

ETHNICITY AND POLITICS  
IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

by

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## ABSTRACT

This study of politics in the Northwest Territories concentrates on the period from 1966 to 1976 and is organized around the central theme of ethnicity. While other approaches to politics in the N.W.T. are possible, that of political development has been rejected as inappropriate and that of dependence has been set aside in so far as possible to allow concentration on the internal political system in the N.W.T. This thesis attempts to establish that ethnicity is salient in politics in the N.W.T. and to describe the resulting implications for conflict regulation.

Ethnic groups are defined as groups sharing a common set of values, beliefs, and goals, bound by kinship ties, and possessing a set of communal institutions separate and apart from those of other groups. If ethnicity is salient, then evidence should be found that critical issues deal with questions of scarcity, that conflict groups are organized along ethnic lines, and that problems of legitimacy arise from the tendency toward secession inherent where ethnicity is salient. A framework

for discussion of the implications for conflict regulation is provided by Nordlinger in his Conflict Regulation in Divided Societies.

A discussion of indigenous societies before the arrival of Europeans is provided along with a consideration of the changes brought by the fur trade, mineral exploration, and the development of permanent settlements after WW II. After 1966 instead of a single integrated society and culture in the N.W.T., there is a dual economy and society divided along ethnic lines between Whites with their middle-class, southern Canadian culture on the one hand, and the two indigenous native groups, the Dene and the Inuit, on the other. These divisions are reflected in the existence of both a modern wage economy and a traditional land-based economy in the N.W.T. and in the differing sets of goals, values, and beliefs of native and White people in the N.W.T. Evidence for the salience of ethnicity is provided in three areas: 1) each of the central political issues in the N.W.T. involves scarcity in that both native and White positions cannot be adopted simultaneously, 2) conflict groups are at least partially organized along ethnic lines, and 3) legitimation problems are evident at the three levels of electoral politics in the N.W.T.

The implications of the recognition of the salience of ethnicity in politics in the N.W.T. are examined in terms of the elements necessary for successfully conflict regulation as set

out by Nordlinger. While the necessary condition of structured elite predominance appears to exist, conflict group leaders appear to lack conflict regulating motives which would create sufficient conditions for conflict regulation. Further, the only conflict regulating practice which appears to offer any hope of success is a combination of compromise and concession. The attempt to produce a workable compromise might introduce division among native groups in the N.W.T. and even of the N.W.T. itself. The possibility of devising any compromise which could regulate conflict in the N.W.T. is made even more remote by the dependent status of the N.W.T. and outside pressure for development.

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## CHAPTER I

### APPROACHES TO POLITICS IN THE N.W.T.

The appointment of the Royal Commission on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories in 1965 signaled the general awareness that changes would soon be required in the way the N.W.T. was governed. The processes of change at work in northern society in general placed new demands on the political system. The system of direct rule from Ottawa provided few effective channels for local input into decision-making and no direct method for resolving conflicts within the N.W.T. Additionally, governing from Ottawa was proving increasingly inadequate for the demands for provision of services to northern residents and the northern economy. It was hoped that new institutional arrangements could be devised that would be suitable to the new conditions and provide a stable, efficient framework for government and politics in the N.W.T. The ten years following the Commission have seen the acceleration of the already rapid pace of change in the north and the unsuccessful attempt to graft the southern Canadian pattern of political arrangements

to society in the N.W.T.

This process of change in the political system has been viewed as one of failed political development by the policy-makers responsible for the N.W.T. in the federal and Territorial governments. The problem of creating new political arrangements in the N.W.T. has been framed in terms parallel to the now discredited academic concept of political development. The persistence of conflict which cannot be contained within the new institutional framework is regarded not as evidence of misstatement of the problem, but as a sign of the greater efforts required. I hope to show briefly that the application of the concept of political development to the N.W.T. is theoretically unsatisfactory and to reformulate the problem on the basis of the salience of ethnicity. The importance of such a reformulation lies in the policy implications for conflict resolution resulting from this changed perspective. The failure to properly identify the nature of the conflict can only make attempts to resolve it more difficult.

The concept of political development in academic literature had its parallel in the popular expectation of an orderly and easy transition from a colonial situation to responsible government. Observers identified changes taking place in the north with modernization and modernization with political development. Economic development, improvement of transportation and communication facilities, and the spread of education were to bring capabilities

necessary for responsible self-government. Despite the fact that political scientists have increasingly abandoned the concept of political development, it remains a fixture of public debate on the future of the N.W.T.

The concept of political development appeared in the area of comparative politics around 1960, coinciding with the end of the colonial era. It was meant to deal with the change of former colonies into nation-states, with the change from traditional to modern political systems. The publication of The Politics of Developing Areas in 1960 edited by Almond and Coleman marked the beginning of a separate literature of political development.<sup>1</sup> As the concept developed it drew on aspects of both economics and sociology, borrowing heavily from economic development and modernization theories.

By 1966 the political development literature was extensive enough to suggest the need for a summary. L. Pye attempted to extract common themes from the various definitions given for political development in his book Aspects of Political Development.<sup>2</sup> Pye found that political development generally dealt with processes leading to increasing equality of individuals, increasing capacity of the political system, and increasing differentiation of institutions and structures.

This general conception of political development corresponded to the wider popular view of political change in the N.W.T. In 1965 the Minister of Northern Affairs appointed a Royal Commission

to report on the "development" of government in the N.W.T. When the Territorial Public Service was created it included a Department of Local Government whose primary responsibility was "to facilitate political development at the local level."<sup>3</sup> A position paper tabled in the Council of the Northwest Territories in September of 1975 recommending a commitment by the federal government to orderly development to provincial status for the N.W.T. was titled "Political Development."<sup>4</sup> And just as the academic and popular concepts of political development use similar terminology in reaching parallel conclusions, so that arguments against the first apply equally to the second.

By the end of the 1960's the first critical considerations of the concept of political development began to appear, especially in the journal Comparative Politics. In an article titled "The Quest for Political Development" J. D. Montgomery argued that political development had either too broad or too narrow a meaning to have any use as an analytical tool.<sup>5</sup> He suggested that political development is either a narrow reflection of the preferences of academics for change in certain directions or an umbrella concept that covers all forms of political change. If the first were true political development would be little more than an ideological concept. If the second were true political scientists would have done better to have borrowed from theories of social change and begun the study of political change. This suggestion that the study of political change might be a more appropriate approach

was strongly reinforced by S. P. Huntington in his article "The Change to Change: Modernization, Development, and Politics."<sup>6</sup>

If political development is merely to describe non-modern political systems and how they change, then it appears to be unnecessary and even counterproductive to attempt to use this concept as an analytical tool. Yet political development theory additionally shares those same fundamental assumptions that make the work of modernization theorists little more than ideological.<sup>7</sup> Political development, like modernization, assumes particular kinds of change. These favoured changes are regarded as positive and progressive, as development. All other changes or failures to change are lumped together in a residual category called traditional or non-progressive. Only one path leads to political development, that of increasing equality of individuals, increasing capacities of the political system, and differentiation of institutions. The ends of political development are given and change is evaluated in terms of movement toward or away from this preferred outcome. For the N.W.T. this preferred outcome is the replication of the southern Canadian political system in the N.W.T.

The concept of political development is especially inappropriate for use in a multicultural situation like that of the N.W.T. where the industrial, European culture of southern Canada comes into contact with two separate and distinct indigenous cultures, the Inuit and the Dene. When two such differing cultures come into contact one group never simply gives up its culture for that

of the other. Instead a process of change is induced in both cultures.

Rarely is the exchange of culture traits an equal one and never does one culture emerge entirely untouched. The encounter almost always results in an increased similarity between the two cultures, leaving one of them dominant.<sup>8</sup>

While historical evidence may provide some reliable indication of which culture will emerge as dominant in the N.W.T., the outcome is in no way predetermined. All that is certain is that all cultures involved must change and that the scope of "political development" is too myopic to reflect the wide range of possible outcomes.

Once we have given up the habit of viewing politics in the Northwest Territories as a case study in political development, it is perhaps natural to look for prominent characteristics that might point to other more relevant bodies of literature. Two characteristics are immediately striking. One is the dependent status of the N.W.T. within Canada and the other is the multicultural nature of society in the N.W.T.

Important as it is, the question of dependence will, in this paper, remain a secondary concern in dealing with the internal political situation in the N.W.T. There is no doubt that the fact of dependence has important consequences for internal politics, but the two are in a sense separable questions that can be pursued in parallel. In his book The National Interest: The Politics of Northern Development, 1968-75, Edgar Dosman states that his focus

. . . is not on the development of local government in the Yukon and Northwest Territories, important and interesting as that topic might prove. Rather, and necessarily, it centres on Ottawa and relations . . . at the highest levels that determined the framework of northern development.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, in this paper I will adhere to this division of labour leaving the question of dependence as such to Dosman and others in order to concentrate on the internal political situation in the N.W.T.

Though the question of dependence may be set aside, it cannot be forgotten. In important respects the fact of dependence sets the realistic bounds for politics in the N.W.T. The very presence of the N.W.T. in Canada sets limits to the possible political arrangements and even more clearly creates the expectation that the political arrangements adopted will be similar to those of the rest of Canada. Some important areas of concern, such as control of natural resources by the federal government and the domination of the economy by southern corporations, clearly involve powerful actors from outside the N.W.T. Still I hope it will be possible to concentrate on the effects of dependence on the internal political situation, rather than on the question of dependence directly.

The second striking characteristic of the Northwest Territories, its multiculturalism, is more fundamental to the internal political situation. It immediately suggests a consideration of the literature of ethnic politics and plural societies.

The fact that the groups constituting a majority in the N.W.T. are a small minority in the larger Canadian nation will perhaps preclude application of some of the conclusions drawn from non-Canadian examples. Nevertheless, if it can be assumed that the important political factors are similar in all ethnically divided societies, including those which are part of some larger system, then the academic literature derived from the study of other ethnically divided nations should point the way for studies of ethnic division within the Northwest Territories.

Academic attention was directed to political problems resulting from cultural differences by Louis Wirth in his article "The Problem of Minority Groups" published in 1945.<sup>10</sup> Wirth defines minorities as having the objective characteristics of being distinctive, disadvantaged, and socially isolated, and as well the subjective characteristics of having a separate set of values, attitudes, and forms of behaviour. His formulation of the problem as one of a dominant majority with the active exclusion of a minority limits the application of his comments to the N.W.T. For here we have the case of a dominant and privileged minority which hopes to assimilate the majority. Still Wirth's attempt to provide a typology of minority situations on the basis of number and relative size of groups, degree of exclusion of each group, nature of intergroup social relations, and the goals of each group, points us toward the questions that must be considered.



A similar, though more extensive treatment of ethnic relations can be found in Schermerhorn's Comparative Ethnic Relations, published some 25 years after Wirth's essay.<sup>11</sup> Schermerhorn begins by attempting to clear away three problems from past work in ethnic relations; the preoccupation with prejudice and discrimination, the depiction of minority groups solely as victims, and the tendency to view progress in the discipline as a process of adding new case studies or updating older work. Schermerhorn's work is useful in providing a consideration of important characteristics of divided societies more detailed than Wirth's and in providing a description of legitimation as a three-fold problem of acceptance of authority, existence of common values, and presence of common or compatible goal definitions. He sees the central concern of ethnic relations properly as what conditions foster or prevent the integration of ethnic groups into their surrounding society. He assumes that ethnicity must pass out of existence in the inevitable evolution toward modern society, once again introducing the bias of modernization that so crippled the concept of political development.

Enloe begins her book Ethnic Conflict and Political Development with an attempt to separate the concepts of political development and modernization.<sup>12</sup> This allows her to accept the possibility that political development might take place even with the survival of ethnicity and, further, that ethnicity might have positive functions that account for its survival. "Political development"

becomes the series of transformations that enable a society to cope with new demands, the creation of capabilities relevant to needs of groups within the society. Political underdevelopment is seen as the inability of leaders and institutions to accurately represent or serve the interests of the various groups that make up the society. Ethnicity might advance political development, while ethnic conflict might serve to thwart it. Here Enloe has quite clearly moved much closer to the study of political change rather than political development just as Huntington suggested.

Enloe provides a list of characteristics of ethnic groups which provides a good basis for differentiation of ethnic groups in the N.W.T. These include the sharing of common beliefs and values, the general absence of exogamy and the resulting biological self-perpetuation, the possession of communal institutions paralleling those of the larger society, and the existence of a regular network of communication and interaction. For Enloe the degree of pluralism present is a function of the intensity of cultural distinctiveness.

The literature of ethnic politics and plural societies does, then, provide a basis for an approach to the study of the internal political situation in the N.W.T. From the work of Wirth, Schermerhorn, and Enloe it is possible to derive a definition of an ethnic group and a listing of characteristics of divided societies relevant to political conflict. Ethnic groups are, then, groups sharing a common set of values, beliefs, symbols, and goals, bound

by kinship ties, and possessing a set of communal institutions separate and apart from those of other groups. Of importance to a consideration of political conflict will be the degree of difference between groups, the degree of separation and differential participation in the larger society, and the extent of common ground among the groups. Once the existence of ethnic divisions in the N.W.T. has been established it will be necessary to show the evidence of the salience of this ethnicity in political conflict.

Robert Melson and Howard Wolpe have provided useful criteria for the establishment of the salience of ethnicity in political conflict in their article "Modernization and the Politics of Communalism: A Theoretical Perspective." Their definition of communalism corresponds to the definition of ethnic groups adopted above. Communalism is said to refer to the political assertiveness of groups having the characteristics of sharing a common culture, possessing a network of institutions covering the entire life cycle of individuals, and being internally differentiated by wealth, status, and power.<sup>13</sup>

For Melson and Wolpe communalism tends toward salience for two reasons. First, the nature of communalism tends to call the very existence of the society into question. The potential for secession is aggravated by the loss of legitimacy by any institution in an ethnically divided society which comes to be dominated by a single group. Secondly, once established communal groupings tend to persist and changes in the society will most

often serve to strengthen group loyalties.<sup>14</sup> This second critical element is emphasized by Nordlinger in his definition of a "divided society"<sup>15</sup> and by Rabushka and Shepsle in their definition of a "plural society."<sup>16</sup> Both hold that a society can be labeled "divided" or "plural" only when the presence of communal divisions results in organized conflict groups.

A third critical element in the salience of ethnicity is suggested by Schermerhorn in his discussion of the relevance of what he calls "power-conflict theory" to ethnic relations.<sup>17</sup> For Schermerhorn an important factor in the emergence of conflict between ethnic groups is the clash of interests over scarce values. These may cover a wide range stretching from intangibles such as prestige to tangible economic goods, but the clash clearly results from the perception of scarcity. To the extent that no group desires a larger share of some "good" held by another or so long as no group attempts to gain control of some new or previously free good, political conflict in an ethnically divided society could be avoided.

In the face of the existence of threats of disintegration and the persistence of ethnicity Melson and Wolpe finally point to the importance of policy-makers coming to terms with ethnicity.

Stability of culturally plural societies is threatened not by communalism, per se, but by the failure of national institutions explicitly to recognize and accommodate existing communal divisions and interests.<sup>18</sup>

A framework for discussion of such conflict regulation is provided

by Nordlinger in his book Conflict Regulation in Divided Societies. He suggests the six following conflict regulating practices are possible in divided societies: 1) creation of a stable governing coalition; 2) adoption of the principle of proportionality; 3) exercise of mutual veto; 4) depoliticization of certain sensitive issues; 5) compromise; and 6) concessions.<sup>19</sup> Nordlinger stresses the importance of the role of group leaders in bringing about any of these accommodations, of their possessing conflict regulating motives and of their relationship to their followers. If these six practices exhaust the possibilities for conflict regulation and it can be shown that the success of any of the six is unlikely, then the internal political situation in the N.W.T. must be described as a stalemate. Whether the stalemate is stable will be a function of the relative strength of the groups involved and of the influence of outside factors.

The focus of this paper is, then, on the salience of ethnicity in the politics of the N.W.T. and the resulting implications for conflict regulation. After a preliminary sketch of the development of the divided society in the N.W.T. the first task will be to describe the present extent of the divisions. The second task will be to show the salience of ethnicity in politics and the final task to explore the possibilities for regulation of the resulting political conflict along the lines suggested by Nordlinger.

## FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 1

<sup>1</sup> Gabriel A. Almond and James S. Coleman, The Politics of Developing Areas (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1960).

<sup>2</sup> Lucien Pye, Aspects of Political Development (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1966).

<sup>3</sup> Annual Report of the Government of the N.W.T., 1974, (Yellowknife, N.W.T.: Department of Information, 1974), p. 65.

<sup>4</sup> "Political Development," Tabled Document 1-57, Council of the N.W.T., September 29, 1975.

<sup>5</sup> J. D. Montgomery, "The Quest for Political Development," Comparative Politics, I (January 1969), 285-95.

<sup>6</sup> S. P. Huntington, "The Change to Change: Modernization, Development, and Politics," Comparative Politics, III (April 1971), 283-322.

<sup>7</sup> See A. G. Frank, The Sociology of Development and the Underdevelopment of Sociology, (London: Pluto Press, 1970), for a discussion of flaws in modernization theories.

<sup>8</sup> Peter Farb, Man's Rise to Civilization As Shown by the Indians of North America from Primeval Times to the Coming of the Industrial State, (New York: Avon Books, 1968), p. 312.

<sup>9</sup> Edgar J. Dosman, The National Interest: The Politics of Northern Development, 1968-75, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975), p. xvii.

<sup>10</sup> Louis Wirth, "The Problem of Minority Groups," in The Science of Man in World Crisis, ed. by Ralph Linton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945), pp. 347-372.

<sup>11</sup> R. A. Schermerhorn, Comparative Ethnic Relations: A Framework for Theory and Research (New York: Random House, 1970).

<sup>12</sup> Cynthia H. Enloe, Ethnic Conflict and Political Development (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1973), pp. 20-25.

<sup>13</sup> Robert Melson and Howard Wolpe, "Modernization and the Politics of Communalism: A Theoretical Perspective," The American Political Science Review, LXIV (December 1970), 1112.

<sup>14</sup> Melson, p. 1129.

<sup>15</sup> Eric A. Nordlinger, Conflict Regulation in Divided Societies, (Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1972) Occasional Papers in International Affairs, No. 29 (January 1972), p. 7.

<sup>16</sup> Alvin Rabushka and Kenneth A. Shepsle, Politics in Plural Societies (Columbus, Ohio: C. E. Merrill Publishers, 1972), p. 21.

<sup>17</sup> Schermerhorn, p. 41.

<sup>18</sup> Melson, p. 1129.

<sup>19</sup> Nordlinger, pp. 21-53.

