academic classes in Fort Smith and Edmonton and one half year as interns in schools working under the supervision of experienced

teachers. The first Eskimo from the Eastern Arctic, Jacob Partridge, is expected to receive his teaching certificate this year.

Presently the Department is attempting to bridge the cultural gap between teachers and pupils by the training and employment of Eskimo teaching assistants and teacher's aides. The Teacher Assistant Training Program was started in 1965 and is well under way in the Western Arctic. In the Baffin region there is a lack of people with the necessary qualifications to take the courses leading to such employment. The fact that the present salary allotted to these positions is very low as compared to that which accredited teachers receive, might also be a deterrent for many people to become employed in this manner.

Teacher's aides are community members who have received no specialized training; their function is to assist teachers in non-professional activities and to interpret between teachers and pupils. The following table shows the number of people employed in these capacities in the Baffin region.

Table 9. ESKIMO KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS, TEACHING ASSISTANTS AND TEACHERS AIDES IN THE BAFFIN REGION, December 1971[a]

Settlement	K.G.teacher	Assistant	Aide	Total
Arctic Bay	-	1	-	1
Broughton Island	-	1	-	1
Cape Dorset	-	1	-	1
Clyde River	1	1	-	2
Frobisher Bay	-	1	2	3
Grise Fiord	1	1	-	2
Hall Beach	-	1	-	1
Igloolik	-	2	-	2
Lake Harbour	-	1	-	1
Pangnirtung	-	1	-	1
Pond Inlet	-	1	1	2
Total	2	12	3	17

a. the number of Eskimo women employed in these capacities fluctuates from month to month.

Frobisher Bay

Honigmann (1965) has reported on the different types of learning experiences available to the Eskimos and on the various ways in which they made use of them in their, according to the author, "successful" acculturation. While much of the "tutelage" was undirected, the school was involved with directed culture-change and has become the major socializing agency for the younger generation (Honigmann, 1965: 157-193). The first school was opened in 1955 in Apex, fourteen years after the first Eskimos migrated to Frobisher Bay. There had been no mission schooling in Frobisher Bay; the first mission was established in 1957, also in Apex. Some of the Eskimos might have been exposed to mission education in their home communities prior to settling in Frobisher Bay.

According to Honigmann (1965:195) nine Apex pupils, ranging in age from six to fifteen, attended morning sessions during the first year. In the afternoon twenty-four pupils from Ikaluit attended. As described by that author, the first years were plagued by the usual problems: lack of space and materials, failures in the heating and water systems, transportation difficulties, irregular attendence and absenteeism as well as a lack

of trained teachers. The school premises were used for a variety of other educational and recreational purposes, in which the teachers were often actively involved. Teachers were "community teachers" who had a certain measure of contact and personal interaction with the local community. I was told that in the early years the teachers personally brought report cards to the parents and that visiting between teachers and parents occurred. Teachers ordered their parkas and footwear directly from Eskimo individuals and some of the male teachers went hunting with Eskimo men. The female teachers concerned themselves with pseudo-educational programs, such as hygiene and home-management, which were in later years taken over by other agencies.

In 1959 a second school was opened at the Lower Base. Since then both schools have been in operation under the name of the Sir Martin Frobisher elementary school. Honigmann (1965:173-174) described the Southern-oriented curriculum, which included "English language skills (reading, comprehension, and spelling); arithmetic; social facts, including world geography..." As local residents and teachers told me "The goal was to teach English and arithmetic and no frills."

Honigmann quoted a revealing passage from a

speech held during the third year of the school's existence.

> During that spring, ... The chief of DNA's Educational Division emphasized the importance of English to help the Eskimos to adjust to a new way of life. People charged with administrating or teaching the Eskimos should avoid speaking Eskimo simply because they like doing so, for in doing that they could do the people a lasting disservice and jeopardize the whole educational set-up. Some day English would probably be universal in the Arctic; hence, if the Eskimo did not learn it now, they would be severely handicapped. Let teachers use every reasonable opportunity to allow the Eskimos to hear English and let them also develop Eskimos' ability to speak English. On the other hand, the Eskimo language should be preserved, even though it had never given birth to a literature and probably never would.

One can compare this statement with many similar ones observed by researchers which included the fact that pupils were often punished for speaking their own language in the schools (Graburn, 1969:200-203; Willmott, 1961:106-108). Some teachers in Frobisher Bay admitted that, until last year, they were told to concentrate on the teaching of English and discourage the use of Eskimo in the classrooms.

Judging from my own observations and those of many informants it would seem that Margery Hinds prophesy has come true in Frobisher Bay. The educational system has been so foreign and persuasive - and it

concentrated mainly on school-age children - that it has alienated a large proportion of the adult Eskimo population. Integration has been its official guiding principle but English the only language of instruction; the curriculum has been Southern-oriented and all the teachers non-Eskimo. Much of the knowledge and skills which the adult Eskimos could have taught the pupils has been excluded from its operation. The present Principal, in Frobisher Bay since September 1970, told me that it is extremely difficult to get adult Eskimos involved with the school program at the moment. In recent years a small budget of a few hundred dollars has been available for "cultural inclusion" subjects, such as the teaching of Eskimo syllabics and handicrafts. In Frobisher Bay adult Eskimos seem to be reluctant to make use of this opportunity to teach the children some of their cultural tradition, even when it is specified that they can do it in Eskimo and will get paid for it. I was told that Frobisher Bay compares unfavorably in this respect with the smaller settlements where there is "community involvement" and less "apathy." Hinds (1959:16) said that,

> It is possible, ... that parents will be discouraged from trying to teach their children. Thus it is likely that in the near future Eskimos will be unable to read and write their own language.

This is certainly true in Frobisher Bay among the younger generation. Many children speak a mixture of bad Eskimo and bad English. Often parents don't correct them because they usually know sufficient English to understand what the children are saying. The development which Margery Hinds foresaw has even more devastating effects in Frobisher Bay than she imagined; there seems to be ambivalence among the adult Eskimos toward teaching their children anything, even traditional knowledge and skills they still possess, cherish and practice in their homes. Great concern about this was expressed to me by a number of highly acculturated and vocal young Eskimo men and women. They regret their own lack of knowledge regarding their cultural heritage and are aware of the absence of traditional training in many Eskimo families (see McElroy, 1971 for a discussion of present-day socializing practices relevant to this issue).

Now I wish to turn more specifically to the school and its teachers during the 1971/72 school year. The school is strictly concerned with pupils from Kindergarten to grade six. Adult education and recreation, so important a part of the school in former years, have been taken over by other agencies. Except for an occasional Parent-Teacher night, very few

adult community members, Eskimo or Euro-Canadian, enter its doors. I seldom observed adults watching what was happening in the school, either through the windows or on the playground.

Since September, 1964 the school has been directed by four different Principals. One of these is now Superintendent of Education for the Baffin region. The present Principal has considerable experience as teacher and Principal in other schools in the North previous to his posting in Frobisher Bay.

Of the sixty teachers in Frobisher Bay, thirty-one are employed at the high school, two teach at the Adult Education Center and the remaining twenty-seven are elementary teachers (including the Principal and Assistant Principal who do not teach classes). Tables 10 to 13 present data on origin, sex, age, marital status, training and teaching experience of these twenty-seven people.

The material in these tables shows that the teachers in Frobisher Bay are also young: seventeen of them are between the ages of twenty and thirty. One-third of them are non-Canadian; they have an average of Junior Matriculation plus three years of

additional education; an average of five years of teaching experience and an average of two years of teaching experience in the Territories prior to September 1971.

Teachers live in the various accomodations provided by the Department of Education. All the unmarried teachers are housed in the highrise apartment building as are a few married couples without children. Couples with children live in the Rowhousing or Butler buildings, while a few of the married female teachers live in staff housing allotted to their husbands in other agencies. Three teachers and their families live in Apex where they teach.

Most of the teachers arrived in Frobisher Bay on the twenty-third of August. Ten teachers were new to Frobisher Bay; ten had taught there the previous school year and another seven had taught in Frobisher Bay for two years. Four teachers had never been in the Territories prior to September, 1971.

Since school started on the first of September the teachers had little opportunity to get acquainted with the town and its people. Three of the intervening days were spent at the Teachers' Orientation sessions.

Table 10. COUNTRY OR PROVINCE OF ORIGIN OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS IN FROBISHER BAY, 1971/72

Province in Canada	Teachers
Alberta	1
Manitoba	1
New Brunswick	2
Nova Scotia	2
Ontario	3
Quebec	2
Saskatchewan	1
Total	12

Country	Teachers	
England	5	
Ireland	3	
New Zealand	1	
Total	9	
Unknown	6	(all Canadian, but provinces unknown)

Table 11. AGE, SEX AND MARITAL STATUS OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS IN FROBISHER BAY, September 1971

	Male married	Male single	Female married	Female single	Total
Year of birth					
1910-20	-	-	3	-	3
1921-30	-	-	-	1	1
1931-40	3	-	2	-	5
1941-50	4	1	6	6	17
Unknown	1	-	-	-	1
Total	8	1	11	7	27

Table 12. YEARS OF TRAINING BEYOND JUNIOR MATRICULATION AND YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS IN FROBISHER BAY, September 1971

Training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unknown	Total
Experience									
0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	-	2	2	-	-	1	-	-	5
3	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
4	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	3
5	-	-	5	-	-	1	-	-	6
6	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
7	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
8	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
11-20[a]	-	1	-	-	4	1	-	-	6
Total	-	5	9	2	7	3	1	-	27

a. exact number of years not recorded in the files.

Table 13. YEARS OF TRAINING BEYOND JUNIOR MATRICULATION AND YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS IN FROBISHER BAY, September 1971

Training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unknown	Total
Experience in the NWT									
0	-	-	2	-	1	1	-	-	4
1	-	4	3	1	2	1	-	-	11
2	-	1	3	1	3	-	-	-	8
3	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Total	-	5	9	2	7	3	1	-	27

These were attended by all new Baffin teachers, who left for their settlements immediately after the meetings were over. The Frobisher Bay teachers spent the few remaining days unpacking and getting settled in their apartments.

School was held from September first to the twenty-third of December. On the evening of that day a charter flight, locally called "The teachers' flight," departed for Montreal. Eleven of the elementary teachers and many of the high school teachers left on it to spend their holidays with relatives or friends. School started again on the second day of January and continued until the end of June.

School hours were from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m., and from 2.30 to 4.30 p.m. The Kindergarten and Prereading classes left fifteen minutes earlier than the others. The pupils of the Base school were bussed to and from school, including being carried home for lunch. The Apex children walked to school. A few of them were bussed to the Kindergarten classes which are held at the Base school only, while a few Base children are bussed to Apex to attend the Special Class there.

Until this fall the teachers were expected to

find their own way to school. Some walked, used their own car or a taxi, while in winter some came on their skidoos. When they complained about this situation the Department of Education arranged for the bussing of the Base teachers, once in the morning and again in the late afternoon. The Apex teachers still look after their own transportation.

The Apex school is located in three buildings and has more room than it needs at present. This is due to the decrease in population. The extra space has allowed the Special Class for physically or emotionally handicapped children to be housed by itself in one of the buildings with several classrooms and workshops. The Base school has grown from the original four classrooms and presently is distributed among twelve different buildings, or part of buildings, such as Butler buildings. There also are four portable classrooms, by far the roomiest and most pleasant in the school. The small library and the music room are located in seperate buildings. Since there is no gymnasium the pupils are taken to the high school for their physical education classes.

Construction on a new elementary school has started and is expected to be finished during the summer of 1972.

Table 14. PUPIL ENROLLMENT IN THE SIR MARTIN FROBISHER SCHOOL, 1955 to 1971

	Esk. girls	Esk. boys	Ind. girls	Ind. boys	Other girls	Other boys	Total
1955							33
1956							61
1957							59
1958							N/A
1959	- 132 -		-	-	- 26 -		158
1960			-	-			191
1961/62	97	92	-	-	- 65 -		254
1962/63	91	81	-	-	- 31 -		203
Jan. 65	108	100	-	-	34	30	272
Mar. 65	107	100	-	-	33	32	272
Jan. 66	115	112	-	-	42	31	300
Mar. 66	128	108	-	-	45	32	313
June 66	129	107	-	-	43	33	312
Jan. 67	158	156	-	-	40	53	407
Mar. 67	157	154	-	-	42	48	401
June 67	158	153	-	-	43	49	403
Mar. 68	164	160	-	-	45	39	408
Jan. 69	186	163	4	-	46	58	457
Mar. 69	188	166	4	-	45	51	454
June 69	182	168	4	-	43	57	454
Jan. 70	196	187	-	-	53	64	500
Mar. 70	195	194	-	-	43	65	497
Sept.70	222	199	-	-	70	81	572
Nov. 71	202	189	-	-	52	68	511

Table 15. PUPIL ENROLLMENT IN THE SIR MARTIN FROBISHER SCHOOL, November 1971

	Esk. girls	Esk. boys	non-Esk. girls	non-Esk. boys	Total
Grades at Base school[a]					
1. K.G. a.m.	6	5	1	5	17
2. K.G. p.m.	6	6	1	4	17
3. K.G. a.m.	4	5	4	5	18
4. K.G. p.m.	8	8	-	-	16
5. Pre-reading	8	8	-	2	18
6. Pre-reading	6	11	2	-	19
7. 1(1)	3	1	7	10	21
8. 1(1)	13	7	-	-	20
9. 1(2)	11	8	-	1	20
10.1(2)	9	9	2	2	22
11.2(1)	5	4	5	9	23
12.2(1), 2(2)	10	11	-	-	21
13.2(1), 2(3), 3(1)	10	10	-	-	20
14.3(1)	4	3	6	6	19
15.3(1)	10	6	2	-	18
16.3(3), 4(1)	10	6	-	2	18
17.4(1)	4	5	5	9	23
18.4(1), 4(2), 4(3)	7	10	-	1	18

	Esk. girls	Esk. boys	non-Esk. girls	non-Esk. boys	Total
19.5(1)	2	4	9	4	19
20.5(1), 5(2)	12	9	-	-	21
21.6(1), 6(2)	8	12	6	6	32
Grades at Apex school					
22.Pre-reading, 1(1), 1(2), 1(3)	9	7	-	-	16
23.2(1)	8	7	1	-	16
24.2(2), 2(3), 3(1), 3(3), 4(1), 4(3)	8	6	1	1	16
25.5(1), 6(1), 6(2)	11	7	-	1	19
26. Spec. class	10	14	-	-	24
Total	202	189	52	68	511

a. The numbers running from 1 to 26 refer to the actual number of classes being conducted, the Kindergarten having two morning and two afternoon sessions. The numbers in parenthesis refer to achievement levels of the pupils.

