

*Learning in another language and in an alien way, old residential school, Fort Resolution.*  
(Public Archives)

Food from the land:  
*Reindeer round-up at Atkinson Point. Left to right: Jimmy Dillon, Mikkel Panaktalok and Don Pingo.*  
(GNWT—D. Hanna)

*Carving up caribou for a feast, Fort Good Hope.*  
(N. Cooper)

*Holman hunters with winter harvest.* (DIAND)



## The Claim to Renewable Resources

The game, fish and fur, and the other renewable resources of the land are the foundation upon which the native people believe their economic future can and should be established. They seek to defend what is for many of them a way of life, and at the same time to modernize and expand the native economy.

A mixture of hunting and fishing and of trapping-for-trade is widely regarded by the Dene and Inuit as their traditional life. This economy is based on primary production at the individual or family level and, because it relies on traditional skills and a detailed knowledge of animal life and the land, this way of life is basic to native culture and gives meaning to the values that the native people still hold today.

If the economic future of the native people is to correspond with their declared preferences, the native economy of the bush and the barrens must be fortified. Small-scale harvesting of renewable resources must cease to be economically uncertain and insecure. The close links between primary production and the collective well-being of the native people should find a prominent place in planning for northern development.

The native people and the native organizations spoke to the Inquiry of the need for innovation in the use of renewable resources. Among their suggestions were the development of a fishery in the Mackenzie River, the systematic harvesting of caribou, the provision of incentives to fur trappers, and an orderly system for marketing fur.

## Viability of the Renewable Resource Sector

The argument against too heavy reliance on traditional, small-scale primary production centres on the question: how many people can the land ultimately support even when the renewable resources of the North are fully utilized? There are now some 15,000 native people living in the Mackenzie Valley and the Western Arctic, and the population is increasing. It is argued, therefore, that the increase of the native people themselves will threaten the viability of their own resource base.

In the past, policies for the North have been influenced, if not determined, by the belief that the available renewable resources cannot support native populations. The conventional wisdom since the decline of the fur trade has insisted that economic development in the North ought to consist of mines, roads, oil and gas, and pipelines. This wisdom so overwhelmed any contrary suggestions that some of the native people themselves have been inclined to doubt the worth of their own economy. Such doubts tended to be confirmed by the consequences of the government policy of concentrating activity in the non-renewable resource sector, which of course increased the vulnerability of the traditional native economy. The prophecies of conventional wisdom thus tended toward self-fulfilment. The conviction that there was no hope for the old way made that way indeed hopeless.

Can the land support a larger native population? The native people testified that industrial development has driven the animals away from many places they used to inhabit. But despite this fact — which is very important from the hunter's and trapper's perspective because it makes his activities

more arduous — animal populations appear to be thriving throughout the Mackenzie Valley and the Western Arctic. It should also be remembered that in aboriginal times the land supported a larger native population than it does today. In fact, there is little evidence that native people are over-exploiting their resources at present, and there is much evidence that overall yields could be increased. I shall deal with this evidence when I turn to the proposals made to the Inquiry for the modernization of renewable resource harvesting.

Northerners point to many animal species that may have some potential for commercial or domestic use and that are not being harvested at the present time. Consider the Western Arctic, where you will find white whale, seal, char, herring, whitefish, trout, moose, caribou, bear, wolf, fox, numerous bird species, edible plants and berries. Consider the strong economy of the people of Banks Island, which is based on white fox trapping. Look at the Mackenzie Valley with its moose, caribou, beaver, muskrat, marten, mink, wolverine, lynx and coloured fox populations, river and lake fisheries, timber stands along the Liard River and the south shore of Great Slave Lake.

I do not want to be misunderstood here: the North is, in fact, a region of limited biological productivity. Its renewable resources will not support a large population. But through a long history the region has been productive enough for the native people, and they believe it could be made to be yet more productive in the years to come.

There has been a dearth of research into the means of improving productivity in the North. Assertions about the impossibility of strengthening the native economy have often been just that — assertions. We do not have adequate inventories of the various



species available there — not even for the Mackenzie River. Nor for that matter do we know very much about the present intensity of renewable resource use. We do not know enough about food chains and ecological relationships in the North to be able to predict what effect an increased harvest of one species may have on other species. We have not considered whether or not new systems of marketing and price support might strengthen the native economy.

Some renewable resource development schemes have been tried in the North, including the fur-garment industry in Tuktoyaktuk and Aklavik, fisheries on Great Slave Lake and in the Mackenzie Delta, and sawmills at a few locations along the Mackenzie Valley, and some attention has been given to the support of trapping. These schemes have usually been undertaken without adequate funding and always without a clear acknowledgment that the native people should run these ventures themselves.

### *Proposals made to the Inquiry*

The native organizations offered some ideas for strengthening the native economy by development of renewable game, fish and fur resources.

Dr. Robert Ruttan and John T'Seleie discussed the fishery potential of the Mackenzie Valley. They emphasized that the Mackenzie, Laird, Hay and Slave Rivers contain at least ten species of fish. Lake trout also occur in harvestable numbers in Great Slave Lake, and arctic char are found in certain tributaries of the Mackenzie River west of the Delta. They reminded the Inquiry that each community along the Mackenzie River makes extensive use of the river fishery during the summer months, and that the fish

of many large lakes along the Valley are a relatively untouched resource. The primary species available are lake trout, whitefish, grayling, pickerel, inconnu (coney), cisco (herring) and northern pike. Although many of these lakes have low temperatures and relatively low productivity, they have sustained for a long time fairly high levels of subsistence fishing. The people of Fort Good Hope and Colville Lake fish more than 50 lakes: in 1975, during a six-month period, the Fort Good Hope people harvested an estimated 127,000 to 186,000 pounds of fish.

The total value of the fishery resource of the Mackenzie River region has never been calculated. Ruttan and T'Seleie reckon the replacement value of the fish taken at Fort Good Hope over the six-month period in 1975 was between \$143,000 and \$209,000, and said that a potential annual production of 500,000 to 1,000,000 pounds of fish would not be unreasonable. They argued that, with a long-range fish management program, the economic value of the fishery could be maximized by the establishment of community and regional markets and by processing for domestic and commercial use or for resale. Certain lakes and streams could be used for sport-fishing camps. At present, several tourist lodges operate on Great Bear and Great Slave Lakes. However, the role of the native people in them is limited to that of guides; they have no control over the management of the lodges nor of the resource base.

Similarly, evidence was given on the possibilities for increased utilization of caribou. Three major herds range within or very near the Mackenzie drainage basin. The population of the Bathurst herd may be approaching 200,000 animals, and the potential annual harvest for this herd alone may well be 10,000 animals. The Bluenose herd,

which ranges in winter along the north shore of Great Bear Lake, is expanding at present and may now number as many as 50,000. In the chapter on the Northern Yukon, I have discussed the importance of the Porcupine caribou herd to the people of Old Crow. But the herd is utilized by native people in the Northwest Territories too. It is an important resource in spring and autumn for the native hunters from Fort McPherson and Aklavik.

These three herds now supply hundreds of thousands of pounds of meat to the native people of the Mackenzie Valley and the Western Arctic. With systematic management, they could constitute an even more important domestic resource and perhaps a commercial resource as well, but the potential harvest limits of this species cannot safely be determined without accurate estimates of their total populations, annual increments and long-term cycles.