## CHAPTER II

### DEVELOPMENT OF A DIVIDED SOCIETY

The development of an ethnically divided society in the Northwest Territories is a relatively recent phenomenon. Prior to the 16th Century two indigenous cultures existed in the N.W.T. having little contact with each other or the rest of the world. While it is unlikely that either culture was static or unchanging before this time, it is certain that both were greatly altered by their contact with European culture. For more than 300 years contact was primarily through the fur trade and though altered, each culture remained largely isolated and the sole culture of its area. It was the growth of White settlement after W.W. II, alongside but largely unrelated to native society, that produced an ethnically divided society in the N.W.T. The beginning of White settlement in the period from 1939 to 1966 marks the transition from an area with two similar and harmonious indigenous cultures to an ethnically divided society.

#### The Pre-European North

Though the Inuit and the Dene were separate and distinct



peoples, there were great similarities between their cultures. Both were band societies based on subsistence hunting and fishing economies and lacking complex institutional arrangements. There were also no great differences between groups within the two cultures. The Dene speak four closely related Athabaskan languages (Dogrib, Slave, Loucheux, and Chipewyan) and are differentiated primarily by language. The Inuit exhibit remarkable uniformity in language and culture from Siberia across North America and into Greenland. All Inuit still speak mutually intelligible dialects of the same language, Inuktitut.

Both Inuit and Dene society were based on aggregates of family based groups often referred to as camps. These small groups usually moved from place to place in accord with the seasons. During the summer several camps would come together for meetings and celebrations of the larger unit called a band. A band consisted of camps hunting and fishing in the same area and bound by extensive kinship ties. There were few formal institutions to bind these bands and, thus, their very existence depended on a high degree of customary cooperation. The anthropologist Peter Farb has described how certain practices such as marriage customs and taboos helped reinforce this necessary cooperation.<sup>1</sup>

Bands were led by headmen whose positions could sometimes be inherited. However, in Inuktitut the title for these headmen translates "He who knows best"<sup>2</sup> and among the Dene the

headman was usually the best or oldest active hunter.<sup>3</sup> In both cases leadership was primarily a function of wisdom and experience. The headman was often advised by an informal council and no formal mechanism existed in any band society to enforce a leader's decisions.<sup>4</sup> Those disagreeing on important issues always had the option of living apart from the band or moving to join another band.

Communication between bands over vast distances has been maintained since before the arrival of Europeans, though contacts between Inuit and Dene were limited. There are documented cases of Eskimo songs spreading from Alaska to Greenland within one year, an indication of the efficiency of the network.<sup>5</sup> Marriages between bands were frequent and helped preserve communication through family ties.<sup>6</sup> Though self-sufficient for necessities, bands exchanged raw materials, tools, and armaments as a common practice.<sup>7</sup> Warfare between bands was infrequent and limited to surprise raids to settle scores, thus never involving territory changing hands.<sup>8</sup>

Contacts between Inuit and Dene were limited both by language differences and residential separation. The Dene inhabited the regions of the sub-arctic forest stretching along the Mackenzie Valley and around Great Bear and Great Slave Lakes. The Inuit lived on the treeless, barren grounds to the north and east of the Dene, primarily along the mainland and Arctic island coasts. Records of contacts between the two are marked by suspicion,

hostility, and a remarkable lack of familiarity with each other even in the Mackenzie Delta area where settlement by the two cultures converged.<sup>9</sup> Both cultural patterns and sparsity of population meant there would be little conflict over territory.

The subsistence economy of the Dene and Inuit was one of feast or famine largely because of inefficient techniques of preservation and, thus, the inability to cope with surplus. Food supply was undependable, especially in late spring when hunting and fishing were made difficult by breakup conditions. Surplus could be neither stored through the warm weather nor easily transported during the seasonal migrations.

The inability to store surplus was probably also the origin of the custom of extensive sharing and gift-giving within the band.<sup>10</sup> Both the Inuit and the Dene had two kinds of property, communal and personal. Neither had any concept of private property.<sup>11</sup> Natural resources on which bands were dependent, and especially the land, were communal property with each family having the right to use a certain portion. Personal property was limited to those things which an individual could use or wear and, again, was kept to a minimum by seasonal migrations. No person ever held tools or clothing to the exclusion of other band members from a fair share. Both surplus and shortage were shared.

### Exploration and Fur Trade

The earliest contacts between native people in the N.W.T.

and European society came with the expeditions by Europeans in search of the Northwest Passage to Asia. The search for an all-water route to the north of North America was largely carried out by the English beginning with the expeditions of Martin Frobisher in 1576, 1577, and 1578. Expeditions were undertaken by sea by Davis (1585-87), Hudson (1610-11), Button (1612-13), Baffin (seven voyages from 1612-1622), Foxe (1631), James (1631), Ross (1818 and 1829-33), and Parry (1819, 1824-25, and 1827) and by land by Franklin in a series of expeditions stretching from 1819 to his disappearance in 1845. The existence of the Northwest Passage was established by Parry in his voyage of 1819 and the survey of the coast west to Point Barrow was completed by a Hudson's Bay Company expedition led by Dease and Simpson in 1839.<sup>12</sup> Ice conditions made the passage useless but the search for the passage had greatly extended English knowledge of the area and established their claim to the surrounding territory.

The discovery of Hudson's Bay in 1610 was especially important for the Northwest Territories as by the 1660's the Hudson's Bay trade route had begun to replace the old St. Lawrence route for furs. Contacts between Europeans and native people spread inland with the fur trade. At first furs moved down the rivers of the interior to the posts on Hudson's Bay, but eventually the two great fur companies established posts inland, first on Lake Athabasca and then throughout the Northwest. Samuel Hearne reached the Arctic coast overland by way of Great Slave Lake and the Coppermine

River in 1768 on behalf of Hudson's Bay Company. In 1789 Alexander Mackenzie set out for the rival Northwest Company in search of furs and a water route to the Pacific but suffered the "disappointment" of descending the river that bears his name to the Beaufort Sea.

At first trade with the Europeans merely brought new items into exchange supplementing the traditional trade between bands. Furs in demand in Europe were traded for iron kettles, knives, axes, guns and gunpowder, blankets, and liquor. By 1670 European goods had begun to displace traditional native crafts throughout North America and dependence on trade with Europeans was thus established.<sup>13</sup> According to Rea in the Political Economy of the Canadian North, "... the effect of the fur trade was to 'commercialize' the native sector so far back in the history of the northern territories that the entire economy had a commercial, export base for the whole period [following 1905]."<sup>14</sup> As trade became an integral part of the economy permanent trading posts were established throughout the N.W.T.

Permanent trading posts came first to the Mackenzie Valley with the establishment of Northwest Company posts along the river beginning with Fort Simpson in 1804 and Fort Good Hope in 1805. In 1821 competition in the fur trade in the northwest was largely eliminated by the merger of the Northwest Company and Hudson's Bay Company. The new Hudson's Bay Company opened a post at Fort McPherson in 1840 and by the 1870's had posts in every part

of the Mackenzie-Great Slave region. Posts exclusively for trade with the Inuit were not established until one hundred years after those along the Mackenzie. In 1912 a post was established at Chesterfield Inlet and in 1913 another at Cape Dorset. By the end of the 1920's permanent posts for trade existed within reach of all the inhabitants of the N.W.T.<sup>15</sup>

The fur trade brought vast changes to the north, but it did not bring the immediate extinction of native culture. Though native people had adopted certain tools and goods from the Europeans and in the process transformed their own culture, they still possessed a culture distinct and relatively isolated from that of the rest of Canada. Trade for certain commodities had become a necessity and the northern economy was irrevocably tied to the outside world. Yet as northern areas seemed unsuited for agriculture, the N.W.T. was destined to remain isolated until the search for mineral wealth turned northward. As in southern Canada white settlement was to be preceded by traders and prospectors, with RCMP detachments not far behind. The first detachment in the western Arctic was established at Fort McPherson in 1903 and the first in the east at Pond Inlet in 1921.<sup>16</sup>

The Metis appeared in the N.W.T. almost simultaneously with the Whites. Many moved west from Rupert's Land with the fur trade and their numbers were augmented by further marriages between White traders and Dene women.<sup>17</sup> Later they were joined by other Metis who fled up the Athabasca and Slave Rivers to escape

the flood of White settlement on the prairies. The Metis remained a small minority in almost every area until after the beginning of permanent White settlement following W.W. II. Perhaps because of their small numbers and as they shared the same way of life as full-blooded Indians, no separate Metis community evolved. Instead Indians and Metis lived closely integrated into a single Dene society, one in which Metis sometimes even assumed positions of leadership.

At the time of Treaties 8 and 11 the Metis were given the choice of "taking treaty" and thus becoming legally recognized as "Indians" or receiving scrip redeemable in cash or land.<sup>18</sup> Those Dene descended in the male line from Indians or Metis who "took treaty" became Treaty Indians. Descendents of those Metis who did not "take treaty" remained Metis. The number of Metis has been increased by the children of Treaty Indian women who have married non-Treaty Indian men, both Dene and White, and have thus lost their status as "Indians." The distinction between Metis and Treaty Indians has thus become legal, rather than racial or cultural.

The Yukon gold rush brought prospectors and settlers streaming north, many overland from Edmonton. In 1897 an Alberta Indian agent recommended to the Minister of the Interior that a treaty be concluded stretching from northern Alberta to the south shore of Great Slave Lake at the earliest possible date. He maintained that,

From all appearances there will be a rush of miners to the Yukon and the mineral regions of the Athabasca during the next year . . . In the face of this influx of settlers into that country no time should be lost by the government in making a treaty with the Indians for their rights over this territory. They will be more easily dealt with now than they would be when their country is overrun with prospectors and valuable mines discovered. They would then place a higher value on their rights than they would before these discoveries are made.<sup>19</sup>

In the text of Treaty 8 signed at various times in the summers of 1899 and 1900, before any mention of peace and friendship or Indian rights, we find the purpose of the treaty clearly stated as being ". . . to open for settlement, immigration, trade, travel, mining, lumbering, and such other purposes as to Her Majesty may seem meet, a tract bounded and described as hereinafter mentioned, and to obtain the consent thereto of her Indian subjects inhabiting the said tract . . ." <sup>20</sup> Treaty 8 was extended only to the south shore of Great Slave Lake and not to the Indians of the Mackenzie Valley because Indian Commissioner Forget said in 1889,

Beyond these points, however, I do not consider that the government would be justified in undertaking negotiation of treaties which would involve very heavy outlay for comparatively inadequate returns insofar as the value of the territory to be ceded . . . The Mackenzie Basin is at present only affected to a limited extent by the Gold Movement . . .<sup>21</sup>

For some years before the signing of Treaty 11 in 1921 church officials had urged a treaty for the Indians of the Mackenzie Valley. They hoped the Indians might then receive government



benefits which would help relieve their desperate condition caused by recurrent famine and epidemic disease. Despite these pleas and the activities of mineral exploration companies in the area the government did not feel that the development potential justified the expense of the treaty until 1920. Coincidentally, in August of 1920 Imperial Oil drilled its first successful well in the Norman Wells Oil Field. The next summer a treaty party was in the field to secure adherence to Treaty 11.

Treaty 11 followed Treaty 8 almost word for word, both were written in Ottawa and presented to the native people in English for signature. The Treaty Commissioners were not authorized to make any changes in the text of the treaty. As many European concepts have no equivalent in the Athabaskan languages the native people were dependent on the explanations of these strange terms given by the Commissioners through interpreters. In his book As Long As This Land Shall Last Father Fumoleau of Yellowknife has documented the native people's understanding of the treaty. They saw it as a treaty of friendship and in almost every case agreed to sign the treaty only after they were assured that they would be permitted to pursue their traditional way of life without hindrance, to hunt, trap, fish, and move freely over the land. For Dene people ownership of the land could have no other meaning than the right to use it.

### Minerals, Permanent Settlements, and Public Services

Whatever the treaties meant to native people, to the government and business community of southern Canada they signified the opening of a vast hinterland of resources to exploitation by private enterprise. With the end of the boom in the Yukon prospectors began to comb the Mackenzie Valley, the Great Bear Lake, and the Great Slave Lake areas in search of the next big strike. The first important discovery in the N.W.T. came at Great Bear Lake in 1930. The first mine opened there in 1933 and by 1934 there were three mines in operation producing silver and radium. These operations remained small scale but they did have several important effects especially in the general encouragement given to prospectors working in the north. They also brought the reactivation of the Norman Wells oil field to provide fuel for the operations and improvement of river transportation from the railhead in Alberta with the acquisition of Northern Transportation Company in 1937 by Eldorado Mines, the largest mine at Great Bear.<sup>22</sup>

The successful operation at Great Bear Lake combined with the pegging of gold at \$35 per ounce in 1934 made the search for gold in the N.W.T. attractive. There was a small claiming rush in the Yellowknife area where gold had already been discovered and by 1936 the first mine operations were being organized. The first gold brick was poured in Yellowknife in 1938. The

increased mining activity convinced the federal government to enter a joint project with the province of Alberta to provide a winter road from Peace River to the south shore of Great Slave Lake.<sup>23</sup>

World War II brought vastly increased activity to the N.W.T. with military projects in mineral exploitation, transport, and communication. In 1944 Eldorado Mines was nationalized in recognition of the importance of its uranium holdings at Great Bear Lake. As a result its subsidiary, the Northern Transportation Company, became a Crown corporation and the federal government acquired a direct interest in river transportation in the north. Construction of a pipeline from the Norman Wells oil field to Whitehorse was undertaken by a U.S. consortium on behalf of the U.S. Army in 1942-44. This brought the construction of ten air fields stretching from Edmonton to Norman Wells, improved river transport due to vast increases in freight handling, and improvement of the winter road to Great Slave Lake to highway standards. At the conclusion of the war mining operations at Great Bear Lake were shut down and the pipeline was dismantled, but the improved transportation facilities remained. As with the treaties, government activity had once again helped open the north, though this time indirectly.

Government involvement in the N.W.T. continued after the war. By this time it was apparent that the gold reserves at Yellowknife provided a fairly secure basis for permanent settlement. There were four gold mines in operation in Yellowknife

in the 1950's employing a total of some 750 miners<sup>24</sup> and the population had reached 3,100 by 1956.<sup>25</sup> The Northern Canada Power Commission was organized in 1948 to take over responsibility for hydroelectric power in the Yellowknife area and began construction of diesel plants in the other large settlements. In the late 1950's the Diefenbaker government authorized a Development Road Program corresponding to the Roads To Resources Program in the provinces. The construction of 1300 miles of highway in the N.W.T. was authorized at an estimated cost of \$64 million.<sup>26</sup> River transport was greatly improved and the season lengthened by the acquisition of steel-hulled diesel tugs and steel barges by the government-owned Northern Transportation Company.<sup>27</sup>

The construction of the Distant Early Warning Line radar system in the period from 1955 to 1957 also provided both direct and indirect impetus to development in the N.W.T. At its peak it employed some 4,000 workers, providing wage employment temporarily in remote areas.<sup>28</sup> Its real value, however, lay in the resulting improvement in transportation and communication facilities in the high arctic. Detailed charting of the mainland coast was completed and nine airfields were constructed.<sup>29</sup> The airfields were of benefit to nearby settlements in ending their total dependence on the short maritime shipping season.

The integration of the N.W.T. into the larger Canadian economy proceeded slowly in the 1950's with responsibility for

this process falling to private business. The pattern of economic growth was consistently one of resource exploitation projects designed by southern corporations, built by southern contractors, staffed by labour brought in from the south, and producing a flow of raw materials and profits to the south. The slow pace of growth has been credited by Rea more to the lack of investment in large scale and efficient "social overhead capital facilities" than the result of factors such as isolation or climate.<sup>30</sup>

Often it was necessary to construct both transportation facilities and complete communities to support a project, an indication of the lack of ties to the existing local economy.

Native people received little benefit from any of these projects. Few secured permanent wage employment. There was no compensation for land use or disruption of hunting, fishing, and trapping. Nor, as municipal organization was lacking, was there any benefit in terms of creation of a local tax base. Instead, southern Canadian standards of living were introduced to the north in the resource-based communities with no opportunities for native people to achieve a similar standard.

Projects were undertaken only by very large enterprises and, then, only when some government assistance could be arranged. North Rankin Nickel Mines operated at Rankin Inlet from 1957 to 1961 after government aid in harbour construction and in the form of the only government sponsored attempt to train a local labour force for mining in the N.W.T.<sup>31</sup> Canada Tungsten began mining operations near the Yukon border in 1961 following an agreement

for sharing road construction costs with the federal government.<sup>32</sup> Also in 1961 the federal government reached an agreement with Cominco Mines to share costs of construction of a railroad north from Grimshaw, Alberta, to Cominco's lead-zinc deposits at Pine Point on the south shore of Great Slave Lake. CN received a grant of \$86.25 million from the federal government for the construction of Great Slave Lake Railway. Cominco provided CN with \$12.5 million plus a guaranteed annual freight tonnage.<sup>33</sup>

Prior to W.W. II government policy toward the N.W.T. had been one of benign neglect. Only token appropriations were made for public welfare and education and these were generally administered through the missions or the Hudson's Bay Company. The post-war period saw a change in the attitude of the federal government toward both public and private activity in the north. Assistance was made available to encourage private development and in the public sector the government moved to introduce standards of services available in the rest of Canada.

In 1948 there were nine mission hospitals, a Red Cross hospital, and one Indian Affairs hospital in the N.W.T.<sup>34</sup> There were 13 day schools and five residential schools, with all but one run by the missions.<sup>35</sup> Transfer of responsibility for health care in the N.W.T. from the Department of Indian Affairs to the Department of National Health and Welfare came in 1945 and by 1951 a program had been instituted providing for the

construction of regional hospitals in the larger centres with nursing stations to serve smaller communities.<sup>36</sup> A new education policy was adopted in 1947 giving responsibility for construction and operation of all schools to the Territorial government. Only 23% of children aged 6 to 16 were in school in 1950-51 but this figure had been increased to 75% by 1960-61.<sup>37</sup> Inuvik was established by the federal government in 1955 to serve as an administrative and distribution centre for the Mackenzie Delta communities at a location where services of a southern standard could be provided.<sup>38</sup> By the end of the 1960's public services and programs similar to those available in the south were available in the Northwest Territories.