Table 16. BREAKDOWN OF PUPIL ENROLLMENT IN THE SIR MARTIN FROBISHER SCHOOL, November 1971

Kindergarten, Pre-reading, grades 1:	204 pupils	(40%)
Grades 2, 3 and 4	192 pupils	(37.6%)
Grades 5 and 6	91 pupils	(17.8%)
Special class	24 pupils	(4.6%)
Total	511 pupils	(100%)

Table 17. AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE PUPILS IN THE SIR MARTIN FROBISHER SCHOOL, November 1971

	Year of birth										Unknown	
	'56	'57	'58	'59	'60	'61	'62	'63	'64	'65	'66	Total
1.[a]	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	16	17
2.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	17
3.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	18
4.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	13	16
5.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	17	-	18
6.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	13	-	19
7.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	18	-	21
8.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	13	1	-	20
9.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	15	-	-	20
10.	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	9	9	3	-	22
11.	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	9	11	1	-	23
12.	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	10	-	-	-	21
13.	-	-	-	-	2	2	14	2	-	-	-	20
14.	-	-	-	-	-	1	10	8	-	-	-	19
15.	-	-	-	-	8	9	1	-	-	-	-	18
16.	-	-	-	1	6	9	2	-	-	-	-	18
17.	-	2	1	3	2	3	12	-	-	-	-	23
18.	-	-	3	7	4	3	-	-	-	-	-	1 18
19.	-	1	-	3	5	9	1	-	-	-	-	19
20.	1	-	3	12	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	21

	Year of birth											
	'56	'57	'58	'59	'60	'61	'62	'63	'64	'65	'66	Unknown Total
21.	1	5	9	7	9	1	-	-	-	-	-	32
22.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	10	-	16
23.	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	7	7	-	-	16
24.	-	-	-	2	3	5	5	1	-	-	-	16
25.	-	2	4	5	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	24
26.	-	5	3	3	6	5	1	1	-	-	-	24
Total	2	16	23	43	57	48	62	60	69	67	64	1 511

a. These numbers are the same as those used in Table 15.

Tables 14 to 17 present data on past and present pupil enrollment, grade and age distribution of the children in the school. The first table, although incomplete, gives an indication of the rapid expansion of the population and the resulting need for educational facilities. It also shows the transient nature of the population when one compares the differences in enrollment for various months during one school year. The peak year of the school's operation was during 1970/71. The drop in enrollment the next year is mainly due to the fact that many of the older students were transferred to the new high school.

Of the present 511 pupils in the school 202 are Eskimo girls and 189 Eskimo boys. There are 52 Euro-Canadian girls and 68 Euro-Canadian boys enrolled, which is approximately one-fourth of the school population. These pupils come from various national, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds; some of these children, for example, had previously attended French schools in the Province of Quebec.

Through the examination of tables of this kind one gets a picture of the problems Northern teachers and pupils face: the cultural variety of the pupils, the age spread and achievement levels in many of the

classes. Especially the latter poses problems for the teachers since they have to "group-teach." The various levels mean that the pupils are at different stages of their learning experience; different textbooks and reading material is used for each group while only certain subjects are taught to the class as a whole. It poses problems for the pupils too because the teachers have to divide their time between the different groups and it is difficult for the pupils to concentrate on a certain assignment when the teacher is talking to another group in the same room. The switching back and forth between groups, in addition to the various subjects which have to be covered each day according to the time table, certainly complicates the teaching as well as the learning experience.

Of the total 511 pupils, 420 attend the Base school and 91 the Apex school. This latter total includes only four non-Eskimo pupils, reflecting the fact that few Euro-Canadians presently live in Apex; one of these four children is the little daughter of an Apex teacher. Of the twenty-one classes at the Base school ten are integrated, having a relatively balanced proportion of Eskimo and Euro-Canadian pupils. Five classes are completely segregated, with only Eskimo pupils. The remaining six classes have

token-integration; they are Eskimo classes with one or two Euro-Canadian pupils. In one of those, for example, a boy listed as non-Eskimo on the class list has an Eskimo mother and speaks Eskimo fluently. Another class reveals that the two Euro-Canadian boys are special cases; one of them speaks French only and the other is retarded. In one of the integrated classes (17 Euro-Canadian plus four Eskimo pupils) the four Eskimo children were the "brightest" of their class last year, I was told, and therefore put together with the Euro-Canadian pupils. One token-integrated class consists of Eskimo "repeaters" plus one Euro-Canadian child whose mother tongue is not English. Whenever I asked about the distribution of pupils in the various classes, their knowledge of English and especially the reading-level they had achieved were given as determinants of placement and promotion.

One favorable factor has to be mentioned: the teacher-pupil ratio in the school is 1:18. Although one class consisted of 32 pupils, most of the other teachers had small groups of children to work with.

A few more observations will close this chapter. The school is run in a conventional manner. Where it not for the Eskimo pupils and displays of their drawings

and stories on the walls, the school could be anywhere in Canada. In fact, I was very much reminded of my own school days in a small country school in Europe some decades ago. There was the same strict adherence to rules and regulations, bells and time tables, standing in line and walking quietly through the corridors. The emphasis on discipline and the occasional physical punishment by individual teachers or by the Principal in his office, were also similar. The Principal rationalized his approach to the organization and the discipline in the school from his belief that there is an extreme lack of order, control and discipline in most Eskimo households. The school thus has to provide these; an orientation which was expressed to the teachers at various occasions, but not shared by all of them.[2]

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[2]The following staff notice from the Principal to the teachers gives an indication of the emphasis on discipline and the manner in which this was conveyed to the teachers. The notice was dated September 6, 1971, and I quote the text in toto. "The Base School has an automatic electric bell system and classes will enter and leave the building according to these bells. It might happen that your watch will not correspond to the bell, however, teachers will be expected to dismiss their classes by the bell only.
This applies not only to the noon hour and evening dismissals but to recess periods as well. To avoid any misunderstanding I will repeat myself; I do not want to see classes leaving before the bell rings. In the morning there will be two bells; one at 9:27, the other at 9:30. When the first bell sounds classes are to line up at their respective outside entrances. The teacher

School attendence is compulsory and financial sanctions can be used to keep the children in school and their attendence regular. Family allowances may be withdrawn when a child is absent without good cause for five days or more in any one month. According to the Principal, parents of about eight Eskimo children were brought to court during the last two years for gross absenteeism on the part of their children. All parents were found guilty and fined; in six cases this action resulted in noticable improvements. Measures like these, however, are only taken after repeated letters from the Principal and several phone calls by the Eskimo secretary to the parents.

McElroy (1971:11) has mentioned that

> School administration has become increasingly lenient in recent years toward warranted absences of school children, but unofficially the teachers

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should meet the class at the outside door and escort them into the building in an orderly manner. I will expect this of each teacher. Please do not have your class enter the building unaccompanied or expect another teacher to look after them for you. Some classes are being exceptionally noisy when they are entering or leaving the building. I would like to discourage this and the time to stop it is now, before it becomes a habit. I would appreciate it if each teacher would speak to his or her class immediately and try to correct the situation." (emphasis the Principal's).

> look more favorably on boys being taken out of school for hunting trips than they view girls being kept home to babysit.

This fact was confirmed by the Principal in Frobisher Bay who allows boys to go hunting with older relatives, but he has very strong negative views regarding girls cutting classes to help their families with shopping, housework or baby-sitting. This was especially so after he had investigated a few cases of girl absenteeism this fall; he found that in several instances when a girl was home to baby-sit or do housework, other adult members were present, apparently unemployed, as far as he could determine.

As can be seen from the following table, attendence during the 1970/71 school year was relatively high. Figures for this year were not yet available but are believed to be similar.

Table 18. PERCENTAGES OF ATTENDENCE DURING THE 1970/71 SCHOOL YEAR OF SIR MARTIN FROBISHER SCHOOL

Month	Percentage	Month	Percentage
September	98.83	February	93.03
October	91.88	March	90.79
November	91.72	April	90.92
December	89.01	May	90.53
January	90.52	June	87.77

CHAPTER V

DEFINITIONS OF SOCIAL SITUATIONS

Introduction

A newcomer to Frobisher Bay is struck immediately by the tremendous amount of gossip which occurs and the defensiveness of many Euro-Canadians with regard to their living in the town. One learns that the Territorial Judge, William G. Morrow, recently called it "the cess-pool of the North" and "the lousiest place in the Territories." He was not referring to the physical plant only but speaking to the high rate of alcohol consumption among the residents and the many criminal offences committed under the influence of alcohol. He singled out the Royal Canadian Legion and advised them to scrutinize entrants. "The police were asked to enforce this too as too many people on the verge of intoxication are admitted" (CBC, Territorial Newscast, April 21, 1971). The recently formed Frobisher Bay Chamber of Commerce, the Frobisher Bay Executive of the Northwest Territories Public Service Association, as well as the Royal Canadian Legion protested to the Judge and the Commissioner in Yellowknife. Emergency meetings were held to this effect. All this happened

less than a year after Prince Philip had let a remark slip about "this garbage heap."

Then one hears that Frobisher Bay has had a very negative press lately and that many residents are upset about the "unscrupulousness" of journalists.[1] They are observed in the town for a few days while staying at the hotel and drinking at the bars. They pick up some gossip there and then write devastating articles about "that terrible place." Relatives of Euro-Canadian residents, reading these articles, sent strongly worded

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[1] An example often mentioned by residents was Peter Lloyd's article in the Winnipeg Free Press of February 11, 1971, which quoted a Frobisher Bay resident as follows: "I would say that 75 percent of the whites here came because they have an alcoholic problem. They know that they can't keep on drinking and hold a job in the South, but here they can get away with it." Opinions were divided about whether this person had actually said this to the reporter. Among those who believed that she had, there were some who publicly announced to "burn her place down." When a certain establishment burned down shortly after, arson was suspected by some residents of the town, but never officially proven. The following excerpt from the CBC, Territorial Newscast of April 5, 1971, also indicates the feelings of residents towards journalists: "Frobisher Bay will be the subject of an article in the Anglican Church magazine Horizon this summer. With only four days to observe Frobisher Bay the editor of the publication, Ron Fellows, was asked how he was planning to treat the subject." Social scientists are included in the category "journalists," by some residents, and considered to be "just as bad." Journalists are also reported to pretend to be researchers so as to have better access to information.

letters "to get the hell out of there" (see Finnie, 1948:194 ff about similar incidents in the Western Arctic).

Then one begins to notice the many complaints about the apathy of the residents, Eskimo as well as Euro-Canadian. Some people air their views publicly in the local newspaper. The following two quotations are excerpts of letters sent in by dissatisfied residents.

> You are right about the apathetic attitude of this town, and I for one can envision no change for a long time. This town is composed of people who WANT the best of everything - all for nothing... The people here deserve nothing except each other... This town has given me nothing but regrets for 15 months. I count every day lost... I'm leaving Frobisher in the near future and I only hope that I can fit into the world again after being away from it for so long (Eastern Arctic Star, January 11, 1971).

> I have noticed that other peoples' needs and feelings are not much respected in this town. The only thing that seems to count is to have as much fun as you can (Eastern Arctic Star, February 22, 1971).

One listens to tales about the terrible isolation; charges of favoritism and nepotism: "Competitions for public service positions are a sham, people hire their friends by phone" and "The wives of important officials

have first choice of the easy secretarial positions." One learns about the mediocrity of government personnel and is initiated into the mythology of "being bushed."[2]

Much of this gossip seemed trivial and bitchy, and although many of the complaints may be unimportant in themselves, they are all related to peoples' conceptions about living in the North; their definitions of social situations. People are concerned with why somee people stay and others leave and why they come to the North at all. I observed that many people, especially newcomers, felt that they had to justify their own reasons for being in a place like Frobisher Bay. They also frequently evaluated and conjectured about other peoples' reasons. These reasons attributed to others were usually couched in negative terms, often with a somewhat moralistic overtone. They can be divided into three major categories: financial, professional and personal.

The reasons attributed to other people, at the same

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[2]"Being bushed" was explained to me as follows: "It is a feeling of being locked in, of being imprisoned when the walls are closing in on you. One just has to get out or go crazy." Getting out means leaving the North. A girl who, because of her behavior, had been the subject of much malicious gossip, suddenly received the label "bushed"; immediately people pitied her and

time, seemed to categorize them. If, for example, a professional reason for being in Frobisher Bay is attributed to someone, that reason is felt to be characteristic of that whole person. I found little perception of a possible change in peoples' reasons for living in Frobisher Bay; there seemed to be a tendency to view others in one-dimensional terms.

Financial reasons

In the first category some of the most often heard remarks were "They only came here for the money," or "He is here to make a stake," or "He had debts and had to make some money quick." The implication is that once these financial goals are met, the people will leave to go back to the South. I met several people who frankly admitted to being there "for the money." They intended to save as much as they could to settle down in the South. Some of the goals mentioned were quite specific: a farm in Ontario, a trip around the world, the establishment of a private business, retirement, and so on. The North offers these people a better opportunity to satisfy their material needs than a

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said, "She is bushed, poor girl. She doesn't care anymore what happens to her. She should leave."

comparable period working in the South could, especially when, as they said, "There is nothing to spend money on here anyway." These are often the people who complain about the high food prices in Frobisher Bay; they intend to avoid spending all their salary on daily necessities as they would in the South, but rather to save a certain amount of it.

A woman, who had lived in the Western Arctic for many years, remarked upon the differences in the residents of the two regions. She found that people in Frobisher Bay "don't spend their money like in the West. There they enjoy life, they buy things, charter planes and, in general, try to have a good time." She was amazed at the number of wives in Frobisher Bay who were working. The ideal of such couples is to bank one of the salaries. A favorite pastime in Frobisher Bay is trying to guess how much people are taking out when they leave; staggering amounts like $20,000 and $30,000 are mentioned. Several people in Frobisher Bay are "moon-lighting," such as selling insurance on a part-time basis, working in the hotel kitchen at night or tending bar. Some wives attempt to supplement their husband's income by running small businesses in their homes, selling Avon cosmetics or running a small boutique.

I was told a supposedly authentic story about a professional couple who came to Baffin Island on a one-year contract. They had decided to file for a divorce, but before doing so they wanted to make enough money to enable each to go his own way. They worked in a small community where there were few other Euro-Canadians. Personal problems between them were compounded by the isolation, and they had to be flown out before their contract was up.

Professional reasons

The second category, the professional reasons, are surrounded by a certain amount of uncertainty. Since the changeover of jurisdiction to the Territorial Government there has been considerable "job insecurity" among some residents. The impression I received was that "in the old days of the Federal Government" firing was unheard of. Once one had a position one's future was secure; the worst which could happen was a transfer. The Territorial Government, however, is felt to be "tightening up."

This situation is compounded by the ideology of "obsolescence." This new ideology was first mentioned by the Honorable Jean Chretien, Minister of DIAND, in

a speech to the Yellowknife Board of Trade on November 10, 1969 (Lotz, 1970b:148). Since then, officials in the Territories, including the Commissioner himself, have included it in their speeches while travelling. The ideology's official goal is "to have 75 % of all staff positions in the Territories filled by local residents by 1977" (Canada Year Book, 1970-71). On a trip to the Eastern Arctic in November, 1971, Commissioner S. M. Hodgson said at a community meeting in Grise Fiord "this means that every settlement manager who is now employed by the government, has to work himself out of a job and that local people have to be trained to take over." The fact that the terms "local people" or "local residents" are employed leaves some ambiguity in the minds of Euro-Canadians since it is not specified that the ideology refers to native local people or residents, although many suspect that this is implied.

The most often heard phrase when people are attributing professional reasons is "He couldn't find a job in the South." This refers to the rising unemployment in Southern Canada and to the supposed deficient capabilities of the person. Either an individual's qualifications were not acceptable for employment in the South or his work record such that the North was the only place left for him: "This was

all he could find." Non-Canadians are sometimes singled out in this respect since it is believed that their degrees or diplomas are not valid in most Canadian provinces. I did meet some Englishmen who admitted this fact; they told me that the Province of Newfoundland and the Territories were the only places they could be employed without retraining or rewriting professional examinations. They preferred to live in the North because of the high standard of living and because "We could never live like this in England." The same, of course, applies to people with other national backgrounds.