From the beginning of the fur trade, furbearers have been a major source of income for native people. Although trapping has declined over the last 20 years, it still remains an important part of the native economy. Beaver, muskrat, marten, mink, fox, lynx and wolverine are the most important animals in the trapping economy. Even though, during the past few years, there has been some increase in trapping owing to higher fur prices, there is evidence to show that much higher levels of trapping could be sustained. A report entitled *Development Agencies for the Northwest Territories* prepared in 1973 by Edward Weick for a Special Staff Group of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development under the chairmanship of Kalmen Kaplansky stated:

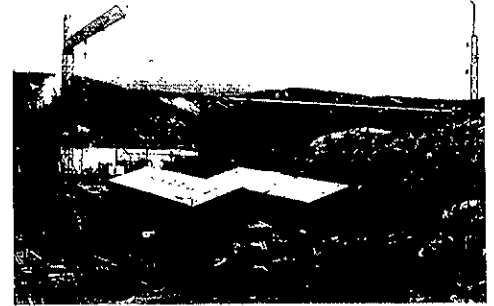
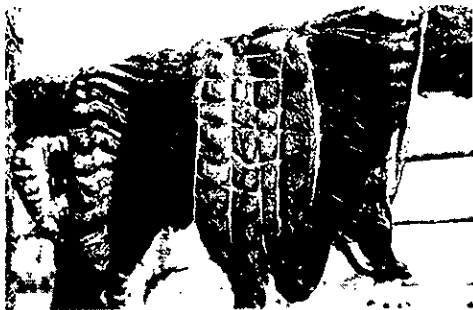
The number of pelts taken in 1970-71 as shown in Statistics Canada's data on fur

*Herring fishing in Tuktoyaktuk harbour. (J. Inglis)*

*Fish drying, Trout Lake. (N. Cooper)*

*Tuktoyaktuk woman working in fur garment factory. (GNWT)*

*Government operated fish processing plant, Jacobshavn, Greenland. (E. Weick)*



## Native Claims

187

production is well below the optimum. Estimates suggest that muskrat production could be increased from 74,450 to 250,000 pelts; white fox, from 25,584 to 100,000 pelts; ermine, from 1,844 to 10,000 pelts; mink, from 4,021 to 10,000 pelts and beaver, from 6,888 to 12,000 pelts. Since Northwest Territories production is a small part of total international production, an increase in exploitation would not likely have a depressive effect on prices except, perhaps, in the case of distinctive species such as the white fox. [p. 20-21]

Ruttan and T'Seleie told the Inquiry that potential fur yields could readily be increased by more effective management. Values could also be increased by an improved marketing system, including public auctions and the development of trapper-owned trading stores to ensure the lines of credit so essential to trapping, sales to handicraft centres, and further development of a fur-garment industry within the Northwest Territories. The Special Staff Group report indicated what would be required to modernize the trapping industry. It would have to include:

... better information on resource availability, restrictive licensing, improved equipment and access to remote, underexploited areas, adjustment of trapping, wage work and school term seasons, to avoid conflicts. It could also include more rational marketing mechanisms to minimize currently excessive control by middlemen, of both the primary production and the manufacturing-retailing markets. Standards of size and quality should be established and enforced. [ibid., p. 22-23]

At Fort Liard, Chief Harry Deneron explained that many trappers, who had no established lines of credit, were forced to sell their furs to local traders at prices much lower than the furs ultimately fetched at auctions in the South. He argued that a settlement of native claims that gave the native people control of the renewable

resources of their land and access to capital would enable trappers to maximize their returns.

Ruttan and T'Seleie also gave evidence on the forest resources of the Mackenzie River basin. The most extensive stands of commercially valuable timber occur along the Liard River and on the alluvial flood plains and islands along the Mackenzie River and its tributaries. The Special Staff Group report expressed some doubt on whether or not the forests of the Mackenzie Valley could support a pulp-and-paper industry, and it emphasized that the forest resource is better suited to supply the local and regional market and that forest products should be especially developed for use in the North. The report suggested:

It should be possible to integrate the northern forest resource into the construction industry by planning in advance to use regional materials in housing programs and thus provide a basis for local development. It might be more expensive initially to supply northern lumber needs from territorial forest stands. Yet, when one considers the jobs that might be created in logging, sawmilling, perhaps transportation and prefabrication, probable reduction in welfare costs, the development of useful skills and competence, and the possible growth of a viable forest industry, these positive factors might offset the somewhat higher initial costs. [ibid., p. 40]

This view accords with what many native people in the villages told me. They maintained that housing constructed out of logs and designed locally would provide them with shelter that is better suited to their needs, and would permit them to use local materials and develop native skills.

## Evidence From Other Countries

Substantial efforts have been made to develop native economies based on renewable resources in some other parts of the world. Some arctic countries have made serious attempts to maintain and strengthen native economies based on hunting, fishing and trapping. I think we may obtain a better idea of the opportunities that renewable resource development offers, if we look at the experience — and the mistakes — of some of these other countries.

### EVIDENCE FROM GREENLAND

Qanak, an Inuit community, was established because the Greenlandic-Danish administration was alarmed by the possible consequences of the construction of a huge United States Air Force base at Thule. In particular, the hunters and trappers of the Polar Eskimo were thought to be culturally threatened.

To ensure their survival as harvesters of renewable resources, the Thule people moved during the late 1950s to Qanak and a number of nearby camps and small settlements. Qanak, a community of some 750 people, is an impressive example of how an economy and a society based on local renewable resources can be strengthened. Educational and medical services are delivered to all but the tiniest camps, and essential goods are sold in the stores at comparatively low prices.

Community rules limit the use of snowmobiles and powerboats because these machines alarm and drive away the local populations of marine mammals. As a result, present-day hunting is an effective blend of traditional and appropriate modern technology: kayaks may be taken by powerboat to the bays and fiords, then paddled to the hunting locations. Hunters must harpoon a



narwhal before shooting at it, thereby eliminating losses through sinking, for the harpoon lines are attached to floats; this rule also reduces the likelihood of a wounded animal escaping to die elsewhere.

In the Mackenzie Delta, the native hunters take approximately 300 white whales each year, but 150 of them are lost because of sinking and the escape of wounded animals. If rules such as those at Qanak were adopted, the whale harvest could be doubled without any increase in the kill.

The material well-being of the Qanak hunters is high by Greenlandic standards. Some furs have a guaranteed minimum price, and in 1971-1972 the earnings of many families from furs alone were above \$5,000.

It is important to emphasize that this group of villages and camps, spread around the bays and fiords of the far northwest of Greenland, is at no great distance from the American base at Thule. The construction and maintenance of the base obviously could provide opportunities to move the Polar Eskimo into the wage-labour economy. However, the Greenlandic-Danish administration decided not to take that course; instead, they encouraged the development of the renewable resource economy. This decision did not create a zoo, in which an impoverished native people pursued their ancient practices for reasons based on southern sentimentality. Rather, with the assistance of the Danish Government, they modernized their traditional hunting, trapping and fishing economy. The Thule-Qanak people can choose between a life as a harvester of renewable resources or a life in town as a wage-earner. This example shows that it is possible to have an effective renewable resource sector that meets the aspirations and needs of the traditional culture, without creating small pockets of

economically or culturally disadvantaged individuals. It must be added, however, that Thule-Qanak, along with the Scoresbysund settlement on the east coast, are exceptions to the general situation in Greenland today.

