# PUTTING IT BACK TOGETHER: MICMAC POLITICAL IDENTITY IN NEWFOUNDLAND



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## Micmac Political Identity In Newfoundland

by

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## ABSTRACT

The Micmac Indians of Newfoundland, over the past ten years, have been engaged in a process of political and cultural renaissance. Having no defined legal Indian status, and with loss of their traditional social and cultural systems, they are using their history in conjunction with political activism to define their place in a province in which there are no registered Indians.

This study examines the historical evolution of this cultural resurgence. Three related themes which underlie their actions also underlie the material presented in this thesis. The first is persistence of Indian identity despite, and perhaps because of, its stigmatisation. The second is a hermeneutic understanding of history which allows the past to act on the present in the self-conscious re-creation of a viable tradition. The third is association with pan-Indianism which transforms Indian identity from stigma to a source of pride.

The theoretical framework understands politicisation of identity as discursive action, and formulates it in terms of 'renaissance' and 'revitalisation.' Renaissance applies to the reflexive use of a sense of peoplehood and the cultural foundations which support it. Revitalisation is the articulation of renaissance - the pragmatic strategies of survival and

development by which a people alter or maintain their cultural whole.

The first chapter introduces the people, their history, and the theoretical and ethnographic frameworks. The second chapter is a history of the Micmacs in Newfoundland from settlement of the island to the time of Confederation. In Chapter 3, their history since 1949 and political development are discussed. Chapter 4 examines identity as communicative action and interpretation of history, illustrated by recent issues in Canadian native politics. The fifth chapter discusses the complexities of native identity in Newfoundland caused by the conflicting forces of stigmatisation and revitalisation. The concluding chapter examines the interplay of renaissance and revitalisation in terms of the value and utility of politicised symbols of cultural tradition.

This thesis focusses on the interplay of history and political pragmatism in the development and maintenance of cultural identity. The Micmacs are working toward practical objectives in an often hostile environment but, more importantly to them, they are seeking a way of life coming out of their history.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Calvin White, president of the Federation of Newfoundland Indians, was my employer. He, his family, the staff and executive of the FNI, and my co-workers, Douglas Jackson and Judy Dwyer, also became my advisors and friends.

I thank the Department of the Secretary of State for generous financial support and patience.

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My parents, George and Ruby Anger, have always been there when I needed them. Througout my research, Stuart Brown has given me courage to continue. For diversion, I thank Cedric, Katie and Alex. To all those who have been a part of this work, I cannot adequately express my gratitude.

The white man is very clever...He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart.

Chinua Achebe

Things Fall Apart

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## PREFACE

This study is a distillation of three years of observation of the activities of the Federation of Newfoundland Indians, and two summers spent living in communities in which the FNI is, or has been, active. It is not a presentation of the results of any one period of field research. The topic is on-going, and for that reason material may be outdated as quickly as it can be written. I have attempted to keep information up to date in the text or in footnotes when possible, but some is already obsolete or will be by the time this is read. My primary interest is the background to Micmac political activity rather than the current situation, and therefore I ask the reader to accept the possible inaccuracies on events of the past few months.

In the summer of 1979 I was employed by the FNI to do genealogical research in the Glenwood and Gander Bay area of central Newfoundland. In the summer of 1980 I received funding under their sponsorship to conduct ethnohistorical research on the west coast of the island in the communities of Flat Bay, St. George's, Stephenville Crossing and Mattis Point in Bay St. George, and Benoit's Cove in the Bay of Islands. Informal fieldwork has continued from 1979 until the present with representatives of the Federation of Newfoundland Indians and the Conne

River Indian Band Council.

The 1980 research project was funded by the Department of the Secretary of State in St. John's and was administered by the Flat Bay office of the FNI. The project commenced on May 5, 1980, and the first three weeks were spent in St. John's conducting library and archival research with one research assistant. From June 1 to September 5 of that year, research in Bay St. George and the Bay of Islands was carried out with eight additional research assistants who were employed for periods ranging from two to twelve weeks. In accordance with the terms of the funding agreement, research assistants were secondary or post-secondary school students from the area. One to two local fieldworkers worked in each town and were responsible for administering a social and economic questionnaire as well as collecting genealogical and historical information through interviews. Their specific tasks varied, depending on circumstances in the towns and the particular interests and capabilities of the workers. My responsibilities included administration of the project, supervision of fieldworkers and conducting interviews in all five communities.

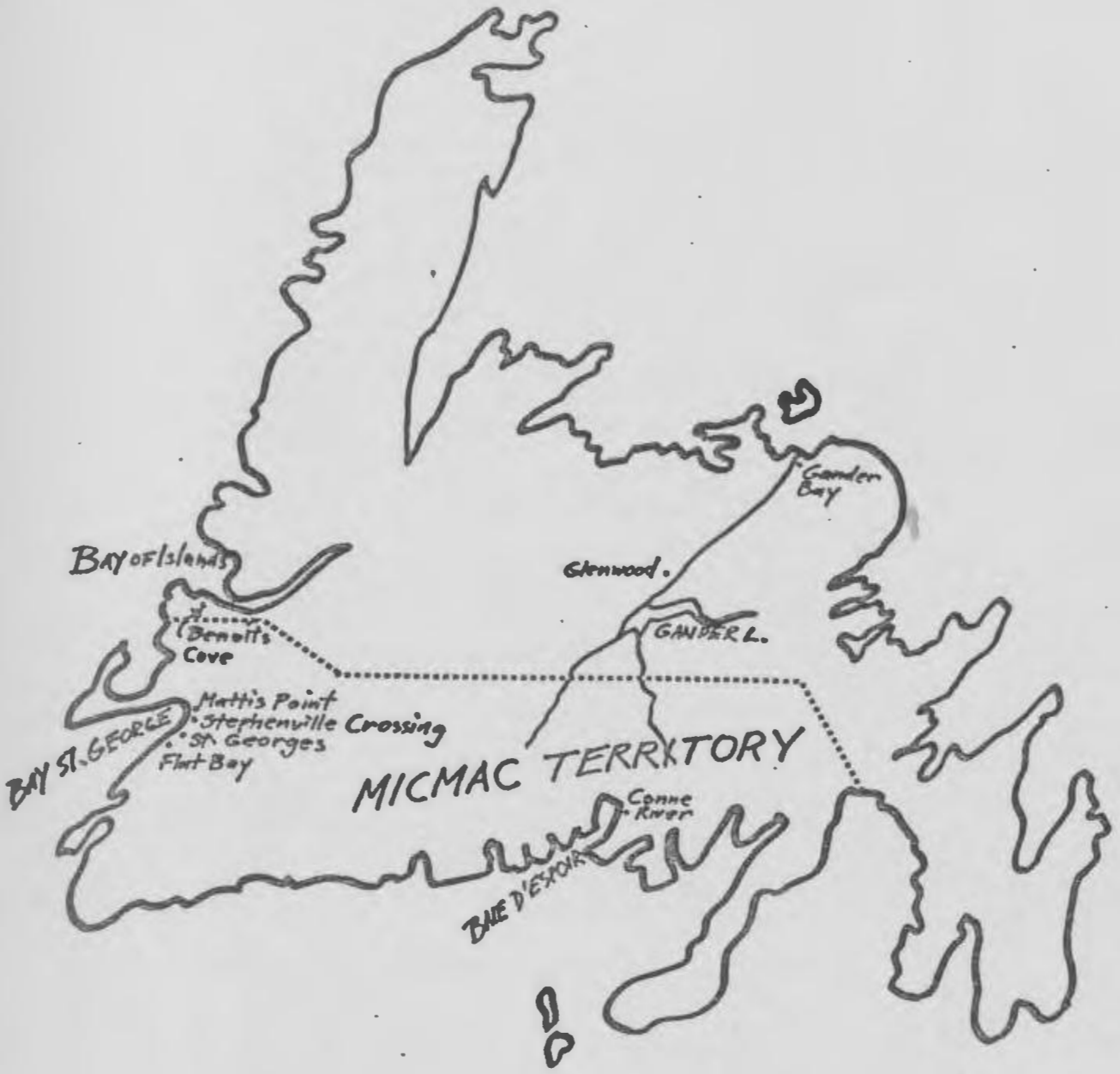
The genealogies and questionnaire data provided me with background knowledge through which I could interpret information on the formation of political associations.

In the field, the questionnaires and genealogies provided a focal point for discussion of family history and personal identity. Genealogical information elicited in the field was supplemented by primary and secondary historical sources. Additional historical information was supplied by residents of the area and local historians. The questionnaires were distributed to randomly selected households in each town included in the study, with the sample size representing twenty-five percent to ninety-five percent of the community's households.

My primary interest - in the personal and political aspects of Micmac identity - was not quantifiable. For that reason, I believed it best to focus my attention on information and attitudes given to me in conversation with people of the communities, people involved in the FNI, media reports, and documents relating to the history and policies of the FNI.

My fieldwork, in a sense, was politically sponsored, and, therefore, this study runs the risk of becoming, or being viewed as, a political document. However, making a contribution to propaganda was not my intent, nor the intent of the Federation of Newfoundland Indians. It is my desire to illuminate a dark area of social fact and cultural process, not to predict or influence outcomes. The FNI has expressed the wish to see an objective, outsider's view of their activities and the

larger question of Micmac identity in Newfoundland in order that they may look dispassionately at what they are doing. If some of my comments seem too critical of their endeavours, I trust their members will accept the study, with criticisms and its own flaws, in the spirit in which it is intended. It is an outsider's view, and while that perspective may be a condition for claiming some objectivity, it is also a condition which means I cannot directly represent what it is to be Micmac in Newfoundland.




MICMAC POPULATIONS IN NEWFOUNDLAND

# INTRODUCTION: OUTSIDE THE FOURTH WORLD

In the end, what we seek is Freedom - if the Governments of Canada and the Province of Newfoundland will not permit us, as an aboriginal people, with our own land and way of life, the freedom to live in our own way in our own land, then we can only consider ourselves as prisoners in our own lands, with a choice of either giving up our own identity and human dignity, by not living our own way of life or becoming criminals by living and practicing our MicMac traditions.

MicMac Statement of Claim to Aboriginal Homelands in Ktaqamkuk [in FNI 1980]

At the moment, it would appear that the Indians want the best of both worlds - traditional hunting grounds, traditional trapping and nomadic rights; traditional freedoms of a lifestyle which excludes nine-to-five work, and includes satisfaction of personal whims of the moment PLUS the other world of white man's housing, water and sewage, schools, industry and government paternalisms. No one can have both, and the Indians should be no exception. They must choose one or the other.

Bob Nutbeem, "A View from the Bay," <u>The Daily News</u>, March 14, 1981 p. 11.

The Newfoundland Trappers' Association wishes to go on the public record as being against the granting of registered Indian status to certain residents of Conne River, Newfoundland. We are opposed to the granting of such status for two reasons: a) We are of the belief that the persons in question are not bona fide aboriginals and (b) we further believe that any such granting of status could lead to an inequity of opportunity to harvest the fur, fish and game resources of insular Newfoundland. We believe...that it should be established how genotypically

> Indian are the persons wishing to be registered as Indians on insular Newfoundland ...In summation, this Association feels that the native presence on insular Newfoundland is largely gone - through both cultural and genetic assimilation...[The] failure of governments to recognize the fallacy being perpetuated by the F.N.I. comes at the ultimate expense of (1) the identities of the Innut (Indians) and Inuit (Eskimos) of Labrador, (2) the funding requirements of those peoples and (3) perhaps eventually the availability of an equal opportunity for all Newfoundlanders to trap, hunt, and fish on insular Newfoundland.
>
> Position Paper of the Newfoundland Trappers' Association on the validity of Native Status claims on Insular Newfoundland, May 1981, Evening Telegram, June 9, 1981, page 6.

The above quotations demonstrate the extremes of opinion held about the Micmac Indians in Newfoundland. Knowledge of their history in Newfoundland is limited, with few scholarly studies and often contradictory public opinions. Their credentials as a bona fide 'native group' have been disputed, and considerable controversy surrounds their political actions.

In 1981 the Micmacs submitted a land claim statement to the government of Canada in which they claim aboriginal rights to the southwest interior of the island as the area which they have traditionally used and occupied. The provincial government has disputed the validity of their claim but, to date, the federal goverment has not reached a decision on the issue. The Micmacs are also seeking registration under the Indian Act

which would give them unequivocal recognition by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND).[1] At present, one Micmac community receives funding from DIAND under the terms of a federal-provincial native funding agreement. The terms of this agreement have recently been renegotiated, but points of contention remain between the government of Newfoundland and the Micmacs.[2]

This thesis does not directly address these unresolved issues, rather it seeks to understand the underlying reasons for such political actions. The Micmacs have an ambiguous place in Newfoundland society, without official recognition but with informal acknowledgement, which results from the history of both Micmacs and Europeans in Newfoundland. During the present century they became a people bereft of their traditional cultural values and social order. However, over the past decade, they have been engaged in cultural and political revitalisation.

This thesis seeks to understand why there has been this resurgence of ethnic identity through discussion of the cultural demise and rebirth of the Micmacs. Three related themes which underlie this process also underlie material presented in the following chapters. The first is the maintenance of a separate Indian identity resulting from persistent, but unwelcome, stigmatisation of Micmacs

by whites. The second is a hermeneutic understanding of history which allows historical material to be used in the re-creation of a self-conscious cultural identity. The third is association with a pan-Indian movement which transforms Micmac identity, which had been at best unrecognized and at worst a slur, into a source of personal and group pride. Common to all three themes is the discursive development of Micmac identity through communication with Newfoundland whites, with themselves and their own history, and with other indigenous peoples.

## POLITICAL SETTING

The Micmac population is scattered across the south western and north eastern parts of the island, with a concentration in Conne River, Baie d'Espoir, on the south coast. Other groups are in the Bay St. George and Bay of Islands districts of the west coast, in the railway and lumber towns of central Newfoundland - Badger, Botwood and Glenwood - and in Clarke's Head, Gander Bay, in the north east. Their number totals between 1,000 and 1,500.[3]

The position of the Indians and Inuit of Labrador has political similarity to that of the Micmacs, but there are significant social differences between them. The Naskapi-Montagnais and the Inuit do not have legal status as defined by the Indian Act, but they are recognised by

the federal and provincial governments in the same way as the Micmacs of Conne River. Financial and political provisions were made for them by a federal-provincial agreement signed in 1965. Newfoundlanders are more willing to agree that in Labrador there are 'real' natives, possibly because they possess more visible markers of identity. They pursue 'traditional' subsistence activities. Until the 1960s the Naskapi-Montagnais maintained a nomadic lifestyle, living in seasonal camps. They have now been 'relocated', to use the government's term, in permanent villages, but many continue to spend the winter hunting season living in camps in the country (cf. Henrikson 1973).

On the island of Newfoundland, Conne River, a village of about five hundred and eighty people, is a 'designated Indian community' under the terms of the federal-provincial agreement. It was not included in the agreement until 1973, eight years after a similar agreement was negotiated for Labrador communities and only after pressure was put on the government by the Micmacs. Micmacs living elsewhere on the island have no legal recognition or financial assistance, other than that accorded them through membership in the Federation of Newfoundland Indians (FNI), an island-wide native association.[4]

The Native Association of Newfoundland and Labrador was founded in 1972, representing Micmacs, Naskapi-Montagnais and Inuit. However, by 1975 each of the three native groups had formed its own association. These are the Labrador Inuit Association (LIA), the Naskapi-Montagnais Innu Association (NMIA), and the Federation of Newfoundland Indians.

## NATIVE IDENTITIES

In most of Canada, the aboriginal population can be divided into two administrative categories. There are status Indians, who receive services and funds directly from DIAND, and non-status Indians and Inuit, who are not regulated by the Indian Act but who may receive some benefits of DIAND through other means. There are also individuals and groups who, for one reason or another fall between these bureaucratic divisions or find themselves in one category while preferring to be in another. They may have lost their registered status for reasons of marriage, as do Indian women who marry white men, or by permanently leaving their reserve, or, until 1951, by giving up their status in order to gain the right to vote. They may be of mixed ancestry living in an area where 'Metis' is not an acknowledged category, or they may simply have lost contact with their reserve community and, in the popular phrase, lost their roots. But in most

areas of Canada, these unofficial Indians, if we may for convenience call them that, exist alongside a socially and politically recognised native population. While there may be times when the Indian credentials of individuals are called into question, the existence of an Indian group or 'reserve' is accepted without hesitation by the rest of the population. There may be disagreement about the privileges to which that heritage entitles them, but there is agreement that they are Indian.

North American Indians are part of the 'Fourth World' as described by George Manuel:

> An awareness of another common bond has also been growing among the colonized peoples of the world. Whenever a tribal people have come under the domination of a European power, there has been the common experience of colonialism. Were this a political experience that did not reach to the very roots of our being, striking at the very heart of our view of the world, it would not have forged such a compelling bond between such distinct peoples.
>
> Were there not already a common understanding of the universe shared by many, if not all, of these people before the coming of the Europeans, the mere fact that we had all had a period of foreign domination would not be an enduring link. The bond of colonialism we share with the Third World peoples is the shared values that distinguish the Aboriginal World from the nation-states of the Third World...
>
> It was a Tanzanian diplomat who said to me, "When the Indian peoples come into their own, that will be the Fourth World." I do not think he meant that we would create nation-states like his own, but that, like Tanzania, the nation-state would learn to

> contain within itself many different cultures and life-ways, some highly tribal and traditional, some highly urban and individual...
>
> The Aboriginal World has so far lacked the political muscle to emerge: it is without economic power; it rejects Western political techniques; it is unable to comprehend Western technology unless it can be used to extend and enhance traditional life forms; and it finds its strength above and beyond Western ideas of historical process...[The] Aboriginal World is almost wholly dependent upon the good faith and morality of the nations of East and West within which it finds itself.
>
> Second, when I met with the Maori people, on my first trip beyond the shores of North America, if I had said, "Our culture is every inch of our land," the meaning would have been obvious to them. Wherever I have travelled in the Aboriginal World, there has been a common attachment to the land. [Manuel and Posluns 1974:5-6]

The above is a statement of the peculiar place of aboriginal populations in countries which were colonised by Europeans. American natives, Maoris, Australian Aborigines, Lapps and other aboriginal peoples are joined together through similar problems, histories and aspirations. While they share in many of the benefits of residence in some of the wealthiest countries in the world, in every case the cost has been their land, their culture and their autonomy. Because the situation of indigenous peoples is not the same as that of the dominant groups in their countries in cultural, political, economic or social terms, the concept of the Fourth World is of

great utility in defining their status. They are not merely disadvantaged members of a society; while they are categorically members of the dominant society, they are not of its culture. Separate histories, traditions, and world views set them apart from the dominant society, thus creating a gulf which cannot be bridged by measures designed to improve their economic and social position alone. They are separate peoples within a nation-state.

However, the boundaries of the Fourth World are not always clear, and a further refinement of the category is necessary to include groups which occupy an ambiguous place within it. These groups could perhaps be called 'fourth world manqué,' in that while they are not qualitatively different from other Fourth World populations, there are differences of degree. In this sub-category we could place those individuals mentioned above, those who have lost at least some part of their native status and/or identity. Also, and more importantly for the purposes of this study, we can include those groups which do not possess an accepted native identity because they lack some of the popular or scholarly criteria of 'native.' They are oriented gravitationally to the native population by cultural traditions or societal labelling, and they desire acceptance but may find it withheld, at least partially, by natives and whites.

To a degree, the Lapps of Norway fall into this category in that they are fighting to demonstrate their cultural distinctiveness which transcends their superficial similarities to the Norwegians in physical appearance, language, and perceived cultural assimilation (cf. Eidheim 1968,1969,1971;Gjessing 1954;Ruong 1969). In the United States there are several groups which have been fighting for recognition and status as Indian which have been popularly regarded as mulatto or 'half-breeds.' These are the We-Sorts, the Lumbees, the Catawba and many others in the north-eastern, southern and mid-western United States.[5]

In the past, the groups in the American South in particular had pragmatic reasons, aside from questions of identity, to press for legal status as Indian, if not white. In the dual system of citizenry of the south, they were legally considered 'free persons of colour' - a position not ranking high on the social scale or in access to social amenities. Their self-definition as Indian required the establishment of a third category, and this proved to be a complicated procedure that not only required change in social definition but administrative and legal changes as well.

Because most of these groups have been regarded as being of mixed white, black and Indian ancestry, their members have encountered difficulties maintaining clear

and unambiguous ethnic classifications. Karen Blu writes of the scholarly reluctance to admit the legitimacy of their Indian identity:

> A few social scientists have assumed that the Lumbee are motivated principally by their desire not to be Black. They want not to be Black, the reasoning goes, so that they can escape the stigma and discrimination suffered by Blacks. Actually, it is said, they would like to be White, but failing that will 'settle' for being Indian:
>
> > The Indian, then, is forever on the defensive. He feels that there is always a question mark hanging over him. His wish to escape the stigma of Negro kinship, and thus to be identified with the white man, is uppermost in his mind. It is this wish which dominates his behavior and determines his modes of personal adjustment to the other races [G. Johnson 1939:519].
>
> > These are all 'reluctant Indians' - Nanticokes, Chickahominy, Lumbees. Most of them would doubtless prefer to be whites. But, since that goal is beyond their reach, they will settle for Indian. It is better to be red than black - even an off-shade of red [Berry 1963:161].
>
> Such statements as Berry's and Johnson's confuse the Indian point of view with a White outsider's point of view. For an Indian, being White is hardly the <u>summum bonum</u> implied here. I have argued in the previous chapter that a Lumbee desire not to be Black is matched by a desire not to be White either, and that both these 'negatives' are balanced by a positive notion of what their Indianness means to them. They have consistently sought recognition as original Americans, 'Indians,' as Whites call them. [Blu 1980:181-182]

Some of these Indian groups have sought legal definition as white at points in their histories. The

Brass Ankles of South Carolina, the Melungeons of Kentucky and Tennessee, and other groups, in the past, have achieved some degree of acceptance as white (Berry 1945:36). Berry considers this as evidence of their success in achieving their aim, whereas Blu refers to sociological rather than legal factors. She argues that mixed ancestry, intermarriage, and the incidents of legal definition as white suggest that had they wanted, these groups could have become white. She discusses the question of identity in terms of 'options:'

> The notion of 'option' or 'choice' obviously implies that the actors see themselves with an array of possibilities. If the actors do not perceive themselves to have options, they cannot make a choice. Unfortunately, there is no evidence to show whether Indian ancestors thought they had a choice of group identities. All we have are accounts of the way they behaved. Judging from these, they have single-mindedly claimed to be autochthonous and have struggled for legal status reflecting that claim...
>
> In the 1970s, individual Lumbee Indians do have a choice. Many of the lighter Indians know that they can easily 'pass' for Whites. One such woman, angry at the frustrations of coping with political maneuverings by Whites, proclaimed, "I could go away from this county and be White. Why should I stay here and put up with this?"... Given the possibility that many Indians now could leave Robeson County and 'become' White, and they know they could, the fact that they do not (or that so few do) cannot be explained if they are motivated, as Berry and G. Johnson maintain, by a desire not to be Black combined with a desire to be White. [Blu 1980:183-184, emphasis in text]

DETERMINING IDENTITY

A fundamental question about the maintenance of identity to be addressed by theoretical constructs is why, after extended histories of contact, are minority populations not subsumed by the dominant society which surrounds them? This question is especially pertinent to those groups which I call 'fourth world manqué', those which are generally small and isolated and without a clearly defined and accepted separate identity. The answer to this question is not to be found in traditional sociological theory which maintains that ethnic distinctions should disappear in a situation of extended face-to-face contact (cf. Frazier 1939). Neither are all the answers to be found in the schools of thought which see the re-emergence of ethnicity as a means of self-identification in an urbanised, industrial world (Kinton 1977). Glazer and Moynihan write, reflecting on their original analysis of ethnicity in America:

> The long-expected and predicted decline of ethnicity, the fuller acculturation and the assimilation of the white ethnic groups, seems once again delayed - as it was by World War I, World War II, and the cold war - and by now one suspects, if something expected keeps on failing to happen, that there may be more reasons than accident that explain why ethnicity and ethnic identity continue to persist...
>
> Beyond the accidents of history, one suspects, is the reality that human groups endure, that they provide some satisfaction

> to their members, and that the adoption of a totally new ethnic identity, by dropping whatever one is to become simply American, is inhibited by strong elements in the social structure of the United States. It is inhibited by a subtle system of identifying, which ranges from brutal discrimination and prejudice to merely naming. It is inhibited by the unavailability of a simple 'American' identity. [Glazer and Moynihan 1970:xxxiii]

Ethnographic research indicates the importance of ethnicity and language as either a central unifying force or, in cases of ethnic and linguistic divisions, as a way of tempering other political or social structures of unification.[7]

Three classic presentations of the maintenance of ethnic identity are found in works written by representatives of colonial government. These are Ibo Women by Sylvia Leith-Ross (1965), A Woman's Mysteries of a Primitive People by D. Amaury Talbot (1915), and The Drama of Orokola by F. E. Williams (1940).

Among the many ethnographies which eloquently express the internal and external complexities, and uses, of identity are Evans-Pritchard's The Nuer (1945),[8] Godfrey and Monica Wilson's The Analysis of Social Change (1945), Edmund Leach's Political Systems of Highland Burma (1954), the works of Max Gluckman on social conflict and order (1959,1963), and Fortes's The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi (1945). Although these are not studies of ethnicity, their depth of

understanding provides a solid foundation of what it means to be 'a people,' and demonstrates ways by which identity and cohesiveness can be altered or maintained.

Works which have contributed to a theoretical understanding of ethnicity include ethnographic monographs, historical studies, edited collections, and articles. The increased interest in the topic of ethnicity since 1970 has been attributed to the influence of Fredrik Barth (Despres 1975:188-189). In Ethnic Groups and Boundaries (1969), Barth discusses boundary definition and maintenance by ethnic groups as a means of subjective identification derived from the group itself. This contrasts with the approach taken by Narroll (1964), in which he sees identification of an ethnic unit as being based on objective criteria of cultural traits, of which their self-ascribed name is but one criterion. Robert Redfield, writing thirty years earlier, discussed the interplay between objective and subjective ethnic identification, and the ways in which visible markers of identity are maintained or altered (1938,1943). The utility of ethnic identification in contemporary contexts is presented as a means of maintaining economic systems (Cohen 1969), as a strategy for definition of place in urban environments (Cohen 1974;Kinton 1977), and as a political strategy for social change (Isaacs 1977). An overview of the attitudinal and sociostructural dimensions

of ethnicity and inequality is presented in a collection edited by Jack Rothman (1977). Other collections of articles which deal with ethnicity from historical, political and theoretical viewpoints are those edited by Dinnerstein and Jaher (1977), Henry (1976), Glazer and Moynihan (1975), Bennett'(1975), Despres (1975), and DeVos and Romanucci-Ross (1975). Nagata (1974) and Moerman (1965,1967) discuss situations in which clear demarcation of 'a people' is confused by complexities of history.

Hechter discusses the history of anthropological thought on ethnicity in terms of 'diffusion' and 'internal colonialism' models, where ethnic identity acts as either a force promoting cultural unity or as an impediment to structural means of social unification. He applies the second model, 'internal colonialism', to an analysis of the Celtic minorities of the British Isles (1975). Orans describes the self-conscious use of both these types of models by the Santal of India in their definition of a place for themselves within the dominant Hindu culture and society in a context of increased industrialisation and urbanisation (1965).

Those who have lived with the issue of politicisation of ethnic identity give us its theory and practice in their writings. W. E. B. DuBois wrote: "One ever feels his two-ness - an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring

ideals in one dark body" (1964:17). Others have conveyed what it means to be black in America in ways which cannot be approximated by academic insight: Malcolm X (Little 1964), Stokely Carmichael (1966), Bobby Seale (1978), Martin Luther King (1963). "Alternative declarations of independence" by blacks and other groups in a disadvantaged position in American society have been compiled by Foner (1976). Indian leaders, such as Harold Cardinal and George Manuel, have written about their political action and their identity in Canadian society (Cardinal 1969,1977;Manuel and Posluns 1974).

However, some of the most eloquent statements on the meaning of ethnic identity are given to us in novels, autobiographies and other forms of writing outside the academic or political. Conflict between place of birth and ascribed identity is described in the novels of Maurice Samuel, including I, The Jew (1927), a story of being Jewish in England, and in Holy Prayers in a Horse's Ear (Tamagawa 1932), the autobiography of a Japanese-American woman born in the 1890s. Mist on the River, (Evans 1954), a novel written long before its topic became fashionable or even acceptable in Canadian literature, is about the conflicts faced by a young Indian caught between the demands of the white and Indian worlds. E. C. L. Adams in Congaree Sketches expresses the problem of ethnic marginality in one paragraph:

> Simon ain't nothin'. He ain't bird-dog an' he ain't houn'...Simon' daddy white, Simon' mammy black, Simon ain't nothin'. He got a nigger heart an' a white man head, an' dat's a mighty po' mixtry...White man spiles the nigger in him an' nigger spiles the white man. He born tangle up an' he guh die tangle up, an' all I can say is God forgive he Daddy and God love he Mammy an' God have mercy on Simon. [Adams 1927:95]

If groups, or individuals, know their identity (or, given certain choices, decide what it will be), their internal self-identification must attain a level of balance with ascribed characteristics which come from outside. An Indian must, to some extent, look and act in a recognisable Indian way if that identity is to be accepted by others. If subjective and objective identification match, the process of establishing agreement between 'us' and 'them' on the identity in question is implicit. The category, the group name itself, is not in dispute, although positive or negative value attached to it may depend on whether or not one is a member of the group. Therefore, while we may concur that acceptance by others is as important as self-awareness in the legitimation of an ethnic identity, it is difficult to observe that process if there is tacit agreement about it.

If it is accepted that questions and justifications, whether they be implicit or explicit, are integral to the establishment of identity, ethnicity may be studied as a result of a communicative process. Here I

am referring to discourse between groups, rather than simply a demonstration of ethnic differences by one group to others. In discussing communication as transmittal and acceptance of meaning, I borrow concepts of discourse from the German theoretician, Jurgen Habermas.

Habermas writes of the governing process in western democracies as one of justification and legitimation through discourse (cf. Habermas 1970,1975). Based on his analysis of the ways that the mandate of government is given to political leaders, he develops a model of communication theory derived from linguistic analysis and hermeneutic critical theory (1970a,1970b, 1971,1979). The model pertains to the process of individual communication, but is also applicable, he argues, to the politics of government in a democracy.

His theory of communicative competence is based on three points. The first is the usual implicit nature of validation of communicative acts. The second is the necessity of fulfillment of 'rules of conduct' which permit the assumption of mutual intelligibility and veracity. The third is the discursive nature of explicit resolution of misunderstanding. He believes that the state of 'ideal communication', in which all these requirements are met, is impossible at the societal level where there are ingrained and hidden structural inequalities.

Habermas does not discuss ethnicity in terms of his communication theory, although questions of identity and cultural 'personalities,' particularly Jewish and German, have been of considerable interest to Critical Theorists (cf. Horkheimer 1961; Adorno, et al. 1950).[9]

## IDENTITY IN NEWFOUNDLAND

The province of Newfoundland is very conscious of its ethnic identity in the larger framework of Canada. It has been just thirty-four years since Confederation, and the province vociferously protects its distinctiveness of history and culture. Perhaps this protectiveness has increased in the past decade because there has been a widespread resurgence of interest in ethnicity and cultural heritage. While Irish- and English-Newfoundland music, dance and food have been enjoying a revival inside and outside the province, other people of Newfoundland, those who are not English or Irish in descent, have been busy with their own cultural renaissance. I do not know if there is a causal link between the two, or if they are simply independent responses to similar stimuli, but one can be used to reinforce the other. For example, in the prolegomena to their land claim statement, the Micmacs ask for understanding and support from white Newfoundlanders on the grounds that just as fishing is an integral part of Newfoundland culture and is worth fighting to preserve,

so, too, are certain salient features of the Micmac way of life:

> Newfoundlanders, more than any other Canadians, should understand how we feel about our land and the animals in it. Newfoundlanders who are fishing have their way of life and their fishing grounds protected by Provincial and Federal regulations. What we now demand from the Federal and Provincial Governments is a similar recognition of our culture, our lifestyle and our territory. [in FNI:1980]

July and August of 1980 saw two significant events in the growth of organised ethnic pride in Newfoundland. The first was "Une Longue Veillee," a two day festival of music, dance and story-telling organised by Les Terre-Neuviens Francais at Cap St. Georges, the largest French-speaking community on the Port au Port peninsula. The festival was attended by francophones from Quebec, New Brunswick, St. Pierre et Miquelon as well as anglophones and francophones from Newfoundland. It was the first of what has become an annual event and it marks the success of the association in renewing contacts with other French-speaking areas. The second event was the seventh annual assembly of the Federation of Newfoundland Indians, a week-long celebration of Ste. Anne's Day held on Sandy Point in Bay St. George. Sandy Point is a spit of land jutting into the bay and is the site of the earliest settlement of Micmacs in Newfoundland. The general assembly of 1980 was the first held on Sandy Point, and

the FNI planned to continue to hold the annual meetings and Ste. Anne's Day festivities there.[10]

These festivals marked great success for the organisations, both of which are very young. But not all people in Newfoundland, even some of their potential members, are convinced of the validity of the organisations' causes. While this cannot be totally unexpected in any political organisation, it may have heuristic value. Absence of consensus on identity produces a greater number of questions being put to those who are claiming a separate ethnic identity, and necessitates a greater amount of explanation and justification on their part. It also may result in a greater number of people who are marginally associated with the ethnic unit; those who are not subjectively aligned in either an organisational or self-identificatory way with it, yet could be included in it on the basis of objective criteria. Using Stymeist's terminology, these people could be called 'peripheral ethnics' (Stymeist 1975:54).[11] In my employment of this term, I mean someone who, due to genealogy, physical appearance or residence, can choose whether or not he wants an active ethnic identification and, if so, which one of the selection open to him he wants. This meaning is more akin to the definition of marginality given by Merton (1957), or Ronald Cohen's 'situational ethnics' (1978).

Prior to the past ten years of politicisation which drove home the philosophy that Micmac identity was something of which one should be proud, the words 'Indian,' 'Micmac,' and 'jack-o-tar'[12] had little but stigma attached to them. The only positive connotation of Micmac identity was in connection with guiding and hunting skills.

There are many reasons for the damping of pride in Micmac identity and these will be discussed in later chapters, but I shall here mention one reason, less tangible than some others, which has had a pernicious effect on their cultural survival. This is the erroneous belief elevated to the status of standard history, that the Micmacs were brought to Newfoundland in the eighteenth century by the French as mercenaries against the Beothuk and English (Bartels 1979:7-8;Howley 1915:25-26).

Historical and archeological evidence indicates that as white settlement of the island increased and began to encroach on Beothuk territory, the Beothuks, in order to avoid contact with whites, increasingly confined themselves to the area of the Exploits River and Red Indian Lake. Aside from their violent skirmishes with white fishermen and the deleterious effects of their enforced mobility, the greatest single factor responsible for their demise was the introduction of European disease, particularly tuberculosis (Marshall 1981).

There has been little substantiation of the claims that the Micmacs were responsible for the extermination of the Beothuk, but the stories which suggest this have commonly been regarded as history. Frederick Rowe relates several of the stories used as evidence of Micmac aggression toward Beothuks, with comments on their universal characteristics:

> One [explanation for hostility] has it that originally the Beothuks and Micmacs were friends...Then came the villainous French who, hating the Beothuks, conspired with the Micmacs and offered a bounty for every Beothuk head brought to them. [After the Beothuks discovered the treachery, they] invited the Micmacs to a great feast and arranged that two Beothuks with hidden weapons would sit next to each Micmac. At a given signal the Beothuks murdered their Micmac guests to the last man. Thus began the enmity between the two tribes.
>
> This story must be one of the oldest connected with inter-tribal and inter-racial warfare. Readers of Arabian Nights will recall it, as will students of the Crusades...
>
> The story originated, apparently, with the geologist Jukes, who says he got it from John Peyton who had gotten it from a Micmac. Here we have an example of a whole people, the Micmacs of Newfoundland (as well, of course, as the French fishermen) tarnished by charges for which, so far as I have been able to ascertain, there is not a scrap of documentary evidence. [Rowe 1977:102-103]

Ironically, the "Micmac Mercenary Myth" (Bartels 1979:7) gained credence through a speech made to the inaugural meeting of the Beothuk Institute in 1852 by William Epps Cormack. He is the man to whom we are

indebted for much of our ethnographic information on the Micmacs.