It is recognized that for some people a few years of "Arctic experience" or "cross-cultural experience" may be valuable in their specific career. In those instances a number of years in Northern service is viewed as a stepping-stone in a career culminating outside the Territories. On the other hand, transients in Frobisher Bay may also be perceived as "on the way up in the system," since a transfer to another settlement in the Territories usually means a promotion. These people are believed to desire an executive position at one of the regional headquarters or in Yellowknife.

Some of these judgements are reserved for men who have married Eskimo women. These men are considered to

have an unfair advantage over others since it is believed that "nobody can fire them." It is thought that by "marrying native" some men assure themselves job security. An interracial marriage is sometimes described as a "political move" on the part of the man who attempts to entrench himself in the bureaucratic system. It is also believed by some that most Eskimo women are not able, or not willing, to adjust to life in the South. Their husbands are thus, by virtue of their marriage, condemned to a life in exile. Opinions of some of the Euro-Canadians are quite strong on this point. I heard that, "These women are dragging their husbands down" and "They can't have anything in common." On the other hand, some of these marriages may be perceived as "irresponsible" and the men having married "for sex only."

The second categories of reasons attributed to others is also the area in which antagonism between old-timers and newcomers is most prominent.[3] Old-timers view the recent arrivals somewhat as interlopers.

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[3]Old-timers, as used in this paper, and as perceived by residents of Frobisher Bay, is a relative term. It is a situational rather than an absolute description. Somebody in his second year in Frobisher Bay, in some cases, may be perceived as an old-timer by a newcomer. I think that most people in Frobisher Bay would agree, under any circumstance, with naming somebody who has been there for five years or more an old-timer.

Their professional ethics, their impatience to get a job done and their ignorance (and sometimes disinterest) of the country and its people are likely to destroy the delicate balance between isolation and commitment to the area, which some of the old-timers have achieved. The attitude of some old-timers toward the newcomers is: "We have seen them come and go. Usually they don't stay long enough anyway to implement the policies or programs they so enthusiastically propose."

An old-timer (in Frobisher Bay since 1964) once told me "I don't know the teachers this year." He meant that he had seen so many teachers during the past years that he could not be bothered to concern himself with them. His wife only knew the teacher of her school-age son. She was equally disinterested and said to me "Oh, they are all the same anyway. They are here for the money and if they can't hack it anymore they'll leave." Both these people liked living in Frobisher Bay; they had been out while the husband held a position in Ottawa, but preferred to go back North.

To some old-timers, in fact, many of the newcomers may appear threatening. They may have up-to-date degrees and high professional qualifications. They are often quick to criticize what they fail to understand. They

might point out things which "should have been done long ago" or which "could have been done better." They might say, "From now on things are going to shape up around here." Old-timers say to that, "Let them stay here for a while and they'll find out what it's like," or "They'll pipe down after a while."

One old-timer told me that, "People are not committed to Frobisher Bay as a community where they plan to stay and bring up their families. The result is that they only take but don't put anything back in." Some of the old-timers would like to see the town develop in certain ways and have vested interests in this development. They see transients assuming control; they see impersonal agencies taking over their former responsibilities. Some say that Frobisher Bay is getting too large and "We can't keep our eyes on what happens anymore." They regret the increased bureaucratization and the decrease in friendly, face-to-face interpersonal relations.

The annual "spring exodus" in Frobisher Bay, when people leave for good or to take their holidays in the South, was described to me as "a real strain on those of us who stay behind." Some say that the high rate in personnel turnover is "offensive to us." This feeling

is intensified among those old-timers who would like to leave also, but cannot. With rising unemployment in Canada many people would find it impossible to find a position elsewhere equal in rank and salary to what they hold in the North. I was told of one department director who had been in Frobisher Bay for about four years. The last two years he had applied for positions in Southern Canada but had been unable to find one comparable to the one he presently has. The view of several people was that, "He hates it here, and you should hear his wife, she can't stand the place."

As old-timers were quick to point out to me, a long stay in the North does not necessarily imply commitment or dedication to the region or its people. Indeed, when listening to some old-timers talk about others, one hears charges of "stagnation," "becoming parochial," "being bushed" and "out of touch with the world". Some talk between old-timers indicated that they actually hated living in the North but saw no chance to get out, or that, since the salaries are high, they should "stick it out as long as we can".

A couple, who had lived in a small settlement for several years, and were now in their first year in Frobisher Bay, told me that they felt they were

stagnating. "We don't really care anymore about what happens in the rest of the world. Listening to the news is an effort and we hardly read our newspapers." About other old-timers they said, "After a while, all you meet are others in the same boat. They have lost interest, even to do a good job." Similar sentiments were expressed by people who made remarks like, "Just go along, save your neck, that's the way to survive here" and "Just drink with the boys and you'll be O.K. here."

To some newcomers, old-timers may appear as those sad people who have given up competing. They are thought to be "unable to make it in the South." One hears remarks like, "They came when the going was good; they wouldn't be able to get a job now if they applied for it," implying their inferior capabilities as well as the fact that they seem to be "in a rut." Some newcomers felt that they should not stay too long in order not to become like the old-timers and also in the belief that it would lessen their professional opportunities in the South.

Personal reasons

The third category of reasons attributed to others

is varied. It includes perceptions of "problems" and "troubles" which supposedly drove some people to the North. These may be interpersonal problems, such as marital ones, a criminal record, alcoholism, an irregular work record, and so on. In general, these people are perceived as escapists of some kind. They may be escaping from certain people, difficult situations or just because "they wanted to get away from it all." If one believes what is being said in Frobisher Bay there must be hundreds of people there who came "to dry out" and a few hundred more with unhappy marriages or broken love affairs.

Reasons attributed to single women are often sexual in nature. It is often said that they came "to find a man." Others are believed to be "running away from a man" or they came "to have a good time." Implied is the belief that supervision and social sanctioning of single women are much looser in the North. One girl of my acquaintance must have believed that too: since her arrival in September until Christmas time she had about ten different boy friends. Old-timers, commenting on her behavior, told me that they had seen this happen many times before. They said that single girls, especially those from rural areas, find the newly found freedom so overwhelming that "they go haywire."

Men travelling through town, to and from settlements, are quick to take advantage of girls like these. Reasons for coming to Frobisher Bay attributed to girls, or single women of any age, are seldom professional or financial.

Other than escapists, Frobisher Bay is believed to have among its inhabitants a number of drifters, who travel because they fail to fit anywhere. It is thought, however, that many people like these "can give a few years of very good work." Although they don't like to stay in any place for any length of time they are respected because they are "independent." Some of these are believed to have come North in the hope of doing a responsible job well, but one with little supervision and "bureaucratic hassles." I was told, "These are the ones who don't like anybody breezing down their neck." Some of these people may have histories of troubles with foremen, supervisors and bureaucracies in general. One employer told me that they are hired regardless of their unstable employment record; one reason being that their mobility has given them a certain detachment and helped them shed some of their ethnocentrism. They are believed to suffer less from culture shock and to be able "to take things in their stride." They are also less likely to be "idealists,

who want to change everything overnight."

Idealists or "Peace Corps types" have a definite negative connotation in Frobisher Bay. I was told that these usually "don't last long here." The reasons were twofold: either they are ostracized by the other Euro-Canadians to such an extent that their situation becomes impossible and they leave, or they themselves can not resolve the conflict between their ethical convictions ("helping the people," which usually means the Eskimos) and the rigidness of the bureaucratic system which does not support them in the way they desire. One woman said to me, "I'm going to leave. The problems here are so immense, one can't solve them, so why stay." It is often said that people like these set their expectations too high, that they are too impatient and become disillusioned. Of course, the often used phrase "They couldn't hack it" applies to them also. It has to be noted in connection with this that the phrase "Eskimo lover" is becoming in vogue as has "nigger lover" in the United States with a similar negative connotation.

It is sad, but true, that one seldom hears reasons of a positive nature given. When people reflect on the reasons which made others come to Frobisher Bay one rarely hears that they came because they wanted to, or

because they were interested in the country and the people. Barger (1972:9) has said the following of the Euro-Canadians in Great Whale River:

> ...the Whites appear to possess a somewhat tenuous self-esteem. A sense of guilt and insecurity indicate some negative self-judgment and lack of self-assuredness. Frequent judgment and condemnation of others might reflect an outward projection of a tenuous self-image.

If this is so in Frobisher Bay, and I do not know if it is, the usually negative reasons attributed to others may reflect undesired traits in the individuals themselves; they may be conscious or subconscious rationalizations of their own motivations for being in the North. One person told me shortly before I left: "If you want me to be really honest, I would have to say that I was fired from several jobs down South. I just couldn't take it anymore and didn't know where to turn or what to do. So, I came here."

When I asked people themselves why they stayed in Frobisher Bay positive reasons were given, and in many cases I believe them to be genuine. I did meet people who seemed to have made a successful adjustment to their new environment, who found their jobs interesting and rewarding, who liked the social life and saw their future as lying in the North. One such person told me,

"I can't visualize myself living anywhere else anymore." Another said, "I really like it here. It is not like in Montreal or Toronto where nobody looks you in the eye. Here, when I walk into town, I'm greeted all the time and I know everybody." Somebody else told me that, "You find out that the things you were used to in the South are not all that important after a while and there is so much here to compensate for them."

What these people have in common is that they are able to enjoy certain advantages which the North offers over the South: a peaceful rhythm of life and a lack of tension; a beautiful landscape and unpolluted air and water; and satisfying face-to-face relations with others who enjoy the same things. They do not dwell, as do many others in Frobisher Bay, on what is <u>not</u> available. The felt deprivations of many Euro-Canadians are too numerous to mention here, but they contain the common themes of lack of choice and variety in what is offered: little choice in selecting one's housing, entertainment, food and clothing, and the lack of like-minded people from among whom to choose friends.

<u>Eskimo problems</u>

A completely different area of concern to many

Euro-Canadians are all those situations which are perceived as problems, namely Eskimo problems. Perceptions range from the blatantly racist to radical ideas about social justice and native civil rights. They all, however, imply that the present situation is wrong or undesirable and that something should be done about it. I mentioned in earlier chapters the obvious cultural differences and socioeconomic disparities between the Eskimos and Euro-Canadians, a fact which no newcomer to Frobisher Bay can ignore.

Balikci and Cohen (1963) and Clairmont (1963) have suggested that Euro-Canadians in Arctic towns are best discussed in terms of the occupational organizations to which they belong. Their professional affiliation influences their attitudes toward and their perceptions of the Eskimo community. It also determines, to a large extent, which group of Eskimos or individual Eskimos they will come into contact with. For example, teachers only know Eskimo children, the probation officer knows those who have run afoul of the law, the alcohol education officer works with those who have drinking problems, while the game officer hunts with the hunters. Many of the office workers only come into contact with a small number of acculturated Eskimo men and women who also work in offices: CBC announcers, clerks, secretaries,

translators, interpreters or "liaison officers" of one kind or another. Very few Euro-Canadians in Frobisher Bay can say that they "know the Eskimos," since each works in his own professional area and general social interaction is slight between the two groups. Very few of the transient professionals, except the Public Health nurses and the social worker, ever visit Eskimo homes or receive visits from Eskimo people. What contact there is between them is usually confined to on-the-job situations, where the Eskimo is usually in a subordinate position or as a client of services dispensed by Euro-Canadians.

During my four-months stay with an Eskimo family, the social worker came to the house once to discuss a certain matter. She came with an interpreter and remained in the house no longer than half an hour. The tourist officer, who wanted to hire some men for a fishing trip, talked outside the house and concluded his business in less than five minutes. Except for two Euro-Canadian men married to Eskimo women, no other Euro-Canadians visited. I believe that this situation was typical for Ikaluit in general.

This mutual avoidance, as old-timers told me, is becoming more pronounced in recent years. Presently a

number of educated, and often well-travelled Eskimo men and women maintain much of the contact between the two cultural groups, acting as middlemen either in a professional capacity or as relatives. It is mainly among the teenagers that one now sees social interaction between Eskimos and Euro-Canadians. Much of this socializing, however, seems to occur in "neutral" places, like the high school, the coffeeshop and the movie theaters, but not in the parental homes. Some of it also takes place in the apartments of young Eskimo or "liberal" Euro-Canadians. I am not speaking here of the sexual encounters between Euro-Canadian men and the Eskimo girls, which also take place, and for which one particular section of the apartment building is famous.

I am reminded of the Euro-Canadian woman, wife of the head of one of the government departments, who exclaimed, "But I don't know any Eskimos." This remark was made during the Eskimo Language Course given at the Adult Education Center. The instructor had told us to practice what he had taught us for at least two hours a week with an Eskimo person among our acquaintances.

Euro-Canadians, because of their professional affiliation, tend to have certain professional ethics

and goals which influence their opinions as well as their interaction with the Eskimos. Definitions of the Eskimo situation and perceptions of Eskimo problems, however, crosscut professional boundaries in many instances. There are many conflicting opinions about the Eskimos, about how they should be treated and about what their future is to be. I believe that one can isolate two major trends, the assimilation and the integration orientation.

The assimilationists may say, "Of course the Eskimos are loosing their culture. They have to if they want to make it." Somebody told me: "All this liberal shit that we made them this way, it makes me sick. I sure don't feel guilty," while others said that, "There is no way that the Eskimos can go back, so they might as well shape up and realize that times have changed." One person told me that one has to view these things in the proper perspective: "There are only about fifteen thousand Eskimos across the Canadian Arctic. Shouldn't we think of the millions of refugees from East Pakistan?" I also learned from some assimilationists that, "There is nothing wrong with <u>our</u> civilization. The Eskimos will have to learn to compete if they want their share of it."

I believe that many assimilationists perceived present Eskimo culture as a corrupted form of the aboriginal one and therefore not worth preserving. Some of them mentioned that traditional Eskimo culture was "really very primitive" and that the Eskimos practiced cannibalism and infanticide. These people tend to speak cynically about "the so-called noble savage." People of this persuasion may say that other Euro-Canadians are "catering to the Eskimos" and "bending over backwards to please them." They call this "discrimination in reverse."

On the other hand, one finds the integrationists who are not so sure about the values and benefits of Western Civilization. They are liberal and reform oriented. They might say, "We are here to motivate them to start doing things for themselves." They feel that the Eskimos should play a constructive and profitable part in the development of the North, firstly because this is just, and secondly, in exchange for the loss of their traditional culture. The integrationists fight for increased social assistance, better housing and employment opportunities for the Eskimos because, "They have a right to it as Canadian citizens." They want lowered employment requirements for Eskimos and suitable, short-term training programs oriented towards

Eskimo cultural habits and towards work attitudes. They are concerned with matters such as the debate about the use of Eskimo syllabics versus the use of the new orthography. They see the latter as "a revolutionary force" in support of a strong pan-Eskimoism. They object to the continued use of syllabics in the Eastern Arctic, since it separates the Eskimos in this region from those in the Western Arctic and from Greenland where other scripts are used. Syllabics is also considered too closely tied to the conservative influence of the church.

Many of the divisions among Euro-Canadians are related to the perceived benefits and detrimental effects of welfare, including its influence on the Eskimos' senses of identity, self-worth and responsibility. While some maintain that Eskimos should not be "dependent" on welfare, others are equally adamant in saying that, "They bloody well have a right to it," and that, in fact, "They should be receiving much more than they do now." The former often gain the last word by saying that, "You can't appreciate things that are given to you; you have to work for them." This value is strongly represented among assimilationists as well as integrationists, which is not surprising among white, middle-class professionals who themselves worked hard to reach the

positions which they now hold.