The present economy of Greenland came into being through a process of forced and rapid change during a relatively short period of time. In the late 1950s, the Danish government decided to develop the Greenland fishing industry, with large fish-processing plants and deep-water fishing fleets, to achieve economic self-sufficiency. Accordingly, shore plants and equipment, fishing boats and trained crews were built up; the people were concentrated into large communities both to achieve economies of administration and to facilitate the operations of large fish-processing plants and of offshore fishing fleets. The administration originally intended the fishing boats to be small and crewed by families, but in the 1960s a trend toward larger vessels, including factory boats, became predominant.

Unlike Thule-Qanak and Scoresbysund, the economic situation in most of the rest of Greenland gives rise to doubts about large-scale development of renewable resources. These doubts are reinforced by difficulties that the "developed" Greenlandic communities are now experiencing, where the incidence of alcohol abuse, violence and family break-down is causing alarm, and the Greenlanders' complaints over their loss of cultural identity and self-respect are becoming louder.

#### EVIDENCE FROM THE SOVIET UNION

It is not easy to obtain detailed information about economic developments in the Soviet Union, but I think we may learn something from what we know about the possibilities of harvesting renewable resources there.

Northern minority peoples have, to some extent, been encouraged to maintain their own renewable resource base. In parts of the Soviet Union, particularly in the far north-east, an area that includes Chukchi and Eskimo communities, hunting has been professionalized.

In 1971 a Canadian party headed by the Honourable Jean Chrétien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, visited the Soviet far North. Walter Slipchenko prepared a report of the party's trip, *Siberia 1971*, in which he notes that the native people work in government and industry and in such professions as medicine, teaching, and administration, but that most of them were still engaged in the traditional pursuits of hunting, fishing and reindeer herding.

Of the estimated 140,000 "small peoples" (a category that excludes the very numerous Komi and Yakut), a total of about 20,000 (the great majority of the work force) are engaged on a full-time basis in professionalized renewable resource activities, and of that number, about 12,000 are classified as hunters and fishermen. Slipchenko pointed out in his summary:

A bonus is paid to trappers and hunters for whatever they catch in excess of the established norms. In order to ensure that a hunter works at his maximum effort the following steps are taken by each sovkhos:

- control and norms are established by fellow hunters;
- each hunter is encouraged by a system of bonuses to catch as many animals as possible;
- each hunter is regarded as a professional man and receives a guaranteed minimum monthly wage. [p. 89]

Let us see what these minimum earnings represent. A normal wage for someone employed full-time in the industrial sector

A Russian reindeer herder and family, Siberia, 1971. (DIAND)

Wood bison. (DIAND)

Cutting reindeer from the herd, Tuktoyaktuk, 1936. (DIAND)

Marten — an important northern fur resource. (NFB—Cesar)



## Native Claims

189

of the Soviet North is 500 roubles per month. Full-time hunters or trappers earn between 200 and 1,000 roubles per month. Their guaranteed minimum is only about 50 percent of a low industrial wage, but the incentives scheme ensures that a successful full-time resource harvester is earning an income not much below that of the highest paid workers in the industrial sector. In other words, a hunter can earn as much as an engineer.

Resource harvesting remains the basis of many native peoples' lives in the Soviet Union. Despite collectivization, the links between hunters, trappers, and reindeer herders and their traditional resources have, to a considerable extent, been preserved. The fur trade in the skins of sea mammals tended in some places to result in overproduction of meat and in wastage. It was therefore decided to establish fur farms where fine-fur animals are fed on the excess meat of marine mammals that are killed for their skins or ivory.

Several Canadian missions have visited the Soviet Union, and the number is increasing as the result of a treaty made in 1970. The Soviets are eager to demonstrate their technological achievements, but they are less eager to let us see how the indigenous peoples of Siberia are making their living today. The Government of Canada should, nevertheless, continue its efforts to send a mission of hunters and trappers to see what they can learn from the Soviet experience.

### EVIDENCE FROM THE UNITED STATES

Dr. Sam Stanley of the Smithsonian Institution presented to the Inquiry a summary of a study made in the early 1970s of economic development among seven Indian tribes in the United States. The study was designed to

isolate the factors contributing to, or detracting from, the success of economic development programs on Indian reservations and in their communities. The study concluded that programs imposed from outside the native communities, which ignored the structure of native society and land use, failed in every case.

The experience of the aquaculture project among the Lummi Indians of Washington State is regarded as one of the most successful economic development programs in the experience of American Indian tribes. Vine Deloria, Jr. described this project in *The Lummi Indian Community: The Fishermen of the Pacific Northwest*. Although the Lummis had participated in the fur trade, and despite the government's efforts to convert them into farmers, their primary economic activity was fishing. The Lummis had participated in the rapid growth of commercial fishing in the 1940s and 1950s; they operated a small fleet of purse-seine boats, which provided employment for most of the men on the reservation. However, during the 1960s, the rationalization of the fishing industry increased the cost of operating a fishing boat far beyond the limited financial resources of the average Lummi. Lacking the capital to improve their fleet and to compete with white boat-owners, the Lummis were forced to give up their boats.

In search of a new economic base, the Lummi Tribal Council considered two very different proposals. One was a proposal by a large corporation to construct a magnesium-oxide production plant in Lummi Bay. The plant would have offered wage employment to members of the tribe, but it would have polluted tidal lands. The Lummis rejected it. The other proposal the tribe considered and adopted was aquaculture — the farming of

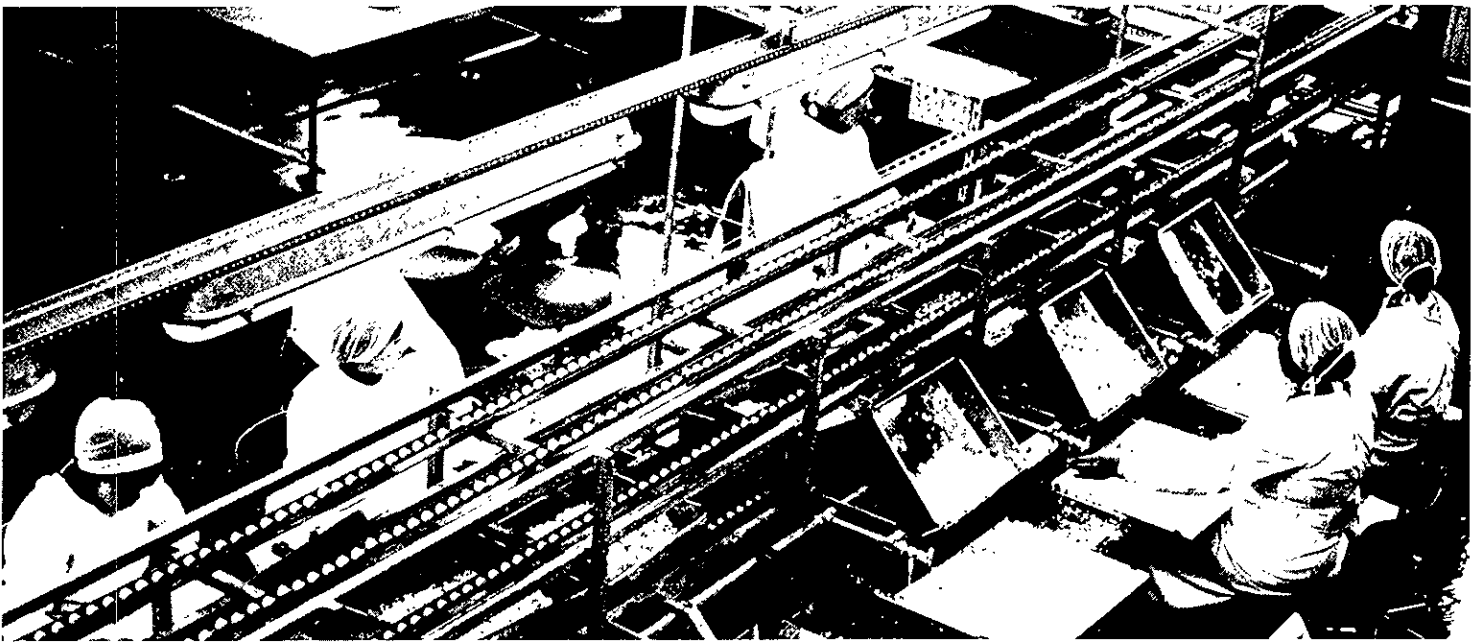
oysters, clams, sea trout, salmon and other seafood products.