Because of the prevailing strength of this belief, the credibility of the Micmacs is severely lessened, and they are disqualified from special status in the eyes of many Newfoundlanders. A recent letter to the editor expresses this attitude:

> [Mr. Tanner] says, 'It was we who imposed ourselves on them, not they on us.'
> He is right in this as it applies to the Labrador natives and indeed to all other Canadian Indians, but not ...to the Micmacs...
> ...The fact remains they came as militants. They imposed themselves upon the native Beothuk and helped exterminate them.
> With the French they imposed themselves upon our ancestors [and] destroyed their homes. [Evening Telegram, Jan. 22, 1983, p. 6]

One may question the logic of such an argument. The Micmacs would not have been doing anything untoward if they had defined the Beothuks as enemies and thus persecuted them. There is no factual evidence to suggest they did, but if they had done so, the Micmacs would not be the only group in North America to have decimated another native population and appropriated its territory, either independently or as allies of a European power. Unless one subscribes to the myth of the 'Noble Savage,' there is no more reason to condemn native groups for acts of aggression against one another than to condemn European powers. Even less supportable is a contention that the successful native group should be denied

aboriginal rights by a power which gained its sovereignty by similar action. However, the belief, with its attendant denial of Micmac legitimacy, has persisted, perhaps because it absolves those who fear that their ancestors were actually responsible for the extermination of the Beothuk. It also provides a rationale for the denial of Micmac claims to aboriginal rights. In a land of immigrants, Micmacs can be considered recent settlers and itinerant killers. While Newfoundlanders recognise the extinct Beothuk historically,[14] the extant Micmacs do not exist as a Newfoundland aboriginal people in their minds.

The Micmacs' struggle, therefore, is not simply for special status and rights over land resources, it is also a fight to validate their existence as an aboriginal people of Newfoundland. They are given only partial official recognition as Indians. Their history in Newfoundland is relatively unknown and much of their culture has been lost. They entitled their land claim statement <u>Freedom: To live our own way in our own land</u>. Through their land claim, through registration, and revitalisation of traditional activities, they are trying to authenticate their way of life and their history. Thus far, the response of government and white Newfoundlanders suggests that the discursive phase of establishment of identity is far from complete.

# NOTES

1. The issues of land claims and registration are central to Micmac political activity, particularly at this moment. In July of 1982 the Conne River Indian Band Council filed a suit against the government of Canada over registration. Although discussion has been going on for over four years, registration of Conne River Micmacs has not yet begun, and the acceptability of the criteria for registration in other areas of the island is being disputed by DIAND. As of May 1983 no decision on the Micmac land claim has yet been made public by the federal Office of Native Claims, but the premier of Newfoundland has stated his opposition to their claim, and to their registration as status Indians on the basis of a provincial government-contracted report on their land claim statement (Jones 1982).

   Because of the great importance of the land claim and registration and the difficulty of doing justice to these topics in a necessarily brief discussion, they are the subject of only fleeting direct reference. But they are the most concrete and politically significant result of Micmac politicisation. In this study, I wish to examine the foundations of these actions, rather than the actions themselves.

2. See Chapter 3 for discussion of this agreement.

3. The FNI estimates a population of 1,400, based on extrapolation from their membership lists. Both the provincial Department of Rural and Northern Development and the federal Department of Indian Affairs have figures for only Conne River and, for the time being, quote FNI figures as being the only available estimates for the rest of the island's Micmac population. The federal and provincial governments have determined their respective funding responsibilities for Conne River on the abitrarily chosen figure of 85% being Micmac. That means that of the population of 588, the federal government supplies 90% of the funds for the 467 are who considered to be Indian, and the provincial government supplies funding for the remaining 15% of the population and 10% of the native portion. The detailed 1981 Canadian census with information on native populations is not yet available. The 1971 Statistics Canada data give a Micmac population of

260 in Conne River and a total of 165 "Innu/Micmac" in communities from the Port au Port peninsula across western and central Newfoundland to Clarenville (Statistics Canada 1973:20).

4. The Federation of Newfoundland Indians remains the official name of the organisation. In 1980 they began to use the name Ktaqumkuk Ilnui Sagamawoutie, which translates as Newfoundland Indian Government, but this Micmac name and its English translation were objected to by the provincial government which claimed that no other organisation could use the word 'government' in its name. A new name which omits the word 'government', Ktaqumkuk Mi'kmawey Saqimawoutie, is now sometimes used. I will throughout this thesis refer to the organisation as the Federation of Newfoundland Indians.

5. The literature on these groups is surprisingly vast, especially considering the very limited public knowledge that exists. For an indication of the scope of the literature, I mention the following, which discuss small Indian or 'mixed-blood' groups from New York to Louisiana and Oklahoma: Aptheker (1939), Babcock (1899), Bailey (1972), Barton (1979), Berry (1945,1963), Blu (1972,1977,1979a,1979b,1980), Boissevain (1956, 1959), Carr and Westex (1945), Frazier (1939), Harris (1948), Hicks (1964,1972), Howard (1960), Hudson (1970), Jones and Parenton (1951), Mooney (1907a,1907b,1928), Pollard (1894), Sider (1976), Speck (1911,1915,1916,1918,1925,1928, 1928a,1943,1943a,1943b,1947), Spiess (1933), Wilson (1959).

6. Blu, writing in the 1970s and after extended fieldwork with the Lumbees of North Carolina, accepts their Indian identity, whereas Berry, writing fifteen years earlier, prefers to allow for all genealogical possibilities by referring to them as 'tri-racial isolates' (Berry 1963;Blu 1980).

7. The centrality to the discipline of anthropology of the maintenance of boundaries of cultural self-definition, and the recent astronomical increase in the number of studies of ethnicity, makes a comprehensive review of the relevant literature a formidable task. For that reason, only some of those works which have been of particular significance in my thinking about this topic will be mentioned.

8. Evans-Pritchard's use of colonial-imposed ethnic categorisation has been criticised by Southall (1976) for not reflecting the Nuer's own conceptualisations of themselves. Taken together, the works by Southall and Evans-Pritchard demonstrate the subjective and objective nature of we/they definitions for the people themselves and for anthropologists.

9. In a speech, Habermas reflected on the impact on intellectual development of the pre-war immigration of German-Jewish academics to the United States (Habermas 1980).

10. The 1981 annual assembly and Ste. Anne's Day celebrations, however, were held in Conne River. The 1982 annual assembly was held in Gander.

11. Stymeist defines 'peripheral ethnic' as "archetypal second-generation ethnic," i.e. a child of immigrant parents who 'belongs' to his parents' ethnic group and to his country of birth.

12. The connotations, and effects, of 'Jack-o-tar,' a term of derision referring primarily to people of mixed Micmac and French ancestry, will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

13. Note, too, the posthumous 'honour' extended to the Beothuks in the naming of a multitude of Newfoundland businesses and sports teams, e.g. 'Beothuk Crushing and Paving,' 'Beothuk Gunsmithing,' 'Memorial University Beothuks,' etc.

.2.

## THE NEWFOUNDLAND MICMACS: TO CONFEDERATION

The history of the Micmacs in Newfoundland has been of great interest to the Micmacs themselves, to white Newfoundlanders, and to scholars. Until recently, the scholarly literature on the topic has been hidden away in studies of Newfoundland history, or of the Beothuk Indians. In the past decade, academic interest has been stirred by the increased activity and visibility of the Micmacs, and their oral history is being augmented by documentary research.[1] The paucity of documentation, unfortunately, makes the task of determining length and type of residence in Newfoundland difficult for both the Micmacs and the aspiring scholar. In this chapter I am concerned with when and why Micmacs came to Newfoundland from Cape Breton and, secondly, with their history, and the history of contact with whites, in Newfoundland from the sixteenth to the mid-twentieth century.[2]

There are two predominant versions of how Micmac Indians from Cape Breton came to be living on the island of Newfoundland. One version is held by the Micmac people themselves. Over the past decade, the Conne River Indian Band Council and the Federation of Newfoundland Indians have been researching Micmac occupation and use of Newfoundland for their land claim statement (FNI 1980).

It argues that the Micmacs were regularly using and occupying the island prior to any settlement or knowledge of it by Europeans. The opposing view argues that the Micmacs came to Newfoundland in the late eighteenth century as allies of the French against the English and the Beothuk. As is evident from even this cursory description of these two views, both provide support for ideological statements about the validity of Newroundland Micmac identity and rights.

Available evidence suggests that Newroundland was a regularly used part of the Micmac hunting territory since at least the fifteenth century as part of their seasonal hunting migration, and that this use, and permanent settlement, intensified in the seventeenth century when food became scarce on the mainland (Pastore 1978:10; Bartels 1978:4-6). While admitting the evidence of travel between Newfoundland and the mainland, Pastore argues that prior to the seventeenth century there was neither need nor adequate means to travel to Newroundland. Frank G. Speck, while not attempting to put a date on the inception of Micmac travel to Newfoundland, contends that the large Micmac canoes were sea-going and sturdy enough to make the journey across the Cabot Strait. Jukes, in 1842, and Speck, in 1922, collected accounts which support this supposition. Three informants in three communities gave descriptions consonant with the following:

> The Newfoundland Indians...are known to both themselves and the Micmacs of Cape Breton as Tayamkukewax, "people of the land across the water." The island itselr is known as Taymkuk. According to the tradition current among Newfoundland Micmacs, the Micmac of the mainland had always some knowledge of the Island through their own excursions by canoe. The route lay between Cape North and Cape Ray on the southwest coast of Newfoundland, a distance of sixty-five miles, land being dimly visible in fine weather. This bold journey was ordinarily accomplished in two days they say. On the first day, if the weather favored the voyagers made St. Paul's Island, Tuywe gan moniguk, "temporary goal island," a distance of fifteen miles. From there three sturdy canoemen would paddle across the remaining fifty miles of Cabot Strait to Cape Ray, Newfoundland. Landing here they would await another calm night then build an immense beacon fire on the highlands to serve both as a signal and a guide for direction through the night. [Speck 1922:119]

Both Newfoundland and Cape Breton Micmacs concur on the veracity of the above description of the method of travel across the strait. During the sixteenth century, they were known to cross from Cape Breton to the Magdalen Islands (Rogers 1911:140), and Charlevoix said that they did "not hesitate to paddle their bark canoes thirty or forty miles by sea" (Charlevoix 1902:264). While accounts given by Jukes and Speck do not set a definite date for the earliest Micmac travel to Newfoundland, they do raise doubts about the validity of the argument given by Pastore that the Micmacs were unable to travel across the strait until they possessed French fishing shallops, thereby placing the time of the earliest travel at the end of the

sixteenth century.[3]

At the time of contact with Europeans, the Micmac population of approximately 6,000 lived in a territory extending from the present-day Gaspe Peninsula through New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland. They soon established a military and economic alliance with the French. When Jacques Cartier entered the Bay of Chaleur in 1534, Micmacs held up furs on poles to attract his attention. Although this is the first recorded European contact with Micmacs, Pastore and Bartels speculate that Basque whalers or fishermen may have already made contact with the Micmacs and initiated trade (Pastore 1978:7;Bartels 1978:2).

Trade goods from the Europeans quickly became important to, and altered, the Micmac way of life. To maintain the supply of firearms, woolen blankets, iron kettles and steel blades, the Micmac hunter was forced to spend more of his time trapping in the interior, rather than collecting food near the coastline. The land could not support as large a population as could the sea combined with the land. The Micmac population decreased due to starvation, the introduction of European diseases and less nutritious European foods which lowered their resistance to disease.

The fur trade, as the only way of obtaining the desired European trade goods, led to other significant

changes in the Micmac way of life. The Micmacs became political allies of the French and became subject to the attentions of missionaries who accompanied the fur traders. Pastore writes in reference to the Cape Breton Micmacs:

> By the end of the 17th century, the Micmacs had become the Christianized allies of the French. They had little choice. Once their enemies were armed with guns and once the Micmacs had grown dependent upon goods produced in France, they had to cultivate good relations with the French - or some European power. To do otherwise would have left them helpless in the presence of their enemies. An alliance with Europeans usually meant new kinds of wars, however. As allies of the French the Micmacs found themselves fighting the enemies of France - the English, and those tribes aligned with the English. [Pastore 1978:8]

New weaponry not only altered the type of warfare, but also put new strains on the wildlife population and, perhaps, added the stress of material avarice to Micmac social life. Satisfaction of material wants required more intensive use of the land. Consequently, by the middle of the seventeenth century, the populations of both fur-bearing and food animals had been drastically reduced and were no longer able to sustain the Micmac population. An early settler, and governor, of Acadia, Nicolas Denys, commented caustically that "the Indians have destroyed everything, and have abandoned the island [of Cape Breton]" (Denys 1908:186-187).

The increasing frequency of sustained and wide-spread food shortages in the latter half of the seventeenth century may not have been necessary to impell large migrations of Micmacs to Newfoundland. Bartels argues that periodic scarcity would have been sufficient motive for some to move to the richer resources of Newfoundland. If the Micmacs had the means of travel and knowledge of the island, there would have been no reason for them to risk hardship or starvation in Cape Breton (Bartels 1978:5).[4] It is important to note that the use of the word 'migration' is only a European perception of what was happening. The Micmacs would not have seen their moves as being from one land to another, but as movements of varying degrees of distance and permanence within their territory. Pastore points out:

> The Micmacs were semi-nomadic hunters and gatherers, and they had to move from one place to another to find the most plentiful sources of food and furs. Other sub-Arctic Indians on mainland North America ranged over enormous stretches of territory. The fact that 17th and 18th century Micmacs had to cross a stretch of water to reach their winter hunting grounds in no significant way differentiates them from the Indians whose hunting territories were confined to the mainland. [Pastore 1977:5-6]

In 1906 Millais, an American sportsman who travelled the interior of the island with Micmac guides, recorded a Micmac account of the creation of Newfoundland which is somewhat less than reverent toward their

homeland:

> ...when Manitou, the Great Spirit, was making the continent of the New World he found he had much material left over in the shape of rocks, swamps, and useless trees. So he formed a big rubbish heap by casting it all into the sea to the north-east, and called it wee-soc-kadoo. Several years after, Cabot discovered it and claimed the island for Great Britain, when it was called Newfoundland. [Millais 1907:1]

The oral history of the Micmacs from Newroundland tells of the 'ancients,' the Sa'yewedjkik, their ancestors who came to Newfoundland long before the whites, and, perhaps, before the Beothuks (FNI 1980:1). It is said that the Sa'yewedjkik knew the entire island and had named all the important places on it. According to the tradition, these ancient families merged completely with the families who later migrated from Cape Breton.

Some have suggested that a cross-shaped formation of pebbles in Bay de Nord may have been the work of the Sa'yewedjkik. Other Micmacs say it was not constructed by them, only found accidently. The cross was first discovered in 1830 by Peter Sylvester, a Micmac from Conne River. Father LeClercq, a Recollet priest in the Gaspe in the 1660s, wrote that the figure of the cross was the primary sacred symbol of the Micmacs before missionaries brought it to them as the symbol of Christianity. The cross was a tribal emblem imbued with supernatural powers (Jackson n.d.; Penney 1983).

Unfortunately, we know little of these Sa'yewedjkik, not even enough to demonstrate their existence outside of mythology. In that their supposed presence predates any European knowledge of Newfoundland, there can exist no documentary record of any kind. The only evidence we can hope for, apart from the oral history of the Micmacs, is that which may be uncovered through archeological investigation.

Archaeological surveys of the south coast have been carried out since 1979, but as yet they have not resulted in the discovery of any pre-contact Micmac sites (G. Penney, pers. comm.). Due to the nomadic nature of early Micmac existence in Newfoundland, archaeology may prove to be of limited value in authenticating the oral history of the Micmacs. The pattern of land use in the pre-contact and early contact period was, in all probability, seasonal, taking place only during the fall and winter. Winter hunting parties in Cape Breton and Newfoundland were small family units, with the population dispersed over a vast area. Therefore, the mobility and small numbers of each group would tend to restrict the deposit of large clusters of artifacts.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Although John Cabot officially discovered and claimed Newfoundland for Britain in 1497, it was not until

the latter half of the sixteenth century that the cod fishery off the Newfoundland coast was being exploited on a large scale by the British, French, Portugese and Spanish. Each spring, fishing fleets from Europe sailed to the fishing grounds where they spent the summer, returning at the end of the season with their catch and their fishermen. The island of Newfoundland itself was, for Europeans, as it was put in 1793 by William Knox, "a great English ship moored near the Banks during the fishing-season for the convenience of the English fishermen" (Rogers 1911:137). Permanent residence on the island was not necessary for the success of the fishery and, indeed, was believed to be detrimental to it by the government and merchant companies of England. Accordingly, settlement was not permitted.[5]

Despite the prohibition on settlement, some of these itinerant fishermen felt that they could have a better life in this forbidden and forbidding land than they could expect at home. They remained in Newfoundland after the fishing season ended and built homesteads where they were safe from the fishing companies and crews. Because of their increasing numbers, the 'planters' gained de facto recognition from the British government, although numerous attempts were made throughout the seventeenth century to remove them or at least control their settlement to a quarter of a mile back from the

coastline.[6] Servants were recruited from Britain by the planters and often, after their term of bonded labour had been completed, they would establish themselves as planters. Merchants from the west country of England settled on the east coast of Newfoundland and acted as the power and financial brokers between the migratory fishermen, the resident planters, and the fishing companies of England.

In addition to the illegal settlement by planters, officially sanctioned colonisation was attempted in the seventeenth century. The first colony, established in 1610, was John Guy's at Cuper's Cove (now Cupid's) in Conception Bay. The future of this, and subsequent, British colonies was dependent on the ability of the colonists to survive the harsh environment and on the vagaries of the government and colonisers.[7] It was not until the end of the eighteenth century that Britain finally officially ceased discouragement of settlement in Newfoundland.

The French established civil administration and fortified their settlement at Plaisance (Placentia) in an attempt to expand and protect their colonisation of southern Newfoundland. French rights of settlement on the southern shore and fishing rights to the west and north coasts were not disputed by the English. By the turn of the eighteenth century, the French had twice raided and

destroyed English settlements on the Avalon Peninsula and were effectively in control of the island. However, their control was soon relinquished as a result of the settlement of conflict between England and France in Europe.

The first recorded contact between Europeans and Micmacs is from 1602 when an English explorer, Bartholemew Gosnold, met a party of eight Indians in a Basque shallop off the coast of New England. The Indians "...with a piece of Chalke described the Coast thereabouts, and could name Placentia of the New-found-land..." (Archer 1906:304). A more specific identification of the Indians is not given, but it may safely be assumed that they were Micmacs, since they lived closer to Newfoundland than did any other tribe, excepting those in Labrador. Pastore writes that, "[If] these Indians were not Micmacs, the argument for early Micmac knowledge is in fact strengthened, since it is inconceivable that a more distant tribe would know of the island while the Micmacs remained in ignorance of it" (Pastore 1978:10-11).

The second reference to Micmacs in Newfoundland is from Samuel de Champlain, who observed that mainland Indians came to Newfoundland occasionally to trade with European fishermen (Pastore 1978:10-11). The first definite identification of these mainland Indians as Micmac comes from Father Pierre Biard, the Jesuit

missionary who worked with the Micmac. In 1612 he wrote that the Micmac name for Newfoundland was 'Presentic' (Pastore 1978:11). According to the Micmac land claim statement, 'Presentic', or 'Presentik', was the Micmac name for Placentia Bay, but their name for the entire island was, and still is, Ktaqamkuk (FNI 1980:3).

J. D. Rogers writes that:

> Indians had a village on St. George Bay in 1594, and haunted the shores of White Bear Bay (?) [sic] (1538) and Placentia Bay (1594), but it is not quite clear whether these Indians were Micmacs from the continent or were the Beothics or Native Indians of Newfoundland. [Rogers 1911:29]

References to Micmac or 'Canida' Indians by travellers along the west coast in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries suggest that these would have been Micmacs. In 1616, Newfoundland was included in the Micmac territory which was said to extend from "Chouacoet to Newfoundland" with a population as high as 10,000 (Thwaites 1959:111).

In 1670 an English planter sent to the Colonial Office a report on 'Canida Indians' coming to Newfoundland from "the Forts of Canida in ffrench Shalloways with French fowling pieces...to Kill Beavers & other Beastes for their ffurres..." (Pastore n.d.:3-4). These Indians must have been Micmacs for they were the only nearby group which would be carrying such goods for the purpose given, and the only group which would be described as coming from French forts (Pastore n.d:4).

During the seventeenth century, the Micmacs used the interior lands and rivers while Europeans remained very close to the coastline. There were no compelling reasons for either group to pursue contact with the other. Consequently, references from this period based on European contacts with Micmacs are sparse and not entirely satisfactory. The information which they give is not extensive and only one source definitely names these mainland Indians as Micmacs. However, in light of our knowledge of Micmac subsistence patterns, as well as our familiarity with European subsistence activities in Newfoundland, we can place greater value and reliance on these few references than would otherwise be justified.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

In 1705 the Governor of Placentia, Daniel d'Auger de Subercase, reported a visit paid to the fort by a large party of Micmacs who came to the fort from the interior lands.

> It is their intention to establish themselves in this island which would certainly be very advantageous to them. The rest of their people are expected next spring, and I will do everything I possibly can to see that they achieve their aims. I hope, my Lord, for the good of the King's service and this colony, that you will agree to transfer here the annual presents that you send to their original territory, which they left so that the animals which serve as their food supply can be replenished... [in FNI 1980:36]

Pastore considers this report to be especially important for two reasons:

> First, it seems clear from the wording of his report that he had not sent for them and, secondly, that they were not mercenaries. He wrote, 'Vingt Cinq familles de sauvages Miquemacs du Cap Breton sont passez dans cette Isle...'. Such a phrase does not suggest that the'French authorities had sent for them. Although Micmacs were later used as mercenaries against the English, the fact that this group consisted of families - men, women, and children - to the number of perhaps 100 or more, suggests that it was not a war party. There is nothing else in Subercase's report to indicate that the appearance of the band was unusual, and the wording itself points to the conclusion that this band of Micmacs was perfectly at home in Newfoundland. [Pastore n.d.:4]

Pastore continues to say that Subercase's report is significant because of its date:[8]

> At that time (1705), the question of the Island's ownership, in European terms, had not yet been decided. Both the French and the English maintained a presence on the Island. European sovereignty over the Island was not finally determined until the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, well after the period for which there is strong evidence of Micmac occupation and use. [Pastore n.d.:5]

Three years later, in 1708, Governor Costabelle of Placentia reported that thirty Micmac families were on St. Pierre and intending to come to Fortune Bay for the winter. "They will find on this Island a great quantity of caribou and beaver. I do not think they will leave this place soon," he wrote (FNI 1980:36).

Although undisputed sovereignty over the island was given to England in 1713, the event was not a reflection of actual physical control of Newfoundland, and certainly not of the maturation of English settlement. The French had established supremacy in Newfoundland, but they lost their battle with the English in Europe. Through the instrument of the Treaty of Utrecht, they ceded Port Royal in Nova Scotia and Placentia to the English, but retained fishing rights to the west coast. Resolution of the issue of sovereignty had little impact on Micmac use of the island. The British ventured no further inland after 1713 than they had before, and, therefore, the two groups still had no cause to meet for extended encounters.

Granting of English sovereignty, however, had two significant implications for the Micmacs. The first is that the antipathy between the English and the Micmacs persisted because the Micmacs remained 'allied' with the French. Continued French presence on the west coast (as fisherfolk without a political, military or religious elite) maintained the links between French and Micmac. Power, however, rested with the English, to whom the Micmacs could only be a threat. The reputation as unwanted intruders and murderers of the Beothuk later ascribed to the Micmacs is practically guaranteed in this situation. The second point is that English sovereignty

in 1713 had little practical utility in terms of actual knowledge and use of the island. If one looks at the question in terms of ostensible, de facto sovereignty, eighteenth century Newfoundland belonged to the Micmacs and the French. When the French resigned their mandate, the island, apart from the Avalon Peninsula and the north-east coast, reverted to the Micmacs, in terms of actual use and occupancy. The claim of the English to the whole of the island in 1713 was valid only as a programme for conquest or settlement, tenable only to the extent of their military capability to hold it.

Micmacs were reported to be hunting and trapping inland from Cape Ray in 1715, and in 1720 the existence of a Micmac settlement at St. George's was known. There were two recorded incidents of hostilities between Micmacs and English from this period. In 1727 a Boston schooner was captured by Micmacs at Port aux Basques, and twenty years later, in 1748, twenty-three English settlers were captured by Micmacs and taken back with them to Cape Breton (Pastore 1978:12).

Another significant reference to Micmacs is contained in the description of a voyage along the south cast to Cape Ray, in 1734, by Captain Tavener. There he found "French fishermen from the Basque ports of St. Jean de Luz, and Bayonne, Breton traders, Micmac hunters from Antigonish, and the detached French colony at Port aux

Basques" (Rogers 1911:133). These settlements had virtually no contact with the outside world. Szwed further describes these people:

> This group [of French settlers] was undoubtedly one of a number who left the Chinecto area of Nova Scotia in fear of English control following the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. The French of this area had intermarried extensively with the MicMac Indians, a tribe hostile to the English, so that when the English took over Nova Scotia the Indians feared the consequences as much or more than did the Acadians. Oral history has preserved a picture of this early Acadian migration as being composed of a number of small fishing boats that travelled through the Northumberland Straits to Cape Breton, the Magdalene Islands, to the West Coast of Newfoundland, still protected by French fishing rights. Some obviously stopped at Cape Ray and the Codroy Valley, but many others went on up the coast to other rivers and coves: Bank Head, Flat Bay, St. George's, Shallop Cove, Stephenville, Port aux Port [sic], Bay of Islands, Bonne Bay, and further on to the Straits of Belle Isle and Labrador. [Szwed 1966:27]

After the Treaty of Utrecht, the French maintained contact with the west and north coasts through their fishing fleets and an annual winter visit by "the 'French Governor of Grand Bay in Nova Francia' - clearly M. de Courtemanche of Fort Ponchastain in Bradore Bay - with seventy or eighty Montagnais Indians from Labrador" (Rogers 1911:132).

However, during the Seven Years War between Britain and France, from 1756 to 1763, the French temporarily abandoned their fishery on the west coast and

based their fishing operations on St. Pierre and Miquelon. Consequently, British fishermen fished the abandoned area, and British settlement of the west coast increased. However, the French still retained official usufructuary rights over the 'Treaty Shore.'

In 1762 a British ship met a band of Micmacs on Codroy Island:

> Captain Thompson wrote to the Secretary of the Admiralty on April 16, 1763 following that while cruising off the coast of Newfoundland in H.M. Sloop Sark, in the month of September (1762) previous, he met a party of Cape Breton Micmacs of the island of Codroy, headed by two chiefs named Oulate and Bernard, who asked him for a supply of various useful articles...All of these were sent out by the Government in HMS Tweed, soon after. [Brown 1869:356]

Captain Thompson also reported Micmacs on the south coast between Cape Ray and Baie d'Espoir (Brown 1869:356).

The explulsion of the Acadians at the beginning of the Seven Years War and the signing of the Treaty of Paris by Britain and France in 1763 had a greater impact on the Micmacs of Newfoundland and Cape Breton than had earlier European disputes. France lost all rights to North America, retaining only St. Pierre and Miquelon, and limited rights of fishing on the west and north coasts of Newfoundland. The expulsion of the French was problematic for the Micmacs who had relied on them as trade partners and religious teachers. Neither economics nor religious sympathies united the English and the Micmacs.

In the following few years, some Acadians moved to St. Pierre and Miquelon; others, and a number of Cape Breton Micmacs, moved to Newfoundland's French Shore. By moving to the west and south coasts, the Micmacs were closer to a French priest on St. Pierre, and, if they had to have European neighbours, they probably preferred Acadian to English. The motives for permanent emigration by Micmacs were strengthened as a result of greater pressure being placed on their subsistence resources through the encroachment of increasing numbers of British settlers and military personnel. Most settled in Bay St. George, but some went along the south coast as far as Baie d'Espoir, and, perhaps, further east (Pastore n.d.:6).

In 1764 the newly appointed Governor of Newfoundland, Hugh Palliser, attempted to restore the British merchants' monopoly on the fishery by restricting settlement and access to the fishery (Szwed 1966:24; Bartels 1978:13-14). He wished to remove the Micmacs from the island because he feared their alliance with the French, and on this point, he was in agreement with the former Governor, Thomas Graves. Graves wrote, "if gentle means will not confine them at Home, would it not be better to extirpate them from off the island, than suffer such a connection to be kept up" (Pastore 1978:14). In 1765 the governor of Nova Scotia issued passports to Nova Scotian Micmacs giving them permission to travel freely

between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.[9] This news displeased the Newfoundland governor, who requested that permission be withdrawn (Prowse 1895:330-331). Palliser wrote that two hundred Micmacs had come to Baie d'Espoir in the autumn of that year:

> ...to the great Terror of all our People in these parts, so that before the arrival of the King's Vessels they [the English fishermen] had determined to abandon the whole Fishery to the Westward of Placentia Fort, for the Indians had already begun to Insult and Rob them on pretence of want of Provisions... [Pastore 1978:14]

However, attempts by Newfoundland governors Graves and Palliser to curtail the movements of the Micmacs were unsuccessful, for the Micmacs could easily withdraw into the interior where they were out of reach of the Europeans.

In 1783 the Peace of Versailles officially restored French fishing rights to the west and north coasts, and gave the United States permission to fish on the Grand Banks and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Furthermore,

> The policy of keeping English settlers out of Anglo-French preserves was of doubtful legality, but it had been adopted to some extent in 1764 and was only invested with the sacro-sanctity of an International Declaration for the first time in 1783. [Rogers 1911:134]

The Peace of Versailles established the points of the French Shore as being between Cape John and Cape Ray. The

treaty, like the others before it, gave France only fishing rights with no provision for permanent habitation or permanent structures. The French interpreted this to mean exclusive rights over the fishery and the right to forbid any use of the area by the English.[10]

Settlement on the Treaty Shore by English or French remained illegal after the Treaty of Versailles, although settlement by both, and particularly by the French, actually increased. The British settlers officially did not exist, with this unusual state of affairs continuing until the French gave up their rights to the west coast in 1904.

> During this critical period of settlement,[1783-1904], then, Newfoundland turned its face toward England, the sea, and the fish, while its West Coast, close to mainland Canada and more fertile and susceptible to agriculture, remained a formidable block to full settlement. Where people did settle along the shore they were subject to French harrassment, and were cut off from both England and Canada. They were without representation and, indeed, any form of recognition, as the gaps in Newfoundland histories indicate. [Szwed 1966:25]

Despite this, British settlers remained on the French shore, French and Acadian settlers increased in number, and the Micmacs remained, perhaps even more marginal than the others because they were both unknown and unwanted. Rogers writes about the Micmacs on the west coast during this time:

> They pierced through the wooded belt which fringes the sea-board and hunted somewhere on the bare mossy or rocky barrens beyond - no one knew where, when or how...At St. George's Bay the Micmacs associated with English and Jersey settlers, who were there already (1783) and remained there in spite of the Declaration of Versailles and who in 1813 were 100 in number, with a chief constable, and with a versatile Irishman who used to dress as an Indian to officiate at weddings and funerals, as though he were the self-ordained priest of some new religion. [Rogers 1911:141][11]

The end of the eighteenth century saw the existence of permanent Micmac settlements on the island, and the glimmerings of European knowledge of their presence and habits. The Micmacs were firmly ensconced in Newfoundland as were the British and Acadians. It is possible to draw some comparisons between European and Micmac use of the island. Until the end of the eighteenth century, both groups saw the island as part of their territory, but primarily as a resource base; a preserve for food and materials for economic gain. If Newroundland was a 'great fishing station' to the Europeans, it was an untouched game preserve to the Micmacs. In both cases, control of the land and its resources was from afar. Britain, France, Spain and Portugal directed the cod fishery from Europe. Local government was seasonal, in the hands of fishing admirals and, later, governors sent out for the duration of the fishing season. In a similar way, Micmacs wintered, or perhaps spent full years, in

Newfoundland, but the social order and system of governance remained centred in Cape Breton, whence it spread outward through the territory.

However, the critical difference between European and Micmac settlement is the distinction between transhumant and settled subsistence patterns. A transhumant territorial presence was an integral and definitional aspect of traditional Micmac culture and formed the basis of their concepts of land tenure. European land tenure is based on permanent and full settlement and, therefore, a pattern of limited occupancy of territory, such as the early settlement of Newfoundland, is aberrant. The Micmacs were fully using a part of their territory in a way prescribed by their cultural system, prior to European settlement. Therefore, their claim to aboriginal status on the basis of such land use is sociologically valid, regardless of whether or not some European settlements were established before any Micmac band had come to stay year-round.

NINETEENTH CENTURY

After the turn of the nineteenth century, true colonisation and settlement began in full force. For the British, the question of the colony versus the migratory fishery had finally been resolved. As a result, settlement expanded and became more permanent, and control

of the fishery came into the hands of the Newfoundland settlers. Greater numbers of Micmacs became permanent residents of Newfoundland, maintaining their ties with Cape Breton but developing autonomy in governance and social ordering. The band, and its social structure, had bifurcated, and the Newfoundland Micmacs gradually became distinct from Cape Breton Micmacs in the same way that British Newfoundlanders were no longer strictly British.

During the nineteenth century, Micmacs and Europeans learned more about each other, and increasingly came into conflict. For ease of presentation, the following chronology of events is divided according to type of encounter, the first being those of a friendly nature which provide information about the Micmacs, and the second being those which are hostile.

## Contact

In 1818 the crew of HMS Rosamund met a band of Micmacs living in St. George's. Because Lieutenant Chappel's account is one of the most informative which we have, recounting what the Micmacs said to him and giving a description of their settlement, I will quote it extensively:

> June the twenty-sixth...[We] pursued our walk over a stony beach, until we reached the Indian wigwams, situate on the northern shore of the bay. The village appeared to be entirely deserted by the men; and the women and children, being naturally shy of

strangers, fled to the woods at our approach.

The wigwams, or habitations of the Micmac Indians, are constructed of birch-tree bark in a conical shape; and at the top there is an aperture for the smoke to escape through. They make their fires in the center of the hut; and suspend deers-flesh over it, to dry for the winter consumption...We also perceived great quantities of stinking fish and bones lying scattered about their wigwams; together with canoes, and large fish-stages...

During our war with America, between the years 1775 and 1782, the Micmac Indians, inhabiting the island of Cape Breton and the parts adjacent, were amongst the number of our most inveterate enemies: but at length one of our military commanders having concluded an amicable treaty with them, he selected one of the most sagacious of their Chiefs to negotiate a peace with a neighbouring tribe, who were also hostile to the English cause. The old Indian ambassador succeeded in the object of his mission; and received, as his reward, the grant of a sterile tract of land in St. George's Bay, Newfoundland, together with permission to transport as many of his countrymen thither as might be willing to accompany him in the expedition. Accordingly, the old Sachem left his native land, accompanied by a strong party of Indian followers; and boldly launching out to sea in their own crazy shallops or canoes, they eventually reached St. George's Bay in safety...

The first act of the Micmacs, upon their arrival in Newfoundland, was to appoint the old Indian, who had conducted them thither, their Chief in perpetuity; and they next 'buried the sword,' as a symbol that war had for ever ceased between their tribe and the English nation. Since this period, they have been making a gradual progress towards civilization: and by frequent intermarriage with the European settlers at Sandy Point, the race became so intermingled, that, at the time we visited them, the number of pure Indians did not exceed fifty, exclusive of

> women and children...
>
> Since their original migration from the island of Cape Breton, the Micmacs have frequently changed their abode to different places within the limits of St. George's Bay. They had, however, resided about nine years in the spot where we found them...
>
> Independent of the colony of Micmac Indians, there are, in St. George's Bay, thirteen families of Europeans, or their descendants, who have been born in this place. Owing to a contrariety in their religious opinions, eleven of them are called English families, and the remainder are denominated French; the former styling themselves Protestants, and the latter Catholics...
>
> The whole of the white population did not amount to more than one hundred and twelve persons: and estimating the Indian colony at ninety-seven, St. George's Bay may be said to have contained about two hundred and nine souls altogether, including English, French, Indians, women, and children. [Chappel 1818:74-87]

No documentary evidence has been found to verify the story of the gift of land in St. George's to the Micmacs. One may speculate on reasons for such an act. The British were well aware of the utility and possible impact of alliances with Indian groups, and may have wanted to remove the Micmacs, a group never overly friendly to the British, from their proximity to the American rebels.