> Kids often say to me that they would like to live in a nice house like mine. I tell them: you can have one too if you go to school for seventeen years like I did.

Related to the issues of Eskimo dependency and lack of responsibility is the general problem of the responsibilities for services of the various agencies in Frobisher Bay. Is, for example, the school, the hospital or the welfare office responsible in the following case? Or are the Eskimos?

> Two Eskimo girls from a settlement temporarily lived in Frobisher Bay while receiving treatment at the hospital. They stayed at the hospital, but went to school during the day. Around Christmas time some teachers noticed them in frayed parkas, rubber boots without duffel socks, without mittens or scarves. They walked to school every day without complaining to the authorities. Finally, approached by a teacher, the social worker outfitted the girls in new clothes.
>
> A year later the case was still being discussed

as an example of the confusion which exists. Some people said that actually the parents were responsible; they should have been informed and been made to pay the bill. Some others said this was ridiculous because, if the parents could afford to pay they would have bought proper clothes in the first place. Others attributed the situation to the cultural lack of planning for the future on the part of the Eskimos and although, technically they were responsible, they should not be required to pay since they needed more time to learn about things like these.

A somewhat similar debate is carried on with regard to the school policy of not providing meals for its pupils. Although there is medical evidence to support the view that many Eskimo children are undernourished, the other view has, in Frobisher Bay, won out.[4] It is that Eskimo parents are financially capable of feeding their children and therefore should do so, and that no government agency may interfere; providing food in the school is perceived to be detrimental to the Eskimos'

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[4]Dr. G. C. Butler, Director of Northern Health Services, has stated that, "Many of our Northern children have a moderate anaemia due to a qualitative difficiency in their modern diet; this in turn leads to lack of energy, poor health, and poor concentration" (Norec, 1965:11). A doctor I spoke with in Frobisher Bay confirmed this with his own observations.

sense of responsibility. There are no cooking or eating facilities planned in the new elementary school which is being built. Nevertheless, the New Northern Curriculum has the following paragraph, which reflects a conflicting view within the same Department:

> In the Northern context it is advocated that our schools do provide every child with a hot lunch program.[5]

Both assimilationists and integrationists include many well-trained, experienced and well-meaning people. They are in general intent on "helping the Eskimos" or "helping the Eskimos help themselves." Their conceptions on how this is best done differ in many cases and on various issues. In

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[5]The full quotation reveals a conflicting opinion about the role of education (than)with the one expressed by Baffin education authorities: "A narrow and all to common opinion is held that the school attends to the intellectual needs of the child while his physical needs are the responsibility of some other agency be it the home, the church or Northern Health Services. This reasoning has led to the reduction, if not elimination, of hot lunch programs. Just how any educational program is to function adequately when children are suffering from malnutrition is beyond the pale of common sense. In the Northern context it is advocated that our schools do provide every child with a hot lunch program. To expect children to get out of bed in the cold and dark of a typical winter's day and come to school minus breakfast and be receptive to learning is too ignorant of reality, not to say inhuman" (New Northern Curriculum, 1971:11).

this context a power-play between traditional paternalism and liberal reformism is being enacted among the Euro-Canadians. At the extreme ends of the spectrum one finds the racists and the revolutionaries. The former are present in Frobisher Bay; they are the people who, in addition to making discriminatory remarks, indulge in practices detrimental to the Eskimos. They might buy skidoos from the Eskimos in spring and canoes in the fall, reselling them at triple the price the next season; they are usually the ones to call the RCMP as soon as they see "a drunken Eskimo." Revolutionaries are few, weeded out by public service recruitment practices or not attracted to such employment.

That some people in responsible positions sincerely try to reach a consensus with regard to Eskimo problems can be gleaned from an examination of the minutes kept by the Coordinating Committee on Social Problems.

The Coordinating Committee on Social Problems

This committee was formed in the fall of 1970 at the suggestion of the Regional Administrator.

> The basic purpose was to bring together local personnel working in different capacities, each

> of which might have a bearing on identifiable social problems within the community of Frobisher Bay.

All but two members are Euro-Canadian. They include representatives of the Department of National Health and Welfare, the RCMP, and Territorial personnel working in education, adult education, probation, alcohol education, and social development. Representatives of the four religious denominations were present as well as the Chairman of the Eskimo Housing Association and the local Justice of the Peace. Occasionally other people were invited to speak to a particular problem. The committee was to work closely with the Hamlet Council and the Hamlet Office.

It is interesting to note that all social problems identified and discussed by the committee members were Eskimo problems. One of the members said:

> The committee can look at cultural differences and as most of the problems are with the native population, the meetings might help to understand these problems better.

The main topics under discussion included the following:

1. Eskimo housing: many Eskimos experience problems

in adjusting to living in houses; many houses are overcrowded and lack adequate facilities and furnishings.

2. The inability of many Eskimos to plan and budget for the future.
3. Juvenile delinquency: drinking, drugs, theft, begging in the mall area, and the related lack of proper recreational facilities for the young people.
4. Eskimo unemployment: the need to lower job qualifications and to change employment practices; the need for a local Canada Manpower Center; unemployment benefits.
5. A felt lack of Eskimo leadership and the lack of response to courses offered by the Adult Education Center.

The committee members discussed the ways and means at their disposal to aid the Eskimos in making the necessary adjustments to living in town. They felt that in many areas more education was needed, especially short-term adult courses geared towards specific problems, such as home management, the handling of alcohol and drugs, and employment. Several recommendations to local authorities and to the Commissioner of the Territories were made. However, in June 1971 the committee nearly disbanded because of the lack of positive results. Some

members thought that it was important to continue the meetings, if only because of "the noticeable improvement in communications between departments." While they dealt with individual cases and accomplished little for the Eskimos as a group, the "meetings of minds" helped the various agencies.

> In Frobisher Bay there is quite a considerable change over in staff in all departments, and meetings of this sort should be held...mainly to get acquainted themselves, and so that they would know whom to call if a problem arises.

When one of the members labelled "idle time and unemployment" to be the two major problems in Frobisher Bay the others concurred. The minutes did not reveal any discussion about problems among the Euro-Canadians nor was the high personnel turnover discussed as a problem in need of solution. They did reveal, however, that there are definite limits to what the Euro-Canadians may do in helping or educating the Eskimos. This matter came up with regard to the perceived lack of budgeting and shopping abilities of some Eskimos. The question was raised if one could tell social assistance recipients where to shop, since one of the members had observed that many of them shopped in a private store whose prices are between ten and twenty-five percent higher than in the HBC store. The latter, however, is

three miles away in Apex. The committee requested advice from Yellowknife and learned that it may not interfere since "this is not legal as it is government interfering with private enterprise."

CHAPTER VI

DEFINITIONS OF EDUCATIONAL SITUATIONS

Introduction

One of the first things which struck me while spending time with the teachers was the fact that so few of their discussions centered upon children. Naively, I had thought that teachers "are concerned with children," in a similar manner as one thinks of a bookstore clerk "liking books." Thus my first lesson was that teachers are professionals with a certain commitment and concern with their profession. Much of the talk in the staffroom and on social occasions, in addition to topics referred to in the previous chapter, was devoted to the discussion of technical and emotional aspects of the teaching profession. They included teaching techniques, materials or the lack of materials, and certain "tricks of the trade" that make a teacher's life easier and physically less tiring.

When children were discussed it was usually in terms of specific cases, pupils who for some reason stick out. They were either a particular problem or a nuisance, or so-and-so is "really shaping up this

year." I had to get used to emotional outbursts like, "They made me so tired that I was ready to shoot the whole bunch" or "They are really not worth all the effort I put into it." One learns to take remarks like these with a grain of salt, especially when one understands that they might be made by those teachers who are really trying very hard to do a good job and thus likely to be frustrated. After substitute teaching a few times myself I discovered how tiring teaching can be and what an emotional strain it may produce.

Secondly, I learned that, although professionals, many teachers see their future career as lying outside the profession. Several teachers told me that they did not want to teach all their lives. While some male teachers viewed their future higher up in the system as principals or administrators, others wanted to leave the profession. I was told that after about five years of teaching, "There is not much of a challenge anymore; then you start to think what it is all about: the system and the stuff we are teaching the kids." When alternatives were considered, they included private business, library or secretarial positions, but not related professions such as counselling or social work. In other words, "a nice nine-to-five job which you don't

have to take home with you." One teacher told me that he would like a job as a lumberjack while another concluded that, "Teaching is not a profession for a person with a conscience." Female teachers regret that there is little opportunity of advancement for them within the educational system. Married female teachers often see their teaching career as an interruption of their married lives, including motherhood, to augment their husbands' incomes when necessary, or to return to when the children have grown up.

Thirdly, the teachers conveyed to me that teaching in Frobisher Bay can be, at times, traumatic, and in many cases frustrating. The general cross-cultural teaching experience and certain specific aspects of teaching in Frobisher Bay presented problems to the teachers for which they were not prepared and on which they received little guidance. Several of them said that the most frustrating feature was that no solutions to the problems were offered. Some told me that, "We knew that there would be problems but there is nobody who has any solutions for them." On the whole, teachers traced this to a lack of communication at various levels, not necessarily to the fact that there are no solutions available. There seemed to be a felt need for information, which was perceived to be unavailable to them

through formal channels of communication as well as through informal channels within the ranks of the teachers themselves.

The teachers in Frobisher Bay represent a varied sample of individuals in terms of national, and provincial backgrounds, education and teaching experience, in Canada, foreign countries and in the Territories. One can relate this heterogeneity in background and experience to varying philosophies of education and school curricula, and pupils they had worked with. Some of them had tought "opportunity classes,""enrichment classes" or "special classes" for retarded or emotionally disturbed children; some had worked in other cross-cultural situations: with Canadian Indian pupils, Maori students in New Zealand and Japanese pupils in Toronto.

In Frobisher Bay their situation also presented great variety. Some taught integrated classes, others segregated ones. Some had their classrooms close to the supervision of the Principal in the main building, while others, in seperate buildings, were less exposed to this. The latter were also less accessible to staffroom gossip during coffee breaks. The teachers in Apex lived in a little world of their own and had,

especially at the beginning of the school year, little contact with the Base teachers.

Some teachers were ultra conservative and traditional in their adherence to discipline, strict rules and timetables. Others were permissive and attempted to foster an atmosphere of creativity and self-expression among the pupils. Some relaxed controls in the hope to instil self-direction and self-motivation, while others felt that the school had to provide the regularity and discipline which was perceived to be lacking in Eskimo homes. Some teachers made rules for behavior in school and made it quite clear that they only applied to the school situation: "Out of school you can do what you like, your parents are responsible for that." Others believed that conduct learned in the school should be carried over to the home situation; they occasionally played their teacher role when meeting pupils outside the school. One teacher attempted to make the gap between home and school as small as possible; gum chewing in the classroom and cigarette smoking on the playground were allowed and a minimum of discipline was enforced. "If children are used to sitting on the floor at home, why shouldn't they be allowed to do so in school?" The teacher realized that, in addition to expressing his own philosophy, this approach greatly

reduced tensions within himself. Some other teachers, had they known about this, might have called it "slackening off" or "lowering standards." Others would have approved.

There were differences of opinion on many subjects; the amount and types of materials required, classroom procedures, discipline, the role of the teacher in the community, to name but a few. There was no consensus on subjects like community involvement, the use of Eskimo assistants, nor on the aspect of Northern teaching so often stressed by researchers: Northern experience. Not all teachers agreed that Northern experience was necessary or even helpful in terms of classroom teaching. This is related to teachers' conceptions of themselves as professionals who are supposed to be able to perform their duties in the classroom in any context without major changes in outlook or prodedure. According to these teachers, Northern experience does not lead to quality teaching. Indeed, certain adaptations made by old-timers were perceived as a lowering of standards reflecting negatively on the teachers' capabilities. Other teachers, on the contrary, said quite frankly that, "My first year here was a complete loss and only now do I start to understand in which way I have to change to reach the children." One old-timer said that,

"Tolerance and compassion come with experience, qualities many of the newcomers lack."

Although at times there was overt disagreement and the gossip became extremely "bitchy," many teachers told me that this is a fact of life in many schools and not specific to the North. Some, however, said that, "It is especially bad here, there is no community spirit at all." One teacher told me: "I hate teachers in general and never bother much with them, but I never felt so negatively about them as I do here."

I believe that several of the teachers were unaware of the differences in opinion listed above, simply because they did not discuss them. Teachers infrequently visited each other's classes and small groups interacted in the school as well as socially. While, in part, this might be due to the great physical spread of the school over different buildings, at the Base and in Apex, some of the felt criticism of another's methods and beliefs led to a certain secrecy among the teachers. Some told me, "There is a lack of sharing among us."

The fact that there were few social or professional events at the beginning of the school year is related

to the felt lack of communication among teachers. The first general staff meeting was only held in mid October; neither the Superintendent nor the Principal invited the teachers to their homes to get acquainted. No doubt this helped generate certain divisions among the teachers; married teachers seldom interacted with single teachers; there was a division between old-timers and newcomers, between Apex and Base teachers. Some teachers made contacts with other Euro-Canadians while others did not. Some told me around Christmas time that they really did not know anybody but other teachers.

Looking at the great variety and dissimilarity on many levels one wonders what these teachers had in common. To answer this question one has to examine their situation and isolate those features they shared. A general definition of their situation encompassing many features observed by me and related to me seems to be: a lack of relevant, useful information to help solve educational problems in the classroom. I think that most teachers related this lack of information to a failure in communication; 1) little or no communication with and guidance from the regional office; 2) a lack of informal help and interest from the Principal; 3) a lack of sharing of ideas among the teachers

themselves; and 4) a complete lack of information regarding the community, especially the Eskimo residents.

Most teachers felt that they needed more information to be effective in their classrooms. While some, on their own initiative, made the necessary personal or professional contacts to gather information, others did not and blamed the administration for not providing the channels.

This definition of the situation is related to the teachers' awareness of considerable spoken and written criticism of the Northern educational system and its teachers in particular. They realize that, as one teacher phrased it, "It is not fashionable anymore to blame the kids or the parents for educational failure. All the blame is put on us." Many teachers also recognize that education is an extension of the general social structure and that "educational problems" may in reality be "social problems" which the teachers cannot solve. Some of them resent the fact that the school is made into a battle ground for problems whose origins and solutions are beyond its jurisdiction and power. In addition, some teachers themselves have started to question some of the underlying values of

education and Western culture in general. In fact, for a few, this may have been one of the reasons for coming North. Some said, "I had hoped that it would be different here."

Two occasions on which communication between the administration and the teachers took place were the Teachers Orientation sessions and the Curriculum Workshop. These two events and the reactions of the teachers toward them help explain why the teachers define their situation as they do.

The Teachers Orientation sessions

The Teachers Orientation sessions took place between August 24 through 26. All the new Baffin teachers were required to attend; approximately sixty were present. The meetings were held in the library of the new high school. The seating arrangements were conventional: the teachers on rows of chairs and the speakers facing the audience from behind tables. Time schedules were kept; attendance was compulsory; everybody wore name tags. The atmosphere was subdued and businesslike. The teachers were addressed by the Superintendent of Education of the Baffin region and his staff, who were responsible for the organization

of the meetings. Some local Territorial staff members and education officials from Yellowknife spoke as well. A small panel of Eskimo youths invited questions from the audience, while at one point the general meeting was broken up into small groups where new teachers could meet with others who had taught in the various settlements before. The tone assumed by most speakers was authoritarian and informative. The teachers sat quietly and listened; a few entered into dialogues with the speakers.