Initially, the project required the construction of a research pond to test the growth of oyster and sea trout in salt water. The Lummis built this pond themselves, supplying manual labour, heavy equipment operators, and supervision of the work. The United States government, in funding construction of the main operating pond, designated the Lummi tribe as the prime contractor. Construction of the pond involved a dyke of a kind never before built in the United States: the tribe hired an outside firm to provide the necessary technical skills, but they performed the great majority of the work. They have also built a complete oyster-hatchery that is able to produce 100 million seed oysters a year, an exceptionally high rate of productivity.

The aquaculture project has other distinctive characteristics. The Lummis have matched every construction project with a training program that has prepared native people to assume leadership at the highest levels. The project has had a dramatic effect on the whole concept of education on the reservation. School drop-outs are now going back to school to study fisheries technology, marine biology and business management.

Aquaculture is a vital part of the Lummi economy, but it is not its sole component. The Lummis are searching out subsidiary occupations and training programs that will support total community development. To achieve this aim, profits generated by the aquaculture project are not distributed to members of the tribe, but are used to fund individual or community development to ensure that jobs are available for every Lummi who wishes to live and work on the reservation.

The success of the aquaculture project has



meant that the Lummi can maintain their close ties with the sea in a modern economic context. The project uses the tidal flats that the Lummi have traditionally used; it permits a blending of traditional knowledge of the sea and modern marine biology; it has permitted local control of development and has involved all members of the tribal community; and, perhaps most important, the project has realized the Lummi's desire to maintain their reservation as a source of community life. Deloria says the ultimate success of the project will depend upon the tribe's ability to defend its resource base (water) against inconsistent uses. He concludes:

The programs that have been proposed by the federal government — designed to turn the Lummi into farmers, to make wage earners out of them, to relocate them in the cities, even to make craftsmen out of them — were all activities that did not speak to the Lummi community in terms of its deepest striving: to be itself. The aquaculture project related directly to Lummi traditions. It involved work at which the Lummi people were expert. [Ex. F681, p. 102]

The experience of the Lummi has already been followed in Canada. The Nimpkish Indian Band in Alert Bay, British Columbia, are now developing their own aquaculture project and have established an educational program designed to train native people in the technical skills necessary to manage such a project. They are also offering courses in navigation, net making and boat maintenance. In this way, they seek to ensure that native people maintain an important role in commercial fishing, a role that is consistent with their past and their preferences.

### *Some Implications for Canada*

There are lessons to be learned from these experiences. On the one hand, development must be under the control of the people whose lives and economies are being changed: the strengthening of the renewable resource sector of the native economy must go forward under the direction of the native people themselves. If development proceeds in a manner and at a scale that is out of keeping with local needs and wishes, it will tend to be counterproductive at the local level — whether it is renewable or non-renewable resources that are being developed.

The contrast between Thule-Qanak and the new towns of Greenland is instructive. Greenlandic economic development was imposed from the outside, and we should likely learn as much about its economic and technical aspects in Copenhagen as in Godthaab. In essence, the problem of the Greenland fishery is that the Danes have done the thinking and planning and have provided the capital, whereas the Greenlanders have provided only the labour.

Thule-Qanak offers a much better example of the direction that small native communities may wish to take — development on a scale compatible with the traditions of the people whose economy is being developed. It corresponds with Dene and Inuit ideas of how their native economy should be developed. And, although we are uncertain about the details of the native economies in the Soviet Union, we have learned enough to urge that a closer examination be made of their scheme for professionalization of hunting. The contrast between the Lummi aquaculture project and other instances of economic development on Indian reservations in the United States also shows that the

development of economic programs for native people must be firmly based upon the structures of native society and their pattern of land use.

If renewable resources are to be the basis of an economy, perhaps the native people will have to be subsidized. We already subsidize wheat farmers by price supports because we regard the production of wheat and the stability of farm families as an important goal. We subsidize fishermen on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts by the payment of extended unemployment insurance benefits in the off-season. But, until now, we have never regarded hunting and trapping in the same light. In the North, hunters and trappers have been subsidized — and stigmatized — by welfare. It should now be recognized that people who hunt and trap for a living are self-employed in the same way that commercial fishermen or farmers are.

There should be a reassessment of the goals of educational and social policy as they relate to the traditional sector and to wage employment. There are many young people today who want to participate in the renewable resource sector, not necessarily to the exclusion of other employment, and not necessarily as a lifetime career. They wish to choose and, perhaps, to alternate choices. The teaching of skills that are necessary to participate in a modernized renewable resource economy must therefore be integrated into the educational program, and the importance of these skills must be properly recognized in economic and social policies.

The native economy of the Western Arctic and the Mackenzie Valley is unfamiliar to urban southerners, and policy-makers are generally uncomfortable in thinking about it. They may regard the native economy as unspecialized, inefficient and unproductive. It is true that such economies have not

Sorting shrimp in government fish plant, Jacobshavn, Greenland. (E. Weick)

Abe Okpik examining fish nets at Trout Lake. (N. Cooper)

Hunter with white fox pelts in northern co-op. (GNWT)

Butchering white whale. (W. Hunt)



## Native Claims

191

historically generated much surplus, nor have they produced a labour force that is easily adaptable to large-scale industrial enterprise. They can provide, however, for the needs of those who participate in them. The ways in which we measure economic performance in a modern industrial setting do not necessarily apply in other settings. Nevertheless, other economies can change and modernize in their own way, just as an industrial economy does.

It is increasingly recognized that the economic development of the Third World hinges on agrarian reform, on the modernization of existing agriculture to serve domestic needs; in the same way, and to a greater extent than we have been prepared to concede, the economic development of the North hinges on the modernization of the existing native economy, based as it is on the ability of the native people to use renewable resources to serve their own needs. Productivity must be improved and the native economy must be expanded so that more people can be gainfully employed in it. In my judgment, therefore, the renewable resource sector must have priority in the economic development of the North.