After Chappel's encounter with the Bay St. George Micmacs, the next detailed European source of information which we have concerning them comes from William Epps Cormack. In 1822 Cormack decided to explore the unknown

interior of Newfoundland. He set off from Smith's Sound in Trinity Bay with a Micmac guide and two objectives (Cormack 1928;Howley 1915).

His first objective was to find an overland route suitable for transportation and communication. From study of available maps, he believed that he would find an easy, straightforward path across the high, dry lands which would eventually allow easy construction of a trunk road linking the west and east coasts. His path, while geographically feasible, was never used because there was nothing between the two termini but wilderness. The railway and telegraph lines were later laid south and north of Cormack's route, following the lowlands, settlement patterns, and the Micmacs' route across the island. His second objective was to locate the Beothuk Indians. In this, too, he was less than successful. His guide appeared to be reluctant to take him into Beothuk territory, and his chosen route only touched the edges of their lands. By that time, the remaining Beothuk were living only in the vicinity of the Exploits River and, except when Cormack and his guide came to King George IV Lake, they were not even near the Beothuk.

On this 1822 expedition, Cormack's contribution to our knowledge came inadvertantly from his employment of a Micmac guide, Sylvester Joe,[12] and their consequent meetings with other Micmac Indians. Rogers writes:

> Cormack's historical discovery - unexpected by him and unsuspected by historians - was that during a century or more, while Englishmen were gazing out seawards with their backs turned to the land, Micmacs with their backs turned towards the sea were hurrying to and fro from end to end of the land that lay south of Petit Nord...and unlocking its mysteries with their Indian key. The Indian key - if the metaphor may be allowed - is a paddle...Except in the Beothic sphere of influence, they, and only they, possessed the land. Their methods were European but European with a difference, and the English ignorance of what they had been doing was due not to any difference between Indian and European methods, but to the abandonment by Englishmen of European methods in colonizing Newfoundland. [Rogers 1911:162-163]

Near Maelpegh Lake, Cormack and his guide met a 'Mountaineer' Indian (Montagnais) named James John. He was married to a Micmac woman and with her was camped on an island in the lake. A few days after leaving John's camp, they met a larger party of Micmac men and women. Cormack writes of them:

> None of them could speak English, and only one of them a little French...They were Mickmacks and natives of Newfoundland, and expressed themselves glad to see me in the middle of their country, as the first white man that had ever been here...Here were three families amounting to thirteen persons in number. [Howley 1915:150-151]

From information given him by these Micmacs, Cormack estimated the Micmac population of the island at one hundred and fifty. He writes that they were:

> ...dispersed in bands, commonly at the following places or districts: - St. George's Harbour and Great Cod Roy River on the west

> coast; White Bear Bay, and the Bay of Despair on the south coast; Clode Sound in Bonavista Bay on the east, Gander Bay on the north coast, and occasionally at Bonne Bay and the Bay of Islands on the north-west coast. They are composed of Mickmacks, joined by some of the mountaineer tribe from the Labrador, and a few of the Abenakies from Canada. The Esquimaux, from Labrador, occasionally, but seldom, visit the Island. There are twenty-seven or twenty-eight families altogether, averaging five to each family, and five or six single men. [Howley 1915:151-152][13]

After two days with the party of Micmacs, Cormack and Sylvester Joe continued toward Bay St. George. When about sixty miles from St. George's, they met another group of Micmacs, consisting of eight people: one man, four women and three children. The man, whose name was Gabriel, agreed to accompany Cormack and his guide to Bay St. George. On arrival at St. George's, they found themselves unable to cross to the white settlement on Sandy Point because of gale winds, and the Indian houses, where shelter from the storm might be provided, were still boarded up for the season. They broke into one of the houses, "the captain or chief's as we understood from my last Indian, and found what we wanted - provisions and cooking utensils" (Howley 1915:159). The name of this "provident man" was Emanuel Gontgont.

Cormack made two more journeys into the interior of the island. In 1827 he set off in search of the Beothuk from Exploits with three guides, a Micmac, a

'Bannakee' (Abenaki Indian), and a 'Mountaineer' from Labrador. From Exploits, they went to Hall's Bay then headed westward to the Bay of Islands. When south of White Bay and "discovering nothing that could assist him there, Mr. Cormack proceeded Southwardly, to the Red Indian's Lake" (Howley 1915:188).' After finding encampments and Beothuk graves, but no living Beothuks, Cormack and his party travelled down the Exploits River to its mouth and still could not find any Beothuks.

> Mr. Cormack is decidedly of opinion that the tribe have taken refuge in some sequestered spot in the neighbourhood of Bay of Islands, west of White Bay, or in the South west part of the Island; and having found where they are not, he apprehends very little difficulty in finding where they really are: Mr. Cormack has engaged three of the most intelligent of the other Indians to follow up his search in the ensuing year; and he feels persuaded that the pursuit will be ultimately attended with complete success. [Howley 1915:188]

To that end, he hired three Micmacs - John Louis, John Stevens and Peter John - to search for the Beothuk, but Cormack himself did not accompany them. In February of 1828 they travelled from Baie d'Espoir to Bay St. George, on to the Bay of Islands, and south-east to Red Indian Lake and down the Exploits River, again not going to White Bay, and not sighting any Beothuks (Howley 1915:216). The same three, therefore, in June of the same year continued the search in the area of White Bay. Yet again, they met with failure and, upon their return, Cormack was forced to

admit that "...the tribe if not totally extinct, are expiring, a remnant only of them exists, so small and occupying so small a space that they have been passed by unnoticed" (Howley 1915:219).

Although Cormack never succeeded in befriending any Beothuk other than Sh'awnadithit after she had been captured by John Peyton, the records from all of his expeditions are of great importance in regard to our knowledge of the Micmacs. Detailed information on Micmac customs and way of life comes from his account of the first journey, but the accounts of the latter journeys give us names and places of residence of his Micmac guides.[14]

A later expedition into the interior which provides information about the Micmacs was undertaken by Joseph Jukes in 1838 and 1839. With a Micmac guide, Sulleon, he traversed the area from the Bay of Exploits to St. George's conducting a geological survey. In his report of 1842 he estimates the Micmac population at fewer than one hundred families and says that they travelled from Fortune Bay to St. George's and on to White Bay and the Bay of Exploits. On the French Shore, where permanent settlement was still forbidden, he reports that the French and English appeared to be on friendly terms. Of his guide, he writes that Sulleon knew "all the island perfectly well" (Jukes 1842:121).

The telegraph surveys and installations throughout the 1850s further opened the interior of the island. In the survey of 1851, four Micmacs from Conne River were employed as a way of cutting down the high cost of hiring men from St. John's and paying travel costs into the interior (Gisborne 1851:156). Geological surveys were done from 1864 to 1876 by Sir Alexander Murray, who also employed Micmac guides.

In order to continue and expand development of the interior, a railway line was planned. During the period 1868 to 1898 a route was surveyed and the railway built from St. John's to Port aux Basques. Although some Micmacs benefited materially through employment on survey and construction crews, the railway signalled the end of the old Micmac way of life. It opened the interior and created industries which did not rely on the coastline. Settlement by whites followed development of the railway and industry and Micmacs soon found themselves in competition with whites for land resources.

## Conflict

Throughout the nineteenth century, conflict between Europeans and Micmacs had been escalating. In 1810 Governor John Duckworth received a report from a naval officer that caribou in Baie d'Espoir and birds on the Penguin Islands were being slaughtered and left to rot

by Micmacs. Leaving aside the question of the veracity of the charge, the government's attention to it indicates a change in their interests to include the resources of the interior (Pastore 1978:24-25).

Problems grew between Micmacs and white fishermen and furriers. Pastore comments:

> Paradoxically, the removal of one potential group of competitors, the Beothuks, exacerbated the situation rather than relieved it. When the Beothuks existed in large enough numbers to be dangerous, they acted as a buffer between the Micmacs and the northern furriers. [Pastore 1978:25]

Without the Beothuks, the Micmacs were able to hunt and trap further north in former Beothuk territory, and white trappers of the north coast moved further south. Reported incidents between whites and Micmacs first came from the northern bays, and later from the west coast. In 1812 Lieutenant David Buchan reported to Governor Duckworth that:

> [About] fifty Canadian Indians...had lately been at the head of White Bay, and they plundered Mr. Gill who carries on a Salmon Fishery, and that they had left him with an intention of crossing into Hall's Bay. These Indians have of late years carried devastation with them in every part of the Country they have visited... [Pastore 1978:25-26]

In Moreton's Harbour, a furrier by the name of John Gale complained that:

> ...the Micmac Indians infest White Bay in that manner that makes it impossible for me or any other person settled here to make a

> life of it by catching fur. I have two hundred traps and used to catch three hundred pounds of a winter but now I do not catch forty or fifty pounds in consequence of the Micmacs infesting that Bay. [Pastore 1978:26][15]

In subsequent years, complaints from whites ceased in this area, although Micmacs were known to remain in the northern bays. Pastore believes that the plausible explanation for the decrease in conflict is that the fur stocks were so depleted because of trapping by both Micmacs and whites "that whites, for a time, did not find it advantageous to expend much effort there" (Pastore 1978:26). But problems arose on the west coast. Traps belonging to white furriers were disturbed, and the Micmacs suggested that Beothuks were responsible. The naval report to Governor John Harvey in 1845 concluded that the damage had been done by the Micmacs, who "had for some time previous been very troublesome and mischievous..." (Pastore 1978:26). The Micmacs were said to be:

> ...interfering with the traps of the English and even threatening them with violence, declaring that the King of the French was dying, and his death was to be the signal for France and America to declare war with England in which case they were engaged and quite ready to exterminate all the Englishmen on the west coast of Newfoundland. [Pastore 1978:26]

In an attempt to remove themselves from conflict resulting from the pressure of living in close proximity

to whites and the resulting competition for resources, most of the Micmacs withdrew from the west coast and eventually established their territorial base at Conne River. But here also their lands and their way of life were encroached upon by white men and government regulations. Rich timber and wildlife resources in the area of Baie d'Espoir were desired by whites and increasingly regulated by government (Pastore 1978:27).

In 1863 regulations were passed which made it illegal to use salmon nets, or weirs, to block rivers, the primary way by which Micmacs took fish. This prohibition reduced the Indians' salmon catch by up to two-thirds. River wardens found the task of regulating Micmac fishing practices to be almost impossible. A warden, Henry Camp, in 1872 complained that "to keep an Indian from spearing salmon, trout and eels I believe you must take his arms off," and that, while the fishery at Conne River had been successful over the past year, there had been problems with "saucy" Indians "who fancy they have almost exclusive rights to the river estuary" (Pastore 1978:27;FNI 1980:49-50).

The Micmacs also came into conflict with white settlers in the interior who began, in the 1870s, to supplement fishing and farming with hunting and trapping. A point of contention between Micmac and white trappers was the latter's tendency to ignore the territorial

boundaries of the Micmacs. Later occurrences of hostility between the two usually were due to a white man encroaching on a Micmac's territory or even his trapline (Jackson n.d.). Micmac trapping territories were first mapped and named by J. G. Millais, an American sportsman, in 1907 and by F. G. Speck in 1914 (Millais 1907;Speck 1922). The larger boundaries of Micmac hunting territory given by both Millais and Speck are in accord with those given by Cormack in 1822. The details of family trapping territories given to Speck and Millais by guides and informants are said to be still accurate today and many remain in use by the same families.

Hunting had always been the primary means of providing sustenance. Trapping was a source for trade goods and, later, credit for the purchase of food staples. The bulk of a family's food supply came from hunting caribou in the autumn, snaring rabbits and partridge, and spearing or netting salmon and eels in the summer months (FNI 1980:69). Men hunted in pairs or sometimes in groups of up to six, utilising any part of the Micmac territory. The catch was divided among them, each usually having five or six carcasses. Upon return to their camp, the meat was divided among all the families (FNI 1980:69).

The greatest and most concentrated threat to the Micmacs came with the opening of the railway and the accessibility which that provided for white hunters, both

settlers and sportsmen, to the interior of the island. The railway line crossed the migration path of the caribou herds from the Great Northern Peninsula to the south western interior. The effect of the railway threatened not only the livelihood of the Micmac, but the existence of the herds themselves.

> Whitemen had hunted caribou for as long as there had been Europeans on the island, but they posed little real danger to the animals as long as the white population was relatively small, and as long as the whitemen kept to the coast. From the middle to the end of the 19th century, the white population doubled and by 1891 it stood at over 200,000. Even a population that large would not have been able to decimate the caribou herds without the existence of the trans-island railway, completed in 1898. Now for the first time large numbers of whites could go right into the heart of caribou country, kill their quarry, then bring it back with them on the train. The slaughter was incredible. The caribou herds went from about 200,00 - 300,000 in 1900 to near extinction by 1930. [Pastore 1978:29]

Caribou was the mainstay of the Micmac diet, but the Micmacs came into greater competition with whites for caribou. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the increased white population and greater accessibility of interior lands prompted government intervention. In 1889 an act was passed by the Newfoundland government "to provide for the preservation of Deer." This act permitted the killing of up to ten caribou between October 1st and February 15th by white and Indian poor men (Pastore 1978:27). Such legislation had little effect on Micmac

hunting practices, but it introduced the possibility of prosecution for actions which formed the basis of their economy.

For the Micmacs, hunting continued to be important but became increasingly difficult, involving longer trips and smaller returns. Regulation and decline of fish stocks and caribou herds, combined with increased white settlement and industrialisation, crippled the Micmac way of life.

FROM 1900 TO MID-CENTURY

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Europeans moved swiftly into the interior of Newfoundland and began altering it for their industrial purposes. Mining and logging became increasingly important, and they had an increasingly deleterious effect on Micmac subsistence patterns. Micmacs were still guiding the many expeditions which were made into the interior, some of which were for knowledge, but more for industrial development.

In 1905 the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company (AND) was formed and received a ninety-nine year timber and mineral lease to lands drained by the Exploits River. Other land in the area was occupied by the Reid Newfoundland Railway Company and the Exploits Lumber Company. In 1905 Mattie Mitchell, an Indian from the Bay

of Islands, was employed by the AND Company as a guide and prospector. He discovered lead-zinc ore on the banks of the Buchans River, but this and other nearby ore bodies were not mined until 1928 when new metal recovery techniques made it economically feasible. Mattie Mitchell also herded reindeer from St. Anthony, on the Great Northern Peninsula, to Millertown, in Baie d'Espoir, a distance of four hundred miles when the AND Company imported them from Lapland in 1908 (Johnson 1967). In 1908 and 1909 the AND Company built dams and reservoirs at Grand Falls on the Exploits River, and this area soon grew into the centre of pulp and paper operations on the island. In the next few years, other pulp mills were established on the Gander, Terra Nova, and Conne Rivers (Rogers 1911:179).

Towns quickly grew up alongside the railway line, the pulp mills and the mines. The Micmac way of life was soon in jeopardy. It had been protected longer than for Indian groups elsewhere in North America because Europeans, interested in the fishery, had no reason to go inland. Because of long term disregard of the interior by Europeans,

> ...it was a reprieve from the fate which overtook all other Indians south of the St. Lawrence. But the Micmacs could not escape their fate, they could only postpone. They would be spared only so long as white Newfoundlanders looked toward the sea for their livelihood. Once the larger society

> turned its attention to the interior, the older way of life was doomed. [Pastore 1978:24]

In the nineteenth century the Micmacs had moved northward after the extinction of the Beothuk and they incorporated interior lands as far as Gander Bay into their hunting and trapping territories. However, aside from the Francis family of Gander Bay (discussed later), permanent settlement by Micmacs in the central area of the island did not occur until early in the 1900s. The development of the logging industry and the railway caused some men to leave Conne River in search of employment. Some moved to central Newfoundland and others returned to the west coast. Whereas the Micmacs had earlier moved east along the southwest coast as far as Baie d'Espoir to avoid contact with whites, their departure from Conne River was toward whites and white industry.

In the late 1880s a sawmill was built on the Gander River where the town of Glenwood is now situated. The railway line came through in 1895 and the town developed as these industries brought in employees. In the first years of the twentieth century, Billy John and Jim John, Micmacs from Conne River, walked to Glenwood to find employment as loggers. Jim John married a Micmac woman who made the journey to Glenwood from Conne River a few years after he did. Most of their ten children and their families still live in Glenwood. Billy John married

a Micmac woman from Gander Bay, and the families of their eight children still reside in the areas of Glenwood and Gander Bay.

Both men established hunting and trapping territories along the North West Gander River and also worked as guides for sportsmen. According to a daughter of Jim John, in her childhood each autumn the family moved to a camp built in her father's hunting territory where they remained until spring. Her father would travel throughout his land alone or with some of his sons, returning periodically to the camp with meat and furs. Although this way of life is no longer possible, the area is still known to, and used by, members of the family, and most of John's sons have worked as guides on the river and Gander Lake.

Gander Bay was settled by English immigrants at least a century before Glenwood's settlement. It was originally used in winters for timber cutting by men from Fogo Island and Greenspond. The first permanent settlers, fishermen and boat builders, arrived in the early years of the nineteenth century.

In 1821, or thereabouts, Charles Francis, a young Micmac from Pictou Landing in Nova Scotia, arrived in Gander Bay. The stories about his arrival conflict, but it is probably safe to assume that he was about twelve years old and travelling with his mother. His mother did

not remain in Gander Bay; either she returned to Nova Scotia or went to the Change Islands north of Gander Bay. It is not known in the community why they came to Gander Bay or by what route. It may have been by sea around the northern coast of the island, or overland from the west coast to Baie d'Espoir and north along the Gander River. Whatever his reasons for coming may have been, he remained in Clarke's Head, Gander Bay, and married a local white woman. The descendants of their seven children now comprise over half the population of Clarke's Head and a significant proportion of Glenwood's population.

Charles Francis worked as a trapper and guide. References to him in records of survey parties suggest that he achieved considerable renown for his guiding abilities. As with the John families of Glenwood, his sons had become familiar with large territories from which they supported themselves through hunting and trapping.

Charles Francis's grand-daughter married Billy John of Glenwood, thus establishing a kinship link between the two communities which still continues. Because of the peculiar circumstances of settlement, there are no kinship ties between the Francis family and the residents of Conne River, other than affinal. However, they are able to trace their lineage back to Cape Breton, and there has been some contact between the Francis families in the two localities. There are kinship ties between Glenwood and

Conne River through the John families and through the Jeddore family, who moved to Glenwood in the 1920s from Conne River.

In addition to the length of time, there are further differences in settlement patterns of Micmacs in Glenwood and Clarke's Head and those in Conne River and Bay St. George. The south and west coasts have been used by Micmacs for centuries, and permanent communities were established on land well known to them. The central region, however, was relatively unknown to them until the nineteenth century. By this time the coastal areas, at least, were already settled by whites. When the Micmacs did establish permanent residence in central Newfoundland, they did so as individuals entering an already functioning, albeit newly established, white economic and social milieu. These communities, almost from their inception, were populated by both whites and Micmacs. They have not been officially or popularly considered to be Micmac settlements, as have been Conne River and some areas of the west coast.

Conne River, although it has not until recently had official status as an Indian community, has appeared as such in various Provincial records for at least the last century. While 'settlements of Micmacs' in Bay St. George are documented in early records, the long history of intermarriage and the limited nineteenth century

knowledge of settlement of the area meant that there were no 'Indian' communities about which the government felt it should be concerned. Conne River, however, received special attention. It was surveyed in order to be set aside as a reserve in 1870 by the colonial government. The reserve has not been recognised by later governments but there has been no legal action to countermand it.[16]

In 1908 Governor William MacGregor visited the settlement of Conne River, and in his report wrote:

> It is not possible to regard the present condition and the prospects of this settlement of Micmacs as being bright. Game, their principal food, is manifestly becoming more difficult to procure; their trapping lands are being encroached upon by Europeans; they are not seamen; and they do not understand agriculture. In the middle of their Reservation a saw-mill has been in operation some years, apparently on the allotment of Bernard John, but without his sanction or permission, and, it seems, in spite of the protests of the community. None of the Micmacs work at this mill. Formerly they cut logs for it, but the trees that grew near the water have, they say, all been used up and there are none left within their reach that they could bring to the water. The saw-mill is thus an eyesore to them, as it is on what they regard as their land, and in defiance of them. [MacGregor 1908:5]

He recommended that the Micmacs be given title to the "reservation" of Conne River and be encouraged to farm as well as trap and hunt.

> With some aid, such as supplies of seed potatoes and a few animals, they could no doubt derive much greater resources than at

> present from agriculture, especially if to that were added a good school for the young. [MacGregor 1908:5]

He does not deal with the question of their right to their trapping lands, although he says that:

> Each man regards his rights to his trapping area as unimpeachable. They are recognized at present among themselves, but they have no official sanction for their trapping lands either as a community or as individuals... [MacGregor 1908:6]

He stresses the danger which would befall the Micmacs and their community as a result of encroachment of white trappers, government and industry unless steps were taken to ensure their rights in Baie d'Espoir. However, his arguments are based on grounds other than aboriginal title.

> [It] may be doubted whether there is a single pure-blooded Micmac on the island today. As an ethnic unit the Micmac can therefore hardly be said to exist here.
>
> At the same time the Micmac community, such as it is, will not, at least for several generations, be absorbed into the European population of Newfoundland. It is at present a separate entity, and as such clearly requires special attention and treatment at the hands of the Administration, for the Reservation families have claims on Newfoundland by light of a century of Micmac occupation, and by virtue of the European blood that probably each one of them has inherited. [MacGregor 1908:7]

Given MacGregor's description of Conne River, it is difficult to imagine that, at that time, the social identity of the Micmacs was at all ambiguous. The

problems they were experiencing came from the conflict between the Indian way of life and the white industrialisation and social relations being introduced. Hence, their "claims on Newfoundland," and their need for "special treatment" derive from their identity and existence as Micmacs. "European blood" and white socialisation were not at issue for them. The special protection which he had recommended, of which clear indications of problems between Micmacs and whites over the course of the previous hundred years had demonstrated the necessity, was not given by the government.

The decline of their traditional economic system was accompanied by a cultural decline in the early 1900s. In part, this change in cultural values was due to the change in economic activity. An increasing number of men became part of the white work force. During the first and second world wars several young men joined the armed forces, returning home with very different attitudes and skills.

Much of the responsibility for the loss of Micmac culture and language is laid on Father St. Croix, the priest of St. Albans for thirty years after his arrival in 1911, in whose parish Conne River was included. His own writings bear out the opinion that he was very hostile to Micmac culture.

> Reuben Louis was chief when the writer came in 1911. Reuben died in 1918. The parish priest then appointed Noel Jeddore to succeed him. There were no frills to the appointment, except to hand over to Noel the gold medal and chain which was the symbol of the office of chief. In 1924 the pastor abolished the office of chief. Since then the Micmacs have got along without a chief. Poor Noel left the settlement in disgrace for his insubordination, for Cape Breton, where he still lives. [St. Croix 1937:286]

Noel Jeddore's "insubordination," according to accounts from Conne River, was to express to Father St. Croix the desire of the community to build a church in Conne River rather than be obliged to assist in the building of one across the bay in St. Albans. Failing to obtain the agreement of the priest, the men of Conne River began building their own church anyway, and therefore "poor Noel" was banished (Jackson n.d.).

St. Croix is also believed to have been responsible for the loss of the Micmac language. He forbade its use, and the language not only began to die out, especially among the younger generation, but shame about speaking Micmac and being Indian was introduced. Another factor must also have been significant in the loss of the language. In the 1921 census approximately one-third of the male heads of households in Conne River are reported as being married to white women. With English-speaking mothers, and fathers who were absent for extended periods of time while trapping or logging, the

children conceivably could begin to lose their familiarity with the Micmac language. The effect of English-speaking mothers in the early years would be reinforced by Father St. Croix and the school system, which used, and permitted the use of, only English (Pastore 1978:29-30).

Until the first quarter of the twentieth century, Newfoundland Micmacs maintained strong links with the Micmacs of Cape Breton. Through intermarriage, participation of the Newfoundland Micmac chief in the Grand Council of Micmac Chiefs on the mainland, and through common celebration of Ste. Anne's Day in Cape Breton, cultural contact acted as a cohesive force for the Newfoundland Micmacs. However, the abolition of the office of chief by St. Croix in 1924, and replacement of the trip to Cape Breton for Ste. Anne's Day with celebrations in Conne River removed the reasons, aside from kinship, for continual contact. As the formalised contact through chiefs and festivities ended, so too did intermarriage decrease. Gradually, all but the most incidental contact was lost, and the isolation to which the Newfoundland Micmacs were then subject hastened the erosion of their culture which new social and economic realities had started.

Although the factors which caused great damage to Micmac culture were present and at work at the beginning of the century, they did not show their full effect until

after the first world war. The search for employment caused some young men to leave Conne River, and some joined the armed forces. Their new expectations and new experiences in some ways were incompatible with the way of life in Conne River.

In the 1930s, fur lost its value and the mainstay of the cash economy for Micmacs was lost. The number of full-time trappers went from twenty-three out of forty-eight employed males in 1921 to two out of fifty-one employed males after the drop in fur prices. By 1945 there were no full-time trappers (Pastore 1978:29). The demise of trapping meant the loss of one of the most important foundations of the social organisation of the Micmacs of Conne River. The interior lands were divided into family territories, and the work itself and inheritance of land drew on, and reinforced, kinship and community solidarity. Trapping required minimal contact with the white economy, and what contact was required was thoroughly incorporated into Micmac ways following centuries of participation in the fur trade. Trapping, with its relationship with fur buyers, was familiar and traditional, and due to its long history as a Micmac activity, was a defined marker of Micmac identity.

During the years of the Depression, there was no source of cash income, and little opportunity for employment of any kind anywhere on the island. Hunting

became of greater importance again as it was the only available means of providing sustenance (FNI 1980:70). After the Depression, logging eventually replaced trapping as the primary source of cash. The structure of independent logging is similar to that of trapping. Both are done individually or in small groups and involve spending relatively long periods of time in the woods, then returning to sell the product - logs or fur - to a buyer who pays in cash or extends credit for purchase of provisions. Neither activity requires an employer/ employee relationship, but both institute a patronage relationship between logger or trapper and buyer.

Although logging is similar to trapping, it did not act on Micmac social and cultural cohesiveness in the same way. Because logging was introduced from the outside, and was conceptually defined as white, it did not have the same legitimacy as a Micmac activity. Through logging Micmacs were introduced to the white economy on its terms, and attitudes had to be altered to accommodate a cash economy which had not been part of the Micmac ethos.

The Second World War had an even greater impact on Conne River than did the first. It provided employment for many young men and signalled the end of the stability of the old ways for the Micmacs as a group.

> [Almost] all of the young men between sixteen and mid-twenties sought to escape the grip of chronic unemployment and poverty by volunteering to serve overseas with the Newfoundland Forestry Unit. Youngsters who had spent their lives in the bush exchanged their moccasins for shoes ("The first pair of shoes I ever owned," said one of them), and were kitted out with uniform and rifle in St. John's, and shipped to Scotland where they remained until 1945. [FNI 1980:71]

What they experienced had such an impact that a complete return to the life they had known was impossible when they returned. They had lost fluency in the Micmac language, had received education, learned trades, and were looking for employment outside of subsistence activities. Many were able to work in the woods as loggers for Bowater Corporation, and many would later find employment on major construction projects in the province, such as the Trans Canada Highway and the Churchill Falls hydro-electric development scheme (FNI 1980:71).

> Their success probably accelerated the breakdown of Micmac values. By the late forties, most of the old people who spoke the native tongue as their first language were dead. The 30-year reign of Father St. Croix was coming to an end. His tenure had weakened the community's allegiance to the Micmac Catholic religion.
>
> Still, the people did not lose sight of their background. Responding to the question concerning racial origin in the last Newfoundland census in 1945, almost everyone answered as Micmac, Micmac-English or Micmac-French. [FNI 1980:71]

As Newfoundland prepared to join Canada, the Micmacs had little left aside from their name. A large

part of their population was permanently settled in Conne River and no longer led a nomadic lifestyle. The remainder were living in communities in western and central Newfoundland as year-round residents, sharing their communities with white Newfoundlanders. No chief was present to unite them and, while ties existed between the Micmacs of Conne River and other communities in Newfoundland and Cape Breton, these were personal ties of kinship with little ability to sustain a language or culture. In Conne River there was no system of community organisation or government which would facilitate petitioning for improvements in housing, community services or local employment.

The Micmacs entered the twentieth century with their culture relatively intact, but before long it had started to disintegrate. Forces of cultural change, in the form of Father St. Croix, the English language and education system, and new economic activities, took their toll on the Micmac way of life.

In short, the first half of the century was for the Micmacs of Conne River, and those elsewhere on the island, "a dark period in the history of the community" (FNI 1980:68). Confederation in 1949 seemed to hold great promise for the future of the province of Newroundland. Was that promise there for the Micmacs?

## NOTES

1. Prior to 1976 there is only one publication specifically concerned with the Newfoundland Micmacs. Information which is available is included in texts as incidental to the primary topic, such as the history of the island (cf. Prowse 1895; Rowe 1977; Rogers 1911; Thompson 1961; Head 1976), history of the churches or missionary activity (cf. Brosnan 1948; Wix 1836; Lynd 1857; Fleming 1958), accounts of journeys across the interior (Cormack 1828; Jukes 1848; Millais 1907; Kennedy 1881), or in ethnographic studies of mainland Micmacs (Wallis and Wallis 1955; Hoffman 1955; McGee 1974,1974a). An extensive discussion of Newfoundland Micmacs is found in J. P. Howley's The Beothuks or Red Indians, but again the Micmacs are peripheral to his main topic (Howley 1915). Frank Speck's Beothuks and Micmacs, published in 1922, is the only full ethnographic and historical account of the Newfoundland Micmacs (Speck 1922).

   Since 1970 when Micmacs began researching and documenting their presence on the island, the topic also became of greater interest to anthropologists and historians. Dennis Bartels and Ralph Pastore have both written several papers and reports on Newfoundland Micmac history (Bartels 1978,1979; Pastore 1977,1978,1978a). Upton has written on the history of the Micmacs in Nova Scotia and in connection with the Beothuks (1977,1979). The Conne River Band Council and the Federation of Newfoundland Indians have prepared several reports for their land claim research and in 1980 published their land claim statement (FNI 1980). Douglas Jackson has a manuscript ready for publication on land use patterns in Conne River (Jackson n.d.).

2. Because this is not a historical study, I have relied on secondary sources for this chapter, primarily Pastore (1978) and Rogers (1911). Considerably more archival material, as yet unpublished, exists in the Newfoundland Archives and in the Archives of Nova Scotia, Canada, France and Britain.

3. Another report which supports the accounts given by Speck and Jukes is the following from 1765:

> The Indians about Nova Scotia and the Gulf of St. Lawrence have frequently passed over to the Labrador, which is thirty or forty leagues, without a compass, and have landed at the very spot they first intended: and even in dark cloudy weather they will direct their course by land with great exactness; but this they do by observing the bark and boughs of trees; the north side, in this country, being always mossy, and the boughs on the south side the largest. [Rogers 1765: 209]

4. Bartels also discusses "the spirit of adventure" which is generally accepted as a motive for European exploration:

> The failure of most North American and European scholars to mention this possibility [for native peoples] can easily be interpreted to mean that Europeans were adventurous, curious, etc., while Indians were not. And it is easy to understand how contemporary Micmac, Maliseets, and other Native Peoples could see this as evidence that most European and North American scholars are ethnocentric. [Bartels 1978:5-6]

5. There were several reasons for the prohibition on settlement in Newfoundland: (1) the English did not see any other valuable resource on the island other than the cod fishery and that did not require use of the land; (2) the Newfoundland fishery also provided good training for sailors required by the Navy; and (3) the merchants of England wished to retain control of the fishery, and did not want a resident population of fishermen in Newfoundland who would be outside their influence. After acceptance of the fact of settlement on the east coast, the new merchant class in St. John's took over from the west country merchants in actively discouraging settlement on the west coast. They preferred to keep settlers close at hand, rather than on the west coast where political disputes between England and France about rights over the coast and the proximity of mainland business interests might jeopardize their position (Rogers 1911:72;Szwed 1966:25).

6. From 1656 to 1675 the future of English colonisation in Newfoundland appeared to be bleak while its value was debated in England. Increasingly strict

regulation of settlement culminated in the 1675 decision to discontinue colonisation. The colonists were to be relocated to Jamaica, St. Kitts and elsewhere, and their refusal to move would mean enforcement of the restriction on settlement within six miles of the coastline. The six mile restriction had been part of the Western Charter of 1634 which had appointed Commissioners of Foreign Plantations. These Commissioners reorganised the allocation of colonial lands and the method of governance in Newfoundland. But, since the arrival of the first colonists, all had lived within a quarter of a mile of the shore, and probably had never even wandered anywhere near six miles inland. Enforcement of the law would have killed colonisation of Newfoundland.

In 1677 a reprieve was given. Because of the presence of Royal Navy convoys meant to protect the seasonal fishery and to levy taxes on goods being transported (and smuggled) through Newfoundland, and also because of the presence of the French at Placentia, the government allowed English colonists to remain. Orders of 1677 suspended those of 1675, and in 1680 the Lords of Trade changed the six mile restriction to a quarter of a mile from the coast. This limit, of course, was still disobeyed, and settlers remained right at the coastline, but infractions were ignored (Rogers 1911:75-85).

7. As stated in the previous note, during most of the seventeenth century England debated the value of the colonisation of Newfoundland. After the establishment of the colony at Cuper's Cove, the next settlement was at Harbour Grace, started by Peter Easton, an English sea captain turned pirate. He came to Newfoundland in 1612 and built a fort at Harbour Grace. In 1617 Sir William Vaughn founded colonies in the area of Ferryland, Fermeuse and Renewse on the Avalon Peninsula. From 1621 to to 1628 George Calvert, Lord Baltimore, purchased land and established colonies on the Avalon Peninsula. In 1637 Sir David Kirke was given rights over Lord Baltimore's colony at Avalon after Baltimore had deserted it. The patent Kirke received prohibited settlement within six miles of the coastline. In 1661, thirty years after Lord Baltimore's death, his patent of the colony of Avalon was declared valid. Soon after that time, petitions for a governor of Newfoundland were made, but it was not until 1729 that the first governor of the island, Captain Henry Osborne, was appointed.

8. The times of occupation and sovereignty are critical to the Micmac land claim. According to the terms established for determining the validity of native land claims and for their negotiation, native groups must be able to demonstrate an official agreement between the Indians and the government, i.e. a treaty, or occupation prior to the establishment of European sovereignty. If 1713 is taken as the date of the establishment of undisputed British sovereignty, the available proof of extensive and continual occupation of the land by Micmacs before that date should verify their claim.

9. The issuance of passports presented an interesting question concerning jurisdiction over the Micmacs. Were they considered to be British subjects after the establishment of British sovereignty, or were they considered to be a separate people? The response by Governor Wilmot to Palliser's request to forbid their travel to Newfoundland was that the Micmacs were citizens of the land and should be able to travel freely within it (Bartels 1978:15). However, the granting of passports when no other settler group had such documents suggests that their status was different and necessitated special provisions.

10. The English did not dispute the French interpretation of their rights on the Treaty Shore and, in fact, provided gunboats for the protection of French interests (Szwed 1966:25).

11. It would appear that Chappel met the same 'versatile Irishman' to whom Rogers refers. Chappel wrote:

> [We] were informed that the Crusoe-looking being, whom we had met with upon first entering the place, possessed a licence from St. John's, to perform the functions of priest. 'He was the only person residing there,' they said, 'who knew how to read!' and he officiated at all the religious ceremonies of both Protestants and Catholics. [Chappel 1818:86]

12. Cormack calls his guide 'Joe Sylvestre,' but the Conne River Micmacs believe his surname to have been 'Joe,' a name still common in Conne River (cf. Penney 1983).

13. Cormack reported ten Indian families along the Great Codroy river, and twelve European families living in the area. He wrote of the settlers:

> The residents of Codroy, and those at the river, with the exception of Parsons [a family in Codroy], and one or two others recently settled there for the sake of the cod fishing, are extremely ignorant and indolent, differing in these respects from the rest of the inhabitants of St. George's Bay.