Until 1951 the N.W.T. was governed entirely by civil servants resident in Ottawa with no provision being made for local representation. When the Northwest Territories was carved down roughly to its present boundaries with the creation of Saskatchewan and Alberta in 1905 it reverted to a non-representative form of territorial government. Provision was made for the appointment of a Commissioner and a non-elective advisory council,<sup>39</sup> yet for the next sixteen years no council was appointed nor were any ordinances passed. Instead the Deputy Commissioner of the Royal North-West Mounted Police was appointed Commissioner and the N.W.T. was administered directly by the RNWMP.<sup>40</sup> In 1921 renewed interest in mineral wealth in the N.W.T. sparked the appointment of a Territorial Council, a Council composed of

civil servants, based in Ottawa, and enlarged from four to six members at the end of the year.<sup>41</sup> From that time through W.W. II the Council of the N.W.T. functioned as "an inter-departmental advisory committee coordinating the activities of several federal departments within the Territories,"<sup>42</sup> and the N.W.T. was governed by senior civil servants holding positions in other departments in Ottawa.<sup>43</sup>

With the growth of White settlement and the appeals of the mining industry for various forms of assistance came the first opposition to the old system.<sup>44</sup> School districts were created at Fort Smith and Yellowknife in 1939 and a Local Administrative District established to provide municipal services in Yellowknife January 1, 1940.<sup>45</sup> In 1947 the entire District of Mackenzie was combined with the Yukon into a single riding, thus providing Parliamentary representation to the White residents of the western half of the N.W.T.<sup>46</sup> In 1952 the Yukon-Mackenzie electoral district was divided and the District of Mackenzie received its own MP. Registered Indians in the N.W.T. were enfranchised in 1953, but Inuit residents did not receive the right to vote until 1962 when the Mackenzie riding was extended to cover all of the N.W.T.<sup>47</sup>

Local demands for an administration more responsive to local needs resulted in the amendment of the N.W.T. Act in 1951 to provide the Commissioner with an advisory council of eight members. Three of these were to be elected, but the Commissioner was to retain exclusive executive power and remain responsible only to



the Minister of the Interior in Ottawa.<sup>48</sup> The eastern and far northern portions of the N.W.T. were excluded from even this minor measure of representation as all three electoral districts were established in the Mackenzie District.<sup>49</sup> Throughout the 1950's and 1960's minor adjustments were made in the N.W.T. Act transferring additional powers to the Territorial administration, adding additional elected members to the Territorial Council, and allowing greater powers for local improvement districts.<sup>50</sup> Still, however, the pattern of administration from Ottawa by a Commissioner appointed by the federal Cabinet and advised by a Council, partially elected and partially appointed, was maintained up to 1966.

In 1966 the Royal Commission on the Development of Government in the N.W.T. handed down its recommendations for the N.W.T. That this three-man commission did have one northern resident as a member and held hearings in the N.W.T. as well as in Ottawa, is in itself an indication of a new attitude toward the north.<sup>51</sup> The principal recommendations of the Commission were that the Commissioner of the N.W.T. and the Territorial administration should both be resident in the N.W.T. and that representative, but not responsible, government be established.<sup>52</sup> The Carrothers Commission found neither a large enough tax-base nor a sufficient "human resource base" to justify provincial status and added,

It is not conceivable that the central government would convey title in the minerals and petroleum resources of 1/3 of the land mass of Canada to a

government of less than 0.2% of the total Canadian population, 3/5 of whom are indigenous peoples who, however great their potential, are at the present time politically unsophisticated and economically depressed.<sup>53</sup>

The years from 1966 to the present have seen the gradual implementation of the recommendations of the Carrothers Commission, culminating in the amendments to the N.W.T. Act in 1974 which removed the last appointed members from the Territorial Council.<sup>54</sup>

The two most important influences on the course of development in the N.W.T. in the period from 1966 to 1976 were the decision to establish a Territorial public service resident in the north and the beginning of oil and gas exploration on a massive scale in the Mackenzie Delta, the Beaufort Sea, and the Arctic Islands. Both were to bring increased contact between the indigenous cultures and the dominant southern Canadian economy and culture. Both were to bring increasing numbers of Whites to live in the N.W.T, many on a permanent basis.

Despite the influx of Whites into the Northwest Territories following W.W. II, native people have remained a majority, but in a vastly altered N.W.T. The indigenous cultures have themselves been transformed. From semi-nomadic subsistence hunting and fishing bands has come a native population living in permanent settlements, yet still only loosely tied to the larger Canadian economy through trade. As suggested in a recent position paper of the Inuit Tapirisat,

The most serious change in the Inuit mode of life began about 30 years ago when social services and

health care programs were initiated . . . family allowances and old age security tended to facilitate the gathering of the Inuit into permanent settlements and a general withdrawal from the pursuit of their traditional economy.<sup>55</sup>

Native people first settled at trading posts to take advantage of permanent access to trade and later, as health, education, and welfare services became available, they stayed on in increasing numbers until few were left living outside permanent settlements. Yet native society remained based on subsistence hunting and fishing with incomes supplemented by trapping, seasonal wage employment, and a growing volume of transfer payments. In the meantime a foreign society had grown up alongside the indigenous societies, a society based on wage employment in resource extraction and service industries. The growth of these two separate societies side by side throughout the N.W.T. produced an ethnically divided society. The extent of this division will be dealt with in the next chapter, concentrating on the period from 1966 to 1976.

## FOOTNOTES CHAPTER II

- <sup>1</sup> Farb, pp. 64 and 77.
- <sup>2</sup> Farb, p. 63.
- <sup>3</sup> Keith J. Crowe, A History of the Original Peoples of Northern Canada (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1974), p. 34.
- <sup>4</sup> Farb, p. 82.
- <sup>5</sup> Farb, p. 57.
- <sup>6</sup> Crowe, p. 27.
- <sup>7</sup> Crowe, p. 24.
- <sup>8</sup> Crowe, p. 28.
- <sup>9</sup> Alexander Mackenzie, Journal of a Voyage by Bark Canoe from Lake Athabasca to the Pacific Ocean in the Summer of 1789, ed. by T. H. McDonald (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966), pp. 81-2.
- <sup>10</sup> As in the case of the Great Basin Shoshone described by Farb pp. 49-50.
- <sup>11</sup> Farb, p. 69.
- <sup>12</sup> David Mountfield, A History of Polar Exploration (New York: Dial Press, 1974), pp. 70-86.
- <sup>13</sup> Farb, p. 82.
- <sup>14</sup> Kenneth J. Rea, The Political Economy of the Canadian North (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), p. 322.

- 15 Travelarctic, Explorer's Guide: Canada's Arctic 1974 (Yellowknife: Department of Information, 1974), pp. 8-11.
- 16 Nora Kelly and William Kelly, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police: A Century of History, 1873-1973 (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1973), pp. 107 and 153.
- 17 Crowe, p. 75.
- 18 Rene Fumoleau, As Long As This Land Shall Last (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975), p. 58 and Crowe p. 159.
- 19 Fumoleau, p. 56.
- 20 Treaty 8, reprinted in Fumoleau, pp. 70-73.
- 21 Fumoleau, p. 59.
- 22 Rea, p. 117.
- 23 Ray Price, Yellowknife (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates, 1967), pp. 125-40.
- 24 Rea, pp. 134-5.
- 25 Census of Canada, 1961, Volume I, Table 5, p. 5-94.
- 26 Rea, p. 244.
- 27 Rea, p. 254.
- 28 Rea, p. 310.
- 29 Colin S. Gray, Canadian Defense Priorities: A Question of Relevance (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, and Co., 1972), p. 187.
- 30 Rea, p. 314, and W. Keith Buck and J. F. Henderson, "The Role of Mineral Resources in the Development and Colonization of Northern Canada," in Canadian Population and Northern Colonization, ed. by V. W. Bladen (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), p. 92.
- 31 Rea, pp. 142-3, and Buck, p. 95.
- 32 Rea, p. 143-4.
- 33 Rea, p. 262.
- 34 Rea, p. 295.

- 35 Rea, p. 288.
- 36 Rea, p. 295.
- 37 Rea, p. 291.
- 38 Travelarctic, Explorer's Guide, p. 10.
- 39 Statutes of Canada, 4-5 Edward VII (1905) c. 27.
- 40 C. C. Lingard, "Administration of the Canadian Northland," Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science XII (February 1946), p. 60.
- 41 Morris Zaslow, "A Prelude to Self-Government: The Northwest Territories, 1905-1939," in The Canadian Northwest: Its Potentialities, ed. by Frank H. Underhill (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), p. 91.
- 42 Zaslow, p. 92.
- 43 Rea, p. 35 and Zaslow, p. 91.
- 44 Zaslow, p. 93.
- 45 Lingard, p. 68.
- 46 Rea, p. 43.
- 47 Crowe, p. 201. Registered Indians in the N.W.T. were enfranchised in 1953 as a result of the extension of the Yukon riding to cover the District of Mackenzie. As no reserves had been established in the N.W.T. all Registered Indians were living off reserve and thus became eligible to vote.
- 48 Statutes of Canada, 15 George VI (1951) c. 21.
- 49 Rea, p. 40.
- 50 Rea, p. 40 and ff.
- 51 Report of the Advisory Commission on the Development of Government in the N.W.T., (Ottawa, 1966), pp. 3-21.
- 52 Advisory Commission, p. 158-214.
- 53 Advisory Commission, p. 148.

<sup>54</sup> "Amendments to the N.W.T. Act Give Illusion of Power,"  
News of the North, April 3, 1974.

<sup>55</sup> Inuit Tapiristat of Canada, "Position Paper to the Plenary  
Session on Social Justice and the Question of Differing Values  
and Cultures," Habitat Forum, Vancouver, B.C., June 1, 1976,  
p. 3.

### CHAPTER III

#### DUAL ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

Instead of one integrated society and culture whose members share common values, goals, and beliefs, work in the same economy, and use the same networks of communication, there exists a dual economy and society in the N.W.T. It is a society ethnically divided between the Whites with their middle-class, southern Canadian culture on the one hand, and the two indigenous native groups, the Inuit and the Dene, on the other. The Inuit are a group of some 13,000 spread over the northeastern half of the N.W.T. above the treeline.<sup>1</sup> The Dene are a group composed of the 7,000 Registered Treaty Indians and from 5,000 to 7,000 Metis living in the southwestern half of the Territories. The Treaty Indians and the Metis live in the same settlements sharing the same way of life and are separated mainly by the provisions of the Indian Act which exclude persons of mixed blood in the male line from legal status as "Indians." The remaining 11,000 to 12,000 residents of the N.W.T. are normally referred to as "Whites." This is in no way a racial term, but instead indicates those living in the north who are part of the dominant Canadian



culture. A similar use of the term "White" is explained by Peter Farb as follows,

. . . I am not really talking about any particular Caucasoids but an abstraction, a composite of social, political, and economic attitudes held by certain people whose skin is usually lighter than most of the world's population and who behaved in a certain way toward primitive peoples whenever they were encountered around the globe. The White is a colonizer who early developed an advanced technology; he is an exploiter of human and natural resources; he has destroyed, often intentionally, almost every alien culture he has come in contact with . . .<sup>2</sup>

Local usage of the term "White" is also racially blind and one regularly sees reference to both Negroes and Chinese as White.

#### Modern Wage Economy

The ethnic divisions between native people and Whites in the N.W.T. have a parallel reflection in the dual economy of the north. While it might be tempting to label these divisions "classes" because economic and cultural differences coincide, they remain primarily ethnic divisions as described by Wirth, Schermerhorn, and Enloe. The ethnic groups in the N.W.T. are culturally distinctive and socially isolated. They possess divergent sets of beliefs and values and have institutions paralleling those of the larger society. Because one ethnic group is dominant and the others clearly disadvantaged, there is a tendency to revert to the concept of class for an explanation. However, in the N.W.T. the economic situation serves to reinforce and maintain the ethnic divisions already in existence.

The economy of the N.W.T. can be thought of as two separate but loosely-related systems. It has both a modern wage sector and a traditional land-based sector. Dene and Inuit people live in a society based on an economy different and largely isolated from the modern wage economy which is the basis of White society in the north. While the division is in no way absolute the contacts between the two economies are minimal and few individuals play roles which span the gap.

The modern wage economy requires the majority of the White working-age population to exchange its labour on a regular basis for a wage which can in turn be exchanged for goods and services. There is little production for personal use but rather almost exclusively production for exchange. The public sector of the modern wage economy has approximately 4,100 employees at three levels of government, federal, territorial, and municipal.<sup>3</sup> Only a few of these employees are involved in primary production activities such as power generation or construction; most are employed in administrative and service positions. Approximately one-third of the employees in the public sector are native people.<sup>4</sup>

The private sector of the economy of the N.W.T. has been described by the federal government's Pipeline Application Assessment Group as being ". . . characterized by smallness of size, lack of diversification, and high costs."<sup>5</sup> True as this description is, it neglects two more prominent characteristics, that the modern wage economy is largely the preserve of a single ethnic group and that the private sector of the modern wage economy is dominated

in virtually all areas by large corporations. Only in food processing (with four fish canneries, three bakeries, and two soft-drink bottling plants) and in the lumber industry (with six sawmills) is large-scale corporate participation absent.<sup>6</sup> Some opportunities also exist for the independent entrepreneur or family business in retail trade, construction, transportation, and other service industries. Nevertheless all these activities are substantially dominated by the activities of large corporations. There are approximately 7,400 employees in the private sector of the wage economy, virtually all employed in resource exploitation or service industries.<sup>7</sup>

Banking and finance is, of course, dominated by chartered national banks. However, private banking and finance is itself often overshadowed by government loan programs, public investment, or self-financed corporate projects. The Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce has five branches in the N.W.T. and, in addition, operates a monthly "flying bank" service to remote communities. The Royal Bank and the Bank of Montreal each have two branches in the N.W.T. while the Bank of Nova Scotia and the Toronto-Dominion Bank have one each. It was not possible to secure figures on lending volumes that would allow comparison of public and private activity, but it is nevertheless certain that the activities of the chartered banks are far more extensive than those of the two small credit unions or the cooperatives, but less important than corporate or government activity. It is also clear that the

major decisions on financial matters are made outside the N.W.T., either in the head offices of the banks, in corporate boardrooms, or by the federal government in Ottawa.

By far the largest amount of economic activity in the private sector is concentrated in the non-renewable resource industries. It is oil, gas, and mineral exploration and associated development projects that provide the major source of non-governmental employment in the N.W.T. In 1973 mines operating in the N.W.T. employed 1,344 people, not including those employed seasonally in exploration activities.<sup>8</sup> Oil and natural gas exploration provided some 656 jobs in the 1972-73 season.<sup>9</sup> Imperial Oil is the only company currently producing oil in the N.W.T. Production from the Norman Wells field accounts for approximately 1% of Imperial's total Canadian production.<sup>10</sup> Natural gas is produced both at Norman Wells and at the Pointed Mountain field, near the Yukon-B.C. border. Oil and gas exploration activity is dominated by the major multinational oil companies. As a percentage of total area for which exploration permits had been issued by 1975, 50.7% was held by corporations with over 50% U.S. ownership, 30.9% by Canadian corporations, 7.2% by French, and 4.8% by British corporations.<sup>11</sup> Minimum Canadian participation in exploration activity has been secured by federal government ownership of a controlling interest in Panarctic Oils<sup>12</sup> and, as well, by the recent acquisition of Atlantic Richfield Canada by Petrocan, the Crown corporation established to further guarantee Canadian

participation in the oil industry.

The mining industry is dominated by six companies which account for 100% of the total production value of minerals for the N.W.T. Controlling interest in three of these is held by Cominco Mines and in the others by Falconbridge, Dome Mines, and IU International of Delaware respectively.<sup>13</sup> These six are to be joined by a seventh early in 1977 when production begins at Strathcona Sound on Baffin Island, where a lead-zinc complex is being constructed by a consortium of European multinationals with minority federal government participation.<sup>14</sup> The principal minerals produced in the N.W.T. in descending order of production value are zinc, lead, gold, silver, tungsten, and copper.<sup>15</sup> Should present mineral prices prevail reserves of existing operations are sufficient to ensure continued production and, indeed, expansion of the mining industry should continue.

As mentioned earlier, even those few areas which might offer some scope for individual entrepreneurs are dominated by large corporations. In air transport the major carrier of both passengers and freight is Pacific Western Airlines, at present owned by the government of Alberta. Regional and charter operations are still largely the preserve of small businesses though there is an increasing concentration of business in a smaller number of firms. Freight service by barge on the Mackenzie system and by rail to the south shore of Great Slave Lake is provided by the Northern Transportation Company and Canadian National Railways,

both Crown corporations.

Other aspects of economic activity show various mixes of large and small-scale operations. Retail trade is still largely a monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company, though there have been attempts to provide competition through retail cooperatives. "The Bay" still has some forty retail outlets in the N.W.T. There are some 150 building trades and construction firms operating in the N.W.T., but large projects are usually the preserve of Keen Industries or Poole Construction, both of Edmonton. The fields of hotel accommodation and food service still provide the best opportunities for small businesses, even if many of these are franchise operations.

Communication and power services are provided by a mixture of public and private activity. The CBC provides radio service to all but the smallest settlements and television service to the major centres via Anik satellite. In the eastern half of the Territories telephone and telecommunication service is provided by Bell Canada and in the western half by CN Telecommunications. The Northern Canada Power Commission (NCPC) remains responsible for providing electricity to the major settlements from both hydroelectric sites and oil-fired generators. Distribution of power in the Great Slave Lake area is handled by Plains Western Gas and Electric, a company controlled by the German multinational Electrische Licht und Kraft Lagenung,<sup>16</sup> an indication both of the concentration of economic activity in large enterprises and

of the integration of the modern wage economy of the north into the larger national and world economies.

In terms of the ethnic divisions in the N.W.T. the two most important characteristics of the modern wage economy are the fact that control of major enterprises, both public and private, lies outside the N.W.T. and that its labour force is predominantly White. The vast majority of the investment decisions affecting the N.W.T. are made outside the N.W.T. Local inputs may be considered in questions of how a project is to proceed, but the more fundamental questions of whether there are to be projects and what kind of projects these should be are answered by non-residents. The existence of a predominantly White labour force in an area which has roughly two-thirds native population is an indication of the low rate of participation in the modern wage economy of native people.

No figures are available on employment by ethnic group for the N.W.T. The only indication of the participation rate for native people is the number of native employees of the Territorial government. It is probably safe to assume that this figure of 29% is representative of the proportion of native people in the modern sector as a whole. If anything this would tend to over-estimate participation because of special recruitment and training programs of the Government of the N.W.T. 29% of the labour force in the modern sector plus the 370 people employed full-time in the traditional sector in the N.W.T. would give a figure

of 3,437 native people in the labour force, or a participation rate of 25.0%.<sup>17</sup> This would mean that native people participate in the labour force at a rate just under one-half that of the Canadian population as a whole.<sup>18</sup> Even this may give an unrealistic picture of the extent of native participation as it ignores the intermittent nature of employment for large numbers of native people and their concentration at the lower employment levels.