### Native Management of Renewable Resources

The idea of modernizing the native economy is not new. It has been adumbrated in many reports bearing the imprimatur of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. But nothing has been done about it. Why? Because it was not important to us, whereas large-scale industrial development was. Indeed, such large-scale projects hold great attraction for policy-makers and planners in Ottawa and Yellowknife.

Small-scale projects, amenable to local control, do not.

The remarkable thing is that, despite two decades of almost missionary zeal by government and industry, the native people of the North still wish to see their economic future based on renewable resource development. They have argued that the renewable resource sector must take priority over the non-renewable resource sector. This was said in every native village, in every native settlement.

The native people claim the right to the renewable resources of the North. This claim implies that all hunting, trapping, and fishing rights throughout the Mackenzie Valley and the Western Arctic, along with the control of licensing and other functions of game management, should be given to the native communities, and that, for matters affecting all native communities, the control should be vested in larger native institutions at the regional or territorial level. The native people seek the means to manage, harvest, process and market the fur, fish and game of the Northwest Territories.

It is worth bearing in mind that modernization of the renewable resource sector can be achieved with a comparatively small capital outlay. A reasonable share of the royalties from existing industries based on non-renewable resources in the Mackenzie Valley and the Western Arctic would suffice. Huge subsidies of the magnitude provided to the non-renewable resource industries would not be necessary. And the possibilities for native management and control would be greater.

The question of scale, however, suggests that we may consider some resources that, although they are not renewable, are nonetheless amenable to the kind of development that is consistent with local interest

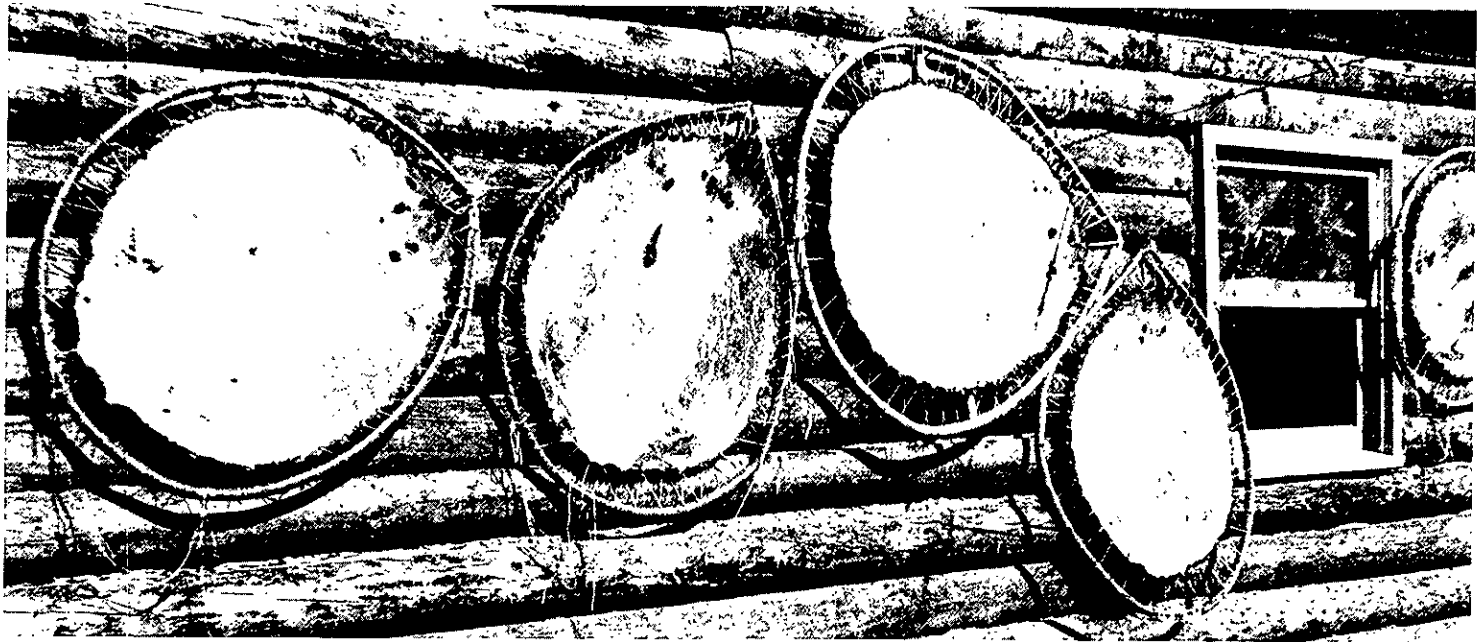
and local control. I have in mind here certain accessible surface resources, such as gravel. These and other resources will no doubt be of importance in the claims negotiations and in land selection. The native people will, in time, judge this matter for themselves, but they should not be constrained or limited by any narrow meaning of the word "renewable."

I do not mean to say that industrial development should not take place. It has taken place, and it is taking place. But unless we decide that, as a matter of priority, a firmly strengthened renewable resource sector must be established in the Mackenzie Valley and the Western Arctic, we shall not see a diversified economy in the North.

### Native Claims and the Pipeline

We must now address the central question, can we build the pipeline and, at the same time, do justice to native claims?

The case made by the native people is that the pipeline will bring an influx of construction workers from the South, that it will bring large-scale in-migration, that it will entail a commitment by the Governments of Canada and of the Northwest Territories to a program of large-scale frontier development that, once begun, cannot be diverted in its course. They say it will mean enhanced oil and gas exploration and development throughout the Mackenzie Valley and the Western Arctic. They say that, to the extent that there is a substantial in-migration of white people to the North, there will be a still greater tendency to persist with southern patterns of political, social and industrial development, and it will become less and less



likely that the native people will gain any measure of self-determination.

The native people say that the construction of a pipeline and the establishment of an energy corridor will lead to greater demand for industrial sites, roads and seismic lines, with ever greater loss or fragmentation of productive areas of land. Industrial users of land, urban centres, and a growing non-native population will make ever greater demands on water for hydro-electricity and for other industrial and domestic uses. The threats to the fishery will be increased. And last, but by no means least, the emphasis the Governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories have placed on non-renewable resources will become even greater than it is now, and the two governments will be less and less inclined to support the development of renewable resources.

Others argue that these developments are inevitable, and that there really is no choice. The industrialization of the North has already begun, and it will continue and will force further changes upon the native people. The power of technology to effect such changes cannot be diminished, nor can its impact be arrested. Rather than postponing the pipeline, we should help the native people to make as easy a transition as possible to the industrial system. This is the law of life, and it must prevail in the North, too.

The native people insist that a settlement of their claims must precede any large-scale industrial development. That, they say, is the essential condition of such development. They say that, notwithstanding any undertakings industry may give, and notwithstanding any recommendations this Inquiry may make, they will never have any control over what will happen to them, to their villages and to the land they claim, unless

they have some measure of control over the development of the North. The only way they will acquire that measure of control, they say, is through a settlement of their land claims.

The native people do not believe that any recommendations this Inquiry may make for the pipeline project will be carried out, even if the government finds them acceptable, and even if industry says they are acceptable, unless they are in a position to insist upon them. And they will be in that position only if their claims are settled, if their rights to their land are entrenched, and if institutions are established that enable them to enforce the recommendations. They say the experience of the treaties proves this.