Szwed quotes a descendant of an early settler, after reading Cormack's opinion, as rejoining: "You'd look 'indolent' too, if some fella came sailing up in fancy clothes!" (Szwed 1966:28).

14. In the absence of more legally binding proof, these records are important as evidence, through public recognition, of Indian ancestry for their descendants in their attempt to gain Indian status.

15. It is interesting that this report, and the one from Buchan in 1812, antedate by at least a decade Cormack's journeys in the area of White Bay in search of the Beothuk. If the presence of Micmacs in the area presupposes the absence of Beothuks, it is possible that the Micmac population in general, including Cormack's guides, knew full well that the Beothuks were extinct, or at least very few in number. Cormack's expeditions were, in that case, truly quixotic.

16. The survey map labels Conne River as an "Indian Reservation." The only non-Micmac resident, a schoolteacher, is granted his property "by chief's permission." The map is in the collection of the Newfoundland Archives.

.3.

## THE NEWFOUNDLAND MICMACS: AFTER CONFEDERATION

Confederation with Canada in 1949 brought many changes for the people of Newfoundland, including the Micmacs. But there were no changes peculiar to the native peoples of the new province due to entry into a country where the Indian Act governed the lives of natives.

Although there is no special provision written into the Act of Union precluding it, the Indians of Newfoundland and Labrador have never had registered status under the Indian Act since Newfoundland entered Confederation. Elsewhere in Canada, the terms of the British North America Act applied at the time of confederation of new provinces with the dominion unless there was an explicit statement of the inapplicability of specific clauses. Newfoundland retained a denominational school system and the right to manufacture coloured margarine under the Act of Union.

In 1947 a subcommittee of the National Convention, the body which considered the various options of jurisdiction open to Newfoundland, submitted a report on provisions available for native peoples if Newfoundland were to join Canada. Provision was made for the application in Newfoundland and Labrador of the Indian Act. Subsequently, this section was deleted from the

final committee recommendations. When confederation with Canada was agreed upon, the conditions of union did not include discussion of registration of natives at all. Joseph R. Smallwood, premier at the time of confederation, said in a radio interview in September 1982 that he had intended that the Indians of the province be given status under the Indian Act, but he had not wanted them to lose the franchise and other rights of citizenship which were not accorded status Indians. However, based on available evidence, it appears that Newfoundland was not inclined to give up control over a part of its population to the federal government. The information that has been found suggests that the federal government, with the policy of assimilation which it held at that time, was willing to ignore its responsibility for native people if the province concurred.[1]

The legal merits of the issue of federal responsibility for native peoples and the applicability of the Indian Act despite the Act of Union are presently before the courts in a case concerning their registration which the Conne River Indian Band Council has brought against the government of Canada. At this time, it is possible only to say that Confederation brought neither the benefits nor limitations of Indian status to Labrador or Newfoundland.

Because Conne River has long been regarded as the centre of the Micmac population and is the only 'designated Indian community' on the island, and also because of its instrumental role in their political organisation, in this chapter I shall concentrate on it. In many ways it is representative of Micmacs in other communities on the island. In the 1950s and 1960s Conne River was a poor and isolated community, with few employment opportunities and with what was left of the traditional subsistence economy rapidly disappearing. The only livelihood to be obtained within the community, aside from welfare, unemployment insurance benefits, pensions and the occasional temporary job, was by trapping and hunting. Until the recent upswing in fur prices, trapping could not provide a substantial income, and hunting was, and is, restricted by numerous game laws which make providing for a family difficult, and strictly prohibit sale of game. Even so, the old ways endured and provided some level of support. Continuation of food distribution practices assured all members of the community a supply of fresh country food (FNI 1980:84).

The search for employment continued to lead young men away from Conne River, and outside experience continued to inject new ideas into the community. Just as veterans of World War II had to go to other parts of the island and Labrador in order to utilise their training,

young men in later years went elsewhere in the province or the mainland. The employment they found at least partially supported members of their families who remained in Conne River. The education which would be of benefit in their work as trappers, guides or wardens was acquired in the bush, although time in the country was limited by the constraints of school. It was in the bush that the Micmac language stayed alive, for it was the language of the country. Men now in their 50s retain some knowledge of Micmac because of this. Girls did not share this life and so did not have similar opportunity to use the language.

After Confederation attendance at school until the age of sixteen was made compulsory. The first school was opened in Conne River in 1908. The first teacher was a woman from the community, of mixed Micmac and white origin, who spoke Micmac and English. All instruction was in English, and children were punished for speaking Micmac, although few could speak more than a few words of English. All teachers for the next fifty years were whites from outside the community and all spoke only English. Grades 1 through 11 were taught in Conne River until 1968 when overcrowding of the school caused the newly instituted school board in Baie d'Espoir to send children in grades 7 to 11 to St. Albans on the other side of the bay where they had to board during the week.

Beginning in 1972, a grade was returned to Conne River each year and additions were built to the school until by 1979 children were able to complete their education through grade 11 in Conne River.

According to a statement made in 1976 by the principal of the Conne River school, of those born between 1938 and 1958, all attended school, but 10% went only as far as grades 1 to 4, 50% went to grades 4 to 6, 20% went to grades 7 to 9, 15% passed grade 10 and either quit or failed grade 11, and 5% (11 of 200 students) successfully completed grade 11. Of the whole generation, 70% are functionally illiterate. Nonetheless these figures represent a great improvement in the level of education compared to the previous generation, those born between 1918 and 1938. Five per cent attained grades 7 to 8, 80% attained grades 2 to 6, and 15% never learned to read and write. Ninety-five per cent are functionally illiterate.

The number of students increased from twenty-three to two hundred from 1948 to 1976. Although numbers and the level of education increased, the quality of education received did not compensate for the loss of traditional knowledge, as is evidenced by the failure and illiteracy rates. While they spent as much time and learned as much as they could in the country, falling fur prices and diminishing game stocks combined with compulsory education until the age of sixteen meant that young men could no

longer follow their fathers into a life on the land. They did not have the requisite knowledge, and the livelihood it could offer was no longer tenable. But formal education equipped them for few alternative occupations. In the principal's words, they "came out of school hardly able to read and write [and not] trained to make a living or be independent in either world."

The jobs most readily available for young men in the 1950s and 1960s for which they were equipped were in logging and construction. Those jobs were relatively plentiful at the time because Newfoundland was expanding its road network, especially with construction of the Trans-Canada Highway, developing hydro-electric projects on the island and in Labrador, and expanding its logging industry. Apart from war veterans, for many of the men who worked on these projects or who left the province for work on the mainland, their departure was the first time they had been outside the Baie d'Espoir area. This fact would later have social and political, in addition to economic, consequences.

By the 1960s Conne River was an isolated, economically and psychologically depressed community of Indians who did not want to be Indian. Their language was dying, there remaining only the elderly for whom Micmac was their first language but who were reluctant to use it. Father St. Croix's thirty year term as parish priest had

diminished their allegiance to Roman Catholicism and, therefore, the Church's ability to act as a unifying force in the community. The provincial education system had taught them to think in white ways but had not taught many of them to read or write with any fluency. Confederation brought new benefits to Newfoundland, but the new province remained poor, and most benefits other than social assistance did not find their way as far as the Indian side of Baie d'Espoir. The old economy based on the resources of the land was no longer able to support the growing population of Conne River.[2] It was further damaged by development of the area. In the 1950s, the government began construction of the Baie d'Espoir hydro-electric project which required flooding of extensive tracts of land which had been part of the Micmacs' hunting and trapping territory. In the 1960s a road was constructed across the interior from Bishop's Falls to Harbour Breton in Baie d'Espoir. It cut across Micmac territory and the migration route of the caribou herds, and provided access into the interior for white hunters (Pastore 1978:30).

The death of the traditional hunting and trapping economy signalled the death of the cultural and spiritual belief systems which were centred on the land and which made the people of Conne River Micmac. Without that, what were they? They were poor Newfoundlanders who were called

'dirty Micmacs' or 'black Indians'[3] by their neighbours in other communities of Baie d'Espoir. Although here I am referring only to Conne River, the situation in communities elsewhere on the island where Micmacs live was similar enough that Conne River may stand as representative. In Chapter 5 I will discuss in greater detail the submergence of Micmac identity and some implications for the recent resurgence of ethnic pride among the Micmacs. I have here merely set the scene which led to political organisation in the 1970s. The attitude toward being Micmac held in the past by the people of Conne River and Micmacs elsewhere on the island can be summed up as: "to call yourself a Micmac is putting yourself pretty low," (Jackson n.d.).

In the first years of the 1970s events transpired which would alter that assessment of what was meant by Micmac identity. The first was the new knowledge imparted to those who left Conne River for the mainland in search of work. There they found that they were different from the majority of the people, that they were Indian. They also gained knowledge and confidence that allowed them, upon their return to Conne River, to begin making changes for the benefit of the community. As Douglas Jackson writes:

> There were always some people in Conne River who, for different reasons, knew something was amiss. On their part the eldest of the

> community...knew and could not help but know perfectly well that they were Micmac for their roots in a proud past made that self-evident. Since the events and changing environment of past decades had alienated those roots, many of the younger generation could not so clearly identify with that tradition. A few though, younger men...had retained an intimate respect for the old people and through them an ingrained image of that tradition. The truth came to others...only once they had ventured to the mainland and there found themselves consistently confronted by the reality of their identity, often treated as someone apart from and lesser than the white man...In these and other cases it took this sort of broader exposure - the mirrored image of themselves thus acquired - to see beyond the insularity and distorted image of Baie d'Espoir. Through this broader experience as well they acquired skills beyond the purely traditional and a confidence in themselves that would help in dealing with the outside world. Such was the case to some degree with those of the middle generation of men who had logged on the Scottish highlands during the war, an experience which could not help but imbue them with some measure of self confidence. [Jackson n.d. names omitted]

They left Conne River, and in Alberta, Ontario and Nova Scotia they met Indians. They encountered people who were recognised as Indians and the stereotyped image of Indian. Those from Newfoundland who looked Indian, that is possessed the physical features commonly ascribed to Indian ancestry, found that they were considered to be Indian. They found, too, that being Indian meant something quite different on the mainland than it did in Baie d'Espoir. While being Indian did not confer exalted status, it did not mean that "one was putting yourself

pretty low" either. There were Indians who took pride in their native identity, despite the stigmatisation, prejudice, poverty and social problems which often accompanied it. The Newfoundland Micmacs returned to Conne River with training and experience in dealing with others and, most importantly, the awareness that being Indian need not be something hidden or forgotten but could be a point of pride. Moreover, they learned that recognition of that identity could bring psychological and material benefits.

For those who went to Nova Scotia, and those in Conne River who stayed in contact with relatives in Nova Scotia, the same point was brought home by different means. We will recall that 'poor Noel' Jeddore was sent off in disgrace to Cape Breton in the 1920s for his disagreement with Father St. Croix. Along with Noel Jeddore and his family, a few other families moved from Conne River. During the intervening firty years, these families had been fully integrated into Micmac communities, becoming status Indians and band members in Cape Breton. Yet many of their close relatives lived in Newfoundland. The inconsistency of this became clear to Conne River people who saw that they were not really Indians other than in a derogatory way. They received no benefits of Indian status, yet their cousins in Cape Breton were recognised as Indians with all benefits

accruing to that, and knew who and what they were.

While discontent was rising and the conviction was growing that there could and should be change in their status, the Micmacs in Conne River did not yet know how to organise themselves in order to obtain the changes and advantages they desired.' They had as yet no experience in negotiating with government or of becoming affiliated with national native organisations. Many also were uncertain of what the cost of such action would be. Initially, there was a great reluctance to join with other native groups and seek status because it was feared that they should be forced to leave Conne River for a government established reserve elsewhere in Newfoundland or in Cape Breton. The terms of the Indian Act were not sufficiently known in Conne River to allay fears of loss of rights and lands.

The solution to problems of strategy and inadequate knowledge came from two quarters. One was the participation of two young men from Conne River in the annual assembly of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians in the spring of 1972. At the meeting they were given the opportunity to explain the circumstances of Micmacs in Newfoundland and to ask for assistance from Cape Breton Micmacs. They were seeking answers to three questions, according to a local newspaper report:

> They wanted to know how to get the Government to recognize the fact that there are Micmacs in the tenth province, how to get Conne River officially recognized as a Reserve, (it was originally surveyed as a Reserve in 1872 but the designation got blurred through the years...), and lastly, how the Indian people living there could organize themselves. [quoted in Jackson n.d.]

Their petition to the assembly received support from Nova Scotia Micmacs and government representatives in attendance. The assembled delegates cabled the DIAND in Ottawa expressing their view that the Micmacs of Newfoundland ought to receive official recognition. A representative of the Indian Claims Commission attending the meeting commented that he "didn't see any reason why the Newfoundland Indians wouldn't be recognized if they wanted to be" (Jackson n.d.).

Armed with support and the promise of organisational assistance from the Union of Nova Scotia Indians, the Conne River delegates returned home with a clearer idea of how to proceed. Their efforts were augmented by the earlier arrival in Conne River of a graduate student at Memorial University of Newfoundland. He had come to Conne River to conduct research, but quickly became personally involved in the newly awakening interest in identity and political action associated with that. He possessed skills in organisation and communication which were lacking in the community and, therefore, could facilitate the process of political

negotiation on which Conne River was embarking.

In May of 1972 elections were held to establish a band council and chief. This council was the first formal community organisation in Conne River since the abolition of the office of chief nearly fifty years earlier. In September of the same year, the Native Council of Canada, representing Metis and non-status Indian groups across the country, made contact with Conne River, desiring to establish a provincial organisation in Newfoundland (Jackson n.d.). To that end, two fieldworkers were hired under the auspices of the Native Council of Canada. They were the anthropology student resident in Conne River and a young Montagnais man from Northwest River in Labrador. Their work in Labrador and Newfoundland over the winter of 1972-1973 led to a conference held at Gander, Newfoundland, in February of 1973 at which the Native Association of Newfoundland and Labrador was founded (Kennedy 1975:7;Jackson n.d.).

The purpose of the newly established organisation, according to its first newsletter, was to put "pressure on the Provincial Government to officially recognize that native people existed in the Province and that they had rights which had been hitherto ignored." The leadership of the organisation came from an elected body of four who made up the Executive Committee and a board of directors representing native communities on the island and in

Labrador. The right to hold office was restricted to "persons of Indian ancestry," but membership was open to Indians and, "should they wish it," Inuit as well (NANL News 1:1[1973]:2). Soon after the organisation was established, it extended eligibility of membership to the settler population of Labrador.[4] By including the settlers, NANL strengthened its position in Labrador by representing three of the four major ethnic groups in the area. Its only competition for representation of the native peoples came from the newly formed Labrador Inuit Association, which had been established in the same year with the assistance of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (Kennedy 1975:4).

NANL had numerical strength and a considerable degree of community support due to the success of a housing improvement programme funded by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation. During 1973 the organisation assessed the quality of housing in native communities in Labrador, and in 1974 they began renovations and repairs on those houses which did not meet acceptable standards. The benefits of improved housing and the local employment generated by this project increased community level support for NANL from those who saw the benefits of membership. However, despite this success, NANL remained, and was seen by Inuit and Settlers as, an association for Indian people and one essentially

controlled from the island of Newfoundland, a matter which became important to the Innu of Labrador.

In June of 1975 NANL changed its name to The Indian and Metis Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (IMANL) (Evening Telegram June 25, 1975). One reason given by the president of the organisation was that:

> ...originally, the Association was called 'Native' because the Labrador Inuit Association (LIA) had not at that time been formed. Now it was formed, the two Associations had agreed that as far as Land Claims was concerned, the LIA would represent all Inuit communities, and IMANL would represent the Indian communities. And, the two Associations would co-operate with regards to any other programs, i.e. Housing. [NANL News 1:7(1975):2]

Another reason given for the name change was the ambiguity of the term 'native,' which could result in misapprehension of the group's purpose; "the term 'native' was deemed to apply to any Newfoundland-born resident and not necessarily those of Indian or Eskimo ancestry" (Evening Telegram, June 25, 1975).

In 1973 the Native Association of Newfoundland and Labrador had pressed for, and obtained, recognition by the federal and provincial governments of Conne River as a "designated Indian community." That new status allowed Micmacs of Conne River to participate in a federal-provincial funding agreement for native peoples of the province.[5] Conne River became eligible for funding from DIAND for housing, economic and community service

programmes. NANL had also lobbied the governments for changes in the administration of the agreement. Administration had been done solely by the two levels of government with no consultation with the native groups.

In 1975 the newly elected president of the IMANL, Marilyn John, submitted a proposal to the federal-provincial committee for changes in its composition. Her proposal was accepted and representation on the committee was altered to include two representatives each from the Inuit, Naskapi-Montagnais and Micmac band councils and two each from the federal and provincial governments. The Micmac News commented on the importance of this change:

> [Program] developments and projects are decided by this committee. There is no other place in Canada where Indian and Inuit representatives have the responsibility or ability to make decisions of this kind...In Newfoundland and Labrador the structure of the Federal-Provincial Committee allows Indian and Inuit representatives to control how funds will be spent. It also gives them the authority to devise and create their own programs, put them in order of priority, decide the amount of funds to be allocated, and distribute the funds. [Micmac News, Sept. 1977]

Elsewhere in Canada, the DIAND has much greater control over the functioning and development of native communities. Band councils are subject to "regional, district and sub-district offices, usually staffed by non-Indian civil servants, [who] control all monies" (Micmac News Sept. 1977).

Although native people in the province suffer serious limitations due to the absence of legal recognition and lack of access to some benefits of status, their ambiguous legal situation could have worked to their advantage. After gaining representation on the federal-provincial funding committee, the potential was there for more direct control by Indian people in governing their lives and deciding on future development of their communities. This arrangement, unsatisfactory as it is in many ways, could have freed them from the bureaucratic constraints of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. However, problems, especially over the past year, between the provincial government and the Conne River Indian Band Council concerning administration of the funds have caused the Band Council to press for direct representation with the federal government only.[6]

There were further structural changes within the native organisations in the province in 1975. The Naskapi-Montagnais Indians of Labrador separated from the IMANL, establishing their own organisation, the Naskapi-Montagnais Innu Association (NMIA). The IMANL was left as the official representative of only the Micmacs of the island.

In April of 1976 the IMANL restructured their organisation and changed their name to the Federation of

Newfoundland and Labrador Indians. Labrador Indians were retained in the title and in the framework of the new constitution in order to leave open the option for them to join the association if they wished. But soon after, Labrador was omitted from the title and the constitution, and the name was again changed to the Federation of Newfoundland Indians. The name change of April 1976 was part of greater changes made in the constitution to ensure membership of bona fide Indians in the province.

> "Something has to be done to strengthen our organisation and make the rest of Canada aware that there are Indian people here," [explained IMANL President Marilyn John]. She went further to explain that ever since the birth of the organisation, there have been numerous requests for membership and assistance from the Native group. At times, the executive of the Association were unsure if these requests were from authentic Indians or from hangers-on. [Micmac News, Apr. 1976:20]

Another way of discouraging 'hangers-on' and increasing the credibility of the organisation decided upon at the general assembly of 1976 was to limit membership to persons of one- quarter Indian ancestry. Marilyn John explained:

> "We want those of one-quarter Indian blood only because we want to be definite of just how many Indians that fit this category are in Newfoundland and also to make our people more aware of our Indian heritage and culture." Prior to the adoption of the one quarter blood by law, it had been estimated there were approximately 800 Indians in the Province but now this figure will probably be cut in half to make it around 400. "We shall

> have to go back and search old church records, statistics of live births, birth certificates, and also interview our older people to find out just who will be eligible for membership." [Micmac News, Apr. 1976:20]

The quarter blood qualification was removed by the next year and replaced by a requirement that potential members demonstrate their eligibility through kinship with a recognised Newfoundland Micmac or with a registered Micmac in Nova Scotia.

The same criteria were utilised when genealogical research began the next year. In 1977 and 1978 genealogies for Conne River were documented for purposes of application for registration as a band under the Indian Act. In 1979 similar research was conducted in central and western Newfoundland. The criteria for initial band registration are, (a) descent from a Nova Scotia registered Micmac, either male or female, or from a person who resided in Newfoundland and is documented in historical sources as Micmac, (b) spouses of persons of Micmac ancestry, their natural and adopted children, and, (c) any person of North American native ancestry resident on the island since 1978.[7] These criteria were accepted by the Department of Indian Affairs for Conne River and the rest of the island, although the Department would commit itself only to registration of Conne River, leaving the decision on the status of Micmacs elsewhere on the

island until after the Conne River band had been established. However, although they gave their agreement in 1979, DIAND has not yet started the registration process for Conne River. Their failure to do so has resulted in a court case being initiated by the Conne River Indian Band Council against the federal government in July 1982.

In 1976 the association decided to terminate membership in the Native Council of Canada, the national representative body of non-status Indian and Metis organisations. "In further strengthening their claim as the true indigenous peoples of Newfoundland," the FNI instead sought membership in the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB), which represents status Indian organisations across Canada (Micmac News Apr. 1976:20).[8] They had applied previously to the NIB for membership but had received no response. They believed that membership in a status Indian body would strengthen their position in negotiations with government by giving them greater legitimacy as Indians who are accepted as such by their peers.

The organisation also decided to move its head office from St. John's to Conne River. While St. John's, as the provincial capital, was more convenient in terms of gaining access to government officials and resources, it provided little opportunity for contact between the

executive of the association and the people whom they represented. By moving to Conne River, "right on Indian land, the Native people will be more knowledgeable on the workings of the Native group" (Micmac News Apr. 1976:20). That move later caused dissension of another sort. Members living outside Conne River believed that the geographical isolation and concentration of organisational power there exacerbated the difficulties of adequate representation of the more dispersed Micmac population in western and central Newfoundland. Being a designated Indian community which gave it assistance not available to Micmacs elsewhere, having the head office of the FNI, and having the largest concentration of Micmac people, gave Conne River an unfair advantage in allocation of funding and services.

Although the possibility of moving the head office from Conne River to somewhere in central Newfoundland had been discussed at subsequent general assemblies, the idea was not seriously entertained until other circumstances forced a move. With the election of Calvin White as president in 1980, the head office was moved to the former regional office in his home community of Flat Bay in Bay St. George. Until Mr. White's election, the president had been required to live in Conne River for the two year duration of his term of office. This practice had not yet caused any serious problems for the person elected because

past presidents either had been from Conne River or able to make the move with little disruption to their lives. But in 1980 the existence of a satisfactory office building already operating in Flat Bay made shifting the organisation easier than shifting the president. The Conne River office remained in operation as a regional office with the vice-president in residence until the spring of 1983 when it moved to Glenwood. There is no longer any FNI representation in Conne River.

The FNI has at present a membership of approximately four hundred. There are active local councils in Flat Bay-St. Theresa's, Port au Port, Corner Brook, Benoit's Cove and Bartlett's Harbour in the western zone, Glenwood and Gander Bay in the central zone. Each local council is headed by a chief, and the chiefs comprise the Board of Directors along with the provincial executive members of the FNI. The local councils have a degree of autonomy in their daily activities but maintain contact with the provincial executive and each other through monthly meetings of the Board of Directors. Annual general assemblies bring the board of directors, executive, community delegates and general membership together for three days of meetings at which larger policies are decided upon and reports of the year's activities are made.

Funding of the FNI comes from the Department of the Secretary of State through the core funding part of their native programming. Core funding provides for operating costs of office space and equipment, permanent staff, administration and travel. Funding for other projects, such as research, community services and recreation, comes primarily from other programmes of the Secretary of State.

Administration and funding of projects goes through different channels in Conne River than in the communities where the FNI is the sole representative of the Micmac people. There is a band council in Conne River which, as an incorporated body, is able to petition for and allocate funds without aid of any other organisation. Conne River Native Enterprises is an economic development body which has attempted to create industry and employment in the community. Its most long-standing undertaking has been a sawmill which it operates in conjunction with the band council. The sawmill, when operating, employs over fifty men from Conne River as loggers, mill crew and equipment operators. It has had an enormous impact on the viability of the community. According to band council estimates, it has caused unemployment in the community to drop significantly.

> According to a survey done by [the band council] in 1973 fully 84% of the families in Conne River were subsisting on less than $400

> month, 47% on less than $300. In contrast, the individual sawmill employees now earn between $650 and $1,000 a month. Dependence upon government relief, hitherto pervasive, has declined dramatically. Between 1971 and 1977 the monthly average of families collecting short term and long term assistance dropped by 50% and 33% respectively. A government contracted social and economic impact study of the sawmill concluded that, 'with the current economic revival, based on the sawmill, Conne River has begun to recover her pride and self respect. For many men the sawmill has provided them with their first opportunity to live and work at home, to provide a decent standard of living for their families.' [Jackson n.d.]

The sawmill has had problems outside its control. It is an independent mill and must find its timber resources outside the huge tracts which belong to two pulp and paper corporations, Bowaters and Price. Other small local mills are also in competition with Conne River for the remaining timber lands. These receive subsidies from the provincial government, whereas the Conne River mill receives federal funds. The different sources of funding and possibly inequitable treatment between the mills has caused disputes between the Conne River mill and the provincial forestry department as well as with the competing mills. Other problems result from financing of the mill. It was not open in 1982, and remains closed, because of the dispute between the provincial government and the band council over the federal-provincial native funding agreement.

Aside from employment provided by the mill and garage, and temporary employment on band council, there is no other large industry to further lower the still high unemployment rate. When the mill is closed, unemployment rates soar. The policy of the mill has been to hire men with large families, by which a greater number of people will benefit. But for the most part, young men, and most women, are still forced to leave the community if they wish to find regular employment. The re-opening in 1981 of the Micmac Arts and Crafts created employment for approximately ten women in making dufflework clothing, moosehide and caribou jackets, vests, gloves and small bags.

A traditional source of income has been revived in recent years. Trapping provides both a living and a sense of maintaining a culture for the approximately thirty Conne River men who form the membership of the Newfoundland Micmac Trappers' Association (NMTA). According to its constitution the objectives of the group, which was incorporated in 1978, are to lobby for protection and promotion of "the traditional and customary interests of Indian people in wildlife resources," for wildlife management, conservation and protection of their habitat. They also see their role as "an educational and resource body" in disseminating information on fur bearing animals and "in encouraging proper harvesting, preparation

and marketing of furs." They may provide "legal assistance to members in those cases deemed appropriate," when contravention of game laws occurs. "All full members are bound by their cultural heritage. Each is committed to obey the traditional customs." Funding under the federal-provincial agreement has allowed the men to be outfitted with new trapping gear, and has provided funds which allow the organisation to act as a resource base.

With the assistance of the band council and the FNI, they have continued to pressure the government for changes in the game laws which would free them from restrictions which impede continuation of a Micmac style of hunting. Their success, however, has been somewhat limited. Seasonal and quota restrictions diminish the utility of time spent on the country, and the Micmacs feel that their traditional system of resource conservation is tenable in itself without need of white regulations.

> That apparent recognition of a special interest informally acknowledged in earlier years, it seems, has been withdrawn by the government. Local wardens have been noticeably more zealous in their enforcement. Now, in this age of airborn wardens, "you just don't feel free on the country anymore" complains [one veteran trapper]. [Jackson n.d.]

The trappers, more than any other group, are trying to make their culture survive and be economically viable. Especially since Confederation, the Micmacs have been trying to enter successfully into a wage economy, but

trying to do so without completely losing their culture and their identity. In the activities of the trappers, that contradiction between survival of body and survival of culture is most clearly demonstrated and it is here that it must be resolved.

The trappers face contradictions of many kinds. An association formalizes the father-son teaching relationship. For some of the young men, the trappers' association is perforce their father, because their fathers gave up trapping long ago. The association provides a means of educating the young. However, an incorporated body is not a part of traditional Micmac culture; a father who teaches by working with his son is.

The government licensing system restricts hunting by season and limits numbers of hunters, areas used, and the amount of game which may be taken. The carrying of guns is forbidden with a trapping license, in order to protect pelts and discourage poaching of big game. But this restriction goes against the customary practice of Micmacs who do not recognise a distinction between hunting and trapping, traditionally doing both at the same time. The licensing system also does not allow for adherence to traditional trapping territories.

> By law beaver are managed under a special license, while all other species may be taken with a general trappers license. Any individual wishing to trap beaver must apply to the province's department of wildlife for

> the required license. If successful he will be assigned a particular management area, hopefully but not necessarily in the area of preference he indicated on the application. While to date no one in Conne River has been refused, the local warden has confined the licenses issued exclusively to the 'east country' as a matter of policy, reserving those management areas to the west to non-Native trappers. Consequently Micmac families traditionally associated with the 'west country' have been prevented from returning to their respective territories. Several have accepted licenses to the east, but reluctantly, for the age old obeyance to tenure by family territory remains strong in their minds. "You just don't feel right on someone else's country" complains...one current trapper thus affected. Meanwhile, the resident families, though sympathetic, are somewhat resentful of the intrusion. Even if, as the warden insists, the game stocks in the east are more than sufficient to support the needs of Conne River, an opinion many question, the restriction nonetheless poses a conflict for all, a clear contradiction of tribal law. [Jackson n.d., names omitted]

Other problems stem from factors more external to trapping than game restrictions and cost of equipment. Game stocks are not sufficient to support many trappers. Increased industrial development and population continue to decrease the numbers of small and big game. Provincial and logging roads continue to open new areas of the interior to white hunters in vehicles. Flooding of great expanses of the Salmon River network in Baie d'Espoir for hydro-electric dams will certainly damage the land and aquatic wildlife populations as well as put under water a large part of the Micmac hunting territory.

Not only can the Micmacs no longer feel free on the country, it is no longer theirs, and much of it is disappearing, either under water or for the expansion of industry. "We do not measure a man by his command of the country, the skills and knowledge that entails. In Conne River they do, as their heritage dictates" (Jackson n.d.). What will happen to that heritage if the land is forfeited and their skills are lost? The Micmacs ask for "freedom to live our own way in our own land," and they imbue that land with their identity. Yet for many reasons, they have become alienated from it, and it from them.

## NOTES

1. During the two weeks following September 29, 1947, the section which dealt with the Indian Act was removed, reintroduced, and then pencilled out in three different versions of the National Convention subcommittee report. No decision was made by the time of Confederation, and it was agreed to establish an Interdepartmental Committee on Newfoundland Indians and Eskimos which could "more appropriately" discuss the matter "subsequent to Union." This committee sought an opinion "as to the precise legal extent of the federal government's responsibility insofar as Indians and Eskimos residing in Newfoundland and Labrador are concerned" from the federal Department of Justice. In the reply of April 14, 1951, the Justice Department said, "It is the responsibility of the federal government to formulate and carry out all policies that are directed at dealing with Indian or Indian problems [sic]." [Public Archives of Canada: Claxton Papers, Min. of Justice, Min. of Mines and Resources, 1949-1951]

2. The population of Conne River has been steadily increasing since the 1920s and 1930s, when tuberculosis caused a drastic increase in the mortality rate of the community.

3. 'Black' is a descriptive word of multiple meanings in Newfoundland. All of its meanings, however, connote strangeness or difference; 'black Protestants,' 'black stranger,' 'black Indian.' It also refers to physical appearance - those with dark complexions are called 'black.' One woman told me about her family: "I've got six kids, three white and three black."

   The Dictionary of Newfoundland English includes in its definition of 'black,' "2. In designations of Protestants atrocious, disliked (as belonging to an opposing or conflicting group); in phr 'black stranger': not of or 'belonging to' a community... 3. Touchy; moody; dangerously quarrelsome or pugnacious" (Story 1982:46).

4. Settlers are the result of intermarriage and co-existence in Labrador for almost two hundred years of Inuit, Indians and Europeans. Their lifestyle is neither native nor European, but rather has developed in a distinct manner as "a cultural accretion

transitional between both extremes" (Kennedy 1975:2, cf. 1981).

5. The first federal-provincial native funding agreement, instituted in the 1950s, concerned only health care. A general federal-provincial native funding agreement which included social services, housing, and education previously had form only as an exchange of letters between the premier of Newfoundland, J. R. Smallwood and Prime Minister Lester Pearson dating from May of 1965. Initially it included only the Naskapi-Montagnais Indians and the Inuit of Labrador. The Micmac community of Conne River was not included until 1973. In 1981 the agreement was formalised as a contractual document, but disagreements between the Labrador native associations, the Micmacs and the two governments over the allocation of funds resulted in the signing of separate documents to Labrador Indians and Inuit, and the Micmacs. Under the terms of the agreements, funds from the federal government are transferred to the provincial government, which then administers services and funding requirements for the designated native communities.

6. Events of this past year suggest that the drawbacks brought about by the bureaucratic rigidity of the federal-provincial native funding committee and the perceived unwillingness of the provincial government to participate fairly in the agreement have outweighed the advantages of being outside the direct purview of the DIAND. Close to one million dollars allocated to Conne River has been held back by the provincial government because of a dispute between the Conne River Band Council and the government over the administration of the funds.

   In April 1982 the provincial government refused to release the federal money to Conne River, and for a year the community was without all funding. The issues contested were the government's accountability for $67,000 which it keeps for administration, control over the spending of the money, and the government's attempt to make release of the funds contingent on conditions outside the terms of the funding agreement. In the last week of April 1983, after all negotiation efforts had failed, the Micmacs occupied the offices of the Department of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development in St. John's. After being forcibly removed by police, nine band members staged a hunger strike. A week after they

began, the provincial and federal governments reached an agreement with the band council and the money for the 1982-1982 fiscal year was released.

7. "Recognised Newfoundland Micmac" refers to a person documented in European records by name and as being Micmac. For example, census data or government reports which give information on the order of "Charles Francis, Micmac guide from Gander Bay."

   The present terms of eligibility for Indian status refer to initial registration only. After the initial band list is compiled, the Indian Act as it stands will subsequently apply.

8. The National Indian Brotherhood since the summer of 1982 has been known as the Assembly of First Nations.

.4.