#### Traditional Land-Based Economy

Yet it is not that native people are engaged full-time in their traditional pursuits of hunting, fishing, and trapping and therefore do not participate in the modern wage economy. As mentioned above, the 1971 Census Labour Force Survey found only 370 people, out of a total labour force of 10,950, giving those as their occupations. Rather native people are poorly situated to compete in the job market in the modern wage economy due to low levels of education, almost non-existent job experience, and relative inability to relocate to secure permanent jobs.<sup>19</sup> Some employment is provided by the 32 native cooperatives but this is usually only in handicraft industries or in marketing of traditional goods<sup>20</sup> and thus tends to maintain the isolation of native people from the modern wage economy.

The two-thirds of the population of the N.W.T. that is native is thus primarily dispersed among the traditional land-based activities of hunting, fishing, and trapping on a part-time



basis with incomes supplemented by seasonal wage employment and transfer payments. A good description of the situation in most settlement is given in the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Assessment,

Very few Native families live exclusively either from cash or income in-kind gained directly from the land. For most communities, the typical family derives its livelihood from a mixture of wage employment and resource harvesting, with trapping providing extra cash and hunting and fishing providing much of the family's food requirements.<sup>21</sup>

Recognition of this pattern is found in the welfare system administered by the Government of the N.W.T.'s Department of Social Development. Two categories of aid are available, distinguishing between "social support" payments to those unable to work and "economic welfare" payments to those who do work but whose incomes are insufficient to meet "standard budgetary requirements." Communities along the north shore of Great Slave Lake and the central Arctic coast were found to have a particularly heavy dependence on economic welfare payments, with some communities receiving over \$300 per capita and with total payments of over \$500,000 to the seven communities in 1973-74.<sup>22</sup>

### Native Society

It should be kept in mind, however, that there exists a dual society in the N.W.T. as well as a dual economy. Native people do not comprise a group isolated from the larger society solely for economic reasons. As well, native people possess a culture differing from that which complements the modern wage

economy of the rest of Canada. They possess different values, beliefs, and goals than Whites. Their lack of participation in the society based on the wage economy is more than just a failure to secure places in that economy. It is also a function of the existence of competing sub-cultures.

While Inuit and Dene people are often grouped together in discussions of the north, it is important to remember that they do not regard themselves as a single group. This feeling of distinctiveness is a result both of settlement patterns which limit contacts and of their cultural differences. While there is a basic general similarity between the two traditional cultures, differences of language, custom, and tradition are extensive enough to provide the basis for separate identities. The degree of this separate identity is well illustrated by the suggestion of the division of the N.W.T. along the treeline in the Inuit land claim submitted to the federal government.

Still, when dealing with the present divisions in the N.W.T. the gulf between the White and native cultures obscures the more minor differences between the two native cultures themselves. Conflict in the north is rarely between Dene and Inuit, but rather between one of the two native cultures and the White. Additionally, the similarity of the present socioeconomic situation of both groups allows drawing general comparisons valid for both native groups. The set of beliefs, values, and goals at present held by Dene and Inuit people are broadly similar.

Native people have special attitudes toward the land and their communities which persist despite the disruption of their cultures. Many still make at least part of their living from the land or traditional arts and crafts, but even those with positions in the modern sector retain this special attitude. For native people the land is ". . . a place to live, not a place to tap."<sup>23</sup> It is more than a source of income and the products of the land are more important than their monetary value. Native people prefer country food to store-bought. They take pleasure in time spent hunting and fishing in the bush. This attitude toward the land is perhaps best expressed by Peter Usher, a sociologist working for the Committee for Original People's Entitlement (COPE) in the Mackenzie Delta area,

To native people, the land is more than just a source of food or cash. It is the permanent source of their security and sense of well-being . . . Around every community there are places to trap, to fish, to get water and wood . . . the community depends on these places. The things that are done there are part of community life. Without these places, community life is poorer, and indeed less possible.<sup>24</sup>

This special attitude toward the land is but one of a set of values that do not mesh well with the White culture based on the wage economy. Native people also possess a special attitude toward their communities, one which overshadows individualism. Each individual is a member of a community which exists as a complex web of interpersonal relationships. Among the Dogribs, this de-emphasis of individualism traditionally went so far that no one

was ever addressed directly by name. Instead some designation of their relationship to another person was used, as "my niece" or "brother of so-and-so."<sup>25</sup> Native people have their identity in their community and find support in their friends and relatives there. In their communities, "... people help each other and by their collective efforts make life better for every member of the community."<sup>26</sup>

The traditional native understanding of the concept of property is rooted in these special attitudes toward the community and the land. There was no concept of private property as the privilege of excluding others from places or things no one was using, nor could any person from outside the community hold property in the community. There existed only rights of use sanctioned by the community. This attitude is then the source of native confusion and resentment when confronted with incursions into the land they are using by oil, gas, and mineral exploration teams without permission from the communities affected.<sup>27</sup>

This divergence of values and attitudes presents additional problems for native people who attempt to take part in the wage economy. Not only must native people acquire facility in a foreign language and skills foreign to their traditional culture, but they must also acquire a foreign set of attitudes. Again according to Usher,

Rarely do native people have a lifetime commitment to wage employment or the associated attitudes toward

saving, spending, and career planning implicit in this way of life.<sup>28</sup>

Given that native people are in a poor position to modify the cultural context of the wage economy in the short run, in order to succeed they must acquire attitudes of individualism and careerism, attitudes in direct conflict with their traditional values. When one considers the large adjustment necessary and, as well, the intermittent nature of wage employment in most areas and for most native people, it is not surprising that so many have either failed or refused to make this transition.

Native people are often in a real sense caught between two worlds, between their traditional way of life which can no longer support them fully nor maintain the standard of services present in the communities and the modern wage economy for which they lack the necessary skills and attitudes for successful participation. There are other indications that the traditional land-based culture and way of life appear to offer the basis for a viable and desirable alternative. Foremost among these is the fact that most native people still retain their native language as a first language after over 30 years of education in English. A majority of the population in the N.W.T. had a mother tongue other than English in 1971.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, traditional drum dances, native games, and native crafts are increasingly popular after hitting a low point in the late 1950's.<sup>30</sup>

Leadership is still found within the native communities

though the traditional loose set of political institutions has become more formalized. For Treaty Indians the Indian Act has given legal recognition to the Chiefs and Band Councils as representatives of their bands and has established regular procedures for their selection. In Inuit settlements traditional leadership functions appear to have been absorbed by local settlement councils set up by the Government of the N.W.T. to provide local municipal services.<sup>31</sup> Local native leadership has recently been involved in issues such as alcohol abuse and education.

The importance of the land claims issue has caused the previous informal cooperation and consultation between bands to become institutionalized. Dene people are organized into parallel organizations so as to provide the possibility of joint action despite provisions of the Indian Act separating them. The Indian Brotherhood of the N.W.T. was organized in 1969 with the assistance of the Company of Young Canadians and the Department of Indian Affairs.<sup>32</sup> Many of its original staff, including its first president, were former CYC community workers. The Metis and Non-Status Association of the N.W.T. was organized in 1972<sup>33</sup> and for the past two years has held joint annual general assemblies with the Indian Brotherhood in the attempt to coordinate their positions. The Inuit Tapirisat of Canada was founded in 1971. It has six regional affiliates, with four of these and a majority of the membership in the N.W.T.<sup>34</sup> The Dene people are served by a regional newspaper, The Native Press, published in Yellowknife

since 1971, first by the Indian Brotherhood of the N.W.T. and later by the Native Communications Society.<sup>35</sup> Inuit Today has been published by the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada in Ottawa since 1971 and serves a similar function for the Inuit in the N.W.T.

The native cultures do possess separate languages, leadership, values and customs, and certain special channels of communication, yet they are no longer independent societies. Each is but one ethnic group in the larger society in the N.W.T. dominated by the White culture and its wage economy. As this White culture has come to dominate society in the north, native people have lost control of certain important aspects of their communal life which had given them some independence.

Trade was the largest force for change in native culture, but the process of adoption of Christianity was the first direct step to loss of native culture for the indigenous people of the north. For this process of conversion was not just a process of exchanging one set of beliefs for another, but rather the first step in the process of acculturation.<sup>37</sup> The beliefs and values taught by the missionaries were an integral part of a foreign culture and brought with them an entirely different way of life. It was the missions that first brought the health care and education systems of the White culture to the north. Christianity was a powerful force for change from native ways, yet unfortunately a new economy was not available to support this change. While the

original Catholic and Anglican missions have attempted to accomplish the conversion of a people, there has lately been a turn both toward evangelical Christianity with its promise of personal salvation and a turn away from Christianity toward a revival of traditional religious beliefs and ceremonies.<sup>38</sup>

Native people lost control of health care very soon after their contact with Whites. Diseases against which they had no natural immunity and against which their traditional medicine was ineffective wiped out thousands of native people in a series of epidemics. Just before W.W. II there was even speculation that native people might die out altogether in the north, but improved health care after the war reversed their decline. Once again, however, the natural balances were upset and the result has been demographic characteristics in the N.W.T.<sup>36</sup> broadly reminiscent of those of less-developed nations and in marked contrast to those of the rest of Canada.

Both the birth rate, at 34.4 per 1,000 in 1972, and the infant death rate of 48.8 per 1,000 live births were more than double the rates for Canada as a whole.<sup>39</sup> The median age for the N.W.T. was 19.1 years in 1971, as opposed to 26.3 for all Canada. The youth dependency ratio was 78.2 for every 100 adults of working age (15 to 64), while it was 58.1 for all Canada. Average family size was 4.3 in 1971, compared to 3.7 for Canada as a whole.<sup>40</sup> These last three figures reflect the heavy burden of dependence imposed by a rapidly growing population. Even



the most conservative Statistics Canada population projections show a doubling of the population in the 30 years from 1971 to 2001, almost entirely due to natural increase.<sup>41</sup>

With the establishment of the first mission schools in 1867 native people began to lose control of the education of their children.<sup>42</sup> Children attending the mission schools not only acquired a foreign education with skills of little value to their daily lives, they were also removed from daily life in the community, thus losing the opportunity to learn their traditional ways fully. For the few children going on to the higher grades this proved an even greater problem as most had to leave their communities to attend residential schools in the larger centres. From the beginning the aim of education brought north by Whites has been the assimilation of native children and native people still believe this remains true to this day. The Inuit Tapirisat has stated,

The education program has had a clear intent of general assimilation of the Inuit. Little has been done to enable the Inuit to preserve their language and culture.<sup>43</sup>

The situation is the same for the Dene and native people have only recently won the concession of native classroom assistants in the lower grades who speak the language of the children. Few native children, however, complete their basic education. Only seven Inuit were enrolled in Grade 10 in 1972<sup>44</sup> and only 243 children were enrolled in Grade 12 for the whole of the N.W.T.,

the vast majority of these being White.<sup>45</sup> While native children are deprived of an education in their own culture, they fail to acquire the skills necessary to succeed in the White culture.

A combination of factors brought the native people loss of control of their economy. Trade brought dependence on the outside world economy and, as prices for furs declined, so did cash income available to native people. Concentration of population in settlements, combined with the vast increase in population, made it impossible for native people to depend solely on subsistence hunting and fishing. Education made it increasingly difficult for native people to follow their traditional vocations, both in depriving them of the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills as children and in causing a general rise in the material expectations of native people.

Both Whites and native people themselves have become increasingly aware of the have-not status of the native people, of their failure to succeed in the White world. Family incomes in the N.W.T. show a wide divergence from the pattern of the rest of Canada, with 31.2% of families in the N.W.T. having incomes below \$4,000 in 1971 as opposed to 20.2% for all Canada. In 1971 the poverty line for a family of four was \$4,697. When average family size in the N.W.T. being 0.6 larger than all Canada and the higher cost of living have been taken into account, the figure of 45.6% of families having incomes below \$7,000 is perhaps a more accurate estimate of the extent of poverty in the N.W.T.<sup>46</sup>

This large percentage living at poverty levels is, once again, more similar to a less-developed nation than to the pattern in southern Canada, though the absolute condition of the poor in a wealthy nation may have little relation to that of the poor in less-developed nations.

Both poverty and population growth are problems new to the Northwest Territories in the last 30 years. Population growth has been caused by improved medical care lowering the death rate and increasing life expectancy while the birth rate has remained unchanged. Poverty in the sense of relative deprivation is also a new problem as life in the north was previously at a subsistence level for all. With the presence of White residents, the extension of education, and the assault of the southern media, there has been the not-surprising rise in expectations of the native people. While both of these problems are real, the present socioeconomic situation in the N.W.T. cannot be explained solely as a poverty problem or a population problem. There remains the problem of ethnic division, the lack of cultural congruence. The values and goals of native people remain vastly different from those of northern Whites, even though they may have come to expect similar material standards. It is not simply a case of modernization where White values replace traditional native values. While the example of White affluence may suggest to native people that they need not necessarily be poorly fed, clothed, and housed, in many ways native people retain their own conception of how this should

be accomplished.

### White Society

Whites in the N.W.T. attempt to differentiate themselves from southern Canadians by emphasizing that they are "northerners." This feeling of northernness is, however, measured by and based on the ability to preserve a southern middle-class life style in the face of the adverse northern environment. Attitudes and expectations show little deviation from those of Whites in southern Canada. Hugh Brody found that White social life exhibits conventions common in the south and revolves around institutions similar to those in small towns in the south, the school, the post office, the store, the doctor's office, and the government office.<sup>47</sup> He has described northern Whites as,

... in but not of the north; they have created in small pockets the conditions of the south and have established a mode of life that is as middle-class as it is White.<sup>48</sup>

The predominantly middle-class nature of White society in the north is not surprising as most northern Whites hold jobs that are basically middle class. Whites are involved almost exclusively in the modern wage economy, in technical fields, the trades, or government positions. The few existing business people are in a dependent, client status with regard to the large corporate organizations and the Government of the N.W.T. As White settlement occurred only relatively recently those who might have taken up lower class positions have either found their

way back south or moved up in the rapidly expanding economy. In the Eastern Arctic an informal survey in 1972 showed the average income of working Whites to be \$11,177, a figure above the average family income for all Canadians even before allowing for the large number of families with more than one wage-earner among northern Whites.<sup>49</sup>

Northern Whites, then, possess a culture similar in all respects to that of the dominant middle class in southern Canada, a culture based on material goods, family life, and the same institutions. Within the existing political system the resulting expectation of participation in political affairs brings an identification with the task of "development" in the north to compensate for the restricted nature and number of leadership positions available. Leadership is provided by persons from positions in the community similar to those in the south, lawyers and businessmen, but independent roles are available only in municipal government, the advisory Territorial Council, or the local business organizations. Others must find their opportunities within the federal or Territorial public services, of whom Brody comments,

Individuals who carry out in the hinterland the purposes of the colonizing nation often themselves have highly developed ideals of service to humanity.<sup>50</sup>

Those who fail to find motivation in idealism often find their loyalty cemented by possibilities of rapid promotion in the expanding bureaucracy. For northern Whites,

. . . the material aspects of middle-class life are thereby enhanced by access to and participation in a group that is very self-consciously a ruling group.<sup>51</sup>

No factor such as residence physically divides Whites from native people. Though most Whites live in the larger settlements, they are present in all communities. Still, Brody found in the eastern Arctic that

. . . social contact between northern Whites and Eskimos is minimal or absent. There is scant basis for everyday sociability, cultural and class differences are compounded by a serious language problem.<sup>52</sup>

The situation is similar throughout the N.W.T. Few Whites, not even those who have lived in the north over ten years, speak a native language, while native languages remain the first language of the vast majority of Inuit and Dene people.

The divisions in the N.W.T. between native people and Whites are ethnic divisions which correspond to economic divisions. The native and White segments of the population are separated by linguistic, cultural, and economic differences. Native people have lost their independence as a culture in the loss of control of their religion, education, health care, and economy, yet they retain their separate and distinctive set of goals, values, and beliefs. The native ethnic groups emphasize connections with the land and a sense of community in contrast to the White emphasis on individualism, materialism, and progress. The native people live in an economy based on part-time exploitation of the land with incomes supplemented by wage employment and transfer payments,

while Whites exist almost exclusively as wage employees since ownership and control of the large organizations dominating the N.W.T. lies outside the N.W.T. These ethnic divisions are the basis of political conflict in the N.W.T. today; a discussion of this salience of ethnicity will be provided in the next chapter.

## FOOTNOTES CHAPTER III

<sup>1</sup> Reliable figures for population by ethnic group are not available for the N.W.T. Estimates given are based on Statistics Canada's estimate of the total population of the N.W.T. January 1, 1974 given in Population Projections for Canada and the Provinces, 1971-2001 (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1974), p. 61, and the number of Registered Indians in the N.W.T. on the same date from the Office of Vital Statistics, Government of the N.W.T. Figures for the other groups are estimates by the Deputy Registrar of Vital Statistics for the N.W.T. derived from the above figures.

<sup>2</sup> Farb, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> The estimate of 4,100 employees in the public sector is based on the figures given for employment by industry in the N.W.T. in the 1971 Census, Volume III, Part 4, Table 2, pp. 2-13 through 2-24. For the public sector I have combined the categories of public administration and defense (2,475), education and related activities (780), and health and welfare (545). The total of 3,800 in 1971 would be 35% of the work force compared with only 20% given in the same source for those categories for Canada as a whole, thus indicating a fairly large public sector. For 1974 the figure for 1971 has been increased by 9% on the assumption that the increase in population will be reflected in a comparable increase in the work force and that its distribution between the public and private sectors has not shifted. See Population Projections, p. 61, for 1971 to 1974 population increase estimate.

<sup>4</sup> This estimate is based on the figures for employment of native people by the Government of the N.W.T. given as "just under 500" out of 1,673 total employees in 1974, or approximately 29%. Final Report of the Commissioner of the N.W.T. on the Task Force Report on Personnel Policy and Management (Yellowknife, April 1976), p. 100.

<sup>5</sup> Pipeline Application Assessment Group, Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Assessment (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1975), p. 38.



<sup>6</sup> Community Data Book, 1974 (Yellowknife, Department of Information, n. d.), passim. All information cited below concerning business activity in the N.W.T. is taken from this source which gives basic data on economic activity for each settlement in the N.W.T.

<sup>7</sup> The estimate of 7,400 employees in the private sector has been derived from figures for total work force (10,950), given in the 1971 Census, Volume III, Part 4, Table 2, pp. 2-13 through 2-24, subtracting the number for the public sector (3,800) and those in hunting, fishing, and trapping (385), giving a total of 6,765. For 1974 this figure was increased by 9% as in footnote 3.

<sup>8</sup> Pipeline Application Assessment Group, p. 63.

<sup>9</sup> Pipeline Application Assessment Group, p. 59.