Let us consider, then, whether construction of the pipeline and establishment of the energy corridor before native claims are settled, will retard achievement of the goals of the native people or indeed render them impossible of achievement?

### *Land and Control of Land Use*

If the pipeline is built before a settlement of native claims is reached, then the land that is required for the pipeline right-of-way, the energy corridor, and their ancillary facilities will have been selected, and will thereby be excluded from any later selection of land for use by the native people. Under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, the pipeline corridor from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez was excluded from the land selection process, and so was the proposed corridor for the Arctic Gas pipeline from Prudhoe Bay along the Interior Route to the International Boundary between Alaska and the Yukon.

I have recommended in this report that certain areas be withdrawn from industrial development to establish a wilderness park

in the Northern Yukon and a whale sanctuary in Mackenzie Bay. But all along the route of the proposed pipeline there are areas and places that are of special importance to the native people. If the pipeline is built now, prior to the native people's selection of land, these areas and places may well be lost.

In many villages along the Mackenzie River, the native people expressed great concern over the proximity of the proposed pipeline to their villages. These small villages are the hearth of native life, and the people in them can be expected to seek special protection for the lands near them. Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, in their submission to the federal government, asked for the native communities' right to select any lands within a 25-miles radius, and the Dene may well seek similar protection for their villages. Acceptance by the government of the proposed route and the designation of an energy corridor along that route before native claims are settled would certainly prejudice those claims. The proposed pipeline route at present passes within 25 miles of Fort Good Hope, Fort Norman, Wrigley, Fort Simpson and Jean Marie River.

Of course, the Dene and Inuit claims are not limited to the vicinity of their villages. They seek ownership and control of the use of vast tracts of land to achieve a number of objectives. They seek to strengthen the renewable resource sector of the northern economy. This, they insist, must take place before a pipeline is built. Their reasoning is simple: once the pipeline is underway, the primary flow of capital will be to the non-renewable resource sector. Once the gas pipeline is built and the corridor is established, the gas pipeline will probably be looped, and after that, an oil pipeline may be constructed, and, of course, gas and oil exploration will be intensified all along the



Beaver pelts drying in Wrigley. (L. Smith)

John Bayly, counsel for COPE. (T. Chretien)

Sam Raddi, President of COPE, with NWT Commissioner, Stuart Hodgson. (Inuit Today—T. Grant)

Ron Veale, counsel for Council of Yukon Indians. (T. Chretien)



## Native Claims

193

corridor. Given the fact that over the past decade, in the pre-pipeline period, there has been a concentration on the non-renewable resource sector of the economy, the shift to that sector, and away from the renewable resource sector, once the construction of the pipeline is begun, will become complete.

A second objective of the claims to land and control of land use relates to non-renewable resources. The native people seek to exercise a measure of control over projects such as the pipeline to protect the renewable resource base and environment upon which they depend. If we build the pipeline now, the federal government will establish a regulatory authority to supervise its construction and enforce, among other matters, environmental protection measures. The authority will employ a large number of inspectors, monitors and other personnel. The public service population in the Northwest Territories, mainly white, will further increase. The necessity, acknowledged on all sides, for a regulatory authority will mean that its staff will have extensive power over land use all along the corridor. There is little likelihood of the native people having any control over land use, whether it be access roads to the pipeline, or seismic exploration, or extensions of the corridor. The machinery for regulating the pipeline will entrench and reinforce the existing federal and territorial bureaucracies.

The native people, through their claims, seek benefits from those industrial developments by which they are prepared to give their consent and which the government deems necessary in the national interest. Would they be in a position to take advantage of any benefits that might accrue from a pipeline, prior to a claims settlement? The native people, with some few exceptions, do

not have the necessary capital or the experience to participate effectively in joint ventures on projects such as the pipeline. But a claims settlement would be the means of supplying capital to native development corporations so they could participate in such ventures. The Metis Association of the Northwest Territories told the Inquiry that they are eager to participate in such ventures.

## Self-Government

The native people believe that, with a new wave of white in-migration in the wake of a pipeline, they will see repeated in the North the experience of native people throughout the rest of North America. An increase in the white population would not only reinforce the existing structure of government; it would reduce the native people to a minority position within that structure, thereby undermining their constitutional claim to self-determination.

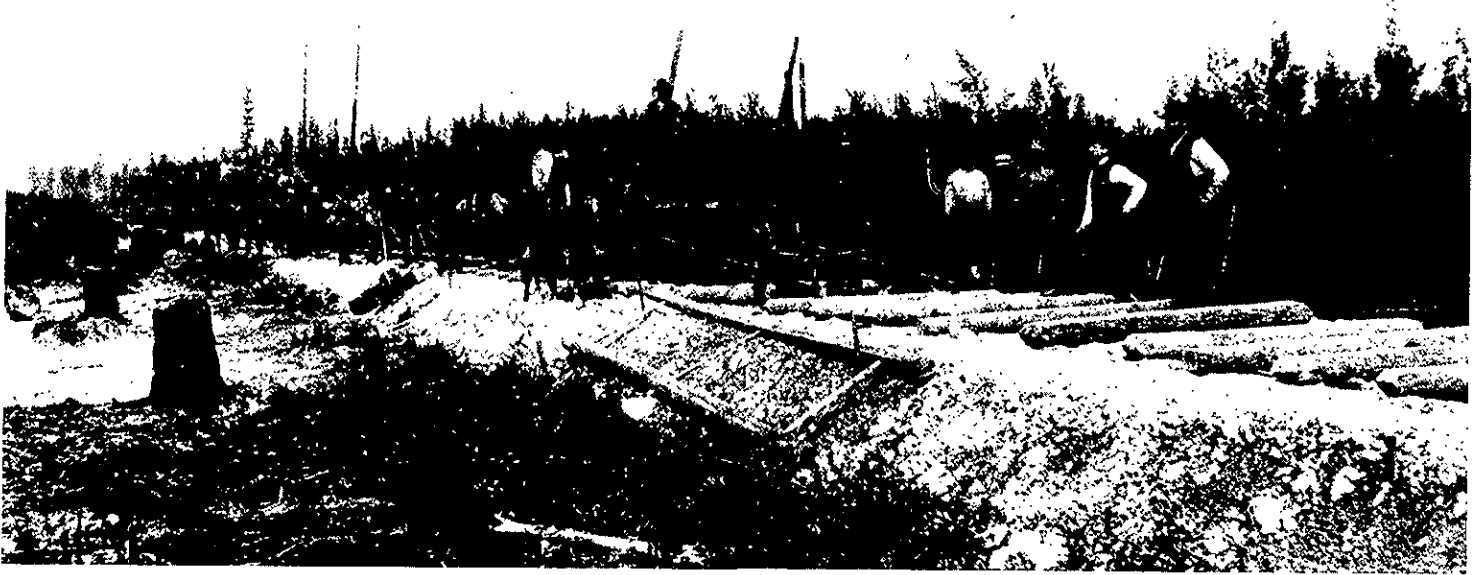
We know there was virtually uncontrolled in-migration to Alaska of non-Alaskan residents as a result of the construction of the trans-Alaska pipeline. Arctic Gas say that measures can be taken to restrict such in-migration to the Northwest Territories. It is also said that stringent measures can be imposed to regulate housing, land use — indeed, the whole of northern life — in a way that was not possible in Alaska. But a proposal to use the power of the state in that way confirms the very fear that the native people have: a large-scale project such as the pipeline would lead to the further entrenchment of the existing, and largely white, bureaucracy in the North, and the chances of achieving a transfer of power to native institutions — one of the major objectives of

native claims — would be made so difficult as to be impossible.