## ETHNICITY AS COMMUNICATION

If a vase shatters, it may be mended, but however invisible the repair, the vase becomes one-which-has-been-broken-and-repaired. That is, it is no longer simply an object; it is a recreation of itself. Knowledge - of objects or of self - is also both object and recreation. Anthropologists have dealt with the question of how one knows and what one knows, both from the perspectives of 'analyst/subject' and 'subject/subject.' How does one know he is a member of a culture: how does the anthropologist know when he has finally understood why the X people do thus-and-such and why the X think they do it. Knowledge may be unreflexive - 'we do it because we have always done it' or 'they do it because it fulfills this need.' Reflexive knowledge is the understanding of the relationship between 'self' and 'other,' history and present. Clifford Geertz calls this process 'deep interpretation' or 'thick description'; Kurt Wolff calls it 'surrender and catch'; Hans-Georg Gadamer calls it the hermeneutic circle.[1] In reference to historical understanding, Gadamer writes:

> The naivety of so-called historicism consists in the fact that it does not undertake this reflection, and in trusting to its own methodological approach forgets its own historicality...True historical thinking must take account of its own historicality. Only

> then will it not chase the phantom of an historical object which is the object of progressive research, but learn to see in the object the counterpart of itself and hence understand both. The true historical object is not an object at all, but the unity of the one and the other, a relationship in which exist both the reality of history and the reality of historical understanding. A proper hermeneutics would have to demonstrate the effectiveness' of history within understanding itself. I shall refer to this as 'effective- history'. Understanding is, essentially, an effective-historical relation. [Gadamer 1976:266]

Bob Scholte applies this concept of understanding to develop a framework for anthropological understanding:

> Neither the possibility nor the desirability of a transcendent, purely scientific anthropology can or should be taken for granted. We must first subject anthropological thought itself to ethnographic description and ethnological understanding and try to determine the degree to which it is circumscribed or made possible by its diverse cultural settings. [Scholte 1974:437]

A self-reflexive anthropology must understand its own history in order to understand how it studies others. Knowledge of self then relates to the understanding of 'other' in order to attain "an essential part of ethnography" which is "to learn, and formulate, what others already in a sense know" (Hymes 1974:53). This does not produce duplication, or reiteration, of knowledge, but rather meta-knowledge which is reformulation of knowledge on another plane. In the dialectical negativity of philosophical hermeneutics, this

is the beginning of true knowledge. Kurt Wolff presents this view of the attainment of knowledge through a story by Heinrich von Kleist, "On the Puppet Theatre":

> "...What advantage would this puppet have over living dancers?..."
> "Such mistakes [as human dancers make]...are unavoidable ever since we have eaten from the tree of knowledge. But paradise is bolted, and the cherub is behind us; we must make the trip around the world and see if it is perhaps somehow open again at the back." ...when knowledge has gone through an infinitude, as it were, grace re-emerges, so that it appears in its purest form in that frame of the human body which has either no consciousness at all or an infinite consciousness--that is, in the puppet or in the god."
> "Thus," I said, a bit distracted, "we should have to eat once more of the tree of knowledge to fall back into the state of innocence?"
> "Exactly," he answered. "That is the last chapter in the history of the world."
> [Wolff 1974:112]

In the second eating from the tree of knowledge, or the development of reflexive and critical knowledge, Wolff sees the hope for western society, and for social science. Humanly radical anthropology, in Wolff's terms, is the pursuit of a hermeneutic understanding of the others which are studied - an understanding of the essential 'worth' or 'value.' He explains it thus:

> The student of the Hopi must seek 'hopiness'; the anthropologist, in general, must seek what corresponds to 'hopiness' in any 'culture' he may wish to study. To say that this conception of anthropology is humanly radical means to stress the injunction inferable from Dorothy Lee's writing, namely, that the student of man get at the root of

> man as it has grown (or grew, or is growing) in a given culture; as it is mediated by this culture, for it is never found ungrown, unmediated; and it is this grasp of a unique growth which is the grasp on man's root, that is, of the universally human. [Wolff 1974:103, emphasis in original, notes omitted]

'Politically radical' anthropology does not necessitate 'the suspension of received notions,' rather it may use its own 'received notions' of what is politically good in combination with the political notions of the people being studied in order to aid them in effecting political and social change. Wolff compares the two:

> [The] difference [between the two radicalisms] lies in what our authors do not even perceive as relevant to their tasks, hence in what they neither work with in traditional fashion nor suspend. This - greatly oversimplified - is politics in the case of the humanly radical anthropologists, with which Gough, on the contrary, is concerned; and in Gough's case, the relation of the student to the people he studies, which is in the forefront of Radin's, Sapir's, Benedict's, and above all Dorothy Lee's attention. Yet again, for one who seeks an anthropology more adequate to this time, more commensurate with it, neither difference is nearly as pertinent as is the fact that both radicalisms, variously and unevenly indeed, do go beyond received notions: this is what humanly radical and politically radical anthropology share. To become aware of it calls for pleading with the former that it recognize the relevance of politics; with the latter, that it recognize that of the relations between student and persons studied; and with both, that they practice the maximal suspension of received notions. [Wolff 1974:109]

It is not only social scientists who are concerned with the uniting of theory and praxis - with understanding the 'hopiness' of those they study, and using that understanding to assist those people in achieving pragmatic ends. Often, the 'subjects' themselves are also concerned with the theory and praxis of politicising their culture. The explication of their peoplehood may be socially motivated (to alter their conditions of existence) or culturally motivated (to maintain their group-identity and separateness), or these two may be intertwined and acting on and for each other. The models of understanding in anthropology used by Wolff, 'humanly radical' and 'politically radical' may also be applicable to political development of ethnic group identity. In this case, members of the group are both 'anthropologist' and 'native.' The two models, which work in conjunction, could be differentiated as 'renaissance' and 'revitalisaton.'

Renaissance is concerned with the deep level of culture - the intrinsic 'hopiness' of a people made explicit to themselves. It is, one could say, Tylor's "complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a society" after the people have for a second time "eaten of the tree of knowledge"; a consciousness of what binds the group together and sets it

apart from others. Cultural renaissance depends less on what one is doing than on **why** it is being done and if actions (or values) contribute to the 'inner harmony' of the culture (Sapir 1966:90).

Revitalisation is the articulation of renaissance: it is the strategies, whether political, social or cultural, by which a culture is recreated. In the case of the Micmacs, revitalisation refers to their political organisation of the 1970s, political and legal actions such as land claims and registration, and economic, social and cultural activity such as development of local industry, housing repair programmes, and craft development, along with all the political and personal conflicts which may be engendered by these.

The pragmatic action of revitalisation is placed in a larger cultural context of Micmac identity and history. Short-term benefits gained by employment or housing repair programmes are to be understood to have a greater benefit in creating circumstances conducive to the survival or adaptation of traditional Micmac culture traits and solidarity of the group. Revitalisation, therefore, is the mechanics of renaissance, which transforms an ethos into practicality. Renaissance provides a cultural rationale for pragmatic action by using history and tradition to unite 'what they were' with 'what they are' and 'what they want to become.'

Renaissance is an observable process; revitalisation is concerned with observable events. This study focusses on revitalisation although, obviously, the underlying issue is Micmac renaissance. The synthesis of the movement between interpretation and action, revitalisation and renaissance, does not return them to what they were. Ideally, a new cultural formulation is created, which continues the interpretative circle in response to changing circumstances yet retains its reflexive link with its past. The culture is a shattered and repaired vase - it is changed yet remains a product of its historical self.

In this chapter I will examine the ways in which the historicity of knowledge and understanding, as seen by Hans-Georg Gadamer, and the role of communication in interpretation of meaning, as understood by Jurgen Habermas, are relevant to understanding the development of politicised and self-conscious ethnic identity. The Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas draws on the philosophical hermeneutics of Gadamer (cf. 1975,1976), and in order to briefly explicate both of these theoretical frameworks I will summarize the social and linguistic theories of Habermas, then develop the relevance of his work to the study of ethnicity. The second task will be done through use of examples drawn from the recent history of Canadian native political activity.

In order to explain adequately Habermas's own work, it is first necessary to place it in its philosophical history. Ronald Schwartz writes:

> The attitude of Critical Theory toward tradition has been dictated by the understanding that real theoretical knowledge in sociology, as distinct from ideology, must necessarily reflect the practical intention to effect social change...In one sense, it belongs to the Marxist heritage, where the critique of ideology was first elaborated as part of a larger programme of human emancipation. But the roots of this attitude also go deeper, tapping the intellectual resources of the Enlightenment, whose advocates saw reason as a weapon against unreasoning tradition and for whom the institutions of the past were irredeemably discredited through a history of oppression and unjustifiable domination. [Schwartz 1979:1].

One of the hallmarks of Critical Theory is that theory is inextricably linked with praxis: that theory which cannot be transferred into action for the benefit of mankind is useless. But human benefit has been seen as requiring progressive change. The past, while necessary to understand the present, is not to be emulated, and tradition is to be resisted. However, many of the recent social movements have been attempts to protect tradition and heritage from the onslaught of technocractic development and progress. Given that scenario, which of two avenues may be considered socially beneficial by a Critical Theorist: the progress of technology and industry, or the tradition of the opposition? The problem

is especially clear in regard to the political actions of native groups in North America, for they are fighting to preserve their cultural traditions or even to take a step backward to return to their old ways. Yet these actions must be seen as radical, and progressive, in that the native groups are struggling for autonomy and for human control of technology.

Schwartz makes the leap from the Marxist basis of Habermas's theory to native political movements through Habermas's notion of discourse. The call upon tradition and history, he states, is a way of establishing equality of discourse between native groups and white governments and society.

Another way of resolving the difficulty may be through a critique of the faith in modified (Hegelian) progression which forms the basis of much traditional Marxist thinking, and can be traced back to the influence of Lewis Henry Morgan. Rather than seeing 'tradition' only in the arguments of the native groups, one can also see the 'tradition' of capitalism and Christianity as motivation for North American society and government. The problem then becomes one of opposing traditions instead of a false dichotomy between tradition and progress.

These two are in no way contradictory and can be more useful when joined. Two traditions are attempting to maintain their balance with each other, but also their

individual integrity. To do this each relies on its history of peoplehood and on discourse with the other in order to validate and gain acceptance of that history.

A concept central to this understanding of tradition, and also to the theory of Jurgen Habermas, is found in the philosophical hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer. It is the concept of effective history, the way in which the present is formed by and yet reformulates what went before it. In the dialectics of Gadamer's hermeneutics, the past and the present are constantly checking each other and accrete layers of meaning to each. A person is a result of his or her effective history; all that has gone before in the life of the individual and the culture in which he or she is born creates the person. It is a continuing process through which new experiences and changing events become a part of the history and thereby enter the interplay between past and present. It is the continuity, and cyclical nature, of tradition which provides the basis of meaning.

> Hermeneutics must start from the position that a person seeking to understand something has a relation to the object that comes into language in the transmitted text and has, or acquires, a connection with the tradition out of which the text speaks. On the other hand, hermeneutical consciousness is aware that it cannot be connected with this object in some self-evident unquestioned way, as is the case with the unbroken stream of tradition. [Gadamer 1975:261]

This means that one must be familiar with the historical and cultural circumstances of a text, but sufficiently removed from it to see it, and one's own connection to it, clearly, thus allowing interpretation.[2]

In order to understand the author of a text, in terms of textual hermeneutic analysis, it is necessary to understand him through his history, the context of his writing and his life, and the cultural traditions of which he was a part. If the text is distanced from the analyst by time, but is a part of the analyst's own culture, its contribution to the culture and, therefore, to the effective history of the analyst, must also be considered. If the text is from another cultural tradition, the analyst must have some knowledge of and empathy for the history and traditions of that culture. Literary analysis in a historical or cultural vacuum, as advocated in the reconstructivist hermeneutics of Wilhelm Dilthey, is in Gadamer's opinion neither possible nor desirable.[3] On the difference between the 'reconstructivist' hermeneutics advocated by Dilthey and the 'demystification' of Gadamer's hermeneutics, Paul Ricouer writes:

> According to the one pole, hermeneutics is understood as the manifestation and restoration of a meaning addressed to me in the manner of a message, a proclamation, or as is sometimes said, a kerygma; according to the other pole, it is understood as a demystification, as a reduction of illusion.

> Psychoanalysis, at least on a first reading, aligns itself with the second understanding of hermeneutics. [Ricouer 1970:26]

Hermeneutics is the basis of the methodology of understanding in Habermas's work. The interpretative process is necessary to understanding in both the analyst/analysand relationship and within the self, in making sense of one's own actions.

Habermas divides action into two types: instrumental and communicative. Instrumental, or technological, action is directed toward an object with the intent of altering or controlling it. It is empirically observable and measurable. Communicative action is subjective thought expressed symbolically through speech or action. Its intent is not domination of external forces, but the communication of internal meaning. There is, therefore, no external and observable change which can be tested. Its understanding requires subjective interpretation to uncover the layers of meaning embedded in the message, in which the "text" is understood in the social and historical context of its author and the interpreter (Habermas 1971:IV:26-31). This is similar to the "deep interpretation" methodology of Clifford Geertz, in which the ethnographer attempts to get to the bottom of the "turtles on turtles" which comprise a culture (Geertz 1973:28-29).

Habermas illustrates the hermeneutic process by using the paradigm of psychoanalytic interpretation of dreams. Dreams can be studied as a model of individual systematic distortion of meaning (Habermas 1970b). In literary and philosophical hermeneutics, interpretation is placed within a historical dimension in which distortion and omission in the text are historical accidents. The abstruseness of meaning may be random and causally unrelated to the content of the text. However, if dreams are regarded as recondite texts, distortion is a deliberate displacement and symbolisation of painful experiences and sanctioned desires. The need to repress that which is not socially tolerable causes the 'author' of the dream to alter his or her own creation. The episodic psychological history of the client/author in dreams is given a symbolic form which disguises and represses the real events, yet provides partial release for the emotions. The patient in psychoanalysis has successfully mystified his or her history by symbolisation but has failed to achieve resolution of the problem. Therapy in its ideal form is demystification, a retracing of the steps through reflexive reconstruction of life events to unveil the obstacle - the moment or sequence of traumatic repression.

The role of therapist is one of facilitator. The client must understand and correct the cause of his or her

anxiety. Professional judgement, however accurate, cannot 'cure' a patient but can only assist through direction or speculative explication of meaning. The theoretical generalised intrepretation of universal psychological process may be provided by the therapist, but the client alone must particularise the general framework to his own situation.

Habermas utilises Freud's analytic relationship between general interpretation and particular internalisation to develop a framework of interaction between two levels of interpretation in his theory of communication. Interpretation of speech, action or thought is both universal and specific. Communicative action by an individual is interpreted in light of universals of thought or linguistics, cultural traditions and history, and the social milieu of the individual. But without knowledge of the particularities of the social context, the act may be unintelligible to the observer (cf. Ricouer 1970).

In the individual act of speaking to another, the communication is underpinned by the 'universals' of form. By speaking, the speaker establishes a relationship with the listener, the success of which depends on their adherence to definite, but usually implicit, rules of conduct. These rules are based on validity claims, claims of truth of intention and substance which must be accepted

by both parties if discourse is to proceed.

Discourse, in a dialectic of statement and counter-statement, is a central theme in Habermas's theory of communication and, I would argue, in the establishment of ethnicity. Discursive examination and justification of validity claims of the speaker is necessary for the evaluation of motivation and opinion. Because communication occurs in a social context, both individual and societal belief systems must be able to withstand discursive examination (Habermas 1971:V).

'True discourse' must meet the demands placed on it by these claims to validity. They include comprehensibility of the language, veracity of the proposition, legitimacy of the speaker's right to speak and of his intentions, and equality of position and power (Habermas 1971:VI). If these prerequisites to true discourse are not satisfied, all communication is falsified. 'Distorted communication' can be rectified only by delving into the usually implicit area of rules of speech and intentions of the other.

The first requirement, comprehensibility of language, refers to the need for both speaking partners to be equally conversant in whatever type of language is employed. At a practical level, be it a foreign language for one speaker, a technical or specialised language, terminology particular to a profession or philosophy, or

simply levels of literacy, if one person is less fluent than the other, he is placed at a disadvantage. This is not to suggest that valid communication cannot occur at all in such a situation, but that both partners must be aware of the linguistic imbalance and compensate for it.

The implications of the second requirement, veracity of the proposition, are obvious. If the discourse is to be valid, the speaker must be confident that, to the best of his knowledge, the statement he makes is accurate and truthful. If a statement is untrue, either by design or oversight, statements in response to it are relevant only to a false issue and, therefore, are equally distorted.

Legitimacy of the speaker's intentions and right to speak is the third requirement. The question is: is this person being honourable in his intentions to convey a message to me, and does he have the knowledge and right to speak intelligently on this topic? If statements are formed with ulterior motives, claims to legitimacy are discredited. If a speaker has neither the knowledge nor right to speak on a particular topic, the speaker and his statements lose credibility.

The final requirement, equality of power and position, is perhaps the most pertinent to ethnicity. Imbalance of power results from two structural situations. The first has been discussed above as comprehensibility

of language. Where there is not equal fluency, and no compensation for this, the more linguistically competent person holds greater power. The second situation of inequality is the more insidious, for its roots lie outside the communicative act. If one party has greater social power than the other, communication may occur, but it will be distorted. Power may be physical or mental, political or legal, but, whatever its basis, it gives one person the ability to sanction expression of the other person's thoughts. One of the most obvious examples is given by Martin Luther King, Jr. in discussing the southern American white belief that their Negroes were happy: "I discussed this frankly with the colored boy who works for us and I told him to express himself freely. He said..." (King 1963:28). When the imbalance derives from societal power held by one, it is difficult to remedy, for radical reordering of the social position of the participants is required. Due to the inherent inequalities in our society, Habermas contends that true discourse remains an unrealised ideal.

The requirements for discourse, and the schema of communication, are also found in Habermas's social theory. However, true discourse is perhaps more illusory at the social than at the personal level. In western society, status distinctions, power imbalance and the ideology which masks the inequalities irrevocably distort all

public communication. Although he is pessimistic about the potential of truthful communication between the people and governments of our states, Habermas does see the possibility for its change in the structure of inequality. He argues that there is a fine line which must be maintained between conditions of existence and ideology. The effectiveness of western ideology is dependent on economic well-being and relative distribution of power. Equilibrium between the two is necessary to the maintenance of continued harmony. If either ideology or material existence falters, the resulting gulf between expectations and reality may cause a crisis of validity. Habermas categorises social crises in three types: crises of rationality, crises of legitimation, and crises of motivation (Habermas 1975:61-92).

Crises of rationality originate in the infrastructure of society, when production cannot satisfy demand. During periods of economic instability, the discrepancy widens between expectations and the actual economic condition of the populace. When disappointed expectations can no longer be ameliorated by belief in the ideology, social disintegration or rebellion may occur. For example, economic opportunities in many Canadian Indian reserves are either nonexistent or inadequate, and the land itself is often too poor to support its population. Sociological studies and political activity

on reserves bear out the probability of consequent social disintegration (alcohol abuse, instability of family units) and rebellion (political organisation, protest).

Legitimation crises are founded in the sphere of government as mediator between industry and consumer. They result from apparent conflicts between the ideology and the action of political powers. As purveyor of industrial ideology, the government conjoins productive forces with political and socio-cultural values. The value system and the right of government to its authority claims must be accepted by those subject to both. If legitimacy claims are not recognised, the ideology may be rejected or altered to fit the exigencies of social change. Legitimacy may be lost due to obvious mismanagement of industrial or social relations, resulting in disparity between benefits expected and received. Legitimacy may also be lost if deleterious side effects of industrial and governmental policy become apparent. The cost of social problems, restrictions of autonomy, or exploitation of other groups or countries necessary to maintain an acceptable standard of living may outweigh its value.

A second reason for lack of credibility lies in the governing power itself, in its right to act as a government. Loss of validity may result from use of socially illegitimate means of obtaining power, or from

the use and misuse of power when in a position of authority. If the government cannot be accepted as legitimate by its people due to its own actions, the options are to replace it or to re-evaluate and alter the underlying value system. To again use the Indian reserve as an illustration, the unresponsiveness of the governing agent, the Department of Indian Affairs, leads to a loss of its credibility, and apathy or rebellion on the part of the people if their concerns are consistently ignored. Loss of the government's legitimacy is, in large part, responsible for the increased desire of Indian bands to establish systems of self-government.

Crises of motivation are socio-cultural phenomena, resulting from inconsistencies caused by social change. Long established values may conflict with more recent social trends. Habermas uses the opposition between 'tradition' and 'empiricism' in our value system as an illustration of a social dichotomy which, if unresolved, may lead to questioning, dissent and ultimately crisis. Dissent may also result from varying needs, desires and beliefs of the diverse subgroups which comprise a complex society. If the values of each group are mutually exclusive of others, social conflict will be engendered. In a society where competition, debate, and freedom of speech and action are held as fundamental values, such dissension may lead to a crisis of legitimation if the

methods used by the authorities to resolve conflict are incompatible with the espoused social values.

Crises of motivation may result in Indian reserves, for example, from the conflict between western and native values. Traditional values may be seen as untenable while the exogenous modernisation values appear viable, although the perceived benefits gained are often irregular. This conflict between two ways of life may lead to dissension between generations, and (if maintenance of 'tradition' can be more beneficial to women than entering an unequal job market) also dissension between the sexes. The juxtaposition of disparate messages - 'maintain your traditions' and 'succeed (or at least survive) in the white world' - perhaps can only be resolved within the group by political reinvention of themselves. By making the basis of their cultural identity explicit, and revitalising it in light of both messages, they may make them compatible.

From almost any point in the history of colonialism, one could find examples which test the appropriateness of Habermas's communication theory to an understanding of ethnicity. In order to demonstrate the model in the most expedient manner, and to provide a Canadian backdrop for Micmac political action, I will limit the examples to four taken from recent Canadian native politics. They are as follows: the Dene Nation,

land claims, the Manitoba Metis Federation, and the 1969 federal government White Paper on Indian affairs.

## THE DENE

> One of the most destructive actions against aboriginal people has been the refusal to recognize our original institutions, and the imposition of foreign systems of government. The result is that the native people become aliens in their homeland.
>
> As a nation we assert our inalienable right to continue as a self-determining people within Canada. It is the right of the Dene, as an aboriginal nation which does not choose to assimilate, to set up a system of government based on our traditions...
>
> The north is different from the rest of Canada because the aboriginal nations are still the majority of the permanent populations in our respective homelands, and still maintain strong, traditional cultures. [Dene Nation 1979:1]

The Dene exemplify the use of rhetoric designed to establish equality between native groups and the Canadian government. Since the beginning of their negotiations with the government, they have never accepted the position of 'native group' or 'tribe.' They have been a 'nation,' with all the images of strength that are conjured up by that word. In the colonial pecking order, 'nation' ranks higher than does 'aboriginal group' which must be administered by white authorities.

The Dene base their right to self-determination and nationhood on "historical aboriginal rights," on the continued existence and viability of their cultural

traditions, and on their numerical predominance in the north.

Official recognition of their aboriginal rights, they argue, came with the signing of Treaties Numbers 8 and 11 in 1899 and 1921. In 1973 Justice William Morrow held public hearings in the North West Territories in order to determine the right of the Dene to file a caveat to Crown lands which they claim as part of their territory (The Native Perspective 2:2[Jan. 1977]:7). Testimony from eyewitnesses to the signing of the treaties indicated discrepancies between the verbal agreement remembered by the Dene and the official government version. The Dene's belief that the government has dealt fraudulently with them is based on the reliance of native groups on the spoken word. Dr. Lloyd Barber, former Indian Land Claims Commissioner, in 1976 said old treaties were seen by the natives as verbal agreements, with the terms set during the discussions. If commitments made verbally were omitted from the government document later prepared, the later version was not considered binding by the native people. By "recognizing the Indian attitude and the sensibility of their understanding of the fundamentals of Treaties," claim settlements and development can proceed from an equitable base (The Native Perspective 1:7[June, 1976]:28).

The Dene claim to nationhood on the basis of their cultural traditions is substantiated by historical research and action. Through years of developing their land claim statement, a considerable amount of documentation and oral history has supported their claim to aboriginal title to the western Arctic. Their history is reinforced by their highly visible use of the land which they claim and their maintenance of their cultural integrity. Dene history and culture is also carefully presented to the government and people of southern Canada. Their spokesmen are fluent in the language of the media, and their communication always reinforces the concept of their nationhood.

The Dene are trying to gain provincial status for the North West Territories. In doing so, they stress the necessity for control of the territory to be in the hands of the permanent residents. The line which they have drawn for definition of permanence is ten years residence in the north, which excludes most transient industrial workers, and gives native people the greater power. They argue that those people coming to the north only for short-term employment should not be able to influence development policy, for they will not be the ones who must remain with the after-effects. It is the native people, and the whites who have become permanent residents, who have the greatest stake in what happens in the north.

On all grounds by which the Dene claim their right to self-determination, they are supported by Canadian and international agencies. Some Canadian governmental reports, notably the Berger Commission of Inquiry, agree with the Dene claim to aboriginal title. International human rights organisations such as the World Council of Churches and the United Nations Non-Governmental Organisations, as well as experts in international law, support the Dene case.

The Dene compare their situation with that of the Third World, where the people and resources are exploited for the benefit of the colonising nations. By stressing their similarities with Third World nations, and by emphasising support received from international bodies, the Dene reinforce their nationhood. They need not rely solely on approbation from within Canada when international support strengthens their position by giving it further legitimacy as an international issue.

Use of the word 'nation' creates equality with the government of Canada. Removal of discussion from the realm of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, where Indians are legally 'wards of the state,' allows the Dene to establish themselves in a position of parity with the government. From this point, negotiations take place with a balance of power between the participants. It is as yet an illusion of equality, for ultimately

institutional power remains in the hands of the government. However, western democratic ideology is such that if illusions are successfully sustained, they must be dealt with as reality, and this may work to the advantage of dissident minorities as well as the government. If the government called in the cards of the Dene, it would be contravening its own ideology. In Habermas's schema, crises of motivation result from irreconcilable conflict between the value system and the needs of the people. Therefore, the Canadian government, with respect to the Dene, is caught on the horns of a dilemma with regard to its public face. While it may get widespread support from white Canadians for denying the Dene what they ask, it will garner little public support if it denies the legitimacy of the Dene people. So long as the Dene sustain their statements of equality and corroborate those with markers of cultural distinctiveness and with outside support, they may force the government to treat them, at one level, as equals. While this situation by no means constitutes Habermasian true discourse, it is an effective tool of propaganda and manipulation. If one cannot change the structural inequalities of discourse, one can take control of its distortion.

'Nation' is also short-hand for a way of life. By declaring their traditions and social order to be equal in value to the Canadian way of life, the Dene change the

question from majority/minority relations to the way in which two ways of life can co-exist equitably. Ronald Schwartz writes:

> The right to a way of life is on a very different plane from gaining fewer or greater economic rewards. In a sense, it is non-negotiable: to the extent that it is understood and authenticated, it must be accepted as valid. It may or may not be consistent with the conflicting interests of other parties, but if justice is to prevail, it may not be traded off piecemeal...But what emerges through this process [of legal claims] is not simply the right to legal redress conceived as a reward to aggrieved individuals, but a right to collective self-determination. [Schwartz 1979:22]

Through use of the word 'nation,' the Dene are telling the country that their claims, and their identity, are non-negotiable. They remain engaged in practical negotiations with the government, as well as in discussion of their ideals, but the point which is stressed is that they are fighting for their peoplehood, not for hunting rights or timber tracts. It is not a question of trading off privileges, but, in Schwartz's words, "the authentication of a history" (Schwartz 1979:22).

> Traditionally the basic political rights of the individual have always been recognized and exercised in all areas of Dene society. The right of Dene individuals to speak for themselves has always been a cornerstone of our civilization. The other strong element in continuing Dene Government has been the collective exercise of self-determination...
>
> Following a thorough debate and the reaching of a collective understanding, it was still the right of an individual to disagree. In

> the Dene way, dialogue remains the obligation of everyone. This approach to government leads most often to consensus which is the desired goal. [Dene Nation 1979:2]

The Dene contrast their traditional social order with white society on grounds of dialogue and equality of participation in the decision making process. They call for discourse, therefore, not only in their present negotiations with the Canadian government, but they also refer to a tradition of discursive governance in their culture. They argue the merits of their traditions over the white government system which has effectively excluded them from participation in matters which affect their lives. They continue to say that, if they achieved their aim of a self-contained Dene Nation within Canada, they would govern by their own standards. This, they believe, would be to the benefit, not only of the Dene, but of all others living in the north.

> Rather than representative government we would encourage government by the people. Instruments through which the people could not only be consulted but really be a part of the decision on major policies would be the right of the people.
>
> The Dene will recognize the right of all residents to full political rights within the Dene institutions...When we say Dene Government we clearly mean an institution set up by the Dene, based on Dene traditions and values. Under the new institutions that will be negotiated, we will guarantee full political rights for everyone...

> This means that for non-Dene living among the Dene, the extent and measure of their rights would exceed those which they now have with the Territorial Government. [Dene Nation 1979:2]

The Dene, therefore, demonstrate in their political action the validity claims given by Habermas. They demonstrate their fluency in the language of negotiation. They recognise the need for discourse, both as a part of their own cultural traditions and in their communication with the federal government. They stress their nationhood in order to establish themselves as equals in governmental negotiation. They give credence to their statements of cultural autonomy by sustaining their 'Indianness' through traditional activities and beliefs, and by making their history known to the rest of the country.

The inverse of discourse is exclusion from communication. Until the Dene, along with other native groups, began demanding a voice in discussion which pertained to their lives, they were state wards, whose future would be decided for them by government agents. George Erasmus, spokesman for the Dene, has said:

> Traditionally, we acted; today we are acted upon. Our history since contact is the record of our struggle to act on our own terms. It is the record of our struggle to decide for ourselves as a people in the face of all the forces which have attempted to decide for us, define us, and act for us. [quoted in Schwartz 1979:21]

In order to be engaged in discourse, in order to act, a people must know themselves and be able to achieve equality of position. They must, in the hermeneutic enterprise, be the self-reflexive subject with an awareness of their identity carved from their awareness of their past.

## THE METIS

The Metis can possibly be defined more easily by what they are not than by what they are. The simplest negative definition is that they are not Indian and they are not whites; they are of mixed ancestry. They could aptly, although derogatorily, be called half-breeds. However, while all Metis are half-breeds, not all half-breeds are Metis. The group label 'Metis' properly refers only to descendants of the progeny of Indian and French during the time of the fur trade in western Canada. Due, at least in part, to the negative connotations of such words as 'half-breed,' the definition has expanded to include all those of Indian-white parentage. Depending on the context, therefore, the meaning of the name varies.

The descendants of the Red River settlement in Manitoba have a strong group identity fostered by Louis Riel's New Nation and the Metis Rebellions of 1870 and 1885. They can define themselves as a group by this history. But they have done so in a positive fashion only

since the mid-1960s when they began again to politically organise. From the time of the Rebellions until recently, the western Canadian Metis group went through a process of disintegration. They had witnessed the failure of their Nation and had their land and sources of livelihood taken from them by white settlers and government in the development of the west. Sawchuk writes about the period after 1885:

> A commission was established in March 1885 to grant lands to the Metis, using the same criteria as had been used in Manitoba. But most of the Metis who received land again fell victim to land speculators, and the rest chose 'money scrip' instead in hope of immediate profit. Thus most of the Metis were dispossessed of their land and when their small capital was gone became destitute, deprived also of the resources of buffalo hunting and freighting...
>
> Lagasse gives evidence that the Metis then began to deny their Indian heritage, identifying only with their European background. He quotes Dominion census figures which point to 2,000 fewer Metis or half-breeds in Manitoba in 1886 than in 1870. The 1941 census, the last to include a separate listing for Metis, accounted for only 8,692; there had been 9,830 in 1870. [Sawchuk 1978:32]

Metis heritage became only a liability. The Canadian government would make special provision for Metis only if they identified completely with Indians, contradicting its earlier promises of Metis lands in the Manitoba Act of 1870. In 1885 Sir John A. Macdonald gave his opinion on the Metis:

> If they are Indians, they go with the tribe; if they are half-breeds they are whites, and they stand in exactly the same relation to the Hudson Bay Company and Canada as if they were altogether white.
> [quoted in Sawchuk 1978:33]

But the Metis were not "altogether white," nor were they, according to Macdonald, Indian. From this state of non-existence, a clear sense of identity was slow in re-emerging among the Metis people.

Due to many similarities in position, Metis are linked with enfranchised, or non-status, Indians. In February of 1968 Indian and Metis representatives from eight provinces met to discuss the formation of a national native organisation. The outcome of that meeting was the creation of the National Indian Brotherhood, representing status Indians, and a working committee for the organisation of Metis and non-status Indians at the national level. The Native Council of Canada was established in 1971 to unite Metis and non-status Indian organisations across Canada (The Native Perspective 1:1[Aug. 1975]:15).

The Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) was incorporated in 1967 at a time when status Indians, non-status Indians and Metis organisations were proliferating in Canada. The MMF, in common with other Metis associations, was established in response to the belief that the interests of Metis and non-status Indians

were not adequately represented by organisations founded by, or including, registered Indians. The legal and socio-economic position of non-status Indians is more similar to that of the Metis than to registered Indians who come under the aegis of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. For that reason, non-status Indians and Metis have together formed voluntary organisations. But there are problems between the two groups, particularly at an ideological level, for the two are not synonymous. Metis who feel a strong sense of their 'Metis-ness' do not wish to be considered by the public as simply Indians; they want their distinct heritage recognised as such.

> One often hears complaints from certain members of the federation that the MMF is not a true Metis organization because some of its founding members and higher officials were enfranchised Indians rather than 'born Metis.' The controversy hinges on the ambivalent attitude often held by Indians and Metis toward legal status. Although the MMF is the only organization to which enfranchised Indians can belong, their membership provides a ready club to those who wish to criticize it, since they say it is being "controlled by Indians." [Sawchuk 1978:67]

What is the purpose of the Manitoba Metis Federation and organisations like it? The underlying, and obvious, motivation is to gain recognition as an ethnic group. The cohesiveness and recognition that the Metis of the Red River settlement had in the late nineteenth

century was lost during the next fifty years. The Metis as a group, and indeed the very definition of the term, became amorphous, with no characteristics or pride, or even white-imposed special status, to distinguish them as a group. The MMF, therefore, acts as a rallying point for group membership. Leaving aside the issue of participation of non-status Indians, in a sense, one can be sure he is a Metis in Manitoba if he is a member of the MMF. In reference to the absence of unifying and identifying cultural markers, Sawchuk quotes an MMF official:

> "I'm always lost when you speak of Metis culture. I've been asked this question before and have never really had it answered to my satisfaction. [A Manitoba Indian Brotherhood official] once asked me, 'What is Metis culture?' 'Good question.' I asked him, 'What the hell is culture?' 'Well,' he said, 'language is culture.' He asked me what language I spoke and I told him Saulteaux. 'Well,' he said, 'that's my language...'" [Sawchuk 1978:44]

The creation of an ethnic association provides a sense of belonging and a forum for the exploration and reformulation of the group history. It provides an atmosphere in which a membership card is substantiated by rediscovery of cultural traditions and unity which foster group action designed to better the lot of its members. Sawchuk discusses this type of voluntary ethnic association as being an 'interest group' (Sawchuk 1978:11). There are specific goals, in this case

primarily of a political and economic nature, which can be best furthered by organisation along ethnic lines. Ethnic groups of this type have specific objectives, but they are not short-lived. The nature of ethnic association is cyclical: achieved objectives further reinforce group cohesiveness and identity which lead to new demands to be met and increased desire to belong to a defined and relatively powerful group.

At one level, the Metis can be labeled a 'poverty group' as well as an 'interest group.' Sawchuk quotes one of his informants as saying, "The basic thing with the Metis people is poverty. That is the predominant factor of that sub-culture - that and the lack of education" (Sawchuk 1978:42). Being poor in Canada is not a condition peculiar to the Metis, but being Metis provides a focus for organisation to change one's disadvantaged position. Angus Spence, former president of the MMF, is quoted by Sawchuk:

> We are nothing but a political football. We are not registered Indians so whenever we have any correspondence with the federal government, they tell us to contact the provincial government who in turn tells us we are just another ethnic group. [Sawchuk 1978:42]

In order to become something more significant than just another of Canada's ethnic minorities, and to carve out a position of influence in the government-native negotiations, the Metis needed to make themselves into a

visible and organised native group.

They have succeeded in obtaining funding for housing, employment and social service projects, in addition to the monies and employment generated by the MMF bureaucracy. They have also made themselves players in the complexities of native politics in Canada. Past-president of the Native Council of Canada, Gloria George, was quoted in a 1976 interview as saying:

> A major, historical breakthrough is recognition by the Prime Minister and government that the Metis and non-status Indians are prominent in the native population...
>
> It was the Metis under Louis Riel who first fought for bi-lingualism in this country and they were defeated. The Metis strongly believe that by recognizing their two ancestries they can have the best of both worlds...What is most important though is that they recognize their indigenous ancestry. [The Native Perspective 1:9 (Sept. 1976):8]

The Metis believe that their part in Canadian history has been significant in the development of the country. They now seek to become an integral part of the dialogue between the government and native peoples. All native groups argue that they have been excluded, intentionally or otherwise, from the communication process in Canadian society, and consequently decisions which affect their lives have been made with little or no consultation with them. The Metis, while agreeing with that stand, believe that they are caught between the two,

clearly as absent from the negotiating table as status Indians yet without the benefits and rights, however minimal, which registered status confers. For the Metis, the need for discourse is not directed only toward the government and white society; it is directed also to status Indians.

They are trying to establish their equality in order to become full discursive partners with government and status Indians, and to receive the accompanying social benefits. In common with other native groups, they use their history and their traditions to validate their claims to a separate identity and to maintain their group cohesiveness. Louis Riel and the New Nation are important to this use of history and, as Sawchuk points out, are used even by those Metis groups which have no lineal connections to the Red River Metis. Louis Riel's rebellion has great power as a symbolic evocation of the strength and unity of the Metis.