<sup>10</sup> Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, North of 60 Prospectus (Ottawa, 1974), p. 2-2.2.

<sup>11</sup> Dosman, p. 45.

<sup>12</sup> A 45% interest, Dosman, p. 44.

<sup>13</sup> See Financial Post Survey of Mines, 1970 through 1975 inclusive.

<sup>14</sup> "Nanisivik Nears Start of Arctic Lead-Zinc Production," News of the North, October 22, 1975.

<sup>15</sup> North of 60 Prospectus, p. 3-13.

<sup>16</sup> Statistics Canada, Intercorporate Ownership, 1972, (Ottawa, 1974), p. 546.

<sup>17</sup> Figures for total labour force and number employed in the traditional sector of the economy from Census of Canada, 1971, Volume III, Part 2, Table 2, pp. 2-22 through 2-40. The labour force participation rate for the N.W.T. has been estimated by using these figures to arrive at an estimation of the number of native people in the labour force. This figure was then divided by the estimated native population ages 14 and over of 13,710, a figure derived from Census of Canada, 1971, Volume I, Part 2, Table 7, pp. 7-9 and 7-10 on the assumption that 2/3 of the total population of the N.W.T. 14 and over is native.

<sup>18</sup> The labour force participation rate for all Canada was 56.1% of those ages 14 and over in 1971. See Minister of Industry, Trade, and Commerce, Perspective Canada, 1974 (Ottawa, 1974), p. 119.

- 19 Pipeline Application Assessment Group, p. 24.
- 20 Community Data Book, passim.
- 21 Pipeline Application Assessment Group, p. 54.
- 22 Department of Economic Development, Government of the N.W.T., "Economic Factors in Selection of Two Communities for Development of a Community Employment Strategy in the N.W.T.," Yellowknife, June 23, 1975. (Mimeographed.)
- 23 Chief Jim Antoine, Fort Simpson Band, quoted by A. Fotheringham, The Vancouver Sun, September 11, 1975.
- 24 Peter Usher, "Northerners and the Land," Canadian Dimension Volume 11, No. 2 (October 1975), p. 26.
- 25 Crowe, p. 49.
- 26 Usher, p. 26.
- 27 "COPE Opposes Meetings on Beaufort Sea Drilling," News of the North. January 28, 1976, and "Inuit Protest Exploration Plans," Inuit Today Volume 4, No. 9 (October 1975), p. 26.
- 28 Usher, p. 26.
- 29 Census of Canada, 1971, Volume I, Part 3, Table 19, pp. 19-13 and 19-14.
- 30 Chief Jim Antoine, Fort Simpson Band, private interview, Fort Simpson N.W.T., July 24, 1974.
- 31 "Report Says Local Government Excludes Native People," News of the North, January 22, 1975.
- 32 "Indian Brotherhood Elects New Directors," News of the North September 11, 1974.
- 33 "Metis Association Reorganized at Conference," News of the North September 4, 1974.
- 34 Inuit Tapirisat, An Introduction to the Eskimo People of Canada and Their National Organization, (Ottawa: ITC, n. d.), p. 5.
- 35 "Communications Society in the Western N.W.T.," Inuit Today Volume 4, No. 6 (June 1975), p. 24.
- 36 See Inuit Today Volume 1, No. 1.

- 37 See C.D. Ellis, "The Influence of the Missionary," in People of Light and Dark, ed. Maja van Steensel (Ottawa: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1966), pp. 14-19.
- 38 Crowe, p. 151.
- 39 Statistics Canada, Vital Statistics Preliminary Annual Report, 1972 (Ottawa: 1974), p. 7.
- 40 Perspective Canada, p. 12.
- 41 Population Projections, p. 61.
- 42 Fumoleau, p. 143.
- 43 Inuit Tapirisat, "Position Paper . . ." p. 10.
- 44 Inuit Tapirisat, "Position Paper . . ." p. 4.
- 45 Commissioner's Annual Report, 1972 (Yellowknife: Department of Information, 1972), p. 86.
- 46 Perspective Canada, pp. 154 and 173.
- 47 Hugh Brody, The People's Land (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1975), pp. 68 and 39.
- 48 Brody, p. 39.
- 49 Brody, p. 42.
- 50 Brody, p. 53.
- 51 Brody, pp. 53-4.
- 52 Brody, p. 75.

## CHAPTER IV

### SALIENCE OF ETHNICITY

Once the existence of ethnic divisions in the N.W.T. has been established and once a description of their development has been provided it is necessary to provide evidence that these ethnic divisions are politically salient. If other factors were salient they would provide the structure for political conflict and suggest approaches to its regulation. But if ethnicity is salient, then any effective strategies for conflict regulation must begin with a recognition of this fact. If ethnicity is salient, then in an examination of the issues in question, the conflict groups, and the arenas for conflict we should find evidence that the issues deal with questions of scarcity, that conflict groups are organized along ethnic lines, and that problems of legitimacy arise from the tendency toward secession inherent where ethnicity is salient.

#### Issues

Political conflict in the N.W.T. revolves around three

central and interrelated issues at all levels. These same issues are generally recognized as the most important by both native and White groups even though each group's definitions of the issues will necessarily reflect its position in the conflict. In his Opening Address to the Council of the N.W.T. in January of 1976 Commissioner Hodgson outlined what he called the "three major northern preoccupations" of government at the present time.<sup>1</sup> Though his statement of the problem reflects the similar position of the federal government and northern Whites, in speaking of decisions necessary on a land settlement with native people, on development of oil and natural gas resources, and on further steps toward responsible government he has raised the more general issues of land claims, the nature and rate of development in the N.W.T., and the nature of the political institutions that are to govern the N.W.T. As a grand design for the elimination of ethnic differences is unrealistic in the short run, the possibilities of conflict regulation must be viewed in terms of these issues.

The most pressing issue separating native and White groups is that of the nature and rate of development to take place in the N.W.T. The term "development" refers primarily to changes in the economy of the N.W.T. but it is used to suggest both the specific changes and their larger social implications. All sides agree that an economy capable of supporting the population of the N.W.T. at a fairly high level is a necessity, but the nature of the changes required and the rate at which they are to occur are

matters of bitter dispute.

If Whites hope to convince native people to accept their view of the proper course of development they must show that its benefits would be available to all residents of the N.W.T. at a price that does not demand too great a sacrifice. The principal tasks to be accomplished in the White view of development are the creation of employment and the establishment of a fiscal base for government sufficient to provide necessary public services. The means of development are to be private investment in resource-based industry and government provision of the necessary infrastructure of transport, power, and communication facilities as well as the necessary planning for the economy. Whites tend to view the north as a storehouse of resources to be exploited and the replication of the southern Canadian pattern of development has rarely been questioned in the White community in the north.

For native people the purpose of development is to provide a material basis for the survival of their culture and, thus, the nature of development becomes an important question. In its "Declaration on Development" the Indian Brotherhood clearly stated its position on the importance of the kind of development to take place saying,

We cannot call development any activity that takes control away from our people. True development must give us more control and greater independence.<sup>2</sup>

Since the native conception of development is less oriented to the material ends of development than to the means of development,

the acceptable rate of change becomes a measure of how much change can be absorbed without social disruption that would undermine the goal of independence. The opinion that the rate of change is already too rapid in the north was often heard at the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry. A native welfare worker in Aklavik expressed this feeling as follows:

I would like to see more time and years for the people to understand what's really going on. Everything is going too fast and we need more time to think and learn about it more . . .<sup>3</sup>

Native concerns with regard to development are well illustrated in the case of Nanisivik Mines near Arctic Bay. Fears centre around disruption that this project may cause in nearby settlements. Local people have voiced their concerns about the increased availability of liquor in the region,<sup>4</sup> about the possible deterioration of services in surrounding settlements due to diversion of funds to the new townsite being built at the mine,<sup>5</sup> about the drain of community leaders and productive workers from existing settlements to this new town,<sup>6</sup> and about the influence of an influx of outsiders.<sup>7</sup>

Both the federal and Territorial governments view the Nanisivik project as important in the creation of wage employment in a remote area. In addition to direct participation in the planning of the project by the federal government as an investor, the Territorial government has provided services such as construction of the townsite and hiring an employment counsellor to recruit a work force.<sup>8</sup> The Territorial government has responded to the

expressions of concern by native people with the statement that communities in the area ". . . have been in the picture on development at Strathcona Sound from the beginning."<sup>9</sup> But native people were not asked to approve or disapprove the project, they were asked only to say something about how the project should be carried out and nothing about whether it is the right kind of project at the right time.

A similar attitude toward consultation is seen in the disputes over the extension of the road system in the N.W.T. To encourage development the federal government has embarked on a road-building program in the N.W.T. including major highways down the Mackenzie Valley and across the Yukon to the Mackenzie Delta. It has been assumed that communities would welcome these roads but this has not necessarily proved to be the case. Native people in Wrigley, Eskimo Point, and Tuktoyaktuk have suggested that roads bring increased contact with southern Canada that communities may not be prepared to cope with.<sup>10</sup> Jean Chretien, then Minister of Northern Affairs, responded to the opposition of the Wrigley Council in the following terms.

We are going ahead with the highway. It is up to this Council whether you want it near the settlement so that you can participate in development or whether you want it far away. I'm simply not prepared to build it farther than 12 miles away . . ."<sup>11</sup>

In Inuvik the Northern Roads Fact Finding hearings were presented with two conflicting views on road construction. White members of the community councils favoured road connections with



the south and between northern settlements as a means to lower freight rates and a way to provide some wage employment for native people.<sup>12</sup> The Committee for Original People's Entitlement argued that native people do not want a road because of the disruption it brings in terms of alcohol availability, increased contacts with the south, and an influx of outsiders.<sup>13</sup> A local employment counsellor added that previous experience in highway construction in the north shows very little utilization of local labour.<sup>14</sup>

The proposed Mackenzie Valley Pipeline has brought the most widespread attention to the problem of the nature and rate of development in the N.W.T. Native people have made their position clear at the community hearings of the Pipeline Inquiry. The weight of their testimony and its consistency support the claim of the native organizations to represent the views of the people as a whole. In the Mackenzie Delta community hearings native people again expressed their fear of the social disruption that would come with the increased availability of alcohol and the inevitable influx of southerners. Even Canadian Gas Arctic's own study of the social impact of the pipeline notes that alcohol problems are much worse in native communities that are experiencing some development.<sup>15</sup> The situation in Fairbanks and Valdez, Alaska, gives a picture of the social problems associated with a large transient work force.<sup>16</sup> Native people also fear environmental damage connected with the pipeline. Hunters and trappers testified

to the harmful effects on fish, muskrat, and caribou from oil and gas exploration activities already taking place in the Mackenzie Delta.<sup>17</sup> Such environmental damage is an immediate threat to the most dependable source of food for native people. Finally, native people oppose the loss of control of the way of life in their communities. Phil Blake, a native socialworker from Fort McPherson, pointed to the results of this loss of independence.

"Do you think that this is the way that Indian people chose to have this community? Do you think the people here had any voice in planning the community? Do you think they would have planned it so that it divided them and gave them a poorer standard than transient Whites who came in, supposedly to help them?"<sup>18</sup>

Native people consistently put forth the position adopted by the native organizations, that no pipeline be built until land claims are settled, in the hope that this would allow them to retain control of the pace of change in their own communities.<sup>19</sup>

Native people are skeptical about the promised windfall from the pipeline, especially as the principal benefit offered is temporary employment in construction. The President of the Inuvik Hunters and Trappers Association said, "It took a long time to find out that jobs don't last but the land and food do."<sup>20</sup>

The White community in the north tends to view the proposed pipeline as a project which would provide a healthy economic environment of expansion in the north. In 1974 the News of the North headlined "Development Boom Expected to Start Soon" and talked of the growth of businesses and facilities necessary to support such a project.<sup>21</sup> The N.W.T. Chamber of Commerce has

given vocal support to the pipeline project and worries only that the project will be too large to involve northern businesses.<sup>22</sup> The President of the Chamber of Commerce in Fort Simpson stressed that Fort Simpson "needs" a pipeline to establish a stable economy, but again expressed the concern that local municipalities and businesses need sufficient time and money to prepare for a pipeline.<sup>23</sup> The town councils of Hay River and Inuvik, the two major centres to be affected by the pipeline, both endorsed the pipeline but lamented that it is unlikely that proper time for planning and preparation will be given.<sup>24</sup>

The all-elected Territorial Council passed a motion in February of 1976 reaffirming support expressed by the previous Council for petroleum exploration and development, including associated pipelines.<sup>25</sup> White Councillors pushed for approval of the motion in order to reassure both the federal government and the oil companies that the cooperation of the Territorial government could be expected should either the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline or the natural gas pipeline from the Arctic Islands be built. Support of the Inuit Councillors was secured by the addition of the proviso that such approval was to be effective December 1, 1976, to allow time for native land claims to be heard. The two Indian Councillors refused to commit themselves to a pipeline in principle, holding that such matters can be decided only after land claims have been settled and that the present Territorial Council should not attempt to commit native people to such projects in advance.

In pushing for approval of the pipeline the White Councillors were acting on an assumption shared with the larger White community. This is the assumption that the Territorial Council is competent to decide such questions as it is the body from which responsible government will gradually emerge as it did in the case of the "Old Northwest Territories" some 70 years earlier. However, the question of the nature of the political institutions which are to govern the N.W.T. is in itself the second issue separating White and native groups. In his Opening Address to the Council in 1976 Commissioner Hodgson referred to the ". . . steps to be taken toward responsible Territorial government in place of the present representative government."<sup>26</sup> David Searle, Speaker of the Council, in discussions on land claims stated that two principles ought not be subject to negotiation in talks between native people and the federal government, "the sovereignty of Parliament and this Council over all territorial lands and waters, regardless of how they are owned," and the principle of democracy in which no group possesses special political rights.<sup>27</sup> The Councillor for Yellowknife North stated his opinion that ". . . the people of Yellowknife still anxiously desire the same political rights and responsibilities accorded to their fellow Canadians."<sup>28</sup>

Native people reject this assumption that the political institutions governing the N.W.T. will be simply reformed versions of the existing institutions and the same as those in southern Canada. The Dene have taken the denunciation of the existing

government institutions and the assertion of their right to self-determination farthest. In a document put forward in 1975 called the "Dene Declaration" the goals of self-determination, self-reliance, and an independent national existence within Canada are set out along with rejection of paternalism, dependence, and assimilation.

"The Dene find themselves as a part of a country; that country is Canada. But the Government of Canada is not the Government of the Dene. The Government of the N.W.T. is not the Government of the Dene. These governments were not the choice of the Dene, they were imposed on the Dene."<sup>29</sup>

The existing system of government in the N.W.T. is additionally described as colonial and corporation-dominated in a companion document titled the "Dene Manifesto." In it the Indian Brotherhood notes that in the N.W.T., "real power lies with a handful of large companies who operate with full cooperation of the Territorial and federal governments."<sup>30</sup>

White response to these Dene documents has been largely disbelieving. Judd Buchanan, then Minister of Northern Affairs, described the statements as "a bunch of gobbledygook" and said "separatist" documents were "unacceptable" as a basis for beginning land claims negotiations.<sup>31</sup> White Councillors tended to take the position that native leaders and White radical advisers "... are trying to impose these radical and experimental views on people who can't judge their validity."<sup>32</sup> But this picture of unrepresentative leadership and radical advisers as the

explanation for these papers is disputed by Hugh McCullum.

"Whites charge that the Dene manifesto is left-wing rhetoric prepared by white consultants . . . as one of only two white journalists who sat through the long careful debates in four languages at Fort Simpson, I have no doubt this position was carefully worked out by the native people."<sup>33</sup>

Inuit statements have been phrased in less strident terms than those of the Dene but this is less a function of dissimilar aims than of the relative pressure on each group. The Inuit land claim asks specifically that Inuit lands be removed from the authority of the Council of the N.W.T. President Arvaluk has stated that the ITC's Board of Directors feels,

". . . very strongly that whatever agreement is reached with native people will set the course for future development, and the present Territorial Council must not determine the future of native residents . . ."<sup>34</sup>

Though some form of territorial status is still envisioned, a primary aim of the Inuit remains self-determination. In the Territorial Council Councillor Ernerk stressed the importance of self-determination for the Inuit people in areas like education, game laws, and the justice system as a means to preserve Inuit culture. He emphasized the widespread belief in the importance of self-determination saying,

"Many of the people I represent fear that the battle for the survival of the Inuit language and culture is being lost and that is because the Inuit themselves did not determine the kind of . . . system which could have preserved the kind of lifestyle they preferred."<sup>35</sup>

For native people land claims is the single most important

issue separating native people and Whites. They see the nature of the land settlement as the principal determining factor of both the nature of the political institutions to govern the N.W.T. and the nature and rate of development to take place in the N.W.T. For Whites the issue of land claims is but one of three major issues and one separable from the others. For native people land claims must be settled before all other issues.

Councillor Nickerson asserted in the Council that "the argument that the political development paper would in some way jeopardize the native land claims is completely and utterly false."<sup>36</sup> Whites tend to see the linking of land claims to other issues only as a bargaining ploy and a dangerously powerful one. Councillor Searle expressed his fear that,

"... if the Canadian government ever agreed to that order of priority, then native organizations could hold the people of Canada to ransom simply by dragging their feet and not negotiating in good faith..."<sup>37</sup>

Whites can only view the priority given to land claims as a bargaining ploy because they envision only one kind of land settlement. Searle has suggested that it would be improper for the federal government to negotiate anything more than land ownership with native people.<sup>38</sup> That Whites hold a particular conception of what a land settlement is to involve is further illustrated by the following statement by Councillor Stewart of Hay River.

"I feel that they [the government of Canada] are bending over backwards to bring about a speedy and just settlement. They have and are continuing to fund the various native

organizations to research the basis of their claims. Patiently they wait for the terms of a sensible settlement to be suggested to them."<sup>39</sup>

A sensible settlement for Whites would presumably follow the James Bay model in which native rights were extinguished in return for title to a limited portion of their aboriginal lands and a cash settlement. A settlement concerned only with land ownership and extinction of native rights would, indeed, have little direct impact on the other two prominent issues.