The many topics which were outlined included a short history of educational development in the North and the Baffin region in particular. The duties of various governmental agencies were mentioned and references made to the various problems the teachers might encounter: language and cultural barriers, the high rate of age-retardation and drop-outs. Some of the social problems of the Eskimo residents were mentioned, such as unemployment, bad housing conditions and the generation gap between the older and younger people. These factors were related to the low achievement rates of the native pupils in the schools. Added to this most of the speakers indulged in some rhetoric about "the great challenge of this educational venture" and "education as a service to the people."

The Superintendent emphasized that education in the Baffin region, and particularly in some settlements, was of recent origin, but that great strides had been made in the last few years. He discussed the former, federal education system in terms of Southern, middle-class standards and values imposed on the Eskimo population without consultation. He said that the change over to the Territorial Government would prove to be beneficial and mentioned that certain changes in outlook and policy had resulted in more community involvement and consultation with the native people. The New Northern Curriculum was one example of the new philosophy. He expressed the desire that the Eastern Arctic become a developmental region rather than an exploited and extractive one, as it had been in the past. In relation to this, education of the native people was felt to be of crucial importance. In short, he pointed out that the new educational objectives should prepare Eskimo pupils to move within their own culture, preserve their heritage and language, and to help them move within the culture of the dominant society, and to move from one to the other.

Other speakers took up some of the same themes and elaborated upon certain aspects, such as the role of education in relationship to the future of the North.

One of the Yellowknife officials repeated a remark made on other occasions:

> The long-term view of the program, in my opinion, is for an Indian or Eskimo person to replace me as Superintendent of Schools in the Yellowknife region; then I will have fully done the kind of job I am trying to (Indian, Eskimo and Métis students to become teachers in (the) North, Northian Newsletter, May-June, 1970:3).

Several of the speakers showed their knowledge of recent criticism of the Northern educational system and projected an image of the new system as the collective responsibility of the Euro-Canadians to make up for the many mistakes of the past and to undo the great damages which Western culture had perpetrated on the native people.

The Superintendent of the Baffin region also informed the teachers that they should channel all their requests for materials and guidance, their complaints or comments through the Principal's office. He said that he did not want to see the teachers in his office because he would be busy with administrative matters or away visiting schools in the settlements; he expressed the hope to be able to visit each school at least once during the school year.

The rest of the sessions were devoted to discussions about professional and personal matters, textbooks, reading material and other teaching equipment, salaries, luggage claims, housing, and so one. A cheerful note during the rather dreary proceedings was provided by Mr. Mick Mallon of the Eskimo Language School in Rankin Inlet; his outline and demonstration of his course and teaching methods were entertaining as well as instructive.

Curriculum Workshop

The new ideology of the Department of Education was further elaborated upon by officials of the Curriculum Division in Yellowknife at the Curriculum Workshop held in Frobisher Bay on November 1 and 2, 1971. Teachers from Broughton Island, Clyde River and Pangnirtung were also present. Similar workshops had been held in the Western and Central Arctic and two more were conducted for the other teachers in the Baffin region: one in Igloolik at which teachers from Cape Dorset and Hall Beach were present, and one in Resolute Bay for its teachers and those from Arctic Bay, Grise Fiord and Pond Inlet. Because of ice conditions the teachers from Lake Harbour could not attend the meetings.

The purpose of the workshop was the presentation and discussion of the New Northern Curriculum for elementary schools, copies of which had arrived in Frobisher Bay in mid-October. They were distributed among the teachers and a letter from the Director of Education in Yellowknife instructed them to study it carefully so as to be prepared for the discussions with comments, questions and suggestions.

The research for this curriculum had started in December, 1970, and the text was prepared by four employees of the Curriculum Division. They were present at the workshop to explain the underlying philosophy and the special subjects for which they were responsible.

As at the Orientation sessions, this workshop was highly organized and the manner of presentation by the various speakers dogmatic and authoritarian. Attendence was again compulsory. Teachers of the high school and the Adult Education Center were not invited, but on the second day it was suddenly announced that the afternoon meeting was to be open to the public. Unfortunately only few members of the community attended.

The teachers gained the impression that the curriculum was based on the philosophy of one man,

Mr. P.M. Robinson, Chief of Curriculum. He had written the "Introduction" and the section on "Cross-cultural education." He was the main speaker at the workshop and his tone and manner of presentation were blunt, dogmatic and, according to some, insulting. He expressed little desire to enter into a shared problem-solving relationship with the teachers, but outlined the philosophy of the new educational approach as a fait-acompli. Since he concentrated on the pupils and their problems, he conveyed little empathy for the teachers' situation.

A sign put up in the staffroom by one teacher, but endorsed by many others, shortly before the workshop, read as follows:

Attention: all W. A. S. P.

Read the Blue Bible from
Yellowknife

esp. Introduction and
Cross-cultural Education.

and then GO HOME !!!

Possibly this fact, although not mentioned by Mr. Robinson publicly, influenced the manner in which he presided over the meetings and the bluntness of his approach. The result was that there was relatively little opportunity for relaxed and open dialogue. I heard some teachers whisper, "They are laying down the law." This situation was compounded by the fact that Mr. Robinson informed his audience that there was still considerable debate in Yellowknife, including the Commissioner's office, about the nature and implementation of this curriculum. He told the teachers that it had not yet been officially approved. The teachers' immediate superiors, the Principal and the Superintendent, were present at the meetings. Under these circumstances it was perhaps surprising that there was criticism expressed, constructive or otherwise, by the teachers at all.

Most of the criticism was negative. It emphasized the great differences between the Western Arctic and the Baffin region, especially the isolation and backwardness of the latter. Some teachers suggested that because of these differences a uniform curriculum for the whole Arctic was not feasible nor advisable, given the differing conditions in various urban and isolated settlements and the greater development in the Western regions.

Some of the criticism centered upon the basic philosophy of the document which, according to some, was irrelevant as far as the social reality of Frobisher Bay was concerned. Other teachers questioned the validity of the work since no Eskimos had been involved in the preparation of it; in fact, they said, "We have to take your word for it that this is what the Eskimos want." Some teachers doubted whether the new curriculum expressed the desires of the Frobisher Bay Eskimos. Some teachers found that the curriculum is not explicit with regard to the practical implementation of the philosophy and that certain sections, such as "Mathematics" and Social Studies," lacked necessary guidelines on how to teach the proposed material in the classroom.

Some comments were favorable, however. Several teachers congratulated Mr. Robinson and his staff; some teachers provided examples of things they had been doing in their classrooms which were now sanctioned by this curriculum. Some teachers might have been influenced by the rather emotially expressed, liberal viewpoint of Mr. Robinson's presentation; his concern with the integration of the native people and his goal of lessening problems and conflicts of the Eskimo pupils. Other teachers, on the contrary, were "turned-off" by, what they called, "the white-man's burden line." While

some teachers expressed their views openly at the meeting, most feelings were expressed privately during the following weeks.

It was interesting to see that some teachers seemed not at all concerned; they expressed no reactions, either pro or con. While some said, "I have heard it all before," others did not seem to think that it affected them at all. When I asked why that was so, I was told that they had developed their own teaching perspective long ago and would stick to it, or that they had decided to leave at the end of the school year anyway, "So why bother?" In all honesty, it must also be added that a few of the teachers had not yet studied the document by the time I left at the end of December.

New Northern Curriculum

The curriculum, in its present form, is a continuation of the federal government's "cultural inclusion" philosophy of recent years. It includes many of the recommendations made by social scientists and education experts with regard to the increased use of native languages and personnel, better preparation and orientation for the Euro-Canadian teachers, new Northern-oriented teaching material and community involvement

with the school program. In this sense, it is a progressive curriculum based on enlightened and informed philosophical considerations. I see one great deficiency: it does not refer to any of the research conducted in the various areas under discussion and the recommendations are presented as options for the Principals and teachers in the various schools to "experiment" with and "if the Eskimo people in the community want it." This factor gives the document a decisive political flavor which takes away from any objective, scientific merits it might otherwise have.

The emphasis of the curriculum is on the integration of the Euro-Canadian and native peoples in the North. It stresses the departure from the white, middle-class biases of former curricula. The goal of the new educational experience is the participation of the native people in the various activities of Western culture while at the same time preserving, and possibly contributing to, the native cultures.

> The organization of learning material is predicated on the assumption that there will be no segregation of pupils on a regular basis...the multi-ethnic character of our society implies that our classroom programs must reflect the attributes of the various cultures on an equal basis. There is no hierarchy of cultures to suggest that the non-native cultures are more important, and

> therefore automatically deserving of greater emphasis (New Northern Curriculum, 1971:3,2).

The basic curriculum considerations are: 1) the teaching of English as a second language, 2) the use of the native language (Eskimo or Indian) as the major tool of instruction during the first few school years. Also, the curriculum proposes to provide a free choice of future career opportunities for the pupils.

> In this respect Northern education must make it possible for the child to choose among and between such possible life patterns as: the wage-earning economy; trapping, fishing, hunting economy; guaranteed anual income, and leisure-oriented social living. The emphasis must be open-ended in that the developing individual is free to make his choice, rather than having his future pre-determined by the educational system (New Northern Curriculum, 1971:2).

Following from these basic premises the authors of the curriculum state that grades will become obsolete, that no standardized tests will be used initially, and that subjects as well as textbooks will be used as resources for knowledge rather than ends in themselves. The thread to tie the curriculum together is to be realized through "communication" in its broadest sense.

Conventionally, communication is thought of in

> terms of the language arts: listening, speaking, reading and writing. This interpretation is too narrow in that it excludes communication via art, music, drama, mathematics, science experimentation, physical education, recreation and, indeed, any activity whereby the individual conveys meaning without the necessity of resorting to verbalization (New Northern Curriculum, 1971:4).

The authors hope that this approach will realize the aims of education, so often stated as, starting from the child's strength rather than his weakness; that is his lack of English. The implementation of this approach demands great flexibility, creativity and a willingness by the teachers to experiment. It implies a knowledge of, involvement and empathy with the native community; in fact, a return to a kind of missionary enthusiasm.

In no uncertain terms, Mr. Robinson attacked present and past teachers for their ethnocentrism and "white, middle-class values and attitudes and the W.A.S.P. atmosphere of the average classroom" (New Northern Curriculum, 1971:7). In the section of "Cross-cultural Education" he described the obvious socio-economic disparities between Euro-Canadians and native people in most communities and the effect of these on the educational chances of the native pupils. He stated that,

> Equal educational opportunities is a dangerous myth. The school has to do what it can to compensate for these discrepancies (New Northern Curriculum, 1971:14).

Reactions of the teachers

Several of the teachers with whom I discussed the curriculum viewed it as essentially a political document. While some agreed wholeheartedly with the expressed ideology, others were suspicious of it and the motives of the authors. Several factors influenced their thinking: the authoritarian, conventional nature of the present educational system in Frobisher Bay, the lack of community involvement with the school and the perceived "apathy" of the Eskimo people, as well as the increased unemployment in Southern Canada. I heard some teachers say, "They are not really serious when they say they want to work themselves out of a job; where would they go?" When referring to the proposed choice in life styles one teacher remarked cynically,

> All the honey-bucket jobs are filled by Eskimos now, therefore the rest is being sent back to the land.

The references to the guaranteed annual income and leisure oriented social living filled some teachers

with horror, while others remarked that this conflicted rather noticeably with the proposed "obsolescence" ideology, which aims towards the employment of native people in positions now held by Euro-Canadians.

Some called it "a pie in the sky" and left it at that, since it was believed that there is no serious intent on the part of the administration to implement it. Others used the same phrase to indicate the practical impossibility of its implementation in Frobisher Bay since, as they said, "It doesn't jell with the social reality of Frobisher Bay at all." They realized that the implementation is dependent on a few salient factors presently absent in Frobisher Bay:

1. community involvement with the school program,
2. the availability of a great number of Eskimo teachers, teaching assistants and teacher's aides,
3. the willingness of Eskimo adults to become "community resource people" bringing their knowledge and skills to bear on the educational process,
4. teachers' knowledge of the community, the people and their culture.

Several teachers made observations which reminded me of Lotz's (1970a:10) evaluation of educational

conferences:

> They all had the feeling that someone, somehow, was trying to keep the lid on.

On the emotional level several of the teachers were disturbed by the references to their WASP origins and outlook. Some were angered by the comparisons which were drawn between Euro-Canadian and native child-rearing practices. The following two passages in the curriculum were often singled out.

> In Indian-Eskimo society, white Anglo-Saxon Protestant values can be hopelessly meaningless (New Northern Curriculum, 1971:7)

> What may appear to the non-native as being permissiveness on the part of the parents in actuality may be a subtle, yet effective approach to child rearing based on love and understanding of a deeper quality than is conventionally known in many "southern" households (New Northern Curriculum, 1971:8, emphasis mine).

In Frobisher Bay, where a large segment of the Euro-Canadian population, including some of the teachers, view the Eskimo community as disorganized, full of violence and conflict, and where the parents are felt to lack control over their children, such descriptions as the ones quoted, are thought to be particularly

inappropriate.

I believe that the information communicated to the teachers on those two occasions added to the ambiguity with which they regarded their teaching experience in Frobisher Bay. The information and directions received were felt to be contradictory, inappropriate and an attack on their self-esteem and sense of identity. Some teachers said, that, "After this, the turnover will become even higher."

Lack of communication

As mentioned, the Superintendent announced that he did not wish to see teachers in his office. When I left many of the new teachers and several of the second- and third-year teachers had not personally met him, either professionally or socially. It is unfortunate that the system is so rigid, since this man has considerable Northern experience and through his marriage to an Eskimo woman, entrance into the Eskimo community. In the few interviews I conducted with him and his assistant, who also has a long experience in the North, he displayed great knowledge of the region and the people. Some of his writings testify to this fact (see Buell, 1970 and 1971). However, he kept himself far removed

from the teachers, communicating with the Principal only. He was seldom seen at social events in town.

While he was away for a six weeks holiday, an official from Yellowknife took his place. He did visit many of the classrooms and took the time to discuss with the teachers the problems they faced. It was interesting to note that most of the teachers appreciated his interest and did not perceive the visits as critical evaluations of their performance.

Some teachers had contact with the regional Teacher Consultant, usually at the initiative of the teacher, asking advice about a particular teaching technique, reading material, and the like. Since her goal also was to visit each settlement at least once during the school year, she was away a great deal and had only limited contact with the Frobisher Bay teachers.

Thus the teachers were forced to rely nearly completely on communication with the Principal. Especially at the beginning of the school year he was extremely busy with administrative matters and had little direct contact with the teachers. In addition, he moved almost exclusively in Euro-Canadian circles, and was seldom seen at social events in the town. He and the Aasistant

Principal, however, became very involved with the renovation of the Curling Club. With the beginning of the curling season in December, he became accessible to teachers there, many of whom joined the club. This club is one of the "elite" organizations in Frobisher Bay and its membership includes many heads of departments. For several years now, no Eskimos have applied for membership. At the opening party only one Eskimo woman was present. She was the wife of one of the members.

How fundamental the lack of communication can be is some instances is illustrated by the following case history. It did not happen this year but was told to me by the teacher involved.

> A teacher was teaching a class which she thought to be grade one. A few days before the end of the school year, when promotion of the pupils was being considered, she said to the Principal that she had the feeling that "most of the children have not been taught enough to go on to grade two." She was informed that she had been teaching a Pre-reading class and that the pupils were being considered for promotion to grade one.