The Metis have no visible markers of separateness, but use their culture and 'way of life' to distinguish themselves from whites. The way of life claimed by them is, however, not always distinguished from the 'Indian way of life,' as the following quote demonstrates:

> "Where I come from (I'm a rancher) you are judged by the number of cows you own. Just on the number of goddamn cows...We live in a society in which the value system is based on material possessions, on your rank...But

> our value system is based on human beings. Human beings are more important than cows, or high academic standing...
>
> "[The] native people...live in more or less communal society, where they believe that they should share, and they do share. For the most part, you go to a Metis home, they will never tell you, 'We would like to put you up for the night but there is no room.' They'd sleep on the floor, and say, 'Oh yeah, we can put you up, you can sleep right here.' I'm not saying about all white men, but many white people will come up and say 'Well, we don't have a spare bedroom, so sorry, but we can't put you up.'" [Sawchuk 1978:41]

Although it is important to stress the white part of Metis ancestry in order to distinguish between Indian and Metis, the stronger line of demarcation is between Metis and white. Power in our society rests with the whites and, therefore, distinctions must be made, and discourse must occur, between Metis and whites. It is to the white audience, the powerful audience, that equality of position must be demonstrated.

## LAND CLAIMS

### What Aboriginal Rights Are Not

> The recognition of aboriginal rights does not give governments a chance to 'pay off' Native people; nor does it enable the Canadian people to evade a legal responsibility established under their own constitution.
>
> But the recognition of aboriginal rights will give Native people a chance to solve their own problems on their own terms.

What are aboriginal rights? The concept is not difficult to understand. Native people interpret it in this way:

"A person knocks on your [door], you answer and invite him in out of the cold, wet weather. You help him, warm, feed and clothe him, and let him live with you.

"As time passes, you find youself outnumbered by your guests and, for many reasons, living in the basement of your own home. Meanwhile, the person you assisted and many of his friends live upstairs, enjoying life through your resources."

In contrast, the people of the dominant culture tend to see aboriginal rights as evolving through their own history as colonialists.

Aboriginal rights must be the foundation of social and economic justice for Native people. Only through using their rights can the Native people of Canada become actively involved in the promotion and use of their land and resources. Implicit in the aboriginal rights concept is the fact that Native people want to have part in the social and economic wealth of the land and its resources.

The aboriginal rights concept does not come from an ownership view in the white man's sense of taking the land out of use; it comes from a feeling of use and occupancy of the land, water and its resources; a communal type of living with the natural environment. Land, in Native reality, is the soul of the total social, economic and political system.

Today, Native people at every level practice the aboriginal rights concept in their everyday dealings with the colonial governments. They accept the various types of government programs as partial payment for the loss of use and occupancy of the land, which resulted in the loss of a way of life. The colonial bureaucracy (federal or provincial), on the other hand, administers programs on the basis of high principle and

> self-held social assistance concepts. These programs are in reality coercive in nature because, even indirectly, they will force the Native people to various forms of assimilation.
>
> Aboriginal rights is never, for Native people, a tool of assimilation nor is it a relinquishment or surrender or extinguishment of Indianness or Nativeness. It is a reaffirmation of Indian or Native rights over the use and occupancy of the land, the water and their resources.
>
> Aboriginal rights is not a pie-in-the-sky concept. It is a valid claim area that will enable Native people to alleviate the violence of unemployment, of poor housing, or poor health care. It is a way to make education meaningful by acknowledging positive Indian history, thereby maintaining Indianness or Nativeness.
>
> We, as non-Natives, do not have much time to work with Native people toward the recognition of their aboriginal rights. A generation which has seen its forefathers bargain in good faith, only to be fooled and lied to, cannot help but see that violent acts by other sovereign peoples produce a power base from which long lasting and fruitful negotiations take place. If we, as non-Indians, faced the sixty-plus percent unemployment, the poor housing, health and social services confronting Native people, there would be revolution in the streets. [S. Killen in The Native People 9:44(Nov. 1976):4]

Land claims made to the federal government by Indian bands across Canada in recent years are by no means simple exchanges of land for money. They are, rather, means of authenticating a way of life (Schwartz 1979:22). Very few claims submitted to the government have yet been settled, but the returns from them, in terms of cementing

identity and pride, have already been enormous. Land claims and, more recently, the constitutional debates, have been a catalyst for native political action, research and public pronouncement on the place of native people in Canadian society. It is in that sense, as negotiator of identity, that land claims are important to discourse.

In order for a claim to territory to be accepted as legitimate by the Canadian government, a native group must be able to demonstrate aboriginal title to that land. This can be done in one of two ways: either by documenting use and occupancy of the territory predating European contact or, in the case of lands covered by treaty, by showing direct genealogical and territorial links between those who signed the treaty and those now making claim against it. When the right of the band to make a claim for land is accepted, and the band's case is presented to the government, then negotiations over the terms of the settlement begin. In large part, the native groups' dispute with the government concerning repatriation of the constitution concerned this process of land claim adjudication. Native groups feared that use of the phrase "existing land claims" in the clause guaranteeing native rights would be prejudicial to claims not yet accepted by the government.

The editorial by Stuart Killen quoted above conveys the ideology of aboriginal rights. While not

synonymous, the concepts of land claims and aboriginal rights are very similar in intent: "this land is not for sale" (McCullum 1975). In reality, settlement of a land claim involves sale of land, but this is the only politically expedient option open to either side. Ideology notwithstanding, the Canadian state is not going to relinquish vast amounts of its holdings to any native group. The problem, therefore, becomes one of striking the right balance between selling out on the natives' part and ceding too much control on the part of the government.

Two settlement agreements in particular have been criticised by both natives and white liberals. The Committee for Original Peoples' Entitlement (COPE) claim in the eastern Arctic, the terms of settlement for which were accepted in principle in 1979, and the James Bay Agreement in northern Quebec, have come in for a great deal of criticism for not adequately providing for the present lifestyle and future of the native people.

In a House of Commons debate on the James Bay Agreement, the Cree and Inuit of James Bay were accused by a Progressive Conservative member, Frank Oberle, of selling their birthright. He also criticised the government for signing the agreement in a province which at that time had recently elected a pro-separtist provincial government. Mr. Oberle quoted the Native Council of Canada: "The federal government has no right

to sign over its responsibilities for Indian and Eskimo lands in any part of Canada to a jurisdiction whose avowed goal is independence from the federal authority." Defence of the government and the James Bay native groups was taken up by Roger Young, a Liberal M.P. He argued that the Grand Council of the Cree had not felt pressure to accept the government's proposed settlement but rather, he said, quoting Cree spokemen, "we felt we had the tomahawk in our hands, that we set many of the deadlines" (The Native People 9:47[Dec. 1976]:4).

The cash and territorial rights which the Cree gained have not eliminated the social and economic problems which affected them before the settlement. Some problems have been exacerbated by the hydro-electric development which has taken place on the lands which they ceded. However, the increased control which the bands now have has greatly alleviated them.

The Cree, and other native groups who have filed land claims, have acquired moral strength from the process, but the degree of political or economic power gained is quite a separate question. Land claims are intrinsically linked with concepts central to native identity; the land, nationhood, and original residency of the country. These concepts can be expressed in concrete terms by claiming a particular tract of territory, with geographical and historical boundaries marking it as

Indian territory. Explicit in most land claims is a call for sovereignty of the native bands within their territories. Sovereignty, the right to self-determination, is a necessary part of land claims, for without it the native people would simply be inhabiting a specified area of land, a situation not dissimilar from the present reserve system. Land claims, sovereignty and nationhood are inextricably bound; if any element of this trinity is absent, the other two are impossible or, at minimum, become devalued.

As Killen writes, the historical perspective of the Canadian government holds aboriginal rights and special status to be a duty of a civilised colonial regime (The Native People 9:44[Nov. 1976]:4). The 'good,' in terms of special rights, services and support, stems from the dominant society and flows down to the natives. The native people have a quite different perspective on their position within Canada. Special services which result from registered Indian status, as Killen argues, can be seen as "partial payment for the loss of use and occupancy of the land, which resulted in the loss of a way of life." Those groups submitting land claims are now demanding full compensation for their losses, and are framing their demands in language which cannot be interpreted by the government, or by white society, as calling for white beneficence in settlement. In trying to remove the

possibility of equivocal interpretations, native claims are presented as non-negotiable.

Land claims in Canada are not new but have been a part of native-white relations for most of this century. They have only become widespread and well-publicised in the last fifteen years. The Nishga of British Columbia began their campaign for settlement of rights to their land in the 1890s and, after hearings in Canadian and British courts, their claim has not yet been resolved. Aside from claims which resulted in the signing of treaties during the early twentieth century, claims which received considerable public and government attention were those submitted by the Six Nations Indians, the Caughnawaga Band, and the Blackfoot Band in the 1950s (Daniel 1980:123-130,138-143).

Particularly in the years following World War II, the government of Canada considered new ways of dealing with native claims of non-extinguishment of aboriginal title or of government failure to fulfill treaty terms. Under the leadership of Diefenbaker, a federal Cabinet committee in 1961 recommended the establishment of an Indian Claims Commission, patterned in part after a similar board in the United States. Claims already submitted by British Columbia bands, the Caughnawaga and the Blackfoot bands were held in abeyance until this legislation came into effect.

However, a change in power in the Canadian parliament meant that the Indian Claims Commission as conceived by Diefenbaker never came into being. The new Liberal government under Lester Pearson approved the idea, but believed that more thorough study of the American model was necessary. Proposed legislation, in the form of Bill C-130, was introduced in December of 1963. But over the next five years, intervening forces prevented final resolution of the bill. The first delay was due to consultation with native groups which resulted in over three hundred submissions which had to be considered before legislation could proceed, and it was June of 1965 before an amended bill, C-123, was presented to Parliament. Before it could be approved, Parliament was dissolved. When it reconvened, new and specific questions of aboriginal title needed resolution immediately, thereby further delaying deliberation on Bill C-123. As a result of these new legal issues, the Indians of British Columbia decided that they needed to form a united front in order to consider the proposed Indian Claims Commission legislation. After this point, the legislation never again surfaced in the Pearson government, and it found new form in the changes which the new Prime Minister, Pierre Trudeau, wished to effect in the entire area of administration of native peoples (Daniel 1980:144-152).[4]

It is too early yet to be able to assess the economic, social and political effects of land claims. Few have been settled; therefore, no general statements about their immediate utility can yet be made, but some conclusions about the process of land claim negotiation can be drawn. Land claims provide a basis for discourse and negotiation. They embody the ideology of nativism and, by referring to an observable piece of land, they root the traditions of a band in a way that rhetoric can never do. The historical documentation which is necessary to the presentation of a land claim statement demonstrates the longevity of use and occupancy of specific land by a specific band in a way which can be argued and tested in a court of law. Historical and legalistic evidence is more compelling to white law-makers and politicians than ideological appeal to heritage. In many ways, this is also true for native peoples. By defining their territory and researching their history of occupancy of that land, their cultural past is made more immediate to their present situation. Successful presentation of a land claim necessitates a feeling of peoplehood, with a history worth remembering and traditions worth preserving. At a peak of group pride, dealing with white society on equal terms must be more easily achieved.

It is important to note that the form taken by land claim negotiation in Canada, aside from its utility

in presentation of identity, cannot be considered 'true discourse.' The equality of the participants is established and maintained by the more powerful, who hence remains in a position of greater power. Mastery of the language of the law courts, the ultimate forum for discourse in western society, is achieved through use of hired legal spokemen on both sides. In effect, the same voices are heard on the government and the Indian sides, 'experts' with background in law and anthropology. The technical and legal expertise hired by native groups is funded from government monies designated for that purpose. It may be argued that this constitutes reparation of recognised inequities which legitimately equalises the two sides, in accordance with Habermas's proviso regarding imbalance of power. However, there are two additional aspects. The first is that the conditions and form of discourse and the existence of the equality itself have been created by the powerful partner, the federal government, through financial support of its 'opposition' and the available recourse to an 'outside' arbiter, the judicial arm of the government. The second is that assistance given from a position of greater power may be withdrawn at any time. If equality is reliant on that assistance, its withdrawal eliminates discourse. Hence, equality is contingent on the success of a power/dependency relationship, or inequality.[5]

1969 WHITE PAPER

> The Government has reviewed its programs for Indians and has considered the effects of them on the present situation of the Indian people. The review has drawn on extensive consultations with the Indian people, and on the knowledge and experience of many people both in and out of government...
>
> Opportunities are present today in Canadian society and new directions are open. The Government believes that Indian people must not be shut out of Canadian life and must share equally in these opportunities...
>
> This belief is the basis for the Government's determination to open the doors of opportunity to all Canadians, to remove the barriers which impede the development of people, of regions and of the country.
>
> Only a policy based on this belief can enable the Indian people to realize their needs and aspirations...
>
> The goals of the Indian people cannot be set by others; they must spring from the Indian community itself - but government can create a framework within which all persons and groups can seek their own goals. [Government of Canada 1969:6]

In the summary statement quoted above and throughout the White Paper, the federal government says that it developed its new Indian policy in consultation with native groups. It calls for greater participation in Canadian society by natives, and it stresses the need for equality and an end to discrimination based on race. It also stresses the importance of Indian identity and cultural traditions. It appears to say all the correct things. Why, then, did it create such a furor?

The 1969 White Paper quickly became an embarrassment to the new Trudeau government. In response to it, several other papers were generated by Canadian Indian groups, including Citizens Plus, by the Indian Chiefs of Alberta (1970) and Wahbung by the Indian Tribes of Manitoba (1971). It also produced a retraction by the Canadian government. It has been the subject of a considerable amount of scholarly and journalistic investigation (Cardinal 1969;Burke 1976;Ponting and Gibbins 1980;Weaver 1981).

When Trudeau became Prime Minister in 1968, there was no clear and agreed upon rationale for dealing with native peoples. Plans to introduce new legislation for the processing of Indian claims had been circulating for seven years through the terms of the two previous Prime Ministers.

The fundamental objective of the White Paper was to remove the legal distinctions between Indians and non-Indians in Canadian society. The special status accorded Indians would be removed, with Indians receiving the same benefits and being under the same obligations as the rest of the Canadian population. Responsibility for provision of community services would pass to the provincial and municipal governments, removing the separate relationship between Indian communities and the federal government. The Indian Affairs department would

be disbanded. In order to allow these changes, the British North America Act would require amendment and the Indian Act would be abolished.

Since Indian groups have often chafed against the restrictions imposed by the Indian Act, it may be asked why they so vehemently opposed the government decision to remove it. Until revision of the Act in 1951, it prohibited Indians from voting and from purchasing alcohol, keeping them in the position of legal minors. Even now, there are restrictions on their use and control of reserve land. Their control of development of their reserves remains subject to the approval of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. The legitimacy of their identity is contingent upon possession of a band number, imposed by the terms of the Indian Act, and without which they are no longer Indians. It is the Indian Act which has created the entire diaspora of non-status Indians and Metis, a distinction of status which has been condemned by most Indian leaders.

Why then, when legislated discrimination is a charge so frequently levelled at the Indian Act, would there have been such immediate rejection of a government programme to remove an institution which seems to be totally anachronistic? There are three major reasons for the rejection of the White Paper by native groups.

The first is the lack of true consultation with native organisations. Although the paper itself states that it was formulated through consultation with the native people and that it reflects their desires, the final report is indicative only of what the government wanted. James Burke discusses the smoke screen of consultation which the government erected and behind which they proceeded to implement policy which had already been decided upon and which was not agreed to by native leaders (Burke 1976). Sally Weaver calls this process of negotiation part of the government's "hidden agenda" for Indian development, with real decisions occurring far from their consultations with Indian leaders (Weaver 1981). The Indian people felt betrayed by the White Paper on two counts. Again, actions which would deeply affect their lives were taking place without their consent and, in spite of all government protestation to the contrary, without their participation. More invidiously, they were betrayed by the creation of an illusion of consultation. This, in the final analysis, may have done greater damage to Indian-government relations. The Indian people were accustomed to being ignored in the making of decisions which involved them, but they were not accustomed to a pretence of participation. Richard Daniel writes in his report on land claims to the DIAND:

> The events of 1969, and in particular the introduction of the White Paper, disrupted this process [of adjudication of Indian claims]...by contributing to a deep distrust among Indian leaders, of government motives with respect to claims...[The] search for new mechanisms for settling claims had achieved only a fresh start in a hostile climate. [Daniel 1980:156]

The second reason for rejection of the White Paper was that Indians wanted to retain their special status. The White Paper would make them no different from any other Canadian, with no special privileges of hunting or fishing, tax exemptions or special services guaranteed under the Indian Act. While they may prefer that the terms of their special status be decided upon by themselves, rather than be imposed by the Indian Act, the status given by the Act was preferable to becoming part of the general citizenry. As the Alberta Indians made evident by their use of a term taken from the Hawthorn report, Indians are 'citizens plus.' They can never be regarded as simply Canadians because they are the aboriginal people of the land. The Alberta Indians write:

> Retaining the legal status of Indians is necessary if Indians are to be treated justly. Justice requires that the special history, rights and circumstances of Indian people be recognized... Professor L. C. Green found that in other countries minorities were given special status. Professor Green has concluded: '...Equality in law precludes discrimination of any kind; whereas equality in fact may involve the necessity of different treatment in order to obtain a result which establishes an equilibrium between different situations...'

> The legal definition of registered Indians must remain. If one of our registered brothers chooses, he may renounce his Indian status, become 'enfranchised,' receive his share of the funds of the tribe, and seek admission to ordinary Canadian society. But most Indians prefer to remain Indians. We believe that to be a good useful Canadian we must first be a good, happy and productive Indian. [Indian Chiefs of Alberta 1970:5]

All submissions from native groups recommended changes in the Indian Act, but they did not want abolition of the Act with its preservation of Indian distinctiveness. The Manitoba Indians state that:

> The basic philosophy behind the [Indian] Act is demoralizing and dehumanizing. It is patronizing and paternalistic in tone. It is a Superior group imposing restrictions and prohibitions upon an 'inferior group.'
>
> The Indian Act must be changed so that it will become a document protecting Indian land and ensuring civil, human, treaty and aboriginal rights. These should be enshrined in the constitution of the country. The Indian Act should reflect that the government honors and sanctions the rights of Indian people. It is clear from consultations that our people do not want the Indian Act abolished, but changed to a document offering opportunity for development and on-going progress, rather than restricting this... Certain restrictions in the Act should be subject to immediate revision, and others subject to review as changes indicate in future development, and future wishes of the Indian people. [Indian Tribes of Manitoba 1971:34]

Indian groups made it evident that in order to maintain their identity, keep their lands and their traditions, they wanted special status. Without this,

they feared "the future generation would be condemned to the despair and ugly spectre of urban poverty in ghettos" (Indian Chiefs of Alberta 1970:1).

The third reason for their rejection of the White Paper concerns land claims and aboriginal rights. Under the terms of the White Paper, an Indian Claims Commissioner would be appointed, but he would have only limited powers of recommendation. The original intent of the Indian Claims Commission in proposals made in previous administrations was to give the Commission powers of adjudication of claims. But the role of the Commissioner as seen by the Trudeau government was "exploratory and advisory" only (Daniel 1980:154). While the terms of the appointment alone were enough to jeopardise all land claims, the White Paper's general tone of equality of status was maintained in its provisions for land and treaty claims. Daniel writes, quoting in part from a Canadian Indian Rights Commission Library report:

> Consistent with this liberal concept of equality, Indian claims were considered to be of only limited significance, at least in so far as they tended to emphasize special rights of special status within the society:
>
> > '[Aboriginal rights claims] are so general and undefined that it is not realistic to think of them as specified claims capable of remedy except through a policy and program that will end injustice to Indians as members of the Canadian community...' [Daniel 1980:153]

Obviously, this opinion on the importance of native land questions would not meet with the approval of native leaders who were beginning to intensify their efforts in the entire area of aboriginal title and treaty terms (cf. Daniel 1980:219-220).

The Alberta Indians quote Diefenbaker as saying in 1968:

> 'We had the Indian Claims Commission. Today the Indians are becoming aroused in a world that is seething with unrest. The injustice of a hundred years could have been compensated if the Claims Commission had been set up. The injustice remains. It remains today.' [Indian Chiefs of Alberta 1970:21]

Daniel quotes the Hon. Ellen Fairclough, chief planner of the Diefenbaker Indian Claims Commission, as saying in 1961:

> 'Knowing the history of Indian claims one may well ask whether, even if adjudicated, they will ever be permanently settled so far as the Indians are concerned.' [Daniel 1980:217]

Whether Diefenbaker or Fairclough were right is still not known because native claims have not yet been settled in Canada. A vehicle for claims settlement was found by the Trudeau government outside the White Paper, but it is too early to know the efficacy of it in the long term. Most of the recommendations for change in policy made in the White Paper were never formally enacted. Native resistance made it impossible. But the shadow which it cast over native-government relations remains, if

only because, fairly or otherwise, the White Paper can always be held up by native people as an example of the government's failure to deal honestly in negotiations.

At the level of dishonesty of action, the White Paper is an example of crisis of legitimation in Habermas's framework. The espoused values by which the government conducts its affairs were denied by its actions. As a consequence, the product of 'discussions' between government and natives - the White Paper - lost credence, as did the integrity of the government as a body which could be trusted to bargain in good faith. However, because the public forum, particularly the news media, was open after publication of the White Paper, and because in that forum the Indians did gain an equal voice, the result of the legitimation crisis was not demoralised accommodation but rebellion. The continuation of discourse and rebellion may have been aided by the social climate in the country at the time. It was at the height of the 'student revolution' movements, Black Power, Red Power, the women's movement, and the FLQ. Had the White Paper been issued even a year earlier, it may have passed into law without controversy. However, in 1969 ample evidence was to be seen that no group need accept any legislation with which it disagreed.

The Indian people made it evident in discussion of the White Paper that, in the present social situation,

they believe that their best chance for equality in Canadian society is through the protective legislation of the Indian Act. While they disagree with the manner in which the Act was formulated and with much of its content, they believe that the separate legal status which it affords them is one of their best defences against acculturation or ghettoization. They are not now in a position as a group with political or economic power to compete equally in the open market of Canadian society and, therefore, they need to retain markers of distinctiveness. They prefer to keep the Indian Act, redefine it in their own terms, and maintain legal separation to accompany their cultural separation. In essence, they are using the devices of apartheid to achieve equality of position. The rights guaranteed them by treaties and the Indian Act give them a bargaining tool by which they can achieve further ends. Should they give up those rights, they would have no lever with which to effect change.

The White Paper, therefore, was presented as an agreement reached through discourse and it offered immediate legal equality and, thereby, the promise of social equality. The Indian people rejected the document's profession of discourse, and elected to remain in a position of legal discrimination in the hope that this situation would eventually lead to greater social

equality.

## CONCLUSIONS

Theodore Herzl said of the Jews: "We are a people - the enemy makes up a people" (cited in Wirth 1943:686). Native peoples, in a way, are reinstating white government and white society as the enemy, using as a battlecry the widest interpretation of aboriginal rights with all the connotations of sovereignty and peoplehood.

Development of ethnic identity is a cyclical and two-sided process. In order to obtain changes which will improve the lot of the group, there must be a modicum of group identity already present to allow organisation of the group. Attainment of goals which benefit the group acts to strengthen group identity and its commitment to political action. Therefore, ethnic political activity is not a limited process with a natural end; it is on-going, with each new development reinforcing the need for continuation.

Ethnic identity, in a sense stricter than simple group membership, requires at least two groups for its development. There must be an 'enemy' (or an 'other') and a 'self.' Although the definition of the group - in terms of membership, markers of group identity, and appropriate group action - stems from within it, this definition is also a more covert response to actions or attitudes of

outside groups (cf. Braroe 1975). There is a discourse, verbal and attitudinal, by which each group defines itself at least in part by how it differs from others. Once it establishes what it is not, a group can define what it is. Throughout the world there has been a tremendous resurgence of interest among aboriginal peoples in their history, material culture, language and other markers of identity. In some cases, these cultural attributes have fallen into disuse, and the groups, therefore, are not merely revitalising but are relearning their culture.

Borrowing of cultural traits has become a significant part of the development of aboriginal traditions. It is legitimated, at least among North American native groups, by the concept of Pan-Indianism. Pow-wows, Plains headdress, northern beadwork, and 'universals' of a generalised 'Indian' ethos now adorn the recreated cultural traditions of unrelated groups. For some, their own history and material culture, and even in some cases their tribal name, have become lost over many years. They now must fashion a new native identity by borrowing Indian accoutrements, relearning their own traditions from ethnographies of the past, or by researching their ethnohistory (cf. Lurie 1970;Thomas 1970;Hertzberg 1971;McNickle 1973). Public presentation may, to some extent, be show-casing, in which familiar images of 'Indian' are used as a lingua-franca vocabulary

to signal and authenticate identity. The semiotic of 'Indian' may include signs gleaned from diverse sources, including cowboy and Indian movies and the 'Noble Savage' motif. Karen Blu quotes from an interview, in reference to the utility of 'Indian' appearance and actions for Indians as well as whites in cities:

> 'This is the first time the Lumbees have ever put any emphasis on things like costumes and dancing,' Mrs. Hunt says. 'In the city, it's about the only way to keep the children mindful that they're Indians and that they have something to be proud of and identify with.'
>
> ...Down there [in North Carolina] maintaining a sense of identity and a feeling for the Indian heritage is easy. In the city, it's more difficult and the children growing up in Baltimore, she believes, need the headdresses and beads and dances to remind them of what they have to be proud of. [Blu 1980:34]

Everett Hughes writes of the importance of language as a marker of ethnic distinction:

> There are some national movements of which it is difficult to say to what extent the emphasis on their own peculiar language serves merely to strengthen their sense of solidarity and to mark off the one people from others, and to what extent there is a problem in finding a common medium of communication. The Zionist movement and the new Israeli people is such a case. Hebrew was certainly not the bread-and-butter language of many of the immigrants to Israel. The movement to make Hebrew the language of the new country is something more than an attempt to find the medium of communication which can be most economically diffused to the polyglot immigrants of the new country...

> ...The dilemma is that of the strength of language as a symbol of tradition, as something that gives one a social identity, as against languages as a means of communication in a new, larger and technologically complicated world. The languages of tradition, in which sentiments may be aroused, may not be those in which the newer communication can be carried on. [Hughes 1955:106,108]

Language itself, as well as other markers of ethnicity, can be considered as both communicative and instrumental action in accordance with Habermas's classification of linguistic action. Choice of language used tells others who a person is in addition to its communicative function of transmitting thought. Perhaps the importance placed on language, in particular on the maintenance of traditional languages, reflects the degree of security which a people feel about themselves as an ethnic group, and also the direction from which they perceive danger to their unity. While doing field work with Indian groups in northern British Columbia, I was told by a man fluent in English and Tsimshian that he would rather have his children learn French than Tsimshian in school because "where else away from the coast can they use Tsimshian? With French, they can go other places and be able to use it." While this view was not widely held in the community, it reflected at least a personal attitude toward language as being instrumental rather than communicative of identity.

Hughes uses the Berbers of north Africa to illustrate this point. The Berbers, although antagonistic toward Turkish Moslems, have made no attempt, to his knowledge, to purge their language and culture of Turkish influences. However, they have zealously kept their language and traditions free from European influence. Hughes argues that this is because the danger to their way of life comes from the European world. The Turkish Moslem tradition, while disliked, is evidence of a long and honourable history as a people with an important past of their own and through their association with Turks (Hughes 1955:105). Expression of opposition to assimilation may be directed more strongly toward those groups perceived to be a greater threat due to their proximity or relative power.

One way by which an ethnic group can combat the dangers posed by outside influence is by maintaining and developing a cultural tradition which is equal in strength to that of potentially threatening peoples. A vital culture will be able to withstand contact from outside without being assimilated by the dominant culture. Martin Orans discusses the Santal of India in light of their means of strengthening their culture in order to achieve parity with the dominant Hindu society. He employs Redfield's distinction between 'great' and 'little' traditions to explain the changes which have occurred in

Santal society.

> One might say that the Santal have been in search of a 'great tradition' since the time that they conceded the social and cultural superiority of their Hindu neighbours. Having taken much from these neighbors, but desirous of maintaining their own identity, they decided to create a 'great tradition' of their own rather than accept the one belonging to their neighbors. There is, for example, an attempt to codify Santal traditions in writing and even the development of a distinctive script in which to record these traditions. In place of an essentially inexplicit religious ideology expressed in ritual, there is the development of an explicit religious ideology with an emphasis on morality. There is also the elaboration of literary forms wholly unlike the unpretentious traditional ones. Paradoxically, while these developments involve rejection of numerous Hindu practices, they introduce fundamental beliefs and values of Hinduism which previously had made hardly any progress among the Santal. Thus, while distinctive traits are re-emphasized, the configurations and orientation of Santal culture become somewhat more like those of the Hindus. [Orans 1965:105]

The Santal, with a tribal, or little, tradition are existing within a society with a great tradition, the Hindu. A little tradition, as defined by Redfield, is a 'folk' or 'peoples' tradition with minimal codification and systemisation of belief and social systems, while great traditions have explicit and long-standing codification of rules (Redfield 1960:41-59). Orans writes:

> [Such] constructs as great and little traditions are mainly aids to thought, and one hardly expects to encounter them as

> objects of experience... Imagine then my surprise at encountering a self-conscious effort to create a great tradition, precisely as Redfield and Singer define it, among a tribal people so well known for having long managed to preserve a considerable degree of distinctiveness from the dominant surrounding civilized society. [Orans 1965:ix]

Before embarking on the development of a great tradition, the Santal tried to gain higher status within Indian society through emulation of Hindu customs. Hinduisation, combined with increased industrial wage labour and migration from Santal villages to industrial towns, decreased the ethnic and social solidarity of the Santal. When this path to equality was seen to result only in marginality or admission to the low end of the caste system, the Santal began rediscovering their own culture. The creation of a Santal tradition equal to that of the Hindu provided another way to achieve prestige and social position. Santal traditions were reinstituted and, in some cases, Hindu customs were retained, but were claimed as Santal in origin. Santal intellectuals explicated and codified the Santal belief system, using a newly developed Santal script. Orans quotes from a speech given at a meeting of the Santal political party:

> 'Now we should rise like other people. The traditional religion is good but now we are following the others' religions. We have no feeling for our caste and religion and that is why others are in high positions. If we have no unity and organization then others will have no respect for our caste...When we spoke with the police who arrested the Santal

> [for cow sacrifice] they asked us for a written record of our religion. Then I said you can go village to village and ask people...Some literate people also are leading us in a bad direction. In eating and clothing we often follow the diku [Hindu] way; we are departing from the way of our own society.' [Orans 1965:117-118]

In order to resist departing from the ways of their own culture, the Santal are returning to and changing their traditions. They are trying to reverse the tide of Hinduisation by making their Santal traditions comparable in form and, to a degree, in substance, to the Hindu culture which surrounds them.

In a way similar to the Santal, native peoples of Canada, and elsewhere, are in search of a great tradition. Reformulation of native concepts in white terms is not new. The 'Great Spirit' present in most native cosmologies in a monotheistic form is, for the most part, a product of European contact. More recently, native peoples' efforts at redefining their cultures have been directed toward finding a new place within the dominant white society.

As the Santal developed a new script as a political rather than an instrumental form of communication, native languages are being relearned. The development of phonetic writing systems has received new impetus from native leaders anxious to make their language usable and therefore viable in a modern world. Tribal

customs are shown to natives and whites through incorporation in native political assemblies and through annual pow-wows. Also, dances and ceremonies are presented as educational entertainment. Underlying the development of dance and ritual, the proliferation of native art and crafts, the publication of native literature both traditional and modern, and the historical and ethnographic research, is the statement that these activities and the cultures in which they were formed are as valid and as viable as the white culture in which they have been submerged. The traditions and customs of a people are reformulated, not merely continued, in order to act as indicators of identity. T. S. Eliot wrote:

> Yet if the only form of tradition, of handing down, consisted in following the ways of the immediate generation before us in a blind or timid adherence to its successors, 'tradition' should positively be discouraged. [Eliot 1928:48-49]

Critical Theorists who prefer the progress of technology to the relative unselfconsciousness of tradition would agree with Eliot, but tradition can be manipulated and made self-conscious. In the native political activity of the past decades, there is no simple unreflexive adherence to the ways of their forefathers, for the time for simply following tradition has long since passed. There is, however, a deliberate effort to reproduce a way of life and a belief system which is

intelligible to, and therefore capable of validation by, white society yet which maintains its own cultural integrity.

Borrowing of cultural traits from other native groups and Europeans may provoke criticism based on the perceived need for purity and authenticity of ethnic traditions, but is understandable in terms of simple history as well as hermeneutic discourse (see pp. 127-130). Many groups have already irretrievably lost their traditional way of life. If they are to rekindle their ethnic identity they must borrow and create a new tradition. However, regardless of their historical situation, in order to communicate their beliefs and their way of life to outsiders, they must present their culture in a way which is intelligible to others. This requires common referents in language and concepts, and, in all probability, will result in some tailoring of the presentation of their culture (and themselves) to white expectations. To convince others that being Indian is in some important way different and significant, it is necessary to convey the concepts that make one Indian and how they differ from concepts which define being white.

'Being Indian' is the basis, but cannot be the aim of Indians' discourse with white society. Their aim is to authenticate their history and culture and their special place in Canada, or to engage in what we have called

cultural renaissance. The basis of discourse is the creation of practical and political issues which engage an Indian populace for renaissance through 'self' and a white populace for renaissance through 'other.' There must be fora and issues which generate practical aims (a market) before there can be an 'Indianisation' industry (production). Without the two threads of renaissance and revitalisation providing a basis for discourse, Indians may continue to be seen by white society as they have been in the past - initially as unintelligible savages, and later as a social problem in a society in which they would not assimilate. The need for an arena for discourse on the part of the authors of the renaissance is the generator of the issues and ideology, and even the factionalism and dissension, of native politics.

Even if the goal of sovereignty within Canada is never realised, the concept of Indian nationhood has gone a long way toward demonstrating to themselves and whites that Indians are a distinct and visible group with an identity which can be validated through their histories and cultures. This, at least, is a first step toward discourse.

# NOTES

1. Levi-Strauss described the interplay between 'anthropologist' and 'native':

> "...it is never himself [the ethnographer] or the other whom he encounters at the end of his investigation. At most he can claim to extricate, by the superposition of himself on the other, what Mauss called the facts of general functioning, which he showed were more universal and had even more reality." [Levi-Strauss 1967:15]

2. "Text" in this context refers to literature, in keeping with the original meaning and purpose of hermeneutics - textual exegesis, usually biblical. However, Gadamer broadened his definition of text and his application of hermeneutics to a general philosophy of existence, in which "text" is the given situation of present existence. Paul Ricouer uses the term "text-analogue" (Ricouer 1963).

3. Dilthey developed a hermeneutic interpretation in which the analyst attempts to subjectively identify himself with the author of the text, removing the barriers of time and cultural differences, and thereby understanding the text in the author's own way, or as the author (cf. Dilthey 1976).

4. Perhaps the most significant of the proposals made by Trudeau was the White Paper on Indian Affairs introduced in 1969. It, and the procedure of dealing with native claims in Trudeau's government, will be included in the following discussion of the White Paper.

5. The mixed blessings of government funding have been weighed by political activist organisations of all stripes. Feminist groups, ethnic associations, humanitarian agencies and other voluntary associations pressing for social change fear the potential loss of autonomy and critical voice which may accompany acceptance of the often necessary, and easily accessible, sources of operational capital available from government.

.5.

## THEY CALLS ME INDIAN

I was told of a man who lived in Boyd's Harbour near Twillingate, an area where few Micmacs live. He gained his livelihood from the land, through hunting, fishing and trapping. While taking some visitors in his boat to a spot which they wished to see, he talked of his father who had also lived in the same manner and from whom he had learned how to live on the country. His father was part Micmac, and the family was locally regarded as Indians, due both to genealogy and to lifestyle. He said of himself, "They calls me Indian. I don't know - I guess I am."

Being Micmac in Newfoundland has different meanings, depending, in part, on place and time. In all situations, however, the meanings are developed and affected by discourse, either implicit or explicit, between Micmacs and non-Micmacs at both individual and political levels. In this chapter some of these meanings will be explored in terms of Micmac identity and the responses to it by whites. Examples used will be drawn from the Bay St. George area of the west coast because the conflict and communication about ethnic identity is shown there in sharpest relief. Discourse on identity is richer and more varied than in areas where cultural homogeneity

or brevity of occupation allows ethnic definitions a greater degree of rigidity. The first part of the chapter is a discussion of some of the differences between areas of the island and the impact of these differences on Micmacs identity. The second part is a sketch of what it can mean to be Micmac, and how Indian identity is accepted or rejected by whites.