The Inuit land claim proposal submitted to the federal government in March of 1976 goes far beyond simple questions of land ownership. While it does offer to negotiate the extinguishment of native rights, it does so only under terms designed to preserve or reestablish Inuit control of their lands and way of life. President Arvaluk cautioned that while details of the claim are negotiable, the basic principle of the claim is a demand for ". . . control of our land, our lives, and our destiny. This is one cornerstone of our proposal which is not negotiable."<sup>40</sup>

The final draft of Inuit land claims proposal was written and approved by 100 delegates from 32 Inuit communities meeting at Pond Inlet from October 29 to November 2, 1975.<sup>41</sup> The main supporting evidence for their claim is outlined in the Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Study, a two-year research study detailing past and present Inuit land use in the N.W.T. completed under the direction of Professor Milton Freeman of McMaster University.<sup>42</sup> Briefly, the claim calls for exclusive ownership of 250,000



square miles of land with title to be held by community and regional corporations. The remaining 500,000 square miles of land would be ceded to the Crown with the Inuit retaining exclusive hunting, trapping, and fishing rights in the area. Subsurface rights would be ceded to the Crown in return for a portion of any resource development revenue in the form of a royalty. Finally, the claim asks that a separate Inuit territory be established called "Nunavut" and comprising that portion of the N.W.T. located above the treeline. This new territory would be governed under a system similar to that existing at present in the N.W.T., but with the restriction of the franchise to those born in the territory or to those who have lived in the territory for a period of ten years.<sup>43</sup>

The Dene land claims proposal was submitted to the federal government in November of 1976. A joint assembly of Indian and Metis representatives was held October 8 to 10, 1976, in Fort Simpson to draft the final version of their proposal. The claim has been based on land use research similar to the Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Study carried out by fieldworkers of the Indian Brotherhood and the Metis Association over the past three years. As described by former President of the Indian Brotherhood, James Wah-Shee, and just as in the Inuit proposal,

"Land not money is the focus of the land settlement. The Indian people are not seeking to sell their land for money no matter how much! . . . A land settlement is seen as the only means of self-protection in the face of the enormous changes being programmed for the N.W.T.

A solid land base is essential for survival as a cultural entity and protection from the devastation which promises to be part of the proposed plan of development for the N.W.T."<sup>44</sup>

Two criticisms of the Inuit proposal by Dene leaders reflect the differences which may be expected in the two proposals.

Rick Hardy, President of the Metis Association, criticized the Inuit proposal for offering to give up native rights in return for various guarantees, rather than seeking to preserve native rights.<sup>45</sup> Wah-Shee stressed that the goal of the Dene is

"formalization" rather than extinguishment of native rights.<sup>46</sup>

Secondly, Erasmus criticized the Inuit proposal for its acceptance of White models for government in the retention of a Commissioner and Council system and for economic development in assuming the passive role of collecting royalties for Inuit people.<sup>47</sup>

This greater concern for preservation of native rights and establishment of native control of development is, undoubtedly, at least partially the result of greater pressures for development of Dene lands. Yet, a claim which involves new forms of political institutions and new models for development can only be further from the conception of the nature of a land settlement held by the federal government and northern Whites.

An attempt was made by the Indian people of the N.W.T. to file a caveat with the Registrar of Land Titles in the N.W.T. warning that title to land in the N.W.T. was in question and, thus, to delay development while a land settlement was negotiated.

The Supreme Court of the N.W.T. originally upheld the right of the Indians to file the caveat in October 1973,<sup>48</sup> but this decision was overturned by the N.W.T. Court of Appeals in November 1975 on the grounds that caveats cannot be filed against unalienated Crown lands.<sup>49</sup> A similar attempt to prevent development before settlement of the land claims has come with the participation of the Indian Brotherhood and the Metis Association in the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry. The native organizations have taken the position that any decision to go ahead with a pipeline must await settlement of their land claims.

The issues of the nature and rate of development, the nature of political institutions, and land claims have become salient not only because the positions of ethnic groups differ on these questions but also because they present an appearance of dealing with scarcity, scarcity in that the demands of both natives and Whites cannot be satisfied simultaneously. Solutions which would satisfy both groups are not readily apparent as both perceive their positions as mutually exclusive. The values involved are seen as fundamental to the very existence of each group and the adoption of the position of one group on any of these issues appears to threaten the survival of the other. Precisely because these issues involve larger questions than the distribution of material goods and because positions are or appear to be mutually exclusive, a compromise where each group makes some gains would be difficult to devise. The perception of the high stakes involved and the

impossibility of both native and White aspirations being satisfied creates the impression that acceptable solutions are indeed in short supply and thus ensures the salience of these issues.

### Conflict Groups

The organization of conflict groups is a second indication of the salience of ethnicity in political conflict in the N.W.T. Native people have set up a number of organizations designed to pursue the interests of their particular ethnic groups. These organizations are all relatively recent creations with the earliest being organized in 1969, and all focus very clearly on land claims as the central issue. All three groups are heavily dependent on the federal government for funding, especially in the form of grants from the Native Citizens Program of the Office of the Secretary of State.<sup>50</sup> As the experience of cooperation above the local level is relatively new, as it is based on the single issue of land claims, and as it depends on federal funding, unity among native groups may be more difficult to maintain than it was to achieve. The geographic isolation of the Dene and the Inuit has already caused them to approach the federal government separately in land claims negotiations. Among the Dene the unity in principle on demands for a land claims settlement may be more difficult to maintain at the stage of detailed negotiations, both as a result of the existence of separate Metis and Indian organizations and in terms of disagreements within each organization. Whites in the N.W.T., however, lack any ethnically-based organization

as there is little recognition by Whites of their own existence as an ethnic group.

The native organizations are built on a membership base that theoretically includes all members of each ethnic group. There is no formal process of joining one of the organizations; all members of the ethnic group are eligible to participate. The membership of the Indian brotherhood is, thus, made up of the 7,000 registered Treaty Indians of the N.W.T. As the Indian Act defines clearly who is eligible to be registered as a Treaty Indian there is little doubt who is eligible to participate in the Indian Brotherhood and as the Indian Brotherhood operates organizationally on the basis of traditional native political institutions a wide degree of participation is guaranteed. For the Metis Association and the Inuit Tapirisat the lines are less clearly drawn. In practice it seems that those of one-quarter native lineage are eligible for membership, a guideline similar to that adopted in the Alaska land settlement.

While native organizations are focused on issues at a "national" level, they are organized as federations of local organizations. For the Indian Brotherhood the traditional bands are the local units. An assembly of Chiefs and Band Councillors selects the officers of the Brotherhood and as well a five-man Board of Directors from among themselves to guide the Brotherhood between annual assemblies.<sup>51</sup> The Metis Association and the Inuit Tapirisat have no such formal local organizations to build from. The

Metis Association charters locals in each settlement and elected representatives of the locals meet in biennial assembly to select the officers of the Association. The ITC functions as a federation of six regional organizations, four of which are located in the N.W.T. These are the Baffin Inuit Association, the Keewatin Inuit Association, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, and the Committee for Original People's Entitlement (COPE). Though membership is direct in these regional organizations, the twelve-member Board of Governors and the officers of the ITC are elected by an annual meeting of representatives from each settlement.<sup>52</sup>

Headquarters for the ITC was originally established in Edmonton but soon shifted to Ottawa. A central office located in the south was felt to be necessary because of difficulty in communication, both between northern and southern centres and between one northern community and another. At the 1976 annual meeting of the ITC the decision was made to shift the headquarters to the north and a committee was established to recommend a date and place.<sup>53</sup> Both the IBNWT and the Metis Association maintain their central offices in Yellowknife.

The issue of greatest importance within the native organizations is consultation with local units and the membership at large. The President of the ITC, James Arvaluk, was unsuccessfully challenged for re-election at the 1976 annual meeting over this issue. His opponent criticized him for neglecting the task of consultation with local communities during formulation of the

Inuit land claim.<sup>54</sup> The Indian Brotherhood finally resolved the leadership question in the summer of 1976 after a long dispute with this same issue as a central concern.

President Wah-Shee was relieved of the duties of his office October 31, 1975 by the Board of Directors of the Brotherhood.<sup>55</sup> The conflict stemmed from Wah-Shee's decision to stand for election to the Council of the N.W.T. in March of 1975, a decision not well-received by all segments of the Brotherhood. Wah-Shee won the Great Slave Lake seat by acclamation. The immediate crisis over his dual positions as President of the Brotherhood and Territorial Councillor came with the disclosure of a paper dealing with political development prepared at a closed session of the Council in September of 1975.<sup>56</sup> Though Wah-Shee publicly opposed the paper, it was felt that his participation in such closed sessions conflicted with his responsibility to maintain close consultation with the Brotherhood membership and the Board of Directors.

The political development paper was regarded as but one manifestation of this larger problem of consultation between the central organizations and their local units. Chief Jim Antoine of the Fort Simpson Band, a member of the Board of Directors, has stressed that Wah-Shee's removal was the result of a general lack of communication between the Yellowknife office and the communities.<sup>57</sup> Before his removal was ratified by a special assembly in Rae in December, Wah-Shee countercharged that this

attack on his leadership was a plot by the staff in the Brotherhood's Yellowknife office and their White advisers to centralize control in their hands.<sup>58</sup> It seems unlikely that this was the case as Wah-Shee was able to secure the support of only two of sixteen Chiefs at the special assembly.<sup>59</sup>

The new President of the Indian Brotherhood selected at the annual assembly in Fort McPherson was Georges Erasmus. Erasmus stressed his philosophical commitment to self-reliance and self-determination for Indian people, stating that he felt these goals were important enough to be worth some material sacrifices in the present.<sup>60</sup> Close consultation with local leadership was promised, both as necessary for developing a successful land claims settlement and as a way of strengthening whatever claim is made since ". . . the government won't believe that the majority of the people in the communities want what they've said they want in land claims."<sup>61</sup>

A second important issue within native organizations is preservation of native culture. The first President of the ITC, Tagak Curley, retired to head the Inuit Education Institute which was set up to pursue the goal of developing an alternative education programme for the Inuit.<sup>62</sup> An Inuit Language Commission was also set up under the auspices of the ITC to develop a standard writing system for Inuktitut and to promote the increased use of Inuktitut in radio, television, and educational materials.<sup>63</sup> Before joining the staff of the Indian Brotherhood, Erasmus was



involved in a project compiling a grammar text of his native Dogrib language. According to Erasmus this preservation of native culture need not be solely a retrospective process as,

Dene culture can adapt and evolve during the years of developing alternative forms of economic development and education as long as the Dene have control over the land and the system.<sup>64</sup>

The Metis Association has sponsored a Metis history project and at their 1976 assembly rejected a proposed union with the Indian Brotherhood stressing that Metis people possess a history and culture separate and distinct from that of Indian people and worthy of preservation.<sup>65</sup> This emphasis in all three groups on preservation of traditional culture is an indication of the heightened sense of ethnic identity to be expected where ethnicity is salient.

In all three native organizations there is a recurring problem of reconciling demands placed on leaders with respect for traditional native culture. The present political situation demands leaders who are familiar with White society and especially leaders who are fluent in English. This conflicts with the tradition of looking to older members of the bands for leadership as they tend to lack the skills necessary for dealing with the government and mass media. The result has often been the elevation of younger people to leadership positions, but usually those who stress the importance of listening to the old people. In his campaign for the Presidency of the Brotherhood Erasmus

stressed the role that old people have to play as "our history books" and their importance in saying what is needed for a fair and just land claims settlement.<sup>66</sup> Yet, while it has become important for leaders to be able to use English effectively, at the same time Erasmus was attacked by his opponent for the presidency for being able to communicate better in English than in his native language.<sup>67</sup>

No single organization or group of organizations has proved particularly effective as spokesman for the White community in the north. This is, of course, the natural result of the fact that the White community does not think of itself as an ethnic community nor does it recognize the possibility that ethnicity might have certain positive functions. Ethnic identities are frequently described as obstacles to progress in the north and often referred to as the pursuit of "selfish" self-interest by native groups.<sup>68</sup> One of the White members of the Territorial Council succinctly expressed this negative attitude toward ethnic identification when he said,

. . . it is important for us to work together as people, not people of this ethnic background or that racial background, but as people of the N.W.T.<sup>69</sup>

In addition the dependent nature of White society in the North and the presence in the north of the full array of cleavages present in White society in the south despite the smaller scale both contribute to this failure of the White community to think of itself as an ethnic group.

The failure of the Chamber of Commerce to become a spokesman for White interests is a result of all three of these factors. The Chamber of Commerce supports settlement of land claims as it would remove an "obstacle" to development.<sup>70</sup> The members of the Chamber are small businessmen and professionals; they do not control the large enterprises which really dominate the economy nor the government bureaucracy.<sup>71</sup> In fact, the members of the Chamber of Commerce are often in a client relationship with both the government and the southern dominated corporations and thus, lack the independence necessary for a vigorous pursuit of the interests of the White community where they differ from federal government or corporate interests. While the Chamber does support both a land claims settlement and the granting of provincial status to the N.W.T., it has little influence over those who have the power to decide these questions. Additionally the Chamber of Commerce is seen by other members of the White community as representing only a narrow segment of the community, the business sector, and is therefore often regarded with hostility by other Whites who feel no community of interest with local businessmen.

For similar reasons trade unions have failed to provide a focus for White leadership, as might have been expected to be possible in a situation where a majority of the work force is employed by large organizations. Trade unions are, again, identified with the narrow pursuit of the interests of a single group within White society. As well, the trade union movement has been rent by

internal schisms. The United Steelworkers has traditionally represented organized workers in mining but since 1974 has been subject to continual raiding by the Canadian Association of Smelter and Allied Workers. The general issue has been that of international versus national unions, but more specifically it has been that of poor service given to the locals by the United Steelworkers.<sup>72</sup>

A variety of other service and social organizations exist in the White community but none even attempt to provide the broad representation and leadership for Whites as an ethnic group that is provided for native people by the IBNWT, the Metis Association, or the ITC. The fact of residential separation, i.e. that Whites tend to live in the larger and predominantly White settlements, contributes to the failure of Whites to perceive themselves as an ethnic group. Because they are a majority in the larger centres and because they are a part of the larger Canadian majority, there is no feeling of being an alien and minority community. Since White society in the north exists as an extension of southern Canadian society leadership in the White community in the north can be found in the same places it would be found in White communities in southern Canada, except where dependence is a factor.

As truly independent positions are relatively rare in the private sector, White leaders are found in or seeking the few elective offices available in the north, either at the municipal level, in the Territorial Council, or in federal politics. Political parties do not exist at the municipal or Territorial

level -- they do, however, exist at the federal level. In the elections since 1968 all three major political parties have fielded candidates in the N.W.T. riding. Federal politics has served both as an arena for playing out ethnic conflict and at the same time as a factor mitigating this conflict.

### Arenas

When we come to a consideration of the arenas for playing out political conflict in the N.W.T. we should find that the legitimacy of institutions at the various levels is called into question as a result of the salience of ethnicity, especially if any of these institutions are perceived as the preserve of a single ethnic group. Conflict at the local level revolves around municipal government, at the Territorial level around the Council of the N.W.T., and at the federal level around the single M.P. from the N.W.T. The evidence with regard to the salience of ethnicity is most clear at the local level and more ambiguous at the federal than Territorial level.

The 1974 federal election provides a good illustration of the operation of political parties at the federal level in relation to ethnic divisions. While no party campaigned on an appeal exclusively to a single ethnic group, one party clearly had the bulk of its support in the White community, another in the native communities, and the third attempted to hold down the middle ground. The NDP nominated Wally Firth, a Metis from the Mackenzie

Delta, for a second term, while the Conservatives once again nominated Bob Ward, a Yellowknife businessman and their candidate in 1972. The Liberal nomination was contested by three people, Richard Whitford, outgoing President of the Metis Association; Joe Mercredi, a Fort Simpson publisher; and Peter Ernerk, an Inuit employee of the Government of the N.W.T.'s Department of Information.<sup>73</sup>

The campaign sheds light both on the issues prominent in the N.W.T. and the constituency of each party. The PC candidate campaigned on the basis of strong support for "free enterprise" and asked voters not to ". . . get social improvements mixed up with socialistic philosophy." He continued with the statement that he favoured,

. . . a philosophy of free enterprise, wherein the individual is rewarded for his or her efforts, where encouragement is given to individuals and businesses to invest in Canada, and when investments show gains that the individuals and businesses are not taxed out of existence as a reward.<sup>74</sup>

The PC's were not, however, opposed to government intervention in the N.W.T. to remove obstacles to development and at Ward's nominating convention the delegates approved resolutions calling for settlement of land claims "without delay," construction of the Mackenzie Valley Highway and Pipeline, special tax relief for northerners, changes in the N.W.T. Act leading toward responsible government, and the creation of a separate Cabinet portfolio for Northern Development with responsibility for Indian Affairs

being shifted to the Secretary of State.<sup>75</sup> The Conservatives consistently favoured rapid replication of the southern Canadian society and economy in the north.

The NDP campaigned on the basis of Firth's record in the House of Commons. Advertisements emphasized his experience and his record of defence of northern interests.<sup>76</sup> Firth stressed that he did not favour developments such as the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline as they promise ". . . only a boom and a very long bust. Again it is a plan to syphon off gas and oil for the American market without benefits for northerners."<sup>77</sup> The NDP annual convention later reaffirmed the party's commitment to provincial status for the N.W.T. and to a just land settlement, but in contrast to the PC statements these were both seen as means to secure northern control over development and not just as ways to remove obstacles to development.<sup>78</sup>

Richard Whitford won the Liberal nomination and campaigned on an appeal to the voters to reject the extremes of the PC's and the NDP by electing a native businessman. Whitford endorsed completion of the Mackenzie Valley Highway, the construction of a bridge over the Mackenzie River at Fort Providence, and an early land claims settlement.<sup>79</sup> The Liberal party was said to favour "balanced development and protection of the environment" and warned that the position of the NDP would cause "economic development to grind to a halt,"<sup>80</sup> while cautioning that the Conservative position neglected concerns of the environment and native rights in the desire for rapid development.<sup>81</sup>

Thus, while no party made what was overtly an ethnic appeal, both the NDP and the PC's advocated programs which had their greatest appeal to a single ethnic group. The NDP's strong defense of native rights appealed to all three native groups, yet was of limited appeal to the White community. Firth's support was broadened only by the support of organized labour in the north for the NDP. Ward's appeal to the free enterprise ethic was, of course, of limited appeal outside the culture in which it developed. Persons lacking the skills necessary to compete successfully in a free enterprise system are not easily persuaded to support such a position. Additionally, the PC's in the N.W.T. have supported an openly assimilationist policy toward native people and consistently downplay the importance of ethnic divisions.

The Liberal campaign implicitly recognized this gap between the appeals of the other two parties and attempted to fill it. It is no accident that the candidates for the Liberal nomination were all native people successful in White terms. This is consistent with the larger national policy of the federal Liberal Party in its insistence on viewing French and English relations as questions of protection of individual, rather than communal rights.