Since the Carrothers Commission in 1966, the development of municipal government has been the focus for the evolution of local self-government in the Northwest Territories. If this policy is to continue, then there is nothing further to be said. If it is to be changed — and the claims of the native people may require change in the existing institutions of local government — the change should be effected before construction of the pipeline is underway and before existing government structures become further entrenched. To the extent that the Dene and Inuit proposals call for the restriction of the franchise in local, regional and territorial political entities to long-term residents of the North, the effect of the construction of the pipeline, swelling the population of white southerners, would render the prospect of agreement on such a limitation that much more unlikely.

The native people seek control over social services so that they themselves can deal with the problems that already exist in the North. It would not be possible to achieve the same objective merely by pursuing a crash program making funds available to support existing local native rehabilitation programs and to establish new ones to deal with the problems associated with the pipeline. The sheer scale of the pipeline's impact on the social fabric of the small communities is likely to overwhelm the capabilities of such native programs as the Koe-Go-Cho Society at Fort Simpson and Peel River Alcoholics Anonymous at Fort McPherson.

At the same time, if the pipeline precedes a settlement of claims, the process of bureaucratic entrenchment will also take place in the social services. The services themselves will have to be expanded to deal with the



anticipated increases in alcoholism, crime, family breakdowns, and other forms of social disorganization that experience in the North, and elsewhere, has shown to be associated with large-scale frontier development. This expansion will mean more social workers, more police, more alcohol rehabilitation workers and a corresponding increase in the size of the bureaucracy.

The idea that new programs, more planning and an increase in social service personnel will solve these problems misconstrues their real nature and cause. The high rates of social and personal breakdown in the North are, in good measure, the responses of individuals and families who have suffered the loss of meaning in their lives and control over their destiny. A pipeline before a settlement would confirm their belief that they have no control over their land or their lives. Whether that conviction is true or not, that will be their perception. These problems are beyond the competence of social workers, priests and psychiatrists. They cannot be counselled away.

Of course, a settlement of native claims will not be a panacea for all of the social ills of the North, but it would permit the native people to begin to solve these problems themselves. That would take time. But it is worth taking the time, because to build a pipeline before native claims are settled would compound existing problems and undermine the possibility of their solution.

I have said that control of education and the preservation of the native languages are central to the issue of cultural survival. The effects that prior construction of a pipeline would have on education and language could be regarded as a litmus test of prejudice to native claims.

The educational system in the North

already reflects the demands of white families, who, although they stay only a year or two in the North, insist upon a curriculum similar to that of Ottawa, Edmonton or Vancouver because they intend to return south. They do not want their children to lose a year or to have to adjust to a different school system in the North.

Pipeline construction would bring yet more white families north, and it would therefore entrench the present system and its curriculum. At the same time as the native people find themselves part of an industrial labour force, without having had a chance to build up and develop their own forms of economic development, they would find increasing difficulty in making their case that the curriculum does not meet the needs of their children.

If the native peoples' claim to run their own schools is to be recognized, it must be done now.

### *The Lessons of History*

The native people of the North seek in their claims to fulfil their hope for the future. The settlement of their claims would therefore be an event of both real and symbolic importance in their relationship to the rest of Canada. The native people want to follow a path of their own. To them, a decision that their claims must be settled before the pipeline is built will be an affirmation of their right to choose that path. On the other hand, if the pipeline is built before native claims are settled, that will be a demonstration to the native people of the North that the Government of Canada is not prepared to give them the right to govern their own lives; for if they are not to be granted that right in relation to the decision which more than anything else will affect their lives and the

lives of their children, then what is left of that right thereafter?

What are the implications of not recognizing that right and proceeding with the pipeline before settlement? Feelings of frustration and disappointment among the native people of the North would be transformed into bitterness and rage. There is a real possibility of civil disobedience and civil disorder.

These things are possibilities. But I can predict with certainty that if the pipeline is built before a settlement is achieved, the communities that are already struggling with the negative effects of industrial development will be still further demoralized. To the extent that the process of marginalization — the sense of being made irrelevant in your own land — is a principal cause of social pathology, the native people will suffer its effects in ever greater measure.

Can we learn anything from our own history? I hope we can, if we examine the settlement of the West and the events that led to the Red River Rebellion of 1869 and the Northwest Rebellion of 1885. Let me make it plain that, while I believe there is a real possibility of civil disobedience and civil disorder in the North if we build the pipeline without a settlement of native claims, I do not believe that there is likely to be a rebellion. Nevertheless the events of 1869-1870 and 1885 offer us an insight into the consequences of similar policies today. These events, and their aftermath, make it impossible to reconcile native claims with the demands of white advance to the frontier.

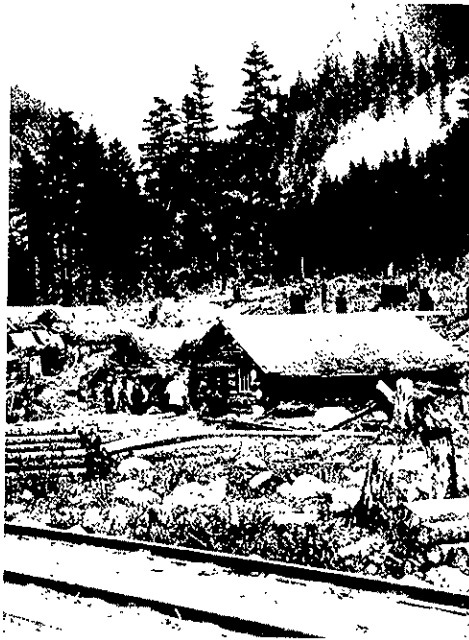
The establishment of a Provisional Government by Louis Riel and his followers in 1869 in the Red River Valley was a consequence of Canada's having acquired Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company without recognition of the rights of the

*Building the CPR: laying track at Malakwa, BC, 1881-1885. (Public Archives)*

*Northwest Rebellion, 1885. Poundmaker in blanket. (Public Archives)*

*Building the CPR: camp for Chinese labourers, Keefers, BC, c.1883. (Public Archives)*

*Northwest Rebellion, 1885: "Miserable Man Surrendering at Battleford, Sask." (Public Archives)*



## Native Claims

195

Metis, Indians and whites living there. The List of Rights drawn up by the Provisional Government called for the settlement of the land claims of the Metis and the signing of treaties with the Indians. In the Manitoba Act of 1870, the claims of the Metis were recognized, and 1,400,000 acres were set aside for their benefit. But their claims were processed very slowly, and, with their lands in doubt and their hunting opportunities continually declining, many Metis migrated north and west to the Valley of the Saskatchewan. There they built a prosperous and stable society that was a product of both the old and new ways. In 1873 they established their own government in the unorganized territory of the Northwest with Gabriel Dumont as president. But the advance of white settlement soon reached them even there.