I said before that the teachers' general definition of their situation was: a lack of relevant, useful information to help solve educational problems in the classroom. With official channels on the local level insufficiently open, and information received on the two professional occasions perceived as "ambiguous," teachers had to rely on information gathered via certain informal channels of communication: gossip with other Euro-Canadians. This included the social information described in the previous chapter. And, since most Euro-Canadians in Frobisher Bay have limited or occupationally specialized knowledge of the Eskimo community only, much of this information received by teachers could give them a distorted view of the latter.

Having lived with an Eskimo family and experienced the peaceful, non-violent way of life in Ikaluit, I feel very strongly that many Euro-Canadians in Frobisher Bay have an exaggerated view of the disorganization, apathy, violence and social maladjustment of the Eskimo population. In discussing this with some of the old-timers and men who have married into the Eskimo community, I found agreement that about seventy-five percent of the Eskimos lead stable, industrious "normal" lives. It is mainly those people who have social or psychological problems, who come to the attention of the authorities.

Those with whom Euro-Canadians come into contact on social occasions, at private parties or in clubs, include only a small proportion of the population; the general population is increasingly withdrawing from the Euro-Canadians and their organizations. Individual instances of murder, wife-beating or child-molesting, alcoholism, gambling or prostitution, which do occur, should not be viewed as characteristic of the whole community. While, at the same time, it should not be forgotten that all these also take place among the Euro-Canadians.

In the following chapter I will describe the nature of gossip in Frobisher Bay as I observed it and as it was recounted to me. I believe, however, that many of the pertinent questions which teachers ask remain unanswered; whom are we teaching, what should we be teaching, how should we teach it, and even, why are we teaching here?

CHAPTER VII

GOSSIP

Description

In the preceding two chapters I have referred to several situations that confront Euro-Canadians and specifically elementary school teachers. I wrote these chapters in such a way as to convey some of the prevailing attitudes and the general atmosphere in the town, and to let the residents speak for themselves. I also wanted to create an impression of the major role which gossip plays in the lives of many Frobisher Bay residents.

I have described some of the reasons for resorting to gossip on the part of the teachers. Possibly these are applicable to other occupational groups as well. The discussions of the Coordinating Committee on Social Problems and remarks made by other Euro-Canadians lead me to believe that there is a general lack of communication through formal channels and that many other Euro-Canadians are in positions similar to those of the teachers.

A great number of Euro-Canadians, many of them transient "job-holders," enter Frobisher Bay each year to perform certain jobs according to standards, goals and ethics originating outside the town. Jacobsen (1968) has described how they bring along their various cultural and social backgrounds, values and attitudes, their personal problems and that,

> These people living in northern communities tend to feel that they live on the fringes far removed from the southern centers where decisions are made, fashions formed and new customs and trends initiated (Jacobsen, 1968:36).

A strange cross-cultural milieu confronts them. Many work in offices in the new town center and live in close proximity to each other. They are often required to cooperate professionally and socially during their short stay. In many cases they are required to reach a working-consensus with regard to policies and programs vis-a-vis the Eskimo client population, about whom they know little. The fact of the high personnel turnover and the absence of a period of overlap between encumbants of professional positions, and the fact that pertinent files and documents of previous years are stored in Ottawa and are presently being sent on to Yellowknife, may lead to a lack of information in many areas. In addition, much of the interaction with the

Eskimos is conducted through interpreters.

In this chapter, then, I will analyze some of the reasons for the importance of gossip in Frobisher Bay and I will outline what its major function seems to be. I will relate "Frobisher Bay gossip" to some of the theory on gossip in the anthropological and sociological literature, concentrating on the function rather than the content of gossip.

People in Frobisher Bay are very much aware of the amount of gossiping which takes place. They frequently comment on it; they might say that they regret or abhor it, but nevertheless, they resort to it. Several times I heard, "Let's not have any gossip tonight" or "No shop-talk allowed." After a period of apparently sincere attempts to discuss other matters, gossiping started again.

I was told that the period between September, when many newcomers arrive in town, and Christmas is the time that most gossiping occurs. This is described by residents as "the sorting-out period." Newcomers meet old-timers. Opinions are transmitted and received on a great variety of matters, including peoples' reasons for coming to, staying in or leaving the town. The

quality of life in Frobisher Bay is evaluated while people take stands, and take note of other peoples' stands, on controversial or sensitive issues. Newcomers are being socialized into current attitudes, values, practices and modes of behavior considered appropriate by those already in Frobisher Bay. These include inter-group relations within the Euro-Canadian set as well as relationships with the Eskimo community. Specific Euro-Canadian and Eskimo individuals are singled out as examples of what the speakers mean, serving as models or as examples "to stay away from."

Both old-timers and newcomers are interested in transmitting and receiving information. Old-timers assert and protect their vested interests in professional and social spheres as well as their "ins" with the Eskimo community. Newcomers attempt to transmit the status and influence which they bring with them from the outside in their professional capacity. They receive indications on how much rank and power will be accorded to them while in Frobisher Bay. Newcomers have to discover who are important in Frobisher Bay and what constitutes their power and influence.

I was told by several people that snap decisions are made during the first weeks in town which prove to

be crucial for the rest of an individual's stay. This includes individuals met and information received which influenced definitions of situations, leading to certain associations and actions on the part of the newcomers which characterized them, in the eyes of others, for the duration of their stay.

Newcomers transmit their desires to be included into the existing social networks for their personal and group needs; for companionship, friendship and entertainment. Old-timers indicate which newcomers are allowed to join in-groups and what this membership entails in terms of behavior and attitudes; other newcomers are excluded from certain existing groups because of certain indications they made during the initial period.

The general camaraderie, which Wilkinson (1959) referred to has disappeared from Frobisher Bay, as attested by many residents and as experienced by myself. Old-timers often, rather nostalgically, talk about "the old times when things were so different" and when "people were friendly and helpful." I was told that, "There is no hospitality anymore" and that the former sharing of resources and services is absent now. In many cases this change was attributed to the growth of the settle-

ment and especially to "Too many strangers" and "Too many transients." Among the recent arrivals, therefore, there might develop a feeling that they are made the scapegoat for real or imagined troubles in town.

> In many Arctic communities today each establishment keeps a close watch on its neighbour, ready to fight at the lightest sign of interference in activities considered part of its field. It is not uncommon for people...to go for a whole year without speaking to a next-door neighbour (Wilkinson, 1959:28).

Although written more than a decade ago, this is certainly true of Frobisher Bay today, as I noticed myself on many occasions and as I was told by informants. Often I made it a point to ask people about their neighbors, or about a specific personality. In many cases individuals were not acquainted since they belonged to different professional or social groups. They might not greet each other on the street nor interact in shops and similar places, but a great deal of indirect information about them was usually available through gossip, and not always complimentary.

In this respect Frobisher Bay is a strange mixture of an urban town yet possessing a small-town atmosphere. It depends very much on the personality of the newcomer whom he meets and how quickly he establishes contacts.

While some greet others when they have seen them a few times and enter into a conversation, others treat Frobisher Bay as a large town, where they do not interact with the other residents unless properly introduced. This fact was very striking in the apartment building, where some residents knew everybody on their floor and visited forth and back. Others did not greet neighbors, however, and lived as if in an apartment building in Montreal or Toronto, where one avoids getting close to neighbors.

Much of the gossiping is situational, either brought on by a certain event or a chance meeting. Some of the most interesting pieces of gossip may be picked up in the coffeeshop, listening to others in the elevator, or by joining a group of secretaries at lunch. Other chance opportunities present themselves by having adjoining apartments or post office boxes. One may have a friend or colleague, married to someone in another department, who transmits inside information, for example, while giving one a ride home.

The gossiping is, however, influenced by the particular experience which the individual brings with him and dependent on definitions of situations, that is, does a person feel that he has to interact with many

other people to gather information or does he believe himself to possess sufficient knowledge to perform his professional duties and satisfy his personal needs. In Frobisher Bay there is a belief that women gossip much more than men; the latter discuss matters, but women gossip. This might be due to the fact that few women have top positions in the various departments and thus are likely to have less inside information. The secretaries, some of whom lunch together regularly, in this respect perform their function as "grapevine," transmitting information from one department to another. Wives of employees, who are not working themselves, depend on the information the husbands bring home to them, which then, in turn, is distributed among wives in similar positions of receiving second-hand information.

Within the school the staffroom is rich in gossip, but not all teachers take advantage of this opportunity for information gathering. On the contrary, some teachers quite deliberately stay away from the room for this very reason. This orientation also leads to avoidance of other places in town where they know that at certain times gossip sessions are held. This, of course, applies to other Euro-Canadians as well. I will discuss some of these people later in this chapter.

There are many parties in Frobisher Bay where usually a great deal of liquor is consumed, which is conducive to gossip. While under the influence of alcohol inhibitions are lowered and people tend to speak more freely than otherwise. Parenthetically, this might well be one of the reasons for the excessive alcohol consumption in the North among Euro-Canadians. The various sociocultural backgrounds of the residents and the high personnel turnover, which necessitates making new acquaintances and friends constantly, require mechanisms to facilitate and accelerate social interaction. Perceptions regarding shared feelings of isolation, frustration and culture shock may well prompt people to rely on gossip more than they would if they were in their home communities. Alcohol helps to accomplish this.

Reminded of Vallee's analogy of Northern residents with passengers on a cruise, one can see much of the social interaction among Euro-Canadians in this light and also understand the necessity for gossip. While on the cruise people make snap judgments about each other; they know little about one another's background or future. Thus they exchange confidences and discuss events and personalities, knowing that soon they will depart for ever, or that the others will. Under those

circumstances some conventional social barriers are broken down, especially when people are reacting to another's indications of discomfort. They might also assess the content of the gossip less critically because of the emotions fostered by discomforting ambiguous situations.

I was told by various people that "although we work together now, who knows who will be here next year and what it will be like then." Others said that, "So-and-so is quickly working himself out of a job and I just hate to think of whom they will be sending next." Several people mentioned that it became very lonely in the North after a few years because, "One loses one's friends so frequently." One woman I spoke with, repeatedly told me that her decision to resign at the end of the year was based on the fact that the friends she had made in previous years had all left and she wished not to invest more energy and emotion in making new friends.

This point was stressed by several people, especially single individuals, who had lived in Frobisher Bay for a number of years. They had made friends during these years, as they said, "often with the help of partying, drinking and joining social clubs I wasn't

really interested in." The high psychological cost of making and breaking relationships lead some to say, "I think I'm going to leave myself; I can't go through it year after year." Another person stated: "It is extremely difficult to remain human in an inhuman situation."

We have to remember that the perceptions I have been describing are selective. People tend not to respond to everything they are exposed to but mainly to that which concerns them directly. This implies that individuals define situations with reference to themselves, their previous experiences and their professional and social situation, and with regard to how they experience or "read cues" directed to them by others. These may be verbal or non-verbal clues. Perceptions on which people base their definitions of situations are situational in that they are influenced by others with whom they come into contact or those who, in some way, provide a model for defining situations in a certain way.

Theory

The unit of the analysis is the situation. Shibutani (1966) has given us a theoretical framework

for the discussion of the situation perceived in Frobisher Bay by the Euro-Canadian residents: a crisis situation characterized by ambiguity. Shibutani (1966: 172) has defined a crisis situation as one that arises out of a perception of ambiguity, "when previously accepted norms are inadequate as guides for conduct" and when "a situation becomes problematic and some kind of emergency action is required." The author showed, with various examples, that periods of rapid social change and cross-cultural situations are often experienced as ambiguous. These periods are characterized by a lack of useful information from the formal, legitimate channels of communication, or when the information available from these channels is perceived as unreliable, contradictory or open to various conflicting interpretations.

In another publication Shibutani (1967) proposed the concept of the reference group as an analytical tool to explain behavior of people moving from one social context to another. He said that,

> The inconsistency in behavior as a person moves from one social context to another is accounted for in terms of change in reference groups... The concept has been particularly useful in accounting for the choices made among apparent alternatives (Shibutani, 1967:159).

> A reference group, then, is that group whose outlook is used by the actor as the frame of reference in the organization of his perceptual field. All kinds of grouping, with great variations in size, composition, and structure, may become reference groups. Of greatest importance for most people are those groups in which they participate directly - what have been called membership groups - especially those containing a number of persons with whom one stands in a primary relationship. But in some transactions one may assume the perspective attributed to some social category - a social class, an ethnic group, those in a given community, or those concerned with some special interest (Shibutani, 1967:163-64).

I will use these concepts, the crisis situation and the reference group, in an attempt to explain the function of gossip in Frobisher Bay.

Shibutani (1966:22) said that in modern mass societies communication takes place through formal, institutionalized channels of communication as well as auxiliary ones. Formal channels tend to be organized by sets of rules and regulations as well as by clearly defined role performance. In fact, these rules are "so well established as to be followed by interchangeable personnel, and sustaining sanctions. There are fixed standards of acceptibility, prescribed routes of transmission, verification procedures, and codes of reliable conduct" (Shibutani, 1966:21).

However, no matter how elaborate the formal channels, they are invariably supplemented by alternative ones.

Thus we can differentiate between the formal transmission of information, news, both in oral and written form, and the supplementary forms of communication, such as rumor and gossip. The emergence and functions of these latter means of communication depend on situational needs and necessities. While rumors may be worldwide and transmitted in formal and informal, oral and written forms, gossip is usually confined to small groups and transmitted orally only. Although, for example, professional gossip may be exchanged internationally in written form among a select group of individuals with similar interests, the gossip we are dealing with in Frobisher Bay is of a different nature. Here the situational necessity for gossip, its nature and its function, arise out of the fluid character of the town's social structure. This type of gossip has been defined by Shibutani as follows:

> Gossip is restricted to small local groups in which members are bound by personal contacts and concerns the private and intimate details of the traits and conduct of specific individuals (Shibutani, 1966:41-42).

Allport and Postman (1947) have also discussed the role of gossip in situations where adequate information through formal channels is unavailable, or nearly so. In accord with Shibutani these authors also stressed the point that gossip is an important alternative mechanism of communication, which should not be thought of as idle or trivial chitchat, as bad, or as especially low-class. Paine (1967:282) has added that,

> Gossip is a very general, and important, way of obtaining...information; sometimes it is the only way.

People tend to gossip with and about others who directly affect their lives in important ways. By doing so, a person's identification with certain values comes into play. This brings us back to the concept of reference groups. This concept, according to Shibutani (1967) has been used in various ways in the sociological literature. Generally it emphasizes comparison and contrast in the evaluation of one's self and the selves of others. Thus, one's perceptual field, to a certain extent, depends on identification with a reference group.

In this framework, gossip in Frobisher Bay can

be viewed as an attempt at affiliation with reference groups, where old-timers and newcomers meet, exchange indications of meanings of situations to form new in-groups and to reduce perceived ambiguity by the sharing of relevant, useful information.

> ...the crucial problem is that of ascertaining how a person defines the situation and who constitutes the audience whose responses provide the necessary confirmation and support for his position (Shibutani, 1967:169).

Paine (1967:278) has also stressed the communication aspect of gossip and the fact that it is "a device intended to forward and project individual interests." He emphasized that the gossiper both wants to receive as well as distribute information.

> In part, he does so in recognition of one of the first principles of information-management. Namely, there is always some information that he wishes certain people to possess - e.g. as assurance to them about his activities - in order that his, and not their, definition of the situation prevails. Where he is simply thinking of the maintenance of a general flow of information back to himself, he circulates information that he can easily afford. But where he wishes to acquire particular information from particular persons he will distribute a selection of information that he knows they wish to possess (Paine, 1967:283).