These appeals to various ethnic segments are reflected in the electoral results for the 1974 election as well as in the campaign. Though the number of voters in the N.W.T. is too small to allow sophisticated statistical analysis of the results, it is possible



to draw some general conclusions from them.<sup>82</sup> A rough division of the results into rural and urban categories as in the tables below provides a clearer picture of voting patterns. Grouping Yellowknife, Hay River, Inuvik, and Fort Smith together gives a roughly urban grouping as these are the four municipalities which have achieved town or city status under the N.W.T. Municipal Ordinance. This places 45% of the eligible voters in the urban category and 55% in the rural category. In addition this grouping should place roughly more than 80% of the White voters in the urban category, though it is impossible to secure accurate population figures by ethnic group as mentioned earlier.<sup>83</sup>

Firth was re-elected with 5,410 votes to 4,271 for Ward and 3,173 for Whitford with a turnout of 61%. (See Tables I and II.) Though there was little difference in turnout between urban and rural areas, there was a significant difference in the relative support for the three parties. In the rural sector the NDP won an absolute majority and some 68% of its total votes. For the PC's the situation was reversed with the party winning a plurality and some 57% of its votes in the urban areas. The Liberal party trailed in both sectors, winning its votes in roughly equal proportion from the rural and urban polls. (See Table III.)

The outcome of the 1974 federal election generally confirms the picture of ethnic support for each party expected from an examination of the campaign. The appeal of the NDP to native people is shown both by its drawing more than two-thirds of its

TABLE I  
1974 FEDERAL ELECTION: TURNOUT

	# Eligible	# Voting*	%
Total N.W.T.	21,299	13,008	61
Rural	11,868	7,330	62
Urban	9,431	5,678	60
Yellowknife	4,163	2,838	68
Hay River	2,310	1,086	47
Inuvik	1,683	979	58
Fort Smith	1,275	775	61

\*Number voting will be higher than totals given in Table II because of spoiled ballots, 109 rural and 45 urban.

TABLE II  
1974 FEDERAL ELECTION: VOTES BY PARTY

	Total #	NDP #    %	PC #    %	Liberal #    %
Total N.W.T.	12,854	5,410   42	4,271   33	3,173   25
Rural	7,221	3,682   51	1,844   26	1,695   23
Urban	5,633	1,728   31	2,427   43	1,478   26
Yellowknife	2,818	809	1,340	669
Hay River	1,077	277	585	215
Inuvik	969	347	305	317
Fort Smith	769	295	197	277

votes from rural polls with their heavily native populations and by its winning a majority in 42 rural polls and a plurality in an additional 9 rural polls out of a total of some 79 rural polls with over 25 eligible voters. The relative weakness of the NDP's appeal to White voters is indicated by its poorer showing in the urban polls where the NDP won a majority or plurality in only 10 of 43 polls. The strength of the Conservative Party in the urban polls where the White population is concentrated bears out its stronger appeal to the White community. The PC's won a plurality or majority in four-fifths of the urban polls and received 57% of their votes in the urban polls which have only 44% of the eligible voters. The scattered support for the Liberal Party is illustrated by its winning a plurality in only 13 of the total 122 polls having 25 or more eligible voters. A further indication of the diverse appeal of the Liberals is the fact that its votes were drawn in equal proportion from the urban and rural polls. (See Table III.)

Unfortunately without extensive field studies of voting behaviour it would be impossible to test any of these inferences conclusively, but there seems to be little evidence to contradict the conclusions which have been drawn with regard to federal politics as an arena for ethnic conflict. Only the relatively surprising showing of the Conservatives in certain rural polls goes against the picture of the Conservative Party drawing the bulk of its support from the White community, the NDP from native

TABLE III

## 1974 FEDERAL ELECTION: DISTRIBUTION OF PARTY SUPPORT

	Rural	Urban
NDP	68%	32%
PC	43%	57%
Liberal	53%	47%

TABLE IV

## 1974 FEDERAL ELECTION: POLLS CARRIED BY PARTY\*

	N.W.T.			RURAL			URBAN		
	Total	Majority	Plurality	Total	Maj.	Pl.	Total	Maj.	Pl.
NDP	61	44	17	51	42	9	10	2	8
PC	48	19	29	17	5	12	31	14	17
Liberal	13	0	13	11	0	11	2	0	2

\*Of a total of 122 polls having more than 25 eligible voters, 79 rural and 43 urban.

people, and the Liberals from the attempt to bridge the gap. The Conservative Party still won only 26% of the rural vote, a figure not greatly inconsistent with the White population in rural polls. Ward's carrying of certain rural polls can be explained by one of three circumstances. In eleven of the rural polls he carried there was a probably majority of White voters. In the other cases there were either low voter turnouts which might suggest differential participation rates for White and native voters in some communities or there was an extremely even three-way split of the votes giving Ward a plurality.

Federal politics is then one arena for ethnic conflict in the N.W.T., but this conflict is limited by its federal connections. Ethnic divisions do appear to set the issues to be discussed and do appear to influence voting patterns, but the extension of the federal party system to the N.W.T. prevents federal electoral politics from becoming solely an ethnic battleground. The commitment of both Conservatives and Liberals on the national level to an ideology of liberalism reinforces the tendency of Conservatives in the N.W.T. to downplay the importance of ethnic divisions and liberal tendencies to define ethnic issues in terms of individual rather than communal rights. The influence of the federal NDP broadens the appeal of the NDP in the north by adding support from organized labour to that from native people. This has directly resulted in a degree of support for native objectives by organized labour as in the endorsement of a land claims settlement

by the United Steelworkers,<sup>84</sup> and again illustrates the mitigating influence of the federal party system on ethnic conflict.

The Territorial Government provides a second political arena for ethnic conflict, but in this case it is an arena modified by the fact of dependence. No one group within the N.W.T. can hope to capture the important centres of power directly. The Territorial government administration remains firmly in the hands of the federal government. This results, however, in a more complete exclusion of native people than Whites. The fact that the White community exists as an extension of the southern society and economy means that certain benefits of power fall to the Whites despite their dependent status. These benefits involve both policy decisions which promote objectives similar to those of northern Whites as well as direct participation in the Territorial administration through employment in the public service.

The territorial status of the N.W.T. creates the situation, somewhat anomalous in the Canadian context, of the separation of the legislative and executive branches of government with the executive enjoying the superior position. As the Council of the N.W.T. is only an advisory body the Territorial administration takes on a role relatively independent of the representative assembly. The N.W.T. Act was amended in 1974 to provide for a fully elected Council for the first time, yet the amendments left the independent power of the administration basically untouched.<sup>85</sup> The Commissioner remains the chief executive officer and remains

responsible only to the Minister of Northern Affairs. Provision was made by the Minister, though not set out in the N.W.T. Act, for the appointment of two members of the Council to an Executive Committee to advise the Commissioner.<sup>86</sup> This committee is composed of the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner, one Assistant Commissioner, and the two Councillors. Each of the members of the committee heads one or more departments in a quasi-cabinet system. The two Councillors hold their positions at the pleasure of both the Commissioner and the Council and are bound by rules of executive committee solidarity as in a cabinet system.<sup>87</sup>

The first elections for the all-elected Council were held in March of 1975 and resulted in a native majority in the new Council.<sup>88</sup> 60% of the voters turned out to elect six White Councillors, six Inuit, two Indian, and one Metis Councillor from the fifteen electoral districts.<sup>89</sup> In the five districts with a probably majority of White voters all candidates were White. In the remaining ten districts, all of which had probable majorities of native voters, only one White Councillor was elected even though seven districts were contested by both native and White candidates. In the South Baffin district Brian Pearson, a White storeowner from Frobisher Bay, was returned to the Council despite the native majority in his district. Pearson had served on the previous Council and his re-election was probably on the basis of his record of outspoken opposition to the Territorial administration and strong defense of northern and native interests.

In a private caucus of the Council in May of 1975 a Speaker and two Councillors to serve on the Executive Committee were selected. David Searle, the member for Yellowknife South, was elected Speaker as the longest standing member of Council.<sup>90</sup> Arnold McCallum, member for Slave River and a former high school principal, was given a seat on the Executive Committee and responsibility for the Department of Education. The other seat on the Executive Committee went to a native Councillor, Peter Ernerk, member for the Keewatin and a former assistant to the Assistant Commissioner. Ernerk was given responsibility for the Department of Social Development. It should be noted, however, that responsibility for one of the departments does not include power to set budgets or to hire and fire staff.<sup>91</sup>

The difficulties of holding a position on the Executive Committee and thus being responsible to the Commissioner, the Council, and one's constituents all at the same time became immediately apparent for Ernerk. At a conference of community councils from the Keewatin district Ernerk was strongly criticized for his acceptance of the Executive Committee position. A motion passed at the conference stressed that it was the feeling of those attending that it is not possible to represent the people of the Keewatin and to speak freely in the Council, while remaining responsible to the Commissioner for a \$30,000 a year job at the same time.<sup>92</sup> By fall the conference participants' fears were borne out when Ernerk was criticized in Council by the Commissioner.



for giving his own view in Council debate and not limiting his comments to the position taken by the Executive Committee.<sup>93</sup>

At the same time as the Territorial Council failed to secure any real power over the Territorial administration, its role as a representative assembly was also called into question. The immediate issue bringing this questioning out into the open was the political development paper mentioned earlier. This paper requested that the federal government set out a positive programme for "political development" for the N.W.T. It was suggested in the paper that this programme include a commitment to eventual provincial status for the N.W.T., a commitment to settlement of the land claims issue, a commitment by the federal government to withdraw from the provision of provincial type services within the N.W.T., and a formula for finance for the government of the N.W.T. that would remove federal control of the budget.<sup>94</sup> After vigorous opposition from all three native organizations the Council agreed to delay consideration of the paper until after the settlement of land claims or the January 1979 session of the Council, whichever comes first.<sup>95</sup>

Opposition to the political development paper within Council came in the form of a joint statement signed by five native Councillors calling for delay in consideration of the paper until native people could be consulted on whether they felt it conflicted with their right to self-determination.<sup>96</sup> Rick Hardy, President of the Metis Association, pointed out that

The Council paper suggests that a N.W.T. Council committee be set up to negotiate with the federal government for the transfer of administration of government resources to the N.W.T. Council . . . We view this recommendation as a clear and absolute disregard for and affront to the aspirations and efforts of the Dene people in our present negotiations with the federal government.<sup>97</sup>

As President of the Indian Brotherhood, James Wah-Shee stressed that a land claims settlement must come before any negotiations on constitutional responsibility lest the position of the Inuit and Dene be undercut by talks on provincial status.<sup>98</sup>

Among some Dene leaders the consideration of this political development paper along with approval in principle of a Mackenzie Valley Pipeline led to rejection of the idea of the Territorial Council as a representative assembly. Not only did it lead to the removal of Wah-Shee as President of the Brotherhood, but it also led to the resignation of the Councillor for Mackenzie-Great Bear. In a statement following his resignation George Barnabe said,

How can I stay on Council knowing that Council agrees to a pipeline? The Dene people have clearly said they want no pipeline before a land claim and yet Council ignored the voice of the people.<sup>99</sup>

For the ITC the Territorial Council became increasingly irrelevant as their land claim submitted to the federal government in March of 1976 suggested that the N.W.T. be divided and a separate Inuit territory established. The political development paper divided the Council along ethnic lines over the question of the proper role for the Council. While for Whites the Territorial Council

remains the likely recipient of further powers from the federal government leading to eventual provincial status, for native people the Council has come to be viewed as part of the package of political institutions to be negotiated with the federal government as a part of a larger land claims settlement.

In the N.W.T. the third level of political institutions which provides arenas for political conflict is the level of local or municipal government. At this level the factor of dependence once again intervenes to limit the arenas, for there is only a small measure of local autonomy in the N.W.T. In 1975 there were fourteen nominally independent municipalities in the N.W.T. Of those, seven were hamlets whose councils have only limited authority to spend funds authorized by the Territorial administration.<sup>100</sup> The seven enjoying greater autonomy than hamlets were the city of Yellowknife, the towns of Hay River, Inuvik, and Fort Smith, and the villages of Frobisher Bay, Fort Simpson, and Pine Point.

Since that time there has been only one change in status and this was the dissolution of the village council in Frobisher Bay and its reversion to hamlet status due to what was described by the Department of Local Government as a "lack of administrative control."<sup>101</sup> Villages control some of their own revenue through setting license fees and tax rates for real property, but depend largely on Territorial government grants and are closely supervised by the Territorial government. Only towns and cities enjoy relative independence, but even these are crippled by insufficient tax

bases. Inuvik, the second largest municipality, is a good example as it had only 130 of some 4,000 residents paying municipal taxes in 1975 and derived most of its revenue from government grants in lieu of taxes as government property accounted for 80% of the total municipal assessment.<sup>102</sup>

Issues of concern at the local level are illustrated by concerns expressed at a 1974 conference of settlement councils located along the Mackenzie River. The conference urged the Territorial government to staff positions in the communities with local people whenever possible, to provide education up to grade nine in every settlement, to establish programmes to encourage home ownership, to improve emergency services available in the settlements, to insure local consultation in land use decisions, to greatly increase expenditures on alcohol education, and to establish an alcohol treatment centre in the N.W.T.<sup>103</sup> This same range of concerns is found at the local level throughout the N.W.T. and while priorities differ in each settlement, alcohol problems usually head the list.

Under local option provisions of the N.W.T. Liquor Ordinance plebiscites may be held in any settlement to establish local prohibition, providing 60% approval is obtained with a majority of residents voting.<sup>104</sup> Numerous local councils have expressed interest in such plebiscites and two have already been held. These resulted in the narrow defeat of prohibition in Frobisher Bay<sup>105</sup> and its approval by 76% of the voters in Rae-Edzo.<sup>106</sup>

It has been suggested that the difference in these two votes was the opposition to prohibition of the White population in Frobisher Bay, while Rae-Edzo has only a very small White population.<sup>107</sup>

Important as the problem of alcohol is, it is not subject to action by local councils as the conduct of plebiscites is the responsibility of the Liquor Control System.

In Fort Simpson the conflict between native and White people over alcohol policy was brought out into the open by a request of the Indian Brotherhood and the local Band Council that the Territorial government order liquor outlets in Fort Simpson closed during their annual General Assembly which was to be held July 17-23, 1975. Hotel owners in Fort Simpson sought a court injunction to prevent the closing when the Liquor Control Board agreed to the request. The hotel owners were supported in their attempt to prevent the closure by the village council, a council with all White members in a community with a fairly even population split.<sup>108</sup> The Chairman of the Council, Gary Black, opposed the closing of the liquor outlets saying,

. . . the members of the Fort Simpson village council are the legally elected representatives of the residents, all the residents, of the village of Fort Simpson. As such we are the ones who must make the decisions which will affect the residents.<sup>109</sup>

The Chief of the Fort Simpson Band, Jim Antoine, countered the arguments of the village council by stating,

The village council is only used by White businessmen to gain their own ends and provide services for the town. It has ignored the band council for years. Gary

Black and the others have lived here for only three or four years. If they expect the Indian people who will live and die here to ask those people if we can do something for ourselves -- there's no way we are going to do that.<sup>110</sup>

The Supreme Court of the N.W.T. granted the injunction to the hotel owners on the grounds that there was no provision for temporary prohibition without a public hearing under the Liquor Ordinance.

A special report prepared in 1975 by the Department of Local Government for the Territorial Council found that Fort Simpson is not an isolated example and that the development of municipal government in the N.W.T. ". . . has played a significant role in the political exclusion and community isolation of many of the original people."<sup>111</sup> The report cites several possible reasons for this exclusion. These are the "red tape" involved in running municipalities, lack of interest in and/or knowledge of the functions of municipal government, and the prior existence of the Chief and band council system in Indian communities. Certainly this lack of participation by native people in the larger municipalities is readily apparent. In the 1974 municipal elections in Yellowknife, Hay River, and Fort Smith there were no native candidates.<sup>112</sup> In January of 1976 an Executive Committee evaluation of Local Government programs suggested examining the possibility of introducing a ward system to municipal governments in the N.W.T. in the hope that this would guarantee native participation in municipal affairs.<sup>113</sup> Unfortunately this approach

fails to consider the possibility that there may be positive reasons for native people's failure to take an active interest in municipal affairs.

The local government institutions that have been set up in the north are modeled on institutions in southern Canada. They are familiar to the White residents and tend to serve the interests of that portion of the population integrated into the modern wage economy. In many cases they have come to be regarded as instruments of the White population and thus to lack legitimacy as would, as Melson and Wolpe suggest, any institution which becomes the preserve of a single ethnic group.<sup>114</sup> This is particularly true in the case of the Indian people who possess competing traditional institutions. Native participation has been somewhat more successful in Inuit settlements but this is small consolation in the face of the Inuit land claim which proposes creation of new community organizations to replace existing municipal governments. The very fact that both native and White people are rarely involved in local government when they live in the same settlements is testimony to the existence of separate ethnic identities and differing sets of values. The lack of participation by native people in the institutions of local government suggests that ethnicity is salient on that level.

Two further arenas which might have been included here are the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry and land claims negotiations between the federal government and native organizations. Though

both land claims negotiations and the pipeline debate involve actors from outside the N.W.T. (and for that reason have not been dealt with in detail here), both have certainly had important effects in increasing the salience of ethnicity in the N.W.T. The very fact that conflict over these issues is to be played out to a large extent outside the normal institutional framework is an indication of the fundamental nature of the issues involved. These special arrangements are a reminder of both the dependent status of the N.W.T. and the legitimation problems of political institutions in the N.W.T. While neither land claims negotiations nor the Pipeline Inquiry have produced any unified position among Whites, they have provided a focus for organization for native groups and, as well, funds for organizational work. Additionally the Pipeline Inquiry has brought a heightened awareness of the issues of the nature and rate of development and land claims as fundamental to even the smallest settlements through its community hearings. The lack of organized participation by Whites in either of these arenas has left them the preserve of the native organizations.

Each of the arenas for political conflict in the N.W.T. provides evidence of the salience of ethnicity. All three levels of government have failed to secure the full participation of both native and White residents, though at the federal and Territorial levels there is some evidence of a mitigating influence which appears absent on the local level. Native people have participated as individuals in federal electoral politics and in



Territorial Council elections, but the legitimacy of the M.P. has been challenged by direct negotiations with the federal government and the authority of the Territorial Council has been explicitly rejected by native organizations who feel that it is part of a package to be negotiated with the federal government. At the municipal level failure of joint participation is a further indication of the salience of ethnicity.

Thus, the salience of ethnicity has focused political conflict in the N.W.T. on the issues of nature and rate of development, nature of political institutions, and land claims. Ethnicity has resulted in heightened ethnic identity for native people and organization of conflict groups along ethnic lines, in the case of Whites by default as they have come to dominate community organizations in which native people do not participate. Finally, salience of ethnicity undermines usefulness of existing arenas in finding ways to regulate conflicts by introducing the problem of legitimacy. In the final chapter I will deal with the resulting implications for conflict regulation of the reformulation of the problem of political conflict in the N.W.T. around the salience of ethnicity.