Manitoba entered Confederation in 1870, and the following year the Canadian Pacific Railway was incorporated. Between 1871 and 1877, the government signed seven treaties with the Indians to enable rail construction to proceed, and by the mid-1870s railway survey crews reached the Saskatchewan.

The CPR, built across the prairies in 1882 and 1883, with the labour of five thousand men, completed the displacement of Indian society that had begun with the treaty negotiations. The settlers who followed the laying of the track soon spread out across the hunting grounds of the Cree and the Blackfoot. The Indians, demoralized and racked by disease, watched from their newly established reserves as their lands were divided.

The construction of the railway was not without serious incident. In 1882, Chief Piapot's Cree pulled up some 40 miles of CPR survey stakes, and camped directly in the

path of construction crews. Only the intervention of the Northwest Mounted Police averted violence then. When the railway crossed the Blackfoot reserve, the Indians again confronted the construction crews. Father Lacombe succeeded in persuading them to give up that land for a new reserve elsewhere.

The Northwest Rebellion of 1885 arose from the grievances and frustrations of the Metis and Indians. Dr. Robert Page, an historian from Trent University, told the Inquiry that, although the CPR acted as a catalyst to bring these tensions to a head, it was not the sole issue. In 1884, serious political agitation led the people in Saskatchewan to ask Riel to return. They sent a petition of rights and grievances to Ottawa which cited the government's failure to provide the Metis with patents to the land they already occupied, and the destitution of the Indians.

The government procrastinated in dealing with the claims despite official entreaties of Inspector Crozier of the Northwest Mounted Police urging that the claims should be settled immediately. In March 1885, the Metis rose in rebellion. The Cree, under Poundmaker and Big Bear, also took up arms. A military operation was organized, and the militia was sent to the west on the CPR. The Metis and Indians were defeated.

On November 7, 1885, the last spike was driven at Craigellachie. Nine days later, Louis Riel was hanged at the police barracks in Regina. Eight Indians were also hanged. The Metis were dispersed, and the Indians were confined to their reserves. Some Metis fled to the United States, some to Indian reserves and some to the Mackenzie Valley. In the years after the rebellion, some Metis were granted land or scrip, but the final settlement of their claims dragged on for

years. Their scrip was often bought up by white speculators and, under the impact of advancing settlement, some of them retreated to the North.

The historical record shows that if the land claims of the Metis had been settled, there would have been no Northwest Rebellion. It is equally plain that the opening of the West to white settlers made it difficult, if not impossible, for the Government of Canada to recognize the land claims of the native people, who had lived on the plains before the coming of the railway.

There is a direct parallel between what happened on the prairies after 1869 and the situation in the Northwest Territories today. Then, as now, the native people were faced with a vast influx of whites on the frontier. Then, as now, the basic provisions for native land rights had not been agreed. Then, as now, a large-scale frontier development project was in its initial stages, and a major reordering of the constitutional status of the area was in the making.

The lesson to be learned from the events of that century is not simply that the failure to recognize native claims may lead to violence, but that the claims of the white settlers, and the railway, once acknowledged, soon made it impossible to carry out the promises made to the native peoples.

The Government of Canada was then and is now committed to settling the claims of the native people. White settlement of the West made it impossible for the government to settle native claims. Today, the Government of Canada is pledged to settle native claims in the North, and the pledge is for a comprehensive settlement. It is my conviction that, if the pipeline is built before a settlement of native claims is made and implemented, that pledge will not and, in the nature of things, cannot be fulfilled.



Hunting camp near Fort Resolution. (R. Fumolcau)

### *Postponement of the Pipeline*

In my judgment, we must settle native claims before we build a Mackenzie Valley pipeline. Such a settlement will not be simply the signing of an agreement, after which pipeline construction can then immediately proceed. Intrinsic to the settlement of native land claims is the establishment of new institutions and programs that will form the basis for native self-determination.

The native people of the North reject the model of the James Bay Agreement. They seek new institutions of local, regional and indeed territorial government. John Ciaccia, speaking to the Parliamentary Committee convened to examine the James Bay Agreement, said that the Government of Quebec was "taking the opportunity to extend its administration, its laws, its services, its governmental structures through the entirety of Québec." [*The James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement*, p. xvii] The Dene and the Inuit seek a very different kind of settlement.

They also reject the Alaskan model. The Alaskan settlement was designed to provide the native people with land, capital and corporate structures to enable them to participate in what has become the dominant mode of economic development in Alaska, the non-renewable resource sector. This model is only relevant if we decide against the strengthening of the renewable resource sector in the Canadian North.

The Alaskan settlement also rejects the idea that there should be any special status for native people. That is a policy quite different from the policy formulated by the Government of Canada. In Alaska the settlement was designed to do away with special status by 1991 and to assimilate Alaskan

natives. The Government of Canada faced that issue between 1969 and 1976 and decided against it.

The issue comes down to this: will native claims be rendered more difficult or even impossible of achievement if we build a pipeline without first settling those claims? Must we establish the political, social and economic institutions and programs embodied in the settlement before building a pipeline? Unless we do, will the progress of the native people toward realization of their goals be irremediably retarded? I think the answer clearly is yes. The progress of events, once a pipeline is under construction, will place the native people at a grave disadvantage, and will place the government itself in an increasingly difficult position.

In my opinion a period of ten years will be required in the Mackenzie Valley and Western Arctic to settle native claims, and to establish the new institutions and new programs that a settlement will entail. No pipeline should be built until these things have been achieved.

It might be possible to make a settlement within the year with the Metis, and perhaps to force a settlement upon the Inuit. It would, however, be impossible, I think, to coerce the Dene to agree to such a settlement. It would have to be an imposed settlement.

You can sign an agreement or you can impose one; you can proceed with land selection; you can promise the native people that no encroachments will be made upon their lands. Yet you will discover before long that such encroachments are necessary. You can, in an agreement, promise the native people the right to rebuild the native economy. The influx of whites, the divisions created among the native people, the preoccupations of the federal and territorial

governments, faced with the problems of pipeline construction and the development of the corridor, would make fulfilment of such a promise impossible. That is why the pipeline should be postponed for 10 years.

A decision to build the pipeline now would imply a decision to bring to production now the gas and oil resources of the Mackenzie Delta and the Beaufort Sea. The industrial activity that would follow this decision would be on a scale such as to require the full attention of the government, and entrench its commitment to non-renewable resource development in the North. The drive to bring the native people into the industrial system would intensify, and there would be little likelihood of the native people receiving any support in their desire to expand the renewable resource sector.

If we believe that the industrial system must advance now into the Mackenzie Valley and the Western Arctic, then we must not delude ourselves or the native people about what a settlement of their claims will mean in such circumstances.

It would be dishonest to impose a settlement that we know now — and that the native people will know before the ink is dry on it — will not achieve their goals. They will soon realize — just as the native people on the prairies realized a century ago as the settlers poured in — that the actual course of events on the ground will deny the promises that appear on paper. The advance of the industrial system would determine the course of events, no matter what Parliament, the courts, this Inquiry or anyone else may say.

If we think back to the days when the treaties were signed on the prairies, we can predict what will happen in the North if a settlement is forced upon the native people. We shall soon see that we cannot keep the promises we have made.