Because several people familiar with the west coast told me that the family histories there were even more complex than in Conne River or central Newfoundland, before I went to Bay St. George to conduct fieldwork I anticipated difficulty in unravelling the tightly-knit and multi-stranded fabric of genealogy and identity. Micmacs throughout Newfoundland share a common history, common traditions and common problems. Accordingly, being Indian on the French shore is in many ways similar to being Indian in Conne River or central Newfoundland. But there are differences between all three areas which result from their different histories of settlement, different neighbouring ethnic groups, and varying degrees of proximity to those neighbours. There are three points which are important to the understanding of the development of Micmac identity and political strategies. Although these are common to all three areas of Micmac settlement, they exhibit somewhat different manifestations in each. They are, first, genealogy as legitimation of

identity and the consequent importance of kinship and surnames, second, intermarriage between Micmacs and whites, and, third, stigmatisation of Micmacs in the past and at present.

Different patterns of Micmac settlement in central, southern and western Newfoundland have resulted in varying degrees of complexity of kinship networks. There are more surnames which indicate Micmac descent on the west coast than in central Newfoundland or Conne River. Some names are common to all three districts, but the west coast has many which are unique to it and which demonstrate the extent of French influence in family histories.

Settlement by Micmacs in central Newfoundland occurred in the mid to late nineteenth century as individual migration which was motivated by the possibility of obtaining employment. Therefore, there are only three Micmac surnames in the Glenwood and Gander Bay areas, others having been introduced by marriage with whites.[1] In Conne River, settlement by Micmacs has a much longer history than in central Newfoundland, but the degree of isolation and homogeneity of the population has reduced the number of surnames brought in from outside. Settlement of the west coast predates that of central Newfoundland and Conne River, and, especially in the eighteenth century, resulted from migration of groups from

Cape Breton. As a result, many more surnames were transported to the area, and there has been more time for them to be changed, added to, or lost.

In Bay St. George, many of the Micmac surnames are French in origin, and were obtained in one of three ways. Many are the result of intermarriage between French and Micmac in Cape Breton or Newfoundland. Others are baptismal names bestowed by French priests on Micmacs. Another group of names results from decisions made by individuals to adopt French names rather than retain Micmac ones. In regard to the latter category, with most of the examples which I recorded, the name change had occurred when the person moved to Newfoundland. With many of my informants the original Micmac name has been completely lost from memory. After the French lost control of the west coast, and the British, with a new tongue, became dominant, many of the French names were anglicised. Therefore, one confronts a complex situation where, for example, some Bennetts, Whites and Youngs are of families which were originally Benoits, LeBlancs, and Le Jeunes, while other Bennetts, Whites and Youngs are the descendants of early British settlers who bore these surnames. Some Whites, Bennetts and Youngs define themselves, or are defined, as Micmac, while others do not.

A second difference between the rest of Newfoundland and the west coast is the greater complexity of intermarriage between Micmac and white. In Glenwood and Gander Bay, which are younger communities in regard to residence of the Micmac population, one need only trace back five generations, at most, to reach the local Micmac 'apical ancestor.' Intermarriage between Micmacs and whites has occurred, but has been largely confined to the communities themselves. That is, people have married across Micmac-white categories, but have restricted the loci of these unions to their own or neighbouring communites. The localised nature of intermarriage and the shorter time span make genealogies easy to trace. In Conne River, the time span has been longer, but the stability of the population and the habit of incorporation of marriage partners into the community also minimises difficulties in genealogical research. In Bay St. George, Micmacs and French were migrating in large numbers to Newfoundland from at least as early as the first half of the eighteenth century. Intermarriage between Micmacs and French in Cape Breton, and individual migration, was occurring earlier than that. While intermarriage is also quite localised on the west coast, the area included extends from the Codroy Valley in the south to the Bay of Islands in the north. There are distinct regions within this general area, but kinship ties link the entire west

coast. Perhaps because of this temporal and geographical complexity, many people are less familiar with the origins of their antecedents than are those in a more restricted time and space frame.

A third difference between the three areas relates to negative attitudes toward Micmac identity. In Glenwood and Gander Bay I saw less evidence of past stigmatisation of Micmacs. The fact of Micmac ancestry generally was recognised and, to some extent, accepted by both Micmacs and whites. Most expressions of white antagonism toward Micmacs are related to recent Micmac political action. For example, many whites are concerned that if Micmacs gain legal hunting and fishing rights and control over land, whites will no longer have access to these resources in the new Micmac lands. Such fears provoke statements such as "he's no more Micmac than I am" and "I'd be Indian too if they paid me for it." I do not know if the animosity is a recent response to Micmac politicisation alone, or whether it has replaced an earlier form of prejudice. Both explanations have been offered me by Micmacs and whites. Regardless of the cause of prejudice in the past, it appears that it has now crystallised around the political actions of the Micmacs.

In Conne River stigmatisation of Micmacs was present before their political organisation, and now has added dimensions due to their successful activism. The

stigmatisation which they felt from elsewhere in Baie d'Espoir was destructive to their identity and the spirit of the community. This destructiveness was particularly acute when combined with active repression of their culture by representatives of the church. The stigmatisation felt by Conne River Micmacs was of a different nature than that experienced in other parts of the island. This was because Conne River has long been a native community, and prejudice and discrimination originated from outside the community. For Micmacs elsewhere the stigmatisation they encountered often came from within their own communities, where Micmacs comprise but one part of the population. Micmacs residing in multi-ethnic communities could not as effectively use an "us versus them" self-defense mechanism as could Conne River residents for whom village boundaries could define and reinforce group solidarity.

On the west coast there is a clearer history of stigmatisation of Micmacs. In most of the communities which possess a Micmac population there has been a part of town traditionally known as 'the reservation.' The genealogies of these people called 'Indians' often were not known sufficiently well to be able to pinpoint the source of the 'Indian blood,' but determinations were made because "they looked like Indians and lived like Indians." That is to say, they were dark complexioned and often

poorer, and lived in more cramped quarters than did the rest of the villagers.

In a report on potential for agricultural development, Ian Whitaker shows his agreement with the local assessment of the differences between Flat Bay East, which is considered 'white,' and Flat Bay West, which is 'the reservation'. Without using the word 'Micmac,' he decribes the two communities as follows:

> The people of Flat Bay East are of French origin...The people speak with a French accent. However, only a few of the people in Flat Bay East can still speak the French language...
>
> The homes in Flat Bay [East] were generally in good condition, often furnished with modern furniture. There were, nevertheless, a few places which could only be classed as shacks. These houses were dirty on the inside and poorly furnished. However, these structures were in a minority and for the most part I found the community members were a clean and progressive people, intent on raising their standard of living...
>
> In fact, some of the residents of Flat Bay East voiced resentment that they should be associated in name with Flat Bay West. Some referred to their neighbours as a 'hard crowd' and 'a bad bunch'...
>
> The houses of Flat Bay [West] are very small and poorly constructed. Some of them cannot be classed as suitable for human habitation ...Generally the houses were not well-kept or very clean...
>
> One of the things that stands out in this community [Flat Bay West] is the general lack of initiative among the people to better themselves. The general upkeep of the houses and the attitudes of the people toward life itself reflect an attitude of complacency.

> The morals of this community are far below those that are generally accepted in our society. [Whitaker 1963:125-126,147-148,170]

Residents of Flat Bay West remained upset about this report seventeen years later. Although the appearance of Flat Bay East and West has been considerably altered by the FNI's housing repair programme, there are still shacks. But standards of maintenance of shacks and new houses betwen Flat Bay East and West do not appear to significantly differ. I saw little difference in attitudes or aspirations of residents of either community, except that most in Flat Bay West and some in Flat Bay East prefer to maintain their Indian identity and develop their community in that context.

## STIGMATISATION AS IDENTITY MAINTENANCE

The whites who talked about "the jack-o-tars over on the reservation" were unwittingly laying the groundwork for the revival of Micmac identity. Their stigmatisation of the Indians has been responsible to a great extent for the maintenance of a separate Micmac identity. Until the last decade, many people on the west coast denied their Micmac ancestry. Some were successful in doing so; others, regardless of their protestations, were marked as Micmac and were reminded of it at every turn. Therefore, while they may not have wished to be Indian, they were told they were, and the reasons for that identity had to

be made clear to each successive generation. It is an easy step, then, to transmute that stigmatisation into ethnic pride when social conditions become receptive to it.

The Micmac leaders, in particular, clearly remember the differentiation that was made, and the insults that were hurled, when they were young. Their memories act as an impetus, and a raison d'etre, for their political actions. Being confronted with statements such as "you're no more Indian than I am," which evoke memories of a time when one was clearly an Indian and the other clearly not, aids leaders greatly in maintaining their strength of committment. Calvin White, president of the Federation of Newfoundland Indians, has recalled to me some memories of childhood:

> My mother would sometimes have to take us to St. George's to the doctor. I always hated going, not only because I didn't like going to the doctor, but because I didn't like to go to St. George's. We were a big family and they didn't have the money to dress us fancy. We'd go in and sit way over on the other side of the room and hope we could get in quickly. Of course, we never could because the doctor would take everybody else first. People in the waiting room would stare at all of us and laugh at what we had on, or what my mother had on, and talk about 'those Flat Bay Indians' coming into town.

The legacy of difference provides a reason for Micmac identity. As has been discussed in Chapter 4, development and management of identity occur as dialogue

between two groups - those who are inside and those who are outside. Attitudes, however derogatory, held by whites about the differences between the two groups support the Micmacs' perception of a separate identity. By placing their 'Indian' attributes in a larger communicative context (i.e., that of North American Indian culture and politics), local negative connotations are balanced by the positive meanings attached to the larger native society. The disparaging comments of local whites, therefore, can be used as reinforcement of the new Micmac identity, and can be countered with such rejoinders as: "You always thought we were Indian before, why aren't we now?" A young Micmac woman explained the altered situation in this way:

> They used to make fun of us at school and call us dirty Micmacs. Now, we're the ones saying we're Indians and we're proud of it, and they don't know what to do. They know that we're part of an organisation and part of a whole world that they're not, and they can't laugh at us anymore. We just say, 'Yes, we're Indians and we're glad. What's wrong with you, you jealous you're not?'

The coming out of the closet, as it were, of Indian people is an action which the FNI has tried to promote. One man now involved with the FNI told me:

> We couldn't feel good about being Indian. Things that we did that other people didn't do we got laughed at for, so we made sure we didn't do them when anybody else was around. Sometimes we didn't even want to do them when we were by ourselves because we didn't want to be acting like Indians. What was there in

> that? All we knew, or all that seemed important at the time, was what we learned in school, and that was that the Micmacs had come over here to kill the Beothuks. We didn't want to be responsible for that, but we didn't know the difference.

There was not a bright future in being Micmac in Bay St. George, so those who were able tried to disassociate themselves from all aspects of Micmac identity. Many were successful and over time their Micmac label was lost. Others were not so easily assimilated, either because of their 'black' appearance or their reluctance to give up all Indian ways, but they were no more willing to be public Micmacs, if being called Micmac was only a slur. They are among those who would have "punched you in the face for calling them Indian."

In fact, anyone on the west coast, regardless of their attitude toward Micmac heritage, would have been inclined to punch anyone for calling them Micmac when it was meant only as an insult. Mr. White said:

> Sure I would've knocked anybody down who called me a dirty Micmac or a lazy, good-for-nothing jack-o-tar. Wouldn't you? If it was said like that, it was only an insult. It didn't say anything about what we were, it was just a way to insult us. That's always been like that. But if you said to anybody around here, "So you're Micmac, are you," or something like that, they'd say yes. But if you said to those same people, "you're nothing but a dirty thieving Indian," then there would be a fight.
>
> My uncle did a lot of guiding on the Serpentine River. One man he guided was a writer in New York. He wrote an article

> about Newfoundland and mentioned my uncle by name and said that he knew the river the way only a Micmac could. He sent a copy to my uncle and he was so proud of that! He showed it to everybody. Does that sound like he was ashamed of being Micmac?

It is difficult now, after ten years of political activism, to determine how many actively denied their Micmac ancestry (whatever the context) in the past, and how many responded only to the derisive application of the words 'Micmac' or 'Indian.' Disguising ownership of Micmac 'blood' was, and is, relatively easy for individuals. The obvious methods, such as marrying out of the community and adopting the spouse's ethnic identity, or moving outside the area where one's antecedants are known, have been used. I was told of Bay St. George families where "buddy there is married to a girl from Conne River," with no suggestion that this fact makes "buddy's" offspring Indian. Another way, more commonly employed, is simply to magnify the significance of certain ancestors while downplaying others. This works both ways; the magnification of 'white' ancestry in order to avoid the label of Indian, or the magnification of Micmac ancestors in order to legitimate an Indian identity. As has been said earlier, the genealogical complexity of the west coast makes it possible for many, if not most, people to choose from several birthright options.

Regardless of the direction which their genealogical interpretation takes, they may have difficulties in having their chosen identity accepted by others. The difficulties for those who wish to be white may now be fewer, as the relative benefits of Indian identity have increased. ,There now are plenty of people who claim the name of 'Indian,' and the function of the label as an insult or means of social control has been greatly diminished. Those who are believed to be of Micmac ancestry but who choose to identiry as white now generally have their self-identification accepted. The connotations of Indian identity have become much more varied. It may be used by whites as an insult, but now it is easily turned into a point of pride by the recipient.

Indian identity has acted as an equaliser in Bay St. George. The poor areas, whether entire villages or families within a village, now have a resource base which allows them a degree of economic and cultural independence. Instead of defining themselves solely in terms of the west coast and the province, they have available to them resources and a heritage which are from outside and which are not available to anyone else in the area. Funding from federal sources is available only to native peoples, or, at their discretion, to non-natives of the area. The history and sense of peoplehood of Bay St. George Micmacs extends beyond the island to that of native

people throughout North America. Therefore, in economics and history, a position as natives gives them parity with non-native individuals and organisations in the area. As part of a group with economic power and a valued history (an incipient 'great tradition'), they can change the local meanings of such boundary markers as 'the reservation.'

However, the changed attitude toward Indian identity generates a new way for the deprecation of Indians. By claiming Micmac ancestry for everyone, and thereby diminishing its importance, critics attempt to lessen the value of the identity and the legitimacy of claims upon it. Many families in Bay St. George have always been considered Micmac, but the relative degree, and importance, of 'Indian blood' has altered since the inception of political activity. The White family of Flat Bay provides one example. Calvin White, as president of the FNI, is one of the most 'visible' Indians in the area. While many regard him as Indian, and his successes have garnered him respect as a politician, opponents to the FNI now cast aspersions on his authenticity as an Indian. As one man said, "Sure Calvin's got some Micmac in him, so do I, but you don't see me running around in buckskin, now do you?"

The notion of 'blood' is a double-purpose one. In the days prior to native political organisation on the

island, a little bit of Indian blood, or a 'black' appearance, was sufficient to put one on the Indian side of town metaphorically and sometimes literally. In the post-organisational period, however, it takes more than a drop of Indian blood to make one a bona fide Indian. Karen Blu has discussed the concept of 'blood' in reference to the Lumbee Indians, where they must deal with the very different meanings of 'Indian blood' and 'black blood:'

> White ideas about 'Indian blood' are less formalized and clear-cut [than about 'black blood']. Indian blood, if it entered a White family in a much earlier generation and if it did not come from Robeson County Indians, is apparently not polluting and can be rather enhancing. A 'Cherokee princess' is perhaps the most frequently mentioned Indian ancestor. It may only take one drop of Black blood to make a person a Negro, but it takes a lot of Indian blood to make a person a 'real' Indian, as White comments such as the following suggest: "He's not a real Indian - he doesn't have enough Indian blood," or "He doesn't have any more Indian blood than I do." [Blu 1980:25]$_2$

Native groups in the American South face a twist in logic not encountered by the Micmacs. If they are 'tri-racial' in origin (cf. Berry 1945,1963), they are subject to the social definitions of both black and Indian blood. On the socially defined black/white scale, prejudice dictates that their claims to 'no colour' should be denied, for, at least in the past, one drop of black blood made one black. However, on the Indian/white scale,

it is the opposite claim which is denied. The Micmacs, and the Lumbees, must be able to demonstrate a suitable amount of 'Indian blood' in order to satisfy white standards for Indian identity. The amount of blood required to make an Indian may vary depending on the social value attached to it.

As the value of 'Indian blood' increased in Newfoundland, its ascribed degree decreased for those who were, or became, openly Indian, and increased for those who have never considered themselves, or been considered by others, to be Indian. The existence of the FNI on the west coast has, at the very least, caused more people to acknowledge their very mixed ethnic origins. However, the recognition of mixed ancestry can be used to detract from the legitimacy of the claim to special status for Micmacs. If most people can claim a Micmac ancestor somewhere, why should only a part of that population claim an exclusive uni-ethnic identity?

One answer to this question was given to me by a representative of Les Terre-Neuvien Francais when asked about the significance of the number of common surnames in the francophone and Micmac associations:

> There are lots of Benoits in our group and there are lots of Benoits in the Federation of Newfoundland Indians. We're all related somehow if we go back far enough. I know there is Micmac in me, but I was raised here in Cap St. Georges. Our environment was French - the language, music, story-telling,

> and everything about us. So for me, it's the French that's important; it's not just what my grandparents were, it's what I was brought up in. If I came from Flat Bay, and was brought up as a Micmac, then the Micmac part of me would be important and the French wouldn't be. It just depends on what you grow up with.

This attitude does not find acceptance with those who are opposed to Micmac politicisation. They argue that intermarriage and the environment acted as levellers for everyone in the area, creating circumstances and a history shared by all. An informant explained the problem in the following way:

> There's nobody that's pure anything here. We've all got a little Micmac, a little French and English and Scotch in us somewhere - probably a little Beothuk too! Look, when the white man came here, they had to marry somebody, right? So if there weren't enough white women, then there were Indians or jackie-tars or something. So we all come from that. And as far as hunting and trapping and all that goes - well, we all had to do that too. You couldn't have lived here without being able to do that. Sure, I don't do it, but I wouldn't be here if my grandfather didn't. And I don't imagine too many of them so-called Indians in Flat Bay are doing it now either.

It is true that the extent of intermarriage makes it feasible that many people from the west coast have Micmac, French and British ancestry. It is also true that many early settlers, regardless of prior cultural traditions, had to sustain life by all available means, and that included hunting and trapping. The difference is that for one group, hunting and trapping provided sustenance alone, while for the Micmacs it provided that

as well as a means of self-identification. The Micmacs' attachment to the land goes beyond the economic to cultural and spiritual levels. All of these aspects of working on the land were included with the skills taught by father to son.

Some others in Bay St. George criticise the FNI on the grounds that Indians, regardless of the validity of their identity, are not entitled to special privileges or status. A letter referring to the Micmac land claim was printed in a west coast newspaper:

> Just imagine the white man and woman have worked over hundreds of years to build this country from the grass roots to what we have today after finding it hundreds of years ago with no industry, no law as we know it today, no religion, no educational system, no armed forces, no paved roads. Even while trying to build the country, the Indians who were discovered here were given billions of dollars earned by the white man's sweat.
>
> Even though all this has been accomplished by the white man, the Indian for some reason feel we still owe him compensation. [The Western Star, July 22, 1982]

An interesting point about this letter is that its author is a store owner in a west coast community, a member of local economic councils, and a former president of his community's native council.

ROLES OF ETHNIC GROUPS

Thus far in this chapter we have looked at isolated examples of negative views of Micmac identity selected from a variety of contexts. The following description of a federally and provincially funded housing assistance programme in Bay St. George permits a fuller understanding of reasons underlying the formulation of positive or negative viewpoints in regard to ethnic identification. The Federation of Newfoundland Indians played a central role in the implementation of the assistance programme. In addition to illuminating the dynamics of identity interpretation as related to a single issue, this discussion also allows a deeper understanding of the operations of ethnic associations and their potential impact.

The first native housing repair programme in the province was started in 1973 in Labrador by the precursor of the FNI, the Native Association of Newfoundland and Labrador. The immediate success of the organisation in Labrador can be attributed to the success of the Winter Warmth Programme. The physical comforts brought to native and settler residents succeeded for a time in overcoming the problems inherent in uniting the ethnically disparate population of Labrador.

Among the island's Micmac population, the housing programme also engendered immediate success in terms of

increasing membership and the level of active involvement in the FNI. It provided a tangible demonstration of the value of membership in a political organisation and of being Micmac, thereby increasing group cohesiveness and strength. The value of such social aid and development programmes is evident. However, less understood, and more problematic, are their negative effects. This is not intended to downplay the importance and necessity of economic programmes, but rather to suggest that the problems inherent in ethnic pragmatism may be of greater heuristic value than study of the benefits. The reasons why people choose or reject Indian identity, and how they reconcile that identity and its associated meanings with other, often conflicting, identities may be affected by their moral perceptions of political or pragmatic action.

In 1978 the FNI instituted a Housing Technical Service division in Bay St. George with funding provided by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) under its Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP). Financial assistance from RRAP was available to all homeowners who met the financial requirement. It was not administered in any way by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, nor did it have any special provisions for native people. The FNI's project for repair of existing houses and construction of new ones was similar in design to others they had previously

sponsored.[3]

The mandate of the Housing Technical Service was to co-ordinate the services of the provincial and federal housing boards, explain procedure to applicants, make an initial assessment of individual eligibility and needs, and supervise the work process. One goal was to ensure that available assistance was directed toward Micmacs and, to that end, to act as an intermediary between government and individuals. A second goal was the training and creation of employment for native people. The 1978 plan required for its operation the training and services of five people and generated $60,000 annually in salaries. The FNI encouraged the hiring of local native and non-native building contractors, suppliers and workmen, and projected that as the programme was extended to other areas of the province, those working in Bay St. George could provide a nucleus of trained administrative personnel. The following terms of reference were presented in a discussion paper circulated to the membership of the FNI and government housing services:

> The Housing Technical Service - under the Federation of Newfoundland Indians will be required to give priority to all of its membership and to those of Native ancestry. However under certain circumstances and with the approval of the executive it may execute its service to people other than "Native".

There were two major problems which affected the housing programme and the FNI in central and western

Newfoundland. Particularly in the central part of the island, exclusion of non-native residents of communities involved in RRAP created antagonism between the two groups which spilled over from the housing programme to Micmac identity itself. "He's no more Micmac than I am" and "well, who wouldn't be Indian if you can get a new house for it" were comments often heard from white residents a few years ago. The emergence of Micmac political activity was received with some scepticism by the Micmacs' white neighbours, but when material well-being began to be disproportionately affected by ethnicity, the scepticism and animosity increased exponentially with each new improvement to a Micmac's property. Regardless of the ethnic aspect of this programme, this type of community conflict over economic gain, and consequent 'divide the spoils' type of justice, is far from unknown in Newfoundland as a whole.

On the west coast the tension was less apparent because the spoils were more widely distributed. Communities rather than individuals were designated eligible for assistance and consequently white residents of chosen communities were not excluded if they qualified on financial grounds. Therefore, while it was still identified as an Indian project, intra-community friction was significantly lower. However, rivalry between communities increased somewhat as a result of RRAP and

other economic programmes initiated by the FNI in west coast communities with large Micmac populations. The communities which underwent the greatest changes in the mid-1970s were those which had been the poorest. These were also the communities which had always been referred to as Indian or jack-o-tar towns. When these poor cousins suddenly acquired a new face and showed burgeoning prosperity, the other towns, accustomed to greater prosperity relative to the 'reservations,' but with fewer Micmacs and less active FNI local councils, resented a change in fortune of which they were not a part.[4] Economic resentment again was translated into ethnic terms to some extent with an opinion conveyed that these people were not really Indians, but became Indian because it paid.

The second problem encountered by the housing programme also resulted from confounding of the programme with ethnic identity, but in this case the problematic response was within the Micmac group. As discussed previously, Micmac identity in Newfoundland has not been for many years a source of pride. Due to their history and the publicly presented characterisation of Newfoundland,[5] being Micmac has been, at best, an ambiguous status. When pride in Micmac identity began to be vocalised through the native association, it simultaneously became prey to the jealousies and rivalries

brought about by pragmatic political activity. Some people, for whom Micmac political activity had become synonymous with RRAP, said to me; "I don't want anything to do with that Federation. I'm not a Micmac. That crowd wouldn't fix some things around here that needed doing." Those people were Micmac according to the genealogies and their own family definition before the housing programme, but, for the period of time that they were annoyed because all of their requests for repairs had not been satisfied, they renounced all claim to Micmac heritage because of "that crowd" who made the decisions. This problem, like the first, was greater in central Newfoundland than on the west coast, where available funding permitted fulfillment of most people's requests.

The most problematic issue on the west coast arose out of its ethnic heterogeneity and genealogical complexity. The question of what villages or individuals qualify for economic assistance programming is connected to the question of who is Micmac. If that is a difficult question to answer in all of Newfoundland, it is doubly so in Bay St. George. The reasons are, first, the greater stigmatisation of Micmacs in this region, and, second, its long history of co-existence and intermarriage between Micmacs and whites.

One community in Bay St. George presents a particularly interesting case study of the inadvertent

effects of economic action. The village is very small and very poor, without a sufficiently large population to support any form of industry or commerce, and no municipal revenue to provide any public services. The population is of French and Micmac descent and most families have been resident in the community for several generations. Although there is a very good harbour, economic activity in the past has been primarily directed inland to hunting, trapping and farming. Residents are often referred to as Indians or 'jack-o-tars' by outsiders (unless the 'Indians' begin to gain benefits from that), but except in special circumstances the individuals so designated do not share that opinion.

In 1975 the Federation of Newfoundland Indians approached the community to discuss the establishment of a local native council. Elections were held and a council was duly constituted. The village then became involved in the RRAP housing programme along with other projects of the FNI. Because the availability of sufficient funds meant that problems of exclusion could be avoided, there was no rancour over the housing programme. Everyone who met the financial requirements qualified for assistance regardless of ethnic ancestry. In this community, there would be few if any who would not qualify on grounds of impoverishment.

Problems began with another construction project in the community. Disagreement between the local council and the FNI about its administration were well publicised in the local press, and led eventually to the dissolution of the existing native council executive. A second native council executive was elected but it never succeeded in gaining the support of the village. Gradually it dropped out of active involvement in the FNI, and, consequently, the FNI dropped out of the consciousness of the community.

After four years, the only people said to be Micmacs by others in the community were the members of the family which had become the second executive of the native council. They, I was told, had always been considered to be Indians even before the advent of the FNI. One other family, which had not been present during the dispute and therefore had no vested interests, acknowledged Micmac and French ancestry but did not place any political significance on either. After I read local press coverage from the time of the dispute in which the members of the first native council declared themselves to be 'part Micmac,' I was told by these same people that their ancestry was French with some English admixture, but no Micmac. I asked why had they been members of the FNI. I did not receive a very direct answer, only that help had been needed, but that subsequent problems had made extended co-operation too difficult. The issue of Indian

identity did not figure in the explanation, although it had figured in their participation in the FNI.

How can one explain individuals or groups wholeheartedly switching their identity from French to Micmac and back to French? My knowledge of west coast genealogies indicates that the people of this community are of both Micmac and French descent, but their self-identification is in some ways situational. They recognise the practical utility of identity, but not its political ethos of permanence.[6]

Why would they do this, and what do such actions say about the meaning of identity and the functions of ethnic associations? How can problems encountered in ethnic-based political activity be of assistance in understanding it? Political expediency alone makes it imperative to bring such problems to light, for without discussion the ambiguity of identity which is suggested may lend credence to such statements as "I'd be Indian too if they paid me for it."

The situation in Newfoundland, particularly exemplified on the west coast, cannot be explained so simply. There are two major factors which underlie contemporary conditions; the first is unemployment and the second is a long history of stigmatisation of Micmacs. Unemployment and poverty mean, first, that sources of financial aid and political power are extremely valuable

and, secondly, that a political organisation must make a concrete impact on the conditions of people's lives.

Forms of political association other than ethnic have been used to improve conditions in Bay St. George for a number of years. The Barachois Development Association has been instrumental in obtaining government funded employment projects for road improvement, brush cutting and construction of recreational facilities. Additionally, in an attempt to expand the local fishery, they have assisted in the operation of a small fish plant in St. George's. Town councils, present in three of the five communities in which I worked, have also petitioned government and industry for creation of employment and improvement of services in their towns.

Despite their efforts, these forms of community organisation lack widespread, popular involvement from those whom they represent. One possible explanation for this is that their activities rarely benefit individuals in directly observable ways. The benefits of the creation of jobs are, of course, abundantly clear to those who are hired. However, the value of a neatly repaired sidewalk in one's town is far less immediate than, say, the repair of a window in one's own house. A second explanation may be that municipal and regional politics cannot produce heightened awareness and emotional involvement for non-participants.[7] There is no point of commonality

around which people can rally other than one of economics, which in Bay St. George means residence in an economically depressed region. However, while the dearth of employment does cause considerable community excitement to be generated when job possibilities are presented, that alone is not sufficient to sustain involvement.

Ethnic association stirs emotion and calls on shared experience in ways other than economic. By combining economics and politics with cultural heritage, it creates a pattern in which economic advancement reinforces the primary reason for the organisation's existence, that being the sharing of common history and traditions. The Federation of Newfoundland Indians has been trying to maintain this cycle by concerted action in the directions of economics and identity.

Especially when the other factor of stigmatisation of Micmac identity is added, people need concrete reasons to risk a return to the label of 'dirty Micmac.' After years of being stigmatised and, therefore, hiding their Micmac identity, in the space of ten years many have regained pride in their heritage and have seen material and political benefits as a result. But the prejudice remains, and, to an extent, is exacerbated by the turn of fortune for the Micmacs due to the activities of the FNI.

The Federation of Newfoundland Indians is a new political structure trying to exist within an established

system of conflicting community and ethnic group power structures, and within the remnants of the merchant power structure as well. The overlaying of a new political system is problematic, especially when it is one which must meet the sometimes conflicting interests of community, government, and national native politics. The internal difficulties of native organisations have been well documented (cf. Burke 1976), and they are compounded in economically depressed and culturally heterogeneous situations such as in Bay St. George.

Can the people of the community which we have discussed be called Indian? They have in the past been called Indian by others, but that designation had only negative connotations. They tried to change those connotations but became embroiled in intra-group politics. Their genealogies suggest they are part Indian, but they have never had reason, except during the brief period of FNI involvement, to acknowledge an Indian identity. This does not mean that their claim to Indian identity was spurious, only that their ancestry and cultural traditions permit them an equally legitimate choice between Indian, French or Newfoundlander.[8]

Their situation demonstrates the double-sided nature of ethnicity; of providing, on one hand, a means of cultural self-definition, and, on the other, a means of group advocacy. Ethnic associations, like other minority

and social action groups, can gain strength by being able to show practical results of political organisation. Successful political action can maintain support and prove the value of turning a stigmatised identity into one of pride. But the reverse side is that practical politics lends itself to rivalry and dispute. Additional problems may result from the fact that, in the case of the Micmacs, few people are solely one thing or another. This gives detractors of their political activity room to manouevre. If pride and belief in the value of political organisation has not had time to become fully accepted, political and personal problems can undermine its perceived value.[9] In cases such as the one presented here, where Indian identity has not had time to lose its perjorative connotations, the distinction between ethnic identity and ethnic politics can be lost. With that, pride in identity may also be lost.

In the past ten years, the Micmacs of the west coast, and for that matter of the whole island, have been given reason for pride through organisations which have been rediscovering cultural traditions and fighting for recognition as a native people. But pride has been, at times, adversely affected by internal strife which was translated into questions about the legitimacy of Micmac identity.

Affirmation of group solidarity and the validity of group existence as an ethnic unit through public presentation of its heritage is one function of ethnic-based associations. Aside from this, they play a role as a political pressure group. They act as advocates for the gaining of social and economic benefits for their members, by creation of employment, provision of services, and lobbying for legal and political changes designed to improve the position of the group. This is their role as 'interest group;' the ability to achieve goals by concerted action which are less attainable by individual effort (Rose 1965). Cohen writes of the utility of ethnic identification in establishing and maintaining trade routes among the Hausa (Cohen 1969). Berry and others write of the success of the Lumbee Indians in changing their disadvantaged legal status by organising politically (Berry 1963;Sider 1976;Blu 1980). Sawchuk applies the term 'interest group' to the political and social objectives of the Manitoba Metis Federation, and Ponting and Gibbins discuss the National Indian Brotherhood in a similar manner (Sawchuk 1978;Ponting and Gibbins 1980).

Unfortunately, in its most negative light, the search for social and economic gain through membership in an ethnic association can be seen as jumping on the band wagon of government funding. Marginal or officially unrecognised groups such as the Micmacs are particularly

susceptible to this criticism. However, in addition to being a legitimate function of political association, action designed to improve the economic or political status of members of an ethnic group is more simply a way of using all available resources to solve a problem.

Throughout the island of Newfoundland, poverty is a widespread problem. Limited and unstable employment opportunities, and a consequent reliance on unemployment insurance benefits, welfare and pensions, suggests the improbability of there being sufficient money to attain a standard of living comparable to that of more affluent areas. Many families have no money to improve their housing conditions or purchase necessary services and amenities. Numerous communities have limited resources with which they can improve facilities or services for their residents.

The Federation of Newfoundland Indians is able to obtain funding to make changes in the living conditions of its members. Pragmatic action of this type reinforces the FNI's role as purveyor of Micmac heritage. Ethnic politics works at both the level of communicative action and instrumental action - renaissance and revitalisation. Communicative action is that which is directly related to the development of pride in being a 'people' and having a heritage which transcends other means of self-identification and which sets them apart from all others.

Instrumental action aids the communicative in two ways. One way is by pragmatic action which directly relates to their cultural traditions and identity, such as Indian registration and land claims. The other is through action which is not directly connected to their identity. The housing repair programme falls into this category and serves two functions: the first is the improvement of material conditions of life for the group's members, and the second is the reinforcement of allegiance to the group and to Micmac identity.

Ethnic organisations, including the FNI, which are attempting to achieve something more substantive than conviviality or rhetoric through their existence and activities recognise that they must maintain both communicative and instrumental action in such a manner that each aids rather than impedes the other. In Newfoundland, the complexities of community interaction, political structures and history make it especially important, though often difficult, for the FNI to succeed in maintaining the equilibrium between politics and identity.

# NOTES

1. The Micmac names are Francis and John, but there are two separate families bearing the surname John. The link between the two is sufficiently far back in time for the two branches to be regarded as separate, and therefore, there is marriage between them. The Jeddore family came to Glenwood from Conne River in the 1920s after the departure of the chief, Noel Jeddore, from Conne River to Cape Breton (cf. Chapter 3).

2. The favour enjoyed by the 'Cherokee princess' with whites is also discussed by Vine Deloria, Jr. (1969). Some Newfoundlanders find a certain social cachet in claiming Shawnadithit, the last known Beothuk woman, as an ancestor. No genealogical evidence of miscegenation exists, aside from Santu, a woman who claimed Micmac and Beothuk ancestry and possessed knowledge of the Beothuks which gave credence to her claim, a woman from Bay St. George who claimed that her great-grandfather was a Beothuk who married a Micmac woman (Cuff 1966). Others in this family also claim Beothuk ancestry. For most, both white and Micmac, who claim descent from Shawnadithit or even Santu, the attraction seems to be romantic rather than as a part of ethnic self-definition.

3. RRAP is still available to all residents of rural and urban Newfoundland and Labrador who live in areas which have been designated by the programme and who meet the financial qualifications. It is not a native housing programme, but is used as such only by the FNI applying as a body on behalf of its members. Housing projects for the province's native people began in 1973 and still continue under programmes of CMHC and the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation (NLHC).

4. This situation has parallels in non-ethnic Newfoundland politics. The "community development" policies of the 1950s created dilemmas for politicians and social planners because of the intransigence of the accepted social order which was challenged by schemes of economic improvement and population resettlement. See for examples Matthews 1976, Wadel 1969.

5. In reference to the island, the Newfoundland identity which is regarded as the standard, and is promoted officially and through the media and arts is derived from the Irish and English traditions. Those are the foremost images conjured up by the word 'Newfoundlander.' Others, such as French or Indian, are conceptually, and often actually, hyphenated. One speaks of 'Newfoundland music' and thinks of Irish derived jigs and airs; if one refers to west coast French music, one specifies 'French-Newfoundland.'

6. Forms of 'situational identity' have been discussed by Pool (1963), Nagata (1974), and Epstein (1978). Much of the literature available on isolated American Indian groups also makes reference to situational identity (cf. Hicks and Kertzer 1972;Bailey 1972). Jeanne Guillimin describes adaptation by rural Micmacs from Nova Scotia to urban life in Boston (1975). Hazel Hertzberg gives us a history of strategies for coping with, or using, Indian identity in the United States (1971).