The view of gossip presented so far - gossip as

a mechanism of communication used by small local groups in crisis situations as they seek identification with reference groups in an attempt to reduce perceived ambiguity - is quite different from its traditional treatment in the literature. Paine (1967:278-79) argued this point when describing some of the approaches taken by traditional anthropologists in their analysis of gossip. For example, the various case histories in Bailey's collection (1971) reveal very different types of gossip and the roles they play: as measures of social control, the creation of leadership, and judgment by the community of socially unacceptable behavior of individuals or groups of individuals. Paine (1967:278-79) stated that,

> This view of gossip usually omits problems connected with information, however. It is assumed that different persons have made available sufficient information for a section of the community to make judgment: gossip here is the execution of this judgment.

There are two major differences between the function of gossip described in traditional anthropological literature and the function of "Frobisher Bay gossip." Firstly, as Paine (1967) argued, in the former case, gossip was studied in small communities or preindustrial societies where a large body of information

for action was available to all. Secondly, these communities were communities in the anthropological accepted sense of the term; its inhabitants had shared sets of values and well-established norms of behavior to which they, more or less, adhered. Frobisher Bay is not such a community. On the contrary, it is a haphazardly selected conglomeration of everchanging "job-holders" from various national and sociocultural backgrounds. They may have dissimilar values while their occupational philosophies and activities might also be dissimilar or conflicting. Professional and social interaction and working-concensus are situational, with regard to specific circumstances of the moment or with reference to a particular event or person. In connection with this, I believe that few Euro-Canadians perceive themselves as we Frobisher Bayers, but rather as we non-Eskimos and in particular as we teachers, we nurses, and so on..

The geographer McBain (1970) described Frobisher Bay as follows:

> ...an artificial community which has continued to exist simply because the Federal Government needed to maintain officials in the region to implement programs for northern development. In a sense, it remained in existence because for most of the time no final decision about its future was reached by government planners. They

could neither decide to develop it nor to close it down.

While in some cases the content of gossip in Frobisher Bay is a good index of peoples' values and attitudes, in other instances the content may hide these. As they are gossiping people make guesses, declare hunches and elicit indications from others about the probable significance of events and personalities. Gossip, in some cases, may be quite inconsistent with peoples' beliefs and in actual conflict with their behavior. In all cases, however, is the content of gossip related to the function.

A typology of Frobisher Bay gossip would have to include several kinds of gossip. There is descriptive and information-gathering gossip, the most neutral types. One recognizes, however, that much of the gossip is more subtle than that. One could isolate loaded gossip, which is a camouflaged means of sounding out others with reference to a certain matter or person. It attempts, indirectly, to transmit a particular point of view which, however, can be retracted if need be; it is difficult to withdraw from a position openly stated. Another type, which one could call defensive gossip, attempts to indicate a point of view held by the gossiper to others in the hope of altering their definition of

the situation.

A gossipy remark can imply a question for straightforward information, it can imply an evaluation of a situation, a judgment, an order, or can be made in such a way as to convey, "Forget it, it was just a joke." Usually the emotional quality, the phraseology and nonverbal accompaniments give indications of underlying values as well as the particular purpose of the gossip, indicating to others what reply is desired.

For example, a remark like, "I heard that so-and-so was drunk when he drowned" is as much a question for information as an invitation for specific reactions. Answers may vary: "That's a lot of nonsense, Eskimos don't go hunting when drunk," or "Most likely, they usually are." The initiater of this particular gossip session could also have started the conversation with, "I don't believe that so-and-so was drunk when he drowned," thereby giving a clear indication of his definition of the situation. While gossiping like this people gather information and become aware of different points of view; they create new perspectives for defining the situation and allign themselves with reference groups based on indications transmitted and received. While gossiping definitions of the situation

are subjected to the test of reality. Confirming responses from others provide support for perspectives, while negative responses force the individual to choose between alternatives.

It was interesting to note that on an occasion where a recent suicide case was discussed the one person who had most of the objective facts on the case did not take part in the gossip. I was told later, in private, some of the circumstances surrounding this particular Eskimo's decision to commit suicide.

This leads me to an examination of those Euro-Canadians, teachers as well as others, who do not, or only rarely, take part in the gossiping in the manner and places referred to in the previous pages. This group includes both newcomers and old-timers. In accord with the theoretical orientation of this paper I seek the explanation in terms of their definition of the situation and the meaning they have formulated for themselves with regard to their stay and their role in Frobisher Bay and the perceived quality of their lives. I hypothesize therefore that, unlike the people described, they have access to satisfactory information and identify with certain reference groups in such a way as to reduce the ambiguity perceived by the others.

In the following chapter I will conclude this paper by describing the felt ambiguity as an inherent characteristic of the total social situation, which is: the colonial situation.

CHAPTER VIII

AN AMBIGUOUS SITUATION: COLONIALISM

Introduction

In this chapter I will pull together some of the main threads which have been running through the preceeding chapters and attempt to formulate a synthesis of the various observations and concepts presented so far. I have described and analyzed certain features of life of the Euro-Canadians in Frobisher Bay in relation to the history of the settlement and its educational system. I have omitted some facts, observations and information transmitted to me by informants. My personal point of view (bias?) and theoretical orientation influences the selection and organization of the material. A longer stay in Frobisher Bay, or data collected by another researcher with a different orientation, might well have resulted in very different conclusions.

As I lived with an Eskimo family most of the time while conducting research among the Euro-Canadians, my experience of the two "worlds" was very vivid. Every day, when I left my "hide-out" to observe and interact

with Euro-Canadians, I felt that I was crossing an invisible boundary, which demarcated two different ways of perceiving and acting out reality. While I had to force myself to be aggressive and pushy among the Euro-Canadians, to extend myself toward them and to ask questions, with the Eskimos it seemed that I was involved in a waiting-game, in which things were happening, but never on my initiative. I constantly had to remind myself not to ask questions; I had to "know" where and when I was wanted, when I was intruding. The result was that people came to me, to keep me company when they thought that I might be lonely or homesick, and to tell me things which they believed I would be interested in. Even the smallest children were extremely sensitive to my moods; at times they would come to me, tell me stories and make drawings for me, while at other times they seemed to feel that I wanted to be alone. Apparently one glance at my face was sufficient for them to sense that.

In comparing my own experiences with other Euro-Canadians in Frobisher Bay, especially some old-timers and men who were married to Eskimo women, my impression of the two worlds was confirmed. They told me, as did indeed several Eskimos, that many of the adult Eskimos are consciously withdrawing from the overpowering, loud,

aggressive and competitive presence of the Euro-Canadians, especially since the latter usually don't stay long enough for the Eskimos to find out if they are "good" persons. Although physically present at some of the events organized by Euro-Canadians, such as bingo games, bake sales (for the Rangers, Boy-scouts, to raise money for a burned-out family, etc.) psychologically they were not "with it," I was told. The Principal of the Adult Education Center experienced the withdrawal of the adult Eskimos. Many of the proposed or initiated programs are especially designed for their benefit. In his own words: "The response is very disappointing," and he proposed to the Hamlet Council that the Center be taken over by an Eskimo Principal and staffed with Eskimo teachers. The younger generation, including some highly educated and acculturated Eskimo men and women, are very much in evidence. In fact they are becoming increasingly vocal and critical of what is happening in the North, while at the same time emulating some of the Euro-Canadians' behavior and practices.

Some of the main concepts used throughout the paper were: definition of the situation, meaning, and reference groups. The ambiguous situation is still the fundamental unit of analysis. I will use Memmi's (1967) understanding of the concept of the ambiguous situation

in terms of colonialism, which he maintained is the most ambiguous situation possible for those confronted with it. The author expressed the belief that "the colonial situation is based on the relationship between one group and another"... and that "Colonial relations do not stem from individual good will or actions; they exist before his arrival or his birth, and whether he accepts or rejects them matters little" (Memmi, 1967: 38-9).

> Definition of a colony: a place where one earns more and spends less. You go to a colony because jobs are guaranteed, wages high, careers rapid and business profitable. The young graduate is offered a position, the public servant a higher rank, the businessman lower taxes, the industrialist raw materials and labor at attractive prices (Memmi, 1967:4).

Much of the history and development of Frobisher Bay and the careers of present-day Euro-Canadian residents confirms this definition. I outlined in Chapter V some of the reasons Euro-Canadians attributed to one another's presence in the North, while I mentioned Barger's (1972) suggestion of a somewhat tenuous self-esteem among Euro-Canadians.

> Today, leaving for a colony is not a choice sought because of its uncertain dangers, nor is it desire of one tempted by adventure.

> It is simply a voyage towards an easier life (Memmi, 1967:3).

I have referred to the missionizing attitudes of the agents of Western Civilization during the great ages of Western exploration and expansion. The prevalence of great numbers of professionals involved with conscious, directed social change in the Eastern Arctic is of relatively recent origin, but their impact is great. I have described how in recent decades the influx of Euro-Canadian transient "job-holders" has brought their national, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds to the North and imposed an alien value system and way of life; a life style which originates outside the Territories and is not oriented towards the North in terms of the future of the majority of the Euro-Canadians.

> In organizing their daily habits in the colonial community, they imported and imposed the way of life of their country, where they regularly spend their vacations, from which they draw their administrative, political and cultural inspiration, and on which their eyes are constantly fixed (Memmi, 1967:5).

Local perceptions of stagnation among old-timers, isolation, lack of information and the resulting ambiguity as well as high personnel turnover have been

mentioned.

> The colony cannot retain the outstanding members of its population. Either for ethical reasons, not being able to justify profiting from daily injustice, or simply out of pride, because they feel that they are of better stuff than the average colonizer, they leave the colony... The constant removals of the best colonizers explains one of the most frequent characteristics of those who remain in the colony - their mediocrity (Memmi, 1967:48).

The term mediocrity was one which often came up in gossip sessions about personalities in Frobisher Bay. In addition, mention was made of idealists or "Peace Corps types" as undesirables and of local perceptions regarding "towing the line" and "don't rock the boat."

> ...humanitarian romanticism is looked upon in the colonies as a serious illness, the worst of all dangers. It is no more or less than going over to the side of the enemy (Memmi, 1967:21).

I have spoken of the increasing avoidance and withdrawal mechanisms used by the older Eskimos and the perceived lack of Eskimo leadership and "apathy" as an Eskimo problem. At the same time, Western Civilization in one of its inherent contradictions - the elementary education system - has fostered among

the younger generation of Eskimos expectations of higher status and better opportunities in life. Thus, we see an increase in militancy on the part of the young. An educated and politically conscious generation of Eskimos is growing up. It is likely that they are going to demand changes and innovations which may run counter to what the present Euro-Canadian bureaucracy thinks is "best for the Eskimos." Euro-Canadians may perceive much of what is going to happen in the next few years as "trouble-making" as indeed some of them do already.

> ... revolt is the only way out of a colonial situation, and the colonized realizes it sooner or later. His condition is absolute and cries for an absolute solution; a break and not a compromise. He has been torn away from his past and cut off from his future, his traditions are dying and he loses the hope of acquiring a new culture... The colonial situation, by its own inevitability, brings on revolt (Memmi, 1967:127-28).

It is also feasible that more Euro-Canadians, dissatisfied with the Southern way of life, will align themselves with Eskimo native-rights groups, or at least attempt to support them, as has happened with Indian organizations in the United States and Canada. This will increase the polarization among Euro-Canadians and result in a more overt and vocal "white backlash." I believe, as do some Frobisher Bay

residents, including several senior officials, that overt and physical hostility in the form of confrontations along racial lines will increase in the near future. McElroy (1971) alluded to some tense incidents of male rivalry in 1967, particularly between Eskimo and Euro-Canadian youths.

> This tension stemmed partly from competition for jobs but erupted into violence in the context of competition for females. Certain demographic factors clarified the situation: there were 75 unmarried Eskimo males and only 41 unmarried Eskimo females in the age group 16-25. In addition, there were approximately 45 single Eurocanadian men who were attractive to Eskimo females because of their greater degree of sophistication and relatively higher incomes. There was a basis for the competition, however, even more significant than the disproportionate sex ratio, and that was the rejection of Eskimo males as suitable marriage partners by many females (McElroy, 1971:5).

As far as I could observe, similar tensions were evident in 1971. However, also in the reverse. Several of the male Eskimo students at the high school dated Euro-Canadian girls, which was upsetting to some of the girls' parents. One female Euro-Canadian and Eskimo male marriage was legalized this year.

Even with the knowledge that Memmi was describing colonial conditions in Tunisia one has no difficulty generalizing his observations and conclusions to life

in Frobisher Bay and to perceptions and feelings of many of the Euro-Canadian residents.

Colonialism

Northern communities have been studied and analyzed by social scientists in recent years, and the general sentiment expressed by many was that the "great Northern experiment" is not working out in human terms. Covertly or overtly they have expressed regret or anger with regard to the castelike character of interracial relations; the obvious socioeconomic disparities and polarization of the two cultural groups is well documented. Jenness, a long-standing critic of Northern Administration, has evaluated Northern settlements in terms of "New World Bantustans" in which the Eskimos are confined and segregated from the rest of the country (Jenness, 1968: 45). He has suggested large-scale relocation schemes to Southern Canada where the Eskimos would have access to training and employment in aid of a higher standard of living (Jenness, 1964:166-78). Apart from the wishes of the Eskimos who might not want to be resettled en masse, schemes like these seem less feasible in the light of recent economic trends in Southern Canada. Also those relocation schemes which have been conducted by the federal government have shown clearly the problems inherent in them and

the frustration they pose for the Eskimos (see Stevenson, 1968).

Ferguson (1971:25) has described the Canadian North as "a satellite society." He said, "It is colonialism, infused with concepts of social welfare, and it depends upon large-scale economic subvention from the parent society." Vallee (1971a:75) has stated that the Canadian Eskimos are "our most disadvantaged minority group," and elsewhere he has referred to them in the following manner:

> On just about every index of prestige, power and command over valued resources, the native peoples of Canada are the least advantaged ... the only advantage enjoyed by native people in the Arctic has been numerical dominance (Vallee, 1971b:150-60).

The following quotation from an article by Swinton (1966:54) summed up many of the observations and feelings of other Northern researchers.

> Speaking quite candidly, the Canadian Eskimo and Indian people are "underdeveloped nations" in the sense of the U.N. Charter, Whether we like to admit this or not. The truly scandalous aspect of this situation is that these people are the original members of one of the most affluent nations in the world. Unfortunately we do not seem to be able to grasp either the reality or the irony of this situation, and we are therefore unable to act appropriately.

> Our private and public attitudes are shockingly condescending and, so far, our remedial actions have been condemned to failure because we have failed to recognize the largely human context of the problem. We have consistently relied on purely economic expediencies, and even our educational, social, and medical programs have been more in the nature of technical aid rather than of human understanding. Thus it has come about that relief has replaced compassion; administration has replaced development; and paternalism has stalled growth... Today, the white people administering the North constitute unwittingly an acute danger to Eskimo cultural survival as well as to the future healthy existence of most other Canadians living in the North.

Many recent studies have concentrated on the adjustments which the native people are making to their changed social environment. The concept of cultural pluralism has often been used as a model for these analyses. Smith (1971:194) explained how anthropological models of pluralism emphasize the conflict and confrontation between different cultural groups who "have no value consensus or common participation in core institutions of the society as a whole."