#### FOOTNOTES CHAPTER IV

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<sup>2</sup> Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories, "Declaration on Development," News of the North, August 13, 1975.

<sup>3</sup> F. Marin, quoted in "Aklavik People Ask Berger to Save Their Way of Life," News of the North, April 9, 1975.

<sup>4</sup> "Arctic Bay Residents are Concerned About the New Mine," News of the North, January 30, 1974.

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<sup>6</sup> "Development of Strathcona . . .," News of the North, April 2, 1975, and "Baffin Residents Prefer to Commute to Strathcona Mine," News of the North, May 21, 1975.

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<sup>10</sup> "Wrigley Council Will Decide Where They Want the Highway," News of the North, January 23, 1974; "Eskimo Point Says No To Road," News of the North, October 1, 1975; and "Conflicting Views on Tuk Road Given to Northern Roads Tour," News of the North, October 1, 1975.

<sup>11</sup> "Wrigley Council . . .," News of the North, January 23, 1974.

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76 "Wally Firth, MP," The Yellowknifer, July 4, 1974.

77 "How the Candidates View the Issues Facing Voters," News of the North, July 3, 1974.

78 "NDP Convention in Yellowknife," News of the North, July 2, 1975.

79 "How the Candidates View the Issues Facing Voters," News of the North, July 3, 1974.

80 "What the Pipeline Would Mean to Yellowknife," The Yellowknifer, June 27, 1974.

81 R. Whitford, "Open Letter," News of the North, July 3, 1974.

82 Report of the Chief Electoral Officer, 30th General Election, pp. 1201-1204.

83 The total population of the four largest settlements was 15,082 in 1974, (see Explorer's Guide, 1974, p. 12). If 65% of their population were White, this would amount to 9,803 people, or over 80% of the estimated total White population of the N.W.T., (see Chapter III, Footnote 1). As 65% is a conservative estimate of the percentage of White population in each of the four settlements and assuming that voting population is distributed roughly equally to total population, this would place more than 80% of the White voters in the urban category.

84 "Steelworkers Support Land Claims," Native Press, September 27, 1975.

85 "Amendments to N.W.T. Act Give Illusion of Power," News of the North, April 3, 1974.

86 S. Hodgson, Council Debates, 55th Session, 8th Council, May 1, 1975, pp. 19-21.

87 "NWT Councillors Feel Executive Committee Would Create Conflict," News of the North, April 3, 1974.

88 All information concerning the N.W.T. Council election taken from Report of the Chief Electoral Officer, Council of the N.W.T., pp. 15-29, unless otherwise noted.

89 "NWT Council," Inuit Today Volume IV, No. 3 (March 1975), p. 13, and "Native People Win Majority on New Territorial Council," News of the North, March 12, 1975.

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91 "McCallum Heads Education, Ernerk Gets Social Development," News of the North, May 7, 1975.

92 "Keewatin Council Condemns Ernerk's Appointment," News of the North, May 7, 1975.

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94 Council Debates, 57th Session, 8th Council, September 29, 1975, pp. 3-4.

95 Council Debates, 58th Session, 8th Council, January 21, 1976, pp. 136 and 146.

96 "Native Councillors Will Not Be Pushed," Inuit Today Volume IV, No. 10 (December 1975), p. 20, and "More Study Called For By Native Councillors," News of the North, October 8, 1975.

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98 "Policy Papers Discussed on Social and Political Development," Native Press, October 22, 1975.

99 "Erasmus and Barnaby Enter Leadership Race," News of the North, March 24, 1976.

100 Commissioner's Annual Report, 1973, p. 67.

101 "Government Takes Over Frobisher," News of the North, November 12, 1975.

102 "Inuvik People Want Control," News of the North, September 24, 1975.

103 "Settlement Councils Ask For Sweeping Changes in Government," News of the North, May 8, 1974.

104 "Prohibition Vote Set for Rae-Edzo," News of the North, June 30, 1976.

105 "Vote At Frobisher Keeps Liquor Taps Flowing," News of the North, May 29, 1976.

106 "Rae Becomes First Community in Decades to Prohibit Alcohol," News of the North, August 18, 1976.

107 "Vote At Frobisher Bay . . .," News of the North, May 29, 1976.

108 "Simpson Hotels Take Liquor Board to Court," News of the North, July 16, 1975.

109 "Simpson Hotels . . .," News of the North, July 16, 1975.

110 "Simpson Hotels . . .," News of the North, July 16, 1975.

111 "Report Says Local Government Excludes Native People," News of the North, January 22, 1975.



<sup>112</sup> "Seven Contest Four Vacant Seats on Yellowknife City Council," News of the North, November 20, 1974, and "Hay River and Fort Smith Draw Plenty of Municipal Candidates," News of the North, November 20, 1974.

<sup>113</sup> "Commissioner's Memo to Local Government Chief," News of the North, January 28, 1976.

<sup>114</sup> Melson, p. 1120.

## CHAPTER V

### IMPLICATIONS FOR CONFLICT REGULATION

The problem to be dealt with in this final chapter has been phrased conflict regulation rather than conflict resolution for two reasons. First, it is impossible to imagine any way of removing either ethnic divisions or their salience in the short run. The gulf separating native and White residents of the N.W.T. is too large to be overcome easily or quickly even if participants could agree it was desirable. Secondly, as mentioned in my discussion of salience of ethnicity, Melson and Wolpe suggest that it is not the existence of ethnic divisions that threatens stability in a political system, but rather the failure of existing institutions to recognize and accommodate those divisions.<sup>1</sup> In extending this argument to the N.W.T. I would hold that it is the failure of policy makers in the dominant institutions to recognize and accommodate the salience of ethnicity that threatens stability.

The federal government is clearly the dominant institution in this case and its northern policy makers have consistently adhered to the position set forth in the Report of the Advisory

Commission on the Development of Government in the Northwest

Territories in 1966. The Commission outlined the six following statements of values that underlay its specific recommendations:

1) that the largest number of residents should participate in responsible government as soon as possible; 2) that the government of the N.W.T. have sufficient powers and resources to fulfil its responsibilities; 3) that the structure of government adopted in the N.W.T should not be foreign to Canadian political traditions; 4) that northern residents should have economic opportunities providing a standard of living similar to that in the rest of Canada; 5) that primary responsibility for economic development remain with the federal government; and 6) that native people have the right to maintain their cultural and ethnic identities.<sup>2</sup> Taken together these six statements allow no real room for any policy approach other than one based on a concept of "political development" where the institutions and society of southern Canada will be recreated in the north.

Yet the situation in the N.W.T. is not merely a case of arrested political development. Native people possess cultures separate and apart from the White European culture of the rest of Canada giving them a separate set of values, goals, and communal institutions. Native people have not organized to wrest permission to participate in the White society and culture, but rather to establish an alternative means to preserve their own cultures. Northern White society exists as an extension of the culture of

southern Canada, a culture which tends to view other cultures as inferior and as potential "obstacles" to fulfillment of its own ends. For Whites, the fact that native people in the north have not been assimilated after thirty years of direct contact with White culture is testimony only to the need for greater efforts at assimilation and to the serious deficiencies of the native outlook, rather than to any positive value in or resilience of native cultures. The problem in the Northwest Territories is not that native people have failed to acquire a "modern" outlook, but rather that they possess alternative outlooks which they wish to preserve and develop.

So long as federal policy makers hold to the model of political development and fail to recognize the salience of ethnicity, possibilities for successful conflict regulation will be minimal. In order to accurately assess the possibilities for conflict regulation on the basis of policies which recognize the true nature of the conflict two additional factors must be kept in mind. These are the dependent status of the N.W.T. and the existence of outside pressure for economic development.

The fact that the N.W.T. is a dependency of Canada makes the federal government the crucial institution for policy making. Yet it is in no way a neutral arbiter of conflict between groups in the N.W.T. Nor are its interests identical to those of any one group. However, the fact that northern White society exists as an extension of the southern Canadian society and economy means that local white interests and values are broadly similar to those of the federal government and that they will lack any resources

for independent action where they do differ. Thus the federal government assumes the role of a major participant in political conflict in the N.W.T. and northern Whites are relegated to playing only an indirect role.

Pressure for economic development comes from the North American business community which wishes to expand its operations in the N.W.T. on the same pattern as in the rest of Canada, from federal government departments whose sole purpose is to aid private development, and from federal government departments responsible for the N.W.T. who see economic development on the southern Canadian model as both inevitable and desirable for the N.W.T. Were it not for this pressure a sort of stable stalemate might be possible, one in which Whites would continue to dominate the "modern" sector of society and the economy while native people would retain the limited autonomy offered by incomplete assimilation and incomplete destruction of their traditional way of life. Yet such a stable stalemate is so unlikely as to require little attention because pressure for development is unlikely to recede. In his book The National Interest: The Politics of Northern Development, 1968-75, Dosman has documented the federal government's commitment to projects such as the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline. This commitment exists both in terms of direct partnerships in enterprises, as in Panarctic Oils and Nanisivik Mines, and in programs designed to provide the services necessary to support such projects. Even should specific major projects fail to materialize, little short

of a total collapse of the Canadian and world economies would remove this pressure entirely.

In his Conflict Regulation in Divided Societies Nordlinger stresses that two factors are critical for successful conflict regulation in a society where communal divisions make social differences salient and result in conflict groups and organizations. A necessary condition is that some form of structured relations exist between leaders and non-elites. Four possible types of structured elite predominance are suggested by Nordlinger: 1) apolitical quiescence on the part of non-elites, 2) non-elite acquiescent attitudes toward authority, 3) patron-client relationships pyramided to the national level, and 4) existence of mass parties with extensive organizational capabilities.<sup>3</sup> The second and most critical factor for Nordlinger is the possession of conflict regulating motives by group leaders.

In the N.W.T. the ITC, the Indian Brotherhood, and the Metis Association provide a form of structured elite predominance similar to mass parties. These organizations were created specifically to provide a means to deal with the federal government in the attempt to resolve major issues in the N.W.T. Among Whites in the N.W.T. the existence of structured elite predominance is more problematic. The White community is not organized as an ethnic group, nor will it be directly represented in negotiations over the major issues. Yet the fact that the White community is dependent on the federal government and the southern Canadian economy, combined

with the legitimacy possessed by the federal government as the government of Canada, would seem to suggest that the White community would accept solutions proposed on their behalf with more or less good grace.

While the situation in the N.W.T. may fulfill Nordlinger's necessary condition of the existence of structured elite predominance, conflict regulating motives do not appear to predominate among the leadership of any of the groups. Nordlinger suggests that at least one of the four following conflict regulating motives must be present: 1) fear of a common external threat, 2) desire to avoid economic disruption or hardship, 3) desire to acquire or retain political power, or 4) desire to avoid bloodshed and suffering by members of the group.<sup>4</sup> Among Whites the problem is again complicated by the factor of indirect leadership, yet it is safe to say that White leaders at neither the federal nor territorial level see any external threat nor feel any real internal threat to the safety of Whites whether or not the conflict is resolved. In negotiating from a colonial position the federal government is concerned with neither acquisition nor retention of political power, but rather with its devolution, a process made difficult by the existence of the conflict. Finally, Whites at both levels are more likely to view regulation of conflict as the most likely route to economic hardship for the White community. For Whites see the problem as one of removing "obstacles" to their interests, hardly a motive conducive to conflict regulation.

Conflict regulating motives also appear absent among native leaders. Native people do perceive an external threat, but it is White society itself that constitutes this threat. Native people feel they have little to lose in an economic sense due to their poverty and poor integration into the White economy. Native people have no desire for political power in the present system as it would be of little value to share such power with Whites. Finally, native people feel their existence as a people is already imperiled and, thus, that suffering for their own groups is best avoided by pursuing their own ways.

It is, then, the fact that their positions on major issues are regarded as fundamental to their own survival by both native and White groups that militates against their leaders possessing conflict regulating motives. Yet if they did possess such motives, it might then be possible to regulate conflict in the N.W.T. through use of one of the six conflict regulating practices which Nordlinger suggests may be effective. Conflict might be regulated through creation of a stable governing coalition, through adoption of the principle of proportionality, through exercise of mutual veto, through depoliticization of sensitive issues, through compromise, or through concession. However, the mutual exclusivity of the native and White positions makes three of Nordlinger's six possible conflict regulating practices inoperable. It is not possible to depoliticize issues such as land claims, nor to operate a governing coalition when the nature of the institutions that



are to govern is in question, nor to satisfy either native people or Whites with a proportional share of the positions in the bureaucracy or economy within a system which they feel undermines the existence of their way of life. A mutual veto is ruled out by the pressure from outside the N.W.T. for development.

As Nordlinger has already ruled out federalism, majoritarianism, and forging of a common national identity as effective conflict regulating practices, only compromise and concession remain among conflict regulating possibilities.<sup>5</sup> Possibilities for resolving the conflict remain equally limited. Ethnic divisions cannot be removed in the short run; they have not disappeared in thirty years of contact between native and White cultures and are even more unlikely to disappear now that native people have come to value their cultures consciously. And just as pressure for development is unlikely to drop, so the White community is unlikely to abandon its position in the N.W.T. If a solution is not found in concession and compromise, then the conflict may be pursued until one group can impose its will on the other.

On first consideration the possibilities for arranging a successful package of compromises or concessions appear slim on the same grounds that coalition, proportionality, and depoliticization are impossible. Yet, as the federal government's primary interest in the N.W.T. is in resource exploitation projects, it might be prepared to make concessions in the areas of land claims and political institutions provided major development projects could

proceed as planned. The Mackenzie Valley Pipeline is the major development project planned for the N.W.T., a project planned jointly by several multinational oil companies with the cooperation of various agencies of the federal government and a major project by any measure. Due to its importance the federal government might be prepared to make concessions on other issues in order to clear the way for the project.

With the Dene, however, this still provides little real prospect of successful compromise as the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline is incompatible with their goals in the other major issues. The building of a pipeline cannot be reconciled with the Dene retaining control of the nature and rate of development in their areas and the ownership of the land. As Inuit lands are for the most part relatively remote from the proposed route of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline and as no other major development projects are under consideration at this time, it might be possible for the issue of the nature and rate of development to take place to be set aside in negotiations between the Inuit and the federal government. Delaying dealing with the issue that appears to have the greatest priority for the federal government might then allow a compromise with the Inuit over land claims and the nature of political institutions. The federal government might be prepared to make such concessions to the Inuit if this seemed to provide a way out of the impasse over development in the remainder of the N.W.T. Being able to set aside temporarily the issue of nature

and rate of development and being offered concessions on the other major issues, the Inuit might be inclined to accept such a compromise. It is this differential possibility of compromise that suggests the most likely scenario for conflict regulation in the N.W.T.

A division of the N.W.T. along the treeline in accordance with the Inuit land claims proposal is the most likely compromise for the N.W.T. Areas under pressure for development have historically been cut off from the remainder of the N.W.T. as in the case of the Yukon in 1898, Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1905, and the northward extension of Quebec, Ontario, and Manitoba in 1912.<sup>6</sup> The best indication that such a division may take place lies in the approval of a second MP for the N.W.T. by the House of Commons in February of 1975. The federal boundary commission which was established to recommend a suitable division into two ridings recommended division along the treeline so as to ". . . give recognition to the traditional life and cultural patterns of the majority of indigenous peoples."<sup>7</sup>

A division of the N.W.T. would facilitate a settlement of outstanding issues in both halves of the N.W.T. concessions to the Inuit would be much easier for the federal government as their territory would have both an insignificant White population and very little pressure for development. Additionally, provisions in the Inuit land claims proposal for a royalty system seem to indicate a willingness to consider the kind of resource exploitation

projects to which the federal government is already committed in the north.

Such a division would also place the federal government in a much stronger bargaining position in the other half of the N.W.T. where pressure for development is immediate. The Mackenzie district already has a fairly even balance of native and White population. Of the Territorial Council ridings located in the Mackenzie district, six have White Councillors while only four have native Councillors. Thus, the federal government could offer to settle the question of land ownership with the Dene people while offering to resolve the other issues through the Territorial Council as the assembly representing all the residents of the N.W.T. Such a compromise would not be well received by the Dene organizations, but their position would be undermined by a set of proposals acceptable to both the Inuit and northern Whites.

Should the federal government and native groups fail to negotiate such a compromise settlement or should one or more native groups fail to agree to such a settlement, the most likely possibility is a forced settlement. The dependent status of native people and their insignificant numbers in relation to Canada as a whole make the possibility of successful resistance small. Armed resistance of small bands offers little real threat to the White population, even if only because of the large degree of residential segregation. Sabotage of development projects, though difficult to prevent, likewise offers little real prospect of forcing federal

capitulation to native demands. The strongest weapon native people possess is public opinion in the south. Yet a public relations campaign by the federal government combined with what appears to Whites to be a generous settlement could make it difficult for southern observers to distinguish a forced settlement from the process of concession and compromise.

Yet as native people feel their very existence is at stake in this conflict, they will not be easily persuaded to abandon the struggle merely because their chances for success appear small. If conflict is to be successfully regulated and use of force to be avoided, then the salience of ethnicity in politics in the Northwest Territories must be recognized and appropriate policy adjustments made by the federal government. The European occupation of North America has finally reached the northern portions of the continent. Since W.W. II a separate White society has grown up in the N.W.T. alongside the Dene and Inuit societies. These native cultures have themselves been changed by contacts with White culture and they are no longer fully independent. Yet they still provide native people with a separate set of values, goals, and communal institutions. Ethnicity remains salient in the politics of the N.W.T.

The salience of ethnicity in the N.W.T. has resulted in organization of ethnic based conflict groups and has created a heightened sense of ethnic identity. It has focused conflict on the issues of land claims, the nature of the political institutions

to govern the N.W.T., and the nature and rate of development to take place in the N.W.T. Ethnicity has undermined the legitimacy of existing political institutions at all three levels of government in the N.W.T. and has called into question the very existence of the Northwest Territories as a political unit. Possibilities for regulation or resolution of conflict in the N.W.T. appear as slim as the outside pressure for and federal commitment to development are great.

## FOOTNOTES CHAPTER V

- <sup>1</sup> Melson, p. 1129.
- <sup>2</sup> Report of the Advisory Commission . . . ., pp. 125-139.
- <sup>3</sup> Nordlinger, p. 85.
- <sup>4</sup> Nordlinger, pp. 43-52.
- <sup>5</sup> Nordlinger, pp. 33-39.
- <sup>6</sup> C. C. Lingard, "Administration of the Canadian Northland," pp. 46-7.
- <sup>7</sup> "Treeline Federal Boundary Touted But Half the Commission Says No," News of the North, February 25, 1976.

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