7. Another factor too must be the politics of personality which so often enters local politics, particularly in small communities. The legacy of individual power remains strong in Newfoundland, where the pivotal role of the merchant still exists in many manifestations. Individual power brokers may retain an inordinate degree of control over all community projects. This may assist the development of a community or harm it, depending on the support which he can command. Such a person would be likely to assume all positions of power in a community, even, for example, the leadership of an organisation such as a native council, regardless of his ancestry. The history of the FNI on the west coast is not exempt from such instances.

8. Although 'Newfoundlander' is not an ethnic group, other than in the sense which was discussed in note 5 above, it is a category employed in self-definition. Some people, when discussing the relative merits of Indian or French identity, say, "I'm a Newfoundlander, I got Indian blood in me (or French), but this is where my family's been and I was brought up to think of myself as a Newfoundlander.

9. It may be argued that evidence of rancour and divisiveness need not be interpreted as bad. In the short term at least, political disputes within the

Micmac group appear to have negative consequences, but the question must remain open in the long term. In Gadamer's interpretation of history, the past and the present are in constant interplay, with the actualities of one always modifying the other. Perhaps the conflicts within the group are the testing grounds of a new Micmac identity which builds on their tradition and also on their present needs. If maintenance of tradition was seen as the only important factor, they may become a living museum which may still generate grants but would not aid cultural renaissance with an effective history binding together their present and their past. Karen Blu also ascribes a positive role to divisiveness in Lumbee politics. She writes:

> Neither factionalism nor diversity, both difficult and usually divisive problems for reservation Indians, has inhibited the growth and development of the Lumbee, yet they have each in abundance. The fact that there have long been many factions has meant that at any one time, there is always at least one engaged in a project that would benefit the whole people...
>
> Lumbees do not have a history of effective cooperative effort except in the face of, to Indians, clear-cut, widely recognized threats from outsiders...What organizes the Indians in cases of perceived threats is a shared point of view, a common self-image, not a formal organization. As soon as the threat disappears, so does Indian cooperation. [Blu 1980:66]

.6.

## CONCLUSIONS: INSIDE THE FOURTH WORLD

Have the Micmacs of Newfoundland entered the Fourth World? The answer to that question hinges on validation of identity. In order to be part of the Fourth, or Aboriginal, World, it is necessary to demonstrate the existence of a legitimate Indian identity. It is necessary to convince others that you are Indian - in both a synchronic sense of looking and acting like Indians right now, and by demonstrating a history, a pedigree as it were, of continuity of culture which has existed since 'time immemorial' and which will continue into the future. In short, a group must possess Gadamer's effective history. The efficacy of their traditions in revitalisation and renaissance of their culture depends on the self-reflexive use of this history in relating their past to their present and their present to their future.

We have seen that the history of the Micmacs in Newfoundland has been an officially ambiguous, and often troubled, one. Because of the ignorance of the interior of the island on the part of Europeans until the mid-1700s, anyone could have been roaming freely outside the purview of any European power. The Micmacs in Newfoundland may have been living in a more traditional manner than their brethren in Cape Breton even until the

early twentieth century. But in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, few record-keepers were present to see them. By the time that institutional contact, in the form of churches, schools and government representation, had become sufficiently established to produce detailed and extensive demographic data, the impact of these same institutions had already started to alter the traditional Micmac social order.

The west coast of the island provides a particularly apt illustration. Until the late nineteenth century, settlements on the west coast were isolated from the rest of the island. Settlement was officially forbidden, and forms of institutionalised state representation which accompany settlement were consequently not present. By the middle of the eighteenth century, there was already extensive intermarriage between Micmac and French settlers. Due to ways of adaptation to the physical and social environment, the ways of life of the Micmac, French, and to a lesser extent British, settlers blended together. Conceptual distinctions of ethnic identification remained, and a new category, 'jack-o-tar,' emerged which incorporated many of those who for various reasons did not fall into the accepted, or acceptable, classifications. Gerald Thomas provides one definition of jack-o-tar in discussion of French naval reports dating from 1830 to 1850:

> According to this report [from a French officer to the governor of St. Pierre] then, there were 1,200 Acadians living in the St. George's Bay area, in addition to four hundred English and four hundred 'French and Indians', the latter presumably Micmacs...
>
> [De la Morandiere] notes that metropolitan Frenchmen were known as 'Jackotars' and were, in general, fishermen who had deserted the fishery in order to avoid military service. The few good French elements were those who wintered in the area to watch over the fishing installations. Many of these worthy elements, however, tended to marry English women and be assimilated to the anglophone population. [G. Thomas 1977:11-12]

Thomas's quote from de la Morandiere suggests that metropolitan French and Micmacs were considered to be one group, with at least the French, and possibly the Micmacs also, called jack-o-tars. Given the description by the French of the French and their description of the Acadians as "people of little value, drawn there by the absence of law, taxes or police," one may not find it surprising that French identity was stigmatised on the west coast (G. Thomas 1977:11-12). If the French and the English did not think highly of west coast French and Acadians, the Micmacs could hardly hope to rate any higher, being Indians as well as allies and marriage partners of the Acadians.

Permanent settlement by Micmacs in communities of central Newfoundland was concurrent with white settlement. Both whites and Micmacs moved to the inland lumbering and railway towns to take part in those expanding industries.

These towns represented a new economic system, not continuation, in totality, of either the outport fishing or Micmac hunting and trapping economies. Shared participation in an economic system resulted in the development of shared social patterns with some retention of differences in attitude and actions based on ethnicity.

The focus of demoralisation, and subsequent renaissance, of the Micmacs is in the community of Conne River. The Micmacs were subjected not only to the intrusion of white wildlife regulation, industry and settlement, but also intervention in their affairs by the Church, merchants, and white values introduced through intermarriage, white education and the need for economic survival. These forms of contact, to a greater or lesser degree, destroyed morale and closed doors by denigrating the Micmac way of life and value system. In the history of Conne River, one may see the creation of a viable settled community with a Micmac identity and Micmac base of morale, which was subsequently demoralised by paternalism (first through Father St. Croix and later through government agents, such as Governor McGregor) and 'welfarism' (after Confederation). The people of Conne River, however, did remain a community due to their shared, but stigmatised, heritage. The upsurge of interest in native rights across the continent during the past two decades came to Conne River via Micmacs in Cape

Breton and an anthropology student. Their sense of community allowed them in the 1970s to use this confluence of people and events to begin revitalisation of their culture.

In one way, the story of Newfoundland Micmacs on the west coast and in central Newfoundland is part of a longer story about Conne River. If Conne River, as a concentrated and recognisable Micmac population, did not exist, the more fragmented Micmac population elsewhere on the island may have been less successful in maintaining any level of group identity.

However, the role played by Conne River in maintenance and renaissance of the idea of peoplehood must be qualified by the simple fact that Micmac identity has remained alive elsewhere on the island. In western and central Newfoundland, small and isolated pockets of Micmacs have retained knowledge of their heritage despite sharing communities, social ordering and economic activity with whites, and despite stigmatisation of Indian identity. The relationship between the Micmacs outside Conne River and the Micmac community of Conne River may be seen as a dialectic, in which the persistence of self-identity in the former has aided and been aided by the sense of community identity in the latter. Both the diaspora and the community are necessary in order to put back together the pieces of their culture and identity.

Micmac identity is founded on three factors. The first is the land, the second is kinship and the third is a history of cultural traditions shared by Micmacs in Newfoundland and the mainland.

LAND

The land is perhaps the most obvious and most significant symbol of Micmac identity, for it is by land that they justify their claim to Micmac heritage and it is for control of land that they are now fighting. By the early years of the twentieth century, the demise of their traditional way of life was well underway. Because of the tremendous impact of contact with Europeans, it is necessary to understand Micmac identity in terms of their whole history in Newfoundland, although that is little known to the white public and scholars. By considering at least the last three hundred years of their history, it is possible to gain a clearer perception of their attachment to the land and their claims of occupancy and use than if only the past century is considered.

It cannot be denied that a significant disruption in land use patterns and loss of cultural traditions did occur, and it is only in the past decade that these losses have started to be reversed as the Micmacs attempt to regain a disappearing culture. Hunting and trapping have never ceased completely in Micmac territory, but that can

also be said of other areas of Newfoundland where, due to the lack of other forms of subsistence, all people have relied on all resources of the land.

The combination of factors, including loss of the caribou herds, the fall of fur prices, expansion of white settlement in the south coast and concomitant competition for food resources, along with development of the logging industry and the onset of the first world war, meant that the Micmacs had to plunge into the twentieth century and the white economic world.

Despite these influences, the land remains the most significant instrument of identification for the Micmacs. I have suggested elsewhere that the relationship of land use to Micmac identity can be understood as a generational phenomenon (Anger 1981:80). In reference to central Newfoundland, I argued that factors of geographical and temporal distance increase the symbolic importance of land to the ideology of young Micmacs, yet diminish its practical importance in their lives. Members of the oldest living generation are the last to have lived off the land as full-time hunters and trappers. Their children grew up in communities away from the centres of Micmac culture; Conne River (in Newfoundland) and Cape Breton, and in a social milieu which encouraged white social and economic values and activities while discouraging Indian identity and lifestyle. Nevertheless,

those people retained the knowledge of their parents and, in some cases, memories of childhood in the family of a hunter. The third generation, grandchildren of the hunters, also grew up in a white world, but heard of the old ways through their grandparents' stories. With North American native politicisation serving as an impetus, they put the stories of the land, their own hunting skills, and the politics of Fourth World ethnicity together with their genealogies and revived their pride in Micmac ancestry and traditions.

Because many of the overt symbols or signs of ethnicity have been lost to the Micmacs, the land is especially important. The functionality of their language, their system of governance, their ceremonial customs, as well as much of their reliance on traditional 'country' knowledge have all been lost in this century. They are now reviving all of these, but, at present, for many it is largely re-creation rather than strengthening. The land remains, as important to their ideology as it is to their livelihood. It is important because it was always the resource over which they had control, and it forms the basis of their traditional way of life and belief system. Without the land, a return to or adaptation of those traditions is impossible. The importance of their land and land use patterns is shared with other native people, fostering the pan-Indian

identity which is necessary for the survival of a small group isolated in Newfoundland. Their sentiments about the land do not differ in substance from the statements of the Dene, the Cree or any other native group in North America, or aboriginal peoples anywhere. George Manuel expressed this attitude, as earlier quoted: "if I had said, 'Our culture is every inch of our land,' the meaning would have been obvious..." (Manuel and Posluns 1974:6).

Lastly, the land is tangible; control over its resources provides a strength of peoplehood by giving it terrestrial substance. It makes a nation, with people and a homeland, from which it is possible to deal with other peoples from a position of comparative equality. If the Micmac land claim to the southern portion of the island were completely accepted, they would then be a land-holding partner with other governments of the island. As it is now, they are either recipients of special goods and services, or they are part of the general citizenry of Newfoundland. Neither is what they desire. They want to be, in Habermasian terms, full discursive partners, maintaining their integrity as a people while interacting with others who share their land but not their history.

KINSHIP

Kinship has a pragmatic function, in addition to validation of identity, as discussed above in reference to

the land as a symbol of identity. Ancestry can also be used as a form of documentation of identity. This function is more complex in the case of the Newfoundland Micmacs than it is with other Canadian Indian where definition is by band list, which may be arbitrary but is definite. In Newfoundland no such lists exist because no such status exists.

Complete census returns are no longer available for any year earlier than 1911.[1] The existing material from before 1911 is not entirely reliable because information is often incomplete or inaccurate. Because of transportation difficulties, many communities were not included in the census returns. Before the Micmacs were permanently settled in communities, they were often overlooked or included only as a group, without details on individuals. Information on individuals given in the 'race' category on the census forms, when is included, is often inaccurate. People known to have been Micmac through historical sources or genealogies may be reported as 'English' or 'French'. Therefore, census figures are a starting point in the search for official documentation, but they will not provide very complete information.

A second source of documentation is in government and military reports of expeditions about the coast of the island, and in published accounts of travel across the island by individuals. Some of these have been mentioned,

such as Lieutenant Chappell's report (1818) and the records of the journeys made by Cormack (1828), Jukes (1842) and Millais (1907). The nineteenth century adventurers employed Micmac guides, and in their written records, or in accounts of expenditure, their guides are often mentioned by name and identified as being Micmac. Some of these records provide additional information about the guides, such as place of residence, areas of the country with which they were most familiar and, in the writings of Cormack and Millais, ethnographic information about the Micmacs.

A third source is the band lists of the Nova Scotia Micmacs. Many Newfoundland Micmacs can trace their genealogies to Micmacs in Nova Scotia who are registered under the Indian Act. Some are unable to do this because the genealogies have been lost to memory, or family names have disappeared in one place or the other. However, even a cursory glance at the surnames of the Nova Scotia Micmacs show many to be the same as those in Newfoundland.

All three sources of information have been used by the Federation of Newfoundland Indians and the Conne River Indian Band Council in documenting genealogies for the purposes of registration of Newfoundland Micmacs under the Indian Act. The criteria established for initial registration do not conform with the present Indian Act and, while the Department of Indian Affairs approved the

selection criteria, some people in Newfoundland do not agree. The strongest objections are to the second and third points, spouses and children of persons of Micmac ancestry and all persons of native ancestry resident in Newfoundland since 1978, on the grounds that they open the door to almost anyone who wishes to be Indian. The Newfoundland Trappers' Association, which represents non-native trappers of the island and Labrador, says that the third criterion, North American native descent:

> ...has immense national implications - hundreds of thousands of Canadians of minority native ancestry (and American and Mexicans of native ancestry immigrant to Canada) can use this precedent to seek registered Canadian Indian status. The impact of such an event on federal coffers and the identity of bona fide Indians and Inuit would be staggering. [Evening Telegram, June 9, 1981, p. 6]

The Trappers' Association has been the most vociferous in opposing the political actions of the Micmacs, especially their registration and land claim. But others have publicly decried their activities as well, including the Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Federation and the Naskapi-Montagnais Innu Association. On the issue of the Micmac land claim, the Wildlife Federation said:

> [They] condone the preservation of what remains of the Micmac culture in the province. However, they said such preservation should not jeopardize equal opportunity for all Newfoundlanders.

> Government, they said, must realize that through culture and genetic assimilation, the Micmacs, who immigrated to the province after 1500 A.D. like other Newfoundlanders, have become Metis, decendents of interbreathing [sic] between Indians and whites. [Evening Telegram Aug. 25, 1982, p. 3.]

Perhaps because of their shared history in politics, or because they fear that they must share the limited pie of federal government funding, the NMIA has questioned the validity of the Micmac claim to Indian status and resented their very vocal presence. It is important to remember that the Labrador Indians and Inuit are less removed from their traditional culture in terms of language and recency of losing a nomadic subsistence pattern. From the vantage point of being at this moment, one could say, 'more Indian than thou,' the NMIA said in a 1980 letter to John Munro, Minister of Indian Affairs:

> In the struggle to create an understanding amongst ordinary Newfoundlanders of the very different world and of the distinctively different Peoples, languages and lifestyles that exist in Labrador, the pernicious fraud being perpetuated at all levels in Newfoundland by the FNI is about as damaging and harmful as it could be to the authentic indigenous nationalities.

To criticisms such as the above from natives or whites, the Micmacs respond that they are no less native for having lost some of the visible markers of cultural tradition. They argue that the criteria for native status should be culturally and socially based in broader fashion than patrilineal descent from an arbitrary original band

list, as the present Indian Act stipulates, or physical appearance.[2] Their defense of inclusion of spouses on the band list is that participation in a lifestyle should be the criterion for definition as Indian. If person becomes a contributing part of the native community, he or she is entitled to share in the benefits coming to those who are native by birth. This is no more arbitrary than the existing patrilineal system employed in the Indian Act, which contradicts the social order of all matrilineal bands and which makes Indians out of white women and whites out of Indian women according to their marriage.

The system proposed by the Micmacs is very flexible, and therefore potential for abuse is present. The Micmacs are aware of this possibility but believe that the necessity of dealing adequately with the complexities outweighs the danger. The Department of Indian Affairs has (at least formerly had) agreed with them that a greater degree of flexibility than is possible under the existing Indian Act is necessary to account for the present cultural and genealogical complexity of the Micmac of Newfoundland.

## CULTURAL TRADITIONS

The Micmacs also base their claim to aboriginal status on the continuation of cultural traditions, founded on subsistence patterns shared with other Eastern

Woodlands peoples since before the time of European contact. Reliance on river, coastal and interior food sources was supplemented by fur trapping and trading with Europeans. Pre-contact spiritual beliefs of the Micmacs based on their relationship with the land were combined with the precepts of Roman Catholicism. Manufacturing technology for the production of utilitarian and ceremonial objects was brought to Newfoundland from Nova Scotia and adapted to local needs and available resources. Since 1900 the strength of these traditions has been eroded due to depletion of resources and increased exposure to white economic and value systems. The decline of traditional economic activities, beliefs, and the Micmac language also meant decline of the bases of Micmac identity in Newfoundland.

People of the middle and older generation retain some knowledge of material culture, ritual and the language, but until recent political activity revived interest in 'the old ways' they had little reason to use it. Memories and impressionistic knowledge remain for younger people. Traditional technology was replaced to a great extent by the technology of whites; the Micmac language was replaced by English; the Micmac cosmology no longer found space in the Roman Catholicism taught by the priests of this century. Although knowledge of the traditions remained, lack of opportunity or need to

actually use it caused details of manufacture or ceremony to be lost.

This situation posed problems when political organisation began in the early 1970s. How does a people regain a culture? The Micmacs started with the most obvious and the most fruitful avenue - the land. It was the one symbol of identity which had been maintained through continued hunting and trapping. Its technology was still known to many older men and could be readily revived. The land could also serve as a starting point in the negotiation of identity with the outside world. Both natives and whites, villages and governments, recognise the significance of land in the establishment of identity as a people.

Revitalising a language is less straight-forward. Although there are some Micmac speakers in Conne River and other communities of the island, the language is rarely used in daily conversation. In the past, Micmac was the language of the country and, because of that, many men over fifty years of age and some younger men retain some degree of familiarity with it. They learned it as children with their fathers while hunting and trapping, but did not use it outside that context.

In Conne River, English became the lingua franca of the community due to suppression of the Micmac language by the church and education system. In central

Newfoundland, and particularly on the west coast, suppression of the language resulted from social sanctions against 'speaking Indian,' school instruction in English, the absence of a community of speakers, and the consequent lack of utility of the language as a means of instrumental communication. Speakers of Micmac became reluctant to use the language or to teach it to their children. Younger men lost their fluency when they left trapping. Women of the same age group generally have less knowledge of the Micmac language because they remained in the community rather than participating in the male activities of hunting and trapping. Most of those who do have some command of the language were brought up by their grandparents - individuals who often had only limited knowledge of English but were fluent in Micmac. Now, those few elderly people for whom Micmac was their mother tongue, for the most part, remain reluctant to use it publicly or to teach it to others, a reticence remaining from their youth. Additionally, those among their children who have some familiarity with the language have not used it for thirty or forty years.

Since establishment of political organisations, Micmac language classes for adults have been held from time to time in Conne River. Teachers have been brought from Nova Scotia because no one in Conne River has felt able to instruct others. Some research on the

Newfoundland Micmac dialect has been done by John Hewson of Memorial University (Hewson 1978). There is virtually no difference in dialect between Newfoundland and Cape Breton Micmac, but some words and grammatical structures no longer used in Cape Breton remain in use in Newfoundland. The language is being reintroduced and this is an important and necessary step in strengthening identity, but, as is often the case, the task was approached a bit too late and the local people who were sources of knowledge are no longer able to help.

Spiritual beliefs, ceremonies, and the manufacture of ceremonial and utilitarian objects are also being reintroduced to Micmac life. The 1979 annual assembly of the Federation of Newfoundland Indians was significant for Micmac cultural traditions in two ways. First, for the first time in over fifty years, a Newfoundland Micmac chief was installed in office. After Noel Jeddore left Conne River for Cape Breton in 1924, there was no chief in Newfoundland. With the establishment of a band council in Conne River a chief was elected, but he did not represent other areas of the island. Since 1979, the Conne River chief is chief of the Micmac population of the entire island and he is a member of the Grand Council of Micmac Chiefs in Nova Scotia.[3] Secondly, the investiture of the chief was accompanied by a sweet grass and pipe ceremony presided over by the spiritual leader of the

Micmac Nation. The ceremony blended traditional Micmac prayer and ritual with elements of belief and ritual best described as pan-Indian in derivation.

A craft co-operative, Micmac Arts and Crafts, had been in operation from 1976 to 1978 in Conne River, Glenwood and Bay St. George. The craft association began operating again in Conne River in 1980. Through mail order, craft exhibitions on the mainland, and through a retail outlet in Conne River, they sell caribou and deer skin moccasins, gloves and jackets, beadwork jewellery, and duffle coats, mittens and slippers of their own manufacture. Traditional Micmac motifs are now used for decoration, but the forms of many of the objects themselves are not of Micmac origin. A hide tanning and leatherwork business began in Glenwood in 1981, and the FNI and Bay St. George Band Council are investigating the establishment of small scale craft production, possibly of spruce root baskets and snowshoes.

Craft production has been instigated by political leaders as a means of economic development which would reflect their cultural traditions. Leaders in all three areas of the island are becoming interested in documenting and reviving craft forms which are specific to Newfoundland Micmacs.[4] The political value of increased visibility through use of material markers of identity is becoming seen to be equal in importance to marketability.

The Micmacs have created no venue or market for their crafts in Newfoundland outside their home communities. Therefore as yet their visibility, and political impact, is limited to the mainland.

## CONCLUSIONS

It is on land, kinship, and cultural traditions that the Micmacs base their identity. These factors, and their interrelationships, have always been a part of Micmac heritage, but in the past have remained implicit. Now, they have been reinterpreted and made explicit as political symbols of Micmac identity. Their historical reality is overlaid with a political meaning intended to legitimate the Micmacs' separate identity. By stressing the development and maintenance of the attributes of Micmac identity, they authenticate that identity and the claim for special status to the white policy-makers and public who will have a part in determining the form of that special status. The symbols also give concrete expression to Micmac identity for their members, thereby strengthening group cohesiveness and pride.

The history of the Micmacs in Newfoundland and the nature of their traditional way of life has been different from that of other Newfoundlanders and now, in a time of cultural resurgence, these differences act as political currency used to reinforce their distinctiveness. The

Micmacs' understanding of their culture is no longer an unconscious continuation of tradition; it has become reflexive. Their culture is being viewed as a set of characteristics and values which must be revitalised and adapted if it is to survive and which must be communicated to others, both native and non-native, as having intrinsic value.

It may be said that the Micmacs have lost markers of cultural distinctiveness. This sentiment seems to be more frequently heard of late, particularly in response to the land claim and registration process. However, it may be said with equal validity that cultural survival has little to do with unwavering allegiance to land, language or kinship. Indeed, cultural renaissance often occurs at the very time of the loss of cultural markers and in the face of external opposition. Edward Spicer refers to the strength of Irish nationalism in the late nineteenth century, at the same time as English replaced Gaelic as the commonly used language, as but one example of this. He argues that:

> The continuity of a people is a phenomenon distinct from the persistence of a particular set of culture traits.
>
> What makes a system out of the identity symbols is not any logical, in the sense of rational, relationship between them. The meanings that they have fit into a complex that is significant to the people concerned. The meanings amount to a self-definition and an image of themselves as they have performed

> in the course of their history. The selection of cultural elements for symbolic references goes on in terms of the character of this image; the frequent shifts in emphasis are part of the process of maintenance in response to alterations in the environment. [Spicer 1971:798]

Resolution of the distinction made by Spicer between 'continuity' and 'a set of traits' lies in interpretation of levels of meaning. Cultural continuity depends more on a deep identity of mind than it does on apparent identity of form and practice. Cultural change (or 'loss') may occur at the second level without loss of integrity at the first. A living culture is one that has and uses an effective history, which allows it to adapt to altered conditions yet maintain its 'wholeness' through continuity with its past. If that hermeneutic understanding is there, the question of prevalence or purity of specific 'traits', such as Spicer's example of the Irish language or the Micmacs' language or bloodlines, does not affect the validity of their intent to revitalise a culture. Opposition from others, or neglect, may aid the process of revitalisation because it brings into light by its opposition what markers of identity and what degree of autonomy identity have been lost. Continuation of opposition fuels the revitalisation fires, for, as Herzl said, "the enemy makes up a people" (Wirth 1943:686).

> The oppositional process frequently produces intense collective consciousness and a high degree of internal solidarity. This is

> accompanied by a motivation for individuals to continue the kind of experience that is 'stored' in the identity system in symbolic form. [Spicer 1971:799]

The Micmacs now, at a time of increased opposition to their claim for special status, have disassociated themselves more strongly than ever before from any identity other than Micmac. In a letter to a St. John's newspaper, Chief William Joe wrote:

> Basically what we found [in our research] was that the ancestors of the Micmac people were using and coming to Newfoundland from the mainland 9,000 years ago...
>
> You state also that because we are slightly tainted with some European blood, we should not be thought of as Indians...But accidents our parents might have made does not make us any less Indian. [Evening Telegram May 29, 1982, p. 6]

The public presentation of ethnic identity demands the perpetuation of a concept of permanence. The necessary fiction of identity is that a person is born as a member of "X" group, his forefathers were "X" since time immemorial, and he, and his children and his children's children, will remain "X" for their entire lives, and that their bloodlines are 'pure.' However, the de facto reality of culture and identity is that both are mutable and so, too, are their markers. In their communicative roles, cultural markers and symbol systems transmit a sense of belonging and define a place in the world; in their instrumental roles they may change the form of their

expression with the exigencies of the moment. However, constancy of history and identity must be publicly presented and authenticated, both for the maintenance of group solidarity and for acceptance by others.

An initial step in the development of a separate identity for all minority groups is a delving into their history as a group, or, if necessary, the manufacture of a credible history.[5] History - the sense of existing throughout time - is necessary for the locating of 'self' within a group and of the group within a tradition. A legitimate history is also demanded by outsiders, for whom absence of a past may indicate absence of peoplehood. This, as we have seen, is problematic for the Micmacs. The white fictive history is that the Micmacs killed the Beothuks, and facts of their actual history on the island have been shrouded in ignorance and, more recently, in political controversy.

Continuation of history and cultural traditions require that they be incorporated in ways which allow a culture to change yet maintain its integrity. In the eyes of the Micmac political leadership, the purpose of organisations is to facilitate the binding together of the generations in order to ensure continuity. The enthusiasm and non-traditional knowledge of the younger people meshes with the experience and traditional knowledge of the culture which is possessed by the elders, and renders it

workable in a modern, white world. Through participation of the elders, a modern political process gains legitimacy as a viable and visible cultural heritage. Given the enormity of the task especially for those disperseed groups without a strong sense of 'community', the FNI has been quite successful in this enterprise. Without structural incorporation of succeeding generations, cultural revival is only temporary. Its longevity depends, at least in part, on adaptation of a traditional way of life to present-day social and economic conditions while maintaining its internal consistency, or sense of harmony (Sapir 1966:90).

The political leaders of the Micmacs are young, most of them ranging in age from twenty to forty years. As has been stated earlier in reference to the land, this age group is at least one, and often two, generations removed from a fully encompassing traditional Micmac lifestyle. They are too far from it to have had first-hand experience in living on the land, yet are not far enough away to feel divorced from the oral record which has been given to them. This holds true for the rest of their cultural milieu as well. Knowledge of their language, oral history, food sources and processing technology, and belief system are retained, at least in part, by older people in Conne River and other parts of the island. Whatever their opinions of political activism

may be, the old people know that their knowledge will die with them unless they are able to teach the young. For some of the elders, their knowledge comes from experience, for others it comes from memories of childhood. Regardless of origin, the old people value the knowledge as part of the old way, and as Micmacs, or simply as people from a different era, they want to pass on the affective quality of that life.

There is considerable interest by young people in learning their history and learning from their elders. This interest in part may be due to the attractiveness of political activism and cultural renaissance as a means of establishing and identity as an individual. My discussions with young people suggest that native activism can work in one of two ways for them. The first is by working together with family members and feeling part of a heritage which includes immediate family but extends beyond that to a kinship network, and, ultimately, to all North American Indian peoples and traditions. One is no longer simply a Flat Bay adolescent, but rather, one is part of the aboriginal world. The second way which political involvement can affect young people is as a means of rebellion against family. By rejecting the 'white' values of parents who discount the Indian part of their genealogy, the young person succeeds in asserting his independence from his parents and becomes part of a

larger kinship network which includes those Indian ancestors, whether real or mythical, which may have been hidden in the family closet. Both of these approaches to native identity can be beneficial in the development of self-identity while also ensuring the continuation of the cultural traditions and value which may be learned from the elders.

Also important are ways of preserving cultural traditions and turning them into a viable way of life; making them 'marketable' in a white world, without eliminating their integrity.

> [The] cultural conception we are now trying to grasp aims to embrace in a single term those general attitudes, views of life, and specific manifestations of civilization that give a particular people its distinctive place in the world. Emphasis is put not so much on what is done and believed by a people as on how what is done and believed functions in the whole life of that people, on what significance it has for them. [Sapir 1966:83]

Micmac political leaders are aware of the importance of maintaining traditions in a way which makes them functional in their present-day situation in Newfoundland. To that end, they continue to diversify their efforts, and increasingly emphasise the importance of relearning a Micmac way of life and tailoring that to fit a white world, rather than fitting themselves into a white society on white terms. Improvement in economic conditions, as in the housing programme previously

discussed, is one goal of the FNI, but in itself it is not related to cultural preservation. Its value is as evidence of the ability of group action to achieve material ends not as readily attainable by individual effort.

In other projects the Micmacs are trying to demonstrate this function of group solidarity while, at the same time, renewing their culture in a more direct way. Micmac Arts and Crafts and the FNI are researching the feasibility of expanding the scope of their training programmes so that the inventory of Micmac crafts will include more objects peculiar to the Micmacs, or which directly reflect Micmac technology. Micmac leaders are cognizant that the importance of this goes far beyond the aid to economic development which it could give. Aside from the increased visibility which could come from the promotion of traditional skills, leaders are aware that if such skills are to survive, they must be passed on to the younger generation now.

At the distance that the Micmacs presently are from a holistic and viable traditional way of life, the remnants of knowledge which remain must not only be preserved but must be reconstituted in a way which makes them useable in a very different world. "Spurious culture," in Sapir's terminology, is one in which the component parts do not mesh together to create

"manifestations of [that] distinctive place in the world" (Sapir 1966:83). If attributes, knowledge or technology of a culture become tangential to it due to changing conditions, the culture in that form becomes unviable. Consequently, particular expressions of the culture may become museum pieces, which are preserved for their historical value, not their utility. If, however, cultural attributes can be retained, or relearned, and successfully adapted to contemporary circumstances, they can remain alive and contribute to the 'inner harmony' of a culture.

Continuation of a culture can be interpreted as a form of communication which is directed to, and receives responses from, those within the group and those outside. It is also a form of historical communication, in which the present is formed by its past and the past is reinterpreted in terms of present circumstances and needs. This interpretative symbiosis exists between the future and the present. Generation binding, as discussed above, is a political necessity of survival, but is also a definitional attribute of culture, without which it cannot exist.

The importance of maintaining a distinct and legitimate identity separate from the dominant white society has been known to North American Indians since long before the recent upsurge of cultural revitalisation.

Perhaps one of the best statements of the value of identity is given by an Indian leader speaking to the United States government in 1887:

> Like other people, the Indian needs at least a germ of political identity, some government organization of his own, however crude, to which his pride in manhood may cling and claim allegiance.:.This peculiarity in the Indian character is elsewhere called 'patriotism,' the wise and patent fashioning of which will successfully solve the question of civilization. Exclude him from this and he has little else to live for. [quoted in McNickle 1973:85]

The 'germ of political identity' which has always been present to some extent among the Newfoundland Micmacs has been widely propagated in the past decade. However, historical factors of migration and lack of official recognition have contributed to uncertainty about the legitimacy of their identity in the minds of some Micmacs and whites in Newfoundland. This uncertainty, and consequent absence of complete validation of their identity, is the reason for my reference to them in the introductory chapter as 'fourth world manqué.' They are not simply native people striving to improve their social lot, they are people striving to gain general consensus among whites and natives that they are native in order to therefore improve their lot. Because of this lack of accord, the Micmacs of Newfoundland are atypical of native people elsewhere in Canada.[6] Correspondingly, their acceptance as Micmac depends to a much greater degree upon

the strength of their cognitive identity and their communication of that identity than is the case with other Canadian native peoples.

Micmac identity even now has multiple meanings in Newfoundland. For some, it is still not seen as a source of pride, for others it is a form of instrumental action by which external ends may be gained. For yet others, pride in it is a new-found sensation. But for some, being Micmac is simply part of being alive - it is their family, their history and their way of life. It is through the latter group in particular that the survival of Micmac identity and of the culture is most clearly demonstrated.

The Micmacs are a small group scattered across Newfoundland, their language has been almost lost, they as yet have no land base and no official recognition, and they have extensively intermarried with whites. Yet, through the vicissitudes of time, the 'germ of political identity' has remained alive. Being Micmac is a family matter at base. An old man in St. George's explained it much more succinctly than I can hope to do when he said with pride:

> Well now, I guess I am an Indian! My father was an Indian and his father was an Indian. And I'm black as tar, I'd have to be foolish to say I'm not a Micmac, now wouldn't I?

## NOTES

1. Many of the earlier records were destroyed by fire, either in the great fires of St. John's near the turn of the century, or in fires which destroyed individual churches.

2. The attitude expressed by the Micmacs is now changing from that above. An 'Indian' physical appearance and 'racial purity' are now viewed as important, as Chief Joe's letter quoted later in this chapter indicates. Intermarriage becomes 'mistakes our parents made.' This is an attempt to combat the argument put forth, with varying degrees of sophistication, that 'they don't have any more Indian blood than anyone else in Newfoundland.' Dealing with that statement on its own terms, however, denies what is fundamentally the most important aspect of Micmac identity, to my mind: that is that it has survived despite dispersal of the population, intermarriage, and loss of language and cultural traits. If even a thread of a sense of 'Micmacness' remains, particularly on the west coast where it was only a liability, the Micmacs have demonstrated the legitimacy of their identity.

3. After the death of Chief William Joe in December 1982, his newphew, Michael Joe, Jr., was elected chief by the people of Conne River. His investiture was attended by Micmac chiefs, including the Grand Chief, and the spiritual leader from Nova Scotia, but Micmacs elsewhere on the island were not included in the election process.

4. For comprehensive discussion of Nova Scotia Micmac material culture, with some reference to Newfoundland, see Whitehead (1980,1982). The Newfoundland Museum and Conne River Micmac Arts and Crafts have collaborated on a study of Newfoundland Micmac material culture and production of artifacts. For results of this project, see Clark and Anger (forthcoming).

5. In reference to the investigation of history, I see as part of this phenomenon the great interest in women's history which followed the political and economic feminism of the 1960s. A similar process of discovering a history occurred in the gay liberation movement. In regard to ethnic minority group history, perhaps one example of selective use of history is in the various forms of the back-to-Africa

movement from Marcus Garvey and continuing to the choice of name by Malcolm X and the adoption of the Muslim faith. A history of enslavement only increases the difficulties of instilling pride in heritage, but a history including the freedom of tribal Africa is more readily a source of pride. Roots, of course, is the quintessence of this (Haley 1976).

In reference to the second point of the manufacture of a history, at the individual level this could be called the 'Long Lance' or 'Grey Owl' complex, in which a fictitious personal ethnic history is created and successfully sold. The Micmacs have fallen prey to the temptations of fictive, or at minimum as yet unprovable, group history on occasion, such as in suggesting proof of ancestral occupation of Newfoundland for nine thousand years. This is conjecture at this point and depends on finding demonstrable connections between the Micmacs and the Maritime Archaic Indians of Newfoundland, which the available archeological evidence cannot verify (J. A. Tuck;pers. comm.).

6. The Metis may provide an exception to this statement. They too are called upon by status Indian groups and whites to justify their native identity. But even the Metis recently have not been officially discredited, as the government of Newfoundland has done to the Micmacs, with one example being Premier Peckford's dismissal of their land claim (Jones 1982).

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