> A clear example of pluralism is found in situations where the encroachment of white settlement has disrupted the native social system, depriving the people of an alternate way of life and, consequently, of a positive identity in the society in which they are now incorporated; where mobility between the indigenous and settler sections is limited, and white settlers have effective control of the means of power (Smith, 1971:197).

Balandier (1965), in his overview of social acience research conducted in colonial Africa, found a curious lack of integration between the smaller social systems described and the total, global society, that is the colony. This can, in part, be explained by the fact that many researchers concentrated on communities rather than societies, or only on selected aspects of the society such as the economic system, kinship, and so on. They thus ignored the necessary structural relationships. The author, therefore, drew attention to the concept of the colonial situation because this "can insure the high degree of integration of various points of view (including that of the historian) which is necessary in the present state of the social sciences" (Balandier, 1965:45). He maintained that a great deal of research concerned with culture-contact, acculturation and social change "has almost never taken into account the colonial situation as a particular conjecture imposing a certain orientation to agents and processes of transformation" (Balandier, 1965:36).

Smith (1971) took up the challenge and used the word colonialism to describe conditions in the Mckenzie Delta. He stated that,

Although there is a complete horror of

> the word "colonialism" in the North and in Canadian administration, because of its association with imperial despotism and exploitation, northern communities such as the Mackenzie Delta display many colonial characteristics. These may be briefly summarized:
>
> 1. Outsiders are present chiefly in order to administer, govern and "develop" the area, its resources, and its native people;
>
> 2. Outsiders are highly transient - present in the Delta for the duration of appointment (usually two or three years);
>
> 3. Financial and other subsidies are paid to outsiders to encourage their employment in the North;
>
> 4. Outsiders form a socially distinct unit, residentially segregated in some Mackenzie Delta settlements:
>
> 5. The outsider segment is highly organized, especially in the political sphere - in this case around the massive structure of the metropolitan power (basically the federal government) created to administer the area;
>
> 6. Settlers or "new northerners" dominate the entreprenurial sphere (economic, political, and social) (Smith, 1971:202).

Frobisher Bay presents a similar colonial situation characterized by all these features. And it is perceived as such by many Euro-Canadians: an ambiguous situation. On the whole, the Euro-Canadians do not use the term colonialism, but they often attack "the system" in their discussions.

Colonizers

Memmi's (1967) analysis of colonialism differentiates between three types of Europeans in the colony: the colonials, the colonizers and the colonialists, thereby drawing attention to the ambiguity which the situation presents. I will apply his model to the Euro-Canadians in Frobisher Bay in order to understand better how they define their situation and choose their reference groups.

According to Memmi (1967:10),

> A colonial is a European living in a colony but having no privileges, whose living conditions are not higher than those of a colonized person... By temperament or ethical conviction, a colonial is a benevolent European who does not have the colonizer's attitude towards the colonized... A colonial so defined, does not exist, for all Europeans in the colonies are privileged (emphasis mine).

In fact, the author maintained that a colonial cannot exist in the colony as a colonial because,

> ... it is not up to the European in the colonies to remain a colonial, even if he had so intended. Whether he expressly wishes it or not, he is received as a privileged person by the institutions, customs and people... it is not up to him to refuse its conditions (Memmi, 1967:17).

Thus, the only real choice most newcomers to a colony have is to become a colonizer or a colonialist. Initially a newcomer might be disturbed by the obvious differences in living standards between the Europeans and the native population; housing and employment segregation and/or discrimination; the lack of meaningful social interaction between the racially/culturally different groups. Such a person, according to Memmi, might have the desire to live in the colony with the same rights and duties as the native population. To remain a colonial this person would have to be "a moral hero" (Memmi, 1967:23) since he would have to break off all economic, administrative and social links with the dominant social system. It would also imply identification with, and in many cases, dependence on the native population, who might accept or reject him for various personal or political reasons. The newcomer realizes the ambiguity of his situation when he perceives that the privileges and benefits accorded to him by the dominant social system are not necessarily legitimately his by traditional local custom or law.

Memmi maintained that when a person remains in the colony, that is, he does not physically leave it, he automatically becomes a colonizer and covertly or overtly accepts the benefits inherent in that position.

Although he may rebel against the colonial system which conflicts with his beliefs, he cannot abandon it since he is a part of it. He may reject colonialism on ideological grounds but "If he does not eliminate himself as a colonizer, he resigns himself to a position of ambiguity" (Memmi, 1967:45). The colonizer who refuses colonialism tries in vain to adjust his ideology to his life, thereby unifying and justifying his conduct. The author stated that,

> Even if he is in no way guilty as an individual, he shares a collective responsibility by the fact of membership in a national oppressor group (Memmi, 1967:39).

Memmi found that most colonizers become colonialists for the following reasons:

> A colonialist...is a colonizer who agrees to be a colonizer. By making his position explicit, he seeks to legitimize colonization. This is a more logical attitude, materially more coherent, than the tormented dance of the colonizer who refuses and continues to live in a colony (Memmi, 1967:45, emphasis mine).

I believe that the observations presented in the preceeding chapters show that many people in Frobisher Bay, especially the many transient professionals, do not become colonialists however. While structural

affiliation with the dominant social system prevents most of them from living in the North as colonials, their ethical convictions prevent them from becoming colonialists. Memmi's reference to the tormented dance of the colonizers describes perfectly the frustrations of many Euro-Canadians attempting to cope with a perceived ambiguous situation. Many are what Carrothers (1967) has referred to as "reluctant imperialists," who are ambivalent and confused about the role they are required to play. I would like to suggest that the experience of this ambiguity is directly related to the high personnel turnover, the need for relevant information and the resulting gossip as well as the many incidents of "being bushed."

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Appendix A. Salary classifications in the Northwest Territories.

Alcohol education officer	$11,600 - 14,200
Area industrial development officer	$11,095 - 13,604
Assistant regional director	$13,600 - 16,800
Carpenter	$ 8,393 - 10,180
Chief accountant	$14,121 - 17,491
Clerk I	$ 4,477 - 5,389
Clerk IV	$ 7,792 - 9,412
Clerk messenger	$ 4,171 - 4,998
Clerk stenographer	$ 5,939 - 7,152
Cook I	$ 6,159 - 7,432
Electrician	$ 9,500 - 11,600
Fire inspector	$ 9,500 - 11,600
Heavy equipment mechanic	$ 9,200 - 11,100
Heavy equipment operator	$ 8,469 - 10,252
Local government regional officer II	$11,481 - 14,121
Mechanical technical officer	$11,550 - 14,184
Plumber	$ 8,716 - 10,592
Public library assistant	$ 6,236 - 7,510
Regional development officer	$11,095 - 13,604
Regional social worker	$12,526 - 15,432
Regional supervisor of Continuing and Special Education	$13,052 - 16,102
Switchboard operator	$ 5,341 - 6,390

Translator	$ 8,716 - 10,592
Vocational instructor	$ 9,055 - 11,026
Welfare worker I	$ 7,513 - 9,055
Welfare worker III	$10,592 - 12,987

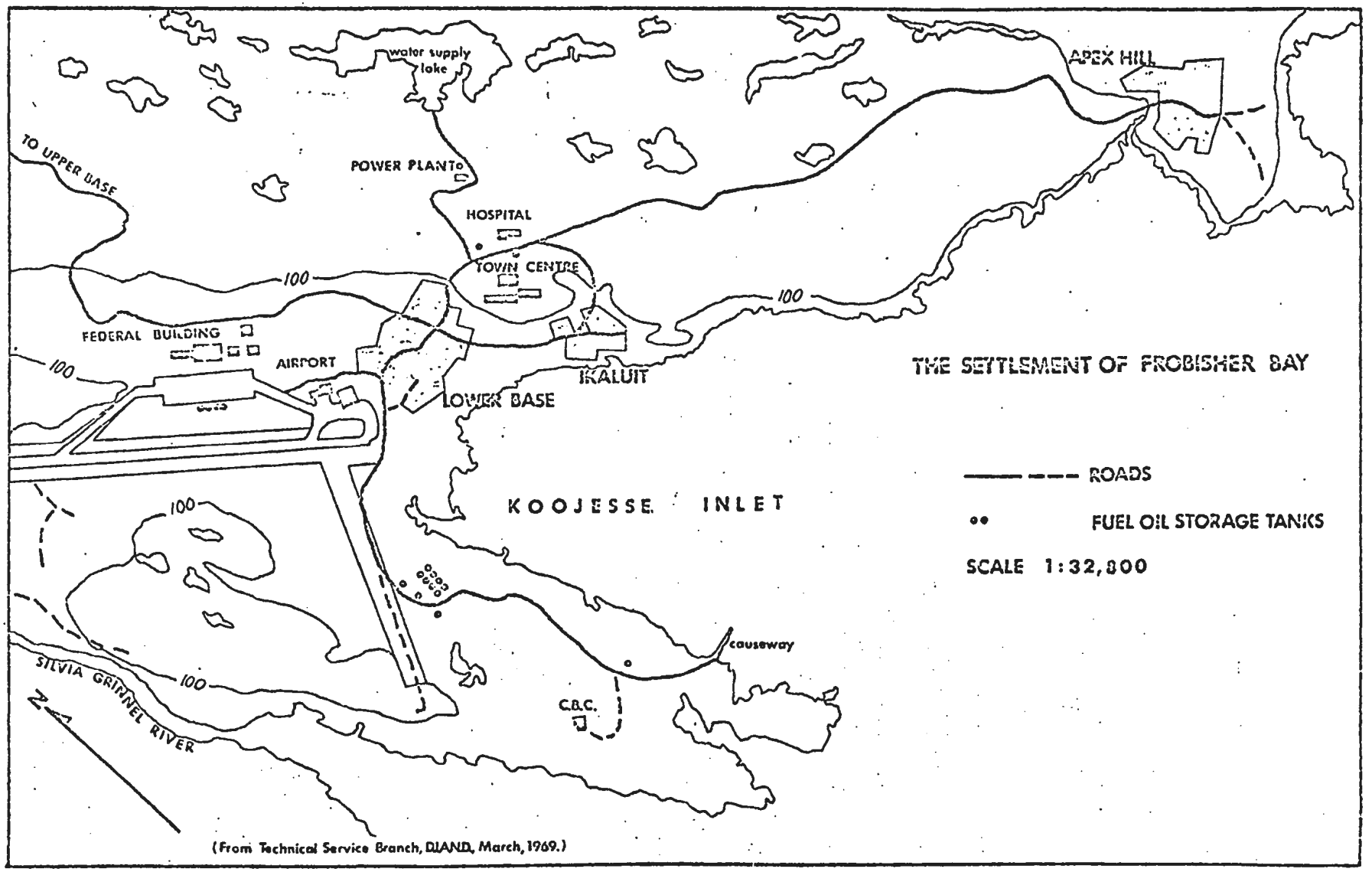
water supply lake
APEX HILL
TO UPPER BASE
POWER PLANT
HOSPITAL
TOVIN CENTRE
100
FEDERAL BUILDING
AIRPORT
IKALUIT
LOWER BASE
THE SETTLEMENT OF FROBISHER BAY
ROADS
FUEL OIL STORAGE TANKS
SCALE 1:32,800
KOOJESSE INLET
causeway
SILVIA GRINNEL RIVER
C.B.C.
(From Technical Service Branch, DIAND, March, 1969.)

Fig. 1

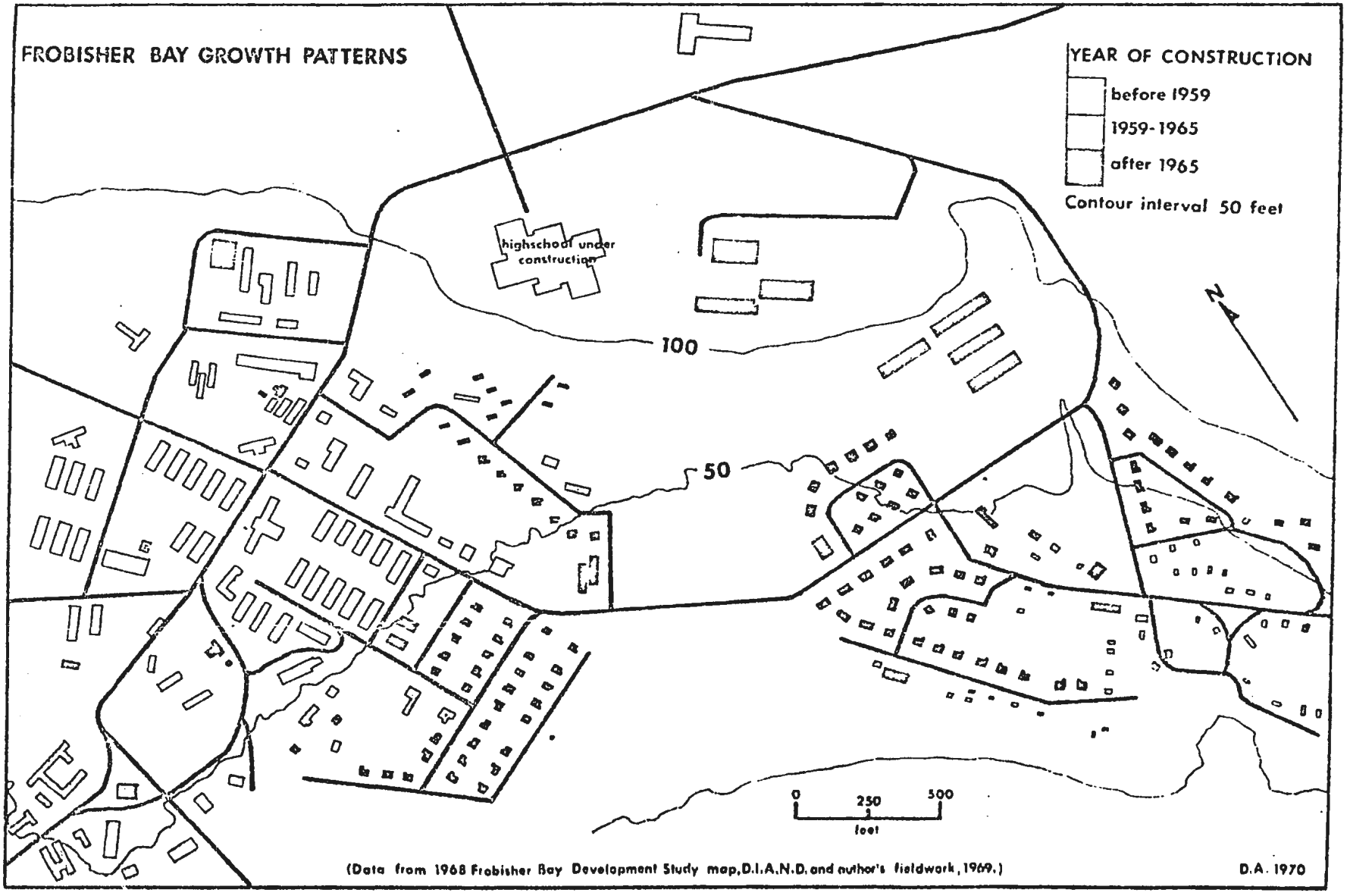
FROBISHER BAY GROWTH PATTERNS
YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION
before 1959
1959-1965
after 1965
Contour interval 50 feet
highschool under construction
100
50
N
0
250
500
feet
(Data from 1968 Frobisher Bay Development Study map, D.I.A.N.D. and author's fieldwork, 1969.)
D.A. 1970

Fig